

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 19-23 October 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
**Outcome/Program:** Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet  
**Topic:** Open Government Partnership

**Senator:** Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins

**Question reference number:** 225

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 4 December 2015

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

When the former Labor Government announced that Australia would join the OGP, it nominated the Attorney-General's Department as the lead agency. The Abbott Government changed that to the Department of Finance by April 2014. It has now been reported that the lead agency has been changed once again to Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

- a) Is this true?
- b) Why was this decision taken?
- c) What costs have been incurred because of each of the two reallocations which have now taken place?

If the PM&C is the lead agency for this initiative, then:

1. Has the Government recommitted to advancing its application to join the OGP?
2. Please advise what actions the Government has taken since the election to develop an action plan.
3. As Australia's participation in the OGP appeared to grind to a halt under Prime Minister Abbott, was it the Abbott Government's policy to abandon the OGP project?
4. Will the Turnbull Government now work towards full membership of the OGP?
5. Please describe the commitments Australia would be required to make if we were to commit to the OGP.
6. Will commitment to the OGP have ramifications for the Government's plans to abolish the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner?

**Answer:**

- a. Yes, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) is the lead agency for Open Government Partnership (OGP).
- b. Public data policy and related matters, including responsibility for OGP, transferred from the Department of Finance to PM&C, as part of the changes made to the Administrative Arrangements Order in September 2015. Putting the Digital Transformation Office and responsibility for public data policy and related matters

together in the PM&C portfolio emphasises the whole-of-government focus of these matters.

- c. No costs were incurred.
  
- 1. On 17 November 2015, the Government announced its commitment to finalise its OGP membership.
- 2. Public consultation commenced on 17 November 2015 to develop an OGP Australian Government National Action Plan by the end of June 2016. This timing has been agreed with the OGP Support Unit.
- 3. No.
- 4. Yes.
- 5. As a member of the OGP, the Government has committed to the OGP Declaration of Open Government; to the development of OGP Australian Government National Action Plan via public consultation; and to independent monitoring on progress by the OGP.
- 6. No.