

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

Additional Estimates 8-11 February 2010

**Question: PM80a-e**

**Topic: Signing of official documents**

**Type of Question: Written**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010**

**Number of pages: 3**

**A piece in the SMH (21/01/2010) titled 'Julia Gillard should be treasurer' said that 'Officials in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet have been known to wait until the Prime Minister is out of the country to get things signed off by the acting Prime Minister.'**

- a) Does PM&C keep a record of the documents that the Prime Minister or Acting Prime Minister signs?**
- b) In total, how many documents has the Prime Minister signed?**
- c) In total, how many documents has the Acting Prime Minister signed?**
- d) Can PM&C provide the dates when Julia Gillard was acting Prime Minister?**
- e) Can PM&C provide the dates when another Minister was acting Prime Minister?**

**Answer:**

- a) PM&C tracks documents that the Prime Minister or Acting Prime Minister has signed. It should be noted that documents sent to the Prime Minister and Acting Prime Minister for signing have been forwarded in accordance with usual practice.
- b) 2,520 documents have been identified as signed by the Prime Minister between 3 December 2007 and 25 February 2010. These documents include ministerial correspondence and briefs but not generally meeting briefs,

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messages, speeches, children's correspondence, invitations and congratulatory letters.

- c) For the same period, 248 documents were signed by Julia Gillard, as Acting Prime Minister. No documents have been identified as being signed by Senator the Hon Christopher Evans, as Acting Prime Minister, for two days he held this position.
- d) Julia Gillard was Acting Prime Minister on 27 occasions. See attached table detailing dates.
- e) Senator Evans was Acting Prime Minister once. See attached table detailing dates.