

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 13-16 Feb 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1.4 Support Services for Government Operations

Topic: Australia Day Function - PMO senior staff conversations and PM travel

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 11

Type of Question: FPA, P63, 13 February

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 30 March 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator RYAN: I would be interested in knowing then, and this goes back to my first question, at what point were the press secretary and the communications director, whom I understand were working to establish all the facts in relation to these allegations - actually doing that and to whom were they speaking?

Senator Chris Evans: I will take that on notice. I do not know the answer and I should not flash outside the off stump, so I will take that on notice.

Senator RYAN: Could you also take on notice at what time the Prime Minister left for Melbourne on Australia Day?

Senator Chris Evans: Yes, okay.

Answer:

- a) The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is advised that the Prime Minister's Director of Communications and Senior Press Secretary spoke to Mr Hodges on 26 and 27 January 2012 in the course of preparing advice for the Prime Minister on 27 February 2012.
- b) The Prime Minister hosted her annual Australia Day Reception at The Lodge on the evening of 26 January 2012 and did not depart Canberra for Melbourne on that day.