

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: 1.1.1 Domestic Policy

Topic: Australia Network Tender - DFAT involvement and Sky

Senator: Senator Birmingham

Question reference number: 42

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

1. What conditions does PM&C believe are necessary for the Australia Network to meet its obligations as a tool of soft diplomacy? Has PM&C advised DBCDE or DFAT of these requirements? Do these requirements differ from the obligations set out in the previous Australia Network contract? If so, please detail all differences.
2. Has the Government been approached by Sky seeking compensation as a result of the tender process not proceeding? Has compensation been offered? Which Department is responsible in terms of any compensation claims?
3. Did PM&C advise the Foreign Minister that the terms of the request for tender would be changed, that the tender process would not proceed or that the ABC would be awarded the Australia Network contract permanently before these details we published in the media? Did PM&C seek input from the Foreign Minister at any stage in regards to any of these decisions?

Answer:

1. These matters remain under consideration by the Government. PM&C is participating in discussions to settle advice to the Government on the long-term arrangements for the Australia Network service.
2. Questions on the Australia Network tender process should be directed to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as the department responsible for the tender process.
3. PM&C does not advise the Foreign Minister. Questions on the Australia Network tender process should be directed to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as the department responsible for the tender process.