

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Renewable Energy Target Review

Senator: Senator Scott Ludlam

Question reference number: 12

Type of Question: FPA, Monday 24 February 2014, page 86&87

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 April 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator LUDLAM: It is past that. This is the Federal Police. It is not coming completely from left field, Senator Boswell. Has that caused you to reconsider whether Mr Warburton is an appropriate person to conduct this review—or are you completely comfortable, now that you have discovered these matters as a result of seeing them on television?

Mr Archer: It is not really a matter of whether I am completely comfortable or not. But the government's intention is that the review proceed as announced.

Senator LUDLAM: That is fair enough. I guess that is more of a political question, isn't it, Senator Abetz?

Senator Abetz: I do not know the answer to the actual issue. But one can be the director of a company in circumstances where somebody else acts in an inappropriate manner of which you are not aware, and that malfeasance therefore should not be visited upon others who may have been completely and utterly unaware of it.

Senator LUDLAM: Senator Abetz, what did you ask the department to do, once these disclosures came to light, to assure yourself that that that was the case—if anything?

Senator Abetz: I will take that question on notice. It was not up to me to assure myself but—

.....

Senator LUDLAM: I accept your clarification, Senator Abetz. It was actually KPMG that was undertaking the inquiry into Mr Warburton. It was an earlier matter on allegations around Saddam Hussein and others. I will leave that there for the time being. Maybe, without editorialising, Senator Abetz, could you indicate what process the government—whoever was ultimately responsible—took to make yourselves completely comfortable that Mr Warburton is an appropriate person to lead this review once those allegations came to light? The officer here said it was not disclosed

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

during the selection process; you discovered it later in the media. So there must have been some follow-up, if not by Mr Archer then by somebody else.

Senator Abetz: I will take that on notice.

Answer:

The Government conducted standard due diligence processes prior to the appointment of Mr Warburton, including completing a declaration of private interests form. The allegations referred to by the Senator did not raise any issues not adequately addressed through the standard due diligence processes.