

**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:** Mr Alistair Furnival

**Senator:** Senator the Hon Penny Wong

**Question reference number:** 23

**Type of Question:** FPA, Monday 24 February 2014, page 103

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

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

Senator FAULKNER: It is now true also, isn't it, that you can acknowledge that the other note at the end of this statement of standards for ministerial staff says:

Any sanctions imposed under this Statement of Standards will be determined after consultation with the relevant Minister by the Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister, acting on advice from the Special Minister of State and the Government Staffing Committee.

Can you confirm that that is the process, and that that is in the code?

Senator Abetz: Yes.

Senator FAULKNER: Did that happen? In the case of—

Senator Abetz: I will have to take that on notice. I don't know whether that occurred or not.

Senator FAULKNER: It could not be possible that it did not happen, could it?

Senator Abetz: Anything is possible in this world.

Senator FAULKNER: Yes.

Senator Abetz: But staff report to the minister for whom they perform work. And that is ultimately what the Prime Minister has delegated, and that is not a surprising revelation.

Senator WONG: Given that—

Senator Abetz: In the event, as I understand it, Mr Furnival has resigned. One assumes that it therefore may not have taken place, but I will take that on notice.

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**Answer:**

Sanctions that may or may not be applied in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Ministerial Staff, both under this and the previous government, are considered private matters as they relate to individual staff members.