

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: Lobbyist Register - Mr Alistair Furnival

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 26

Type of Question: FPA, Monday 24 February 2014, p 109&110

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator WONG: When did you become aware that Mr Furnival was a co-owner of SIM?

Mr McMahon: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator WONG: What led to you contact them?

Mr McMahon: Media speculation.

Senator WONG: Was there any engagement with the Prime Minister's office?

Mr McMahon: No.

Senator WONG: Perhaps on notice you can provide us all of those details that you have just sketched. Also, I would like to know what action the secretary has taken to ensure the registration details, including ownership of Australian Public Affairs, have been accurately reported, as is required under the code.

Mr McMahon: Yes.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) noted press reports that Mr Furnival had an association with Strategic Issues Management Pty Ltd (SIM). At that time, SIM was not listed as an owner of Australian Public Affairs Limited Partnership (APA).

On 19 February 2014, PM&C sought confirmation from APA of its ownership details. APA advised that it was a 'partnership' registered in New South Wales, the partners being:

- Australian Public Affairs Pty Ltd;
- Centre for Litigation Communications Pty Ltd, and
- Strategic Issues Management Pty Ltd.

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Following discussion between PM&C and APA clarifying who or what constitutes an owner for the purposes of clause 5.1(a)(i) of the Lobbying Code of Conduct, on 21 February 2014, PM&C requested that APA update the Register of Lobbyists to list the above three partners as APA's owners. On 24 February 2014, APA made these changes.

As a separate matter, on 12 February 2014, APA requested that its client list be amended on the Register to reflect active or recently active relationships in accordance with the Code.

On 13 February 2014, noting clause 3.1 (b) of the Lobbying Code of Conduct, which requires lobbyists to list any clients who have engaged them in the previous three months, PM&C sought confirmation that the relevant clients had not engaged APA in that period. APA confirmed that it had not represented Mondelez Australia, the Australian Beverages Council or Proctor and Gamble Australia in the last three months. PM&C then removed those three businesses from APA's list of clients on the same day as they no longer fell within the definition of clients under the Code.