

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: Prime Minister's accommodation

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 80

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

What is the status of the lease on temporary accommodation for the Prime Minister taken out by the Department at a cost of \$156,428?

If the lease has been varied or terminated, please provide details.

What is the total cost of this arrangement to date?

With reference to the answer to question on notice 150 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates round:

(a) Why did the Department need legal advice on the publication of this contract?

(b) Is \$110 per night the total cost associated with the Prime Minister's current accommodation?

Answer:

The lease was terminated on 18 November 2013. This lease was signed on 28 August 2013 prior to the election of the Hon Tony Abbott MP as Prime Minister. As Leader of the Opposition, Mr Abbott was not asked for his views on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) entering into the lease. After the election, the Prime Minister made it clear he did not support the lease of the property. He made alternative arrangements to stay at the Australian Federal Police (AFP) College when in Canberra, at a cost of \$110 per night. The total cost of the lease arrangement was \$104,107.13, comprising \$39,107.13 in rental payments and a commercial settlement of \$65,000 for termination of the lease.

In relation to the response to PM150 from the November 2103 Supplementary Budget Senate Estimates hearings:

(a) PM&C seeks legal advice as and when it deems necessary.

(b) Additional costs for the Prime Minister's accommodation at the AFP College paid by PM&C include a pro-rata amount when he is in residence for a Foxtel

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