

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES (ADDITIONAL HEARINGS) 2013-2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program:

Outcome 1. Fair and accountable administrative action by Australian Government agencies by investigating complaints, reviewing administrative action and inspecting statutory compliance by law enforcement agencies.

Topic: Ministerial Leave

Senator: Senator Ludwig

Question reference number: 201

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Was the minister on leave at any point during the Christmas break (between the last sitting of parliament in 2013 and the first sitting in 2014)? If so:

- (1) Please table a schedule of the ministers leave. Please include:
 - a. The dates the minister was on leave.
 - b. The dates the minister was out of the country (if applicable).

- (2) Who was acting in the minister's place?
 - a. What date was it decided to have this person act in the minister's place?
 - b. What was the process for selecting this person?
 - c. Who was involved in making this decision?

- (3) Were there any matters with which the department needed to make contact with the minister during this time? If so:
 - a. Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred
 - b. Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc between the minister and the department during this time.
 - c. Were there any times that the department was aware that it would be unable to communicate with the minister?
 - d. Were there any times that the department tried to contact the minister but were unable?

- (4) Were there any matters with which the department needed to make contact with the acting minister during this time? If so:
- a. Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred
 - b. Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc between the acting minister and the department during this time.
 - c. Were there any times that the department was aware that it would be unable to communicate with the acting minister?
 - d. Were there any times that the department tried to contact the acting minister but were unable?
 - e. but were unable?
- (5) Did the department contact the Minister or acting minister during this time? If so:
- a. Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred
 - b. Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc. between the minister and or acting minister and the department during this time.

Answer:

- (1) The Special Minister of State will answer on behalf of all Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio agencies.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Not applicable.