

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Department of Finance and Administration**

Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2006

**Question: F30**

**Outcome 3, Output 3.1**

**Topic: MOP(S) Salaries**

**Hansard Page: F&PA24**

**Senator Ray asked:**

I think it was about that time that I found or had confirmed that Mr Georgiou and Senator Harradine had been granted some exception. I was only asking because I was knocked back. I was trying to find out what the consistent criteria would be in these cases; I never have. Perhaps you can take that part of the question on notice.

**Answer:**

The previous Certified Agreement, the *Members of Parliament Staff (Commonwealth) Certified Agreement 2001-2002*, allowed the Special Minister of State to exercise discretion under clause 28.3(b) of that Agreement to approve the appointment of electorate employees to a point above the minimum of the respective salary band if the Minister was satisfied that the appointee had the competencies appropriate to the band and had particular experience and skills.

The previous Special Minister of State exercised that discretion on two (2) occasions. The first time was in relation to an electorate employee of Mr Petro Georgiou MP, Member for Kooyong, and the second was in relation to an electorate employee of the former Senator for Tasmania, Mr Brian Harradine.

Clause 28.3(b) was not included in the current *Members of Parliament Staff (Commonwealth) Certified Agreement 2003-2006* (Certified Agreement). However, the discretion to appoint electorate employees to a point above the minimum of the relevant salary band can be exercised under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*.

As per my answer to F29, since the current Certified Agreement was certified, neither the Special Minister of State, nor his predecessor, exercised this discretion.