

**Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Budget Estimates Hearing 26 May - 27 May 2008**



**Question: PM115a**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Resources available to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy  
branch of PM&C**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: What resources are available to the Freedom of  
Information and Privacy Policy branch of the Department?**

**Answer:**

Please see answers to PM115b and PM115c.

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**Question: PM115b**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy Branch Budget**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: What is the total budget for this branch?**

**Answer:** The Department is in the process of developing its business plan and budget allocations for 2008-09.

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**Question: PM115c**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Staff allocated to Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy branch**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: How many staff are allocated to this branch?**

**Answer:**

As at 13 June 2008, the Branch is headed by an Assistant Secretary. As well as the Assistant Secretary, there are seven full-time and two part-time legal staff in the branch. These staff are supported by one full-time executive assistant.

There is also a graduate assigned to the branch on a three month placement, as part of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's 2008 Graduate Program.

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**Question: PM115d**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Staff allocated to the APEC data privacy subgroup within the Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy branch**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: How many of these staff are allocated to the APEC data privacy subgroup?**

**Answer:** As Australia currently chairs the Data Privacy Sub-Group, the responsibilities of one Executive Level 2 staff member includes Sub-Group matters, supported by one Executive Level 1 staff member and one graduate level staff member as necessary.

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**Question: PM115e**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy branch - responsibility for coordinating response to ALRC Privacy Act review**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: Will this branch be responsible for coordinating a whole of Government response the forthcoming review of the Privacy Act by the Australian law reform Commission?**

**Answer: Yes.**

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**Question: PM115f**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Is the Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy branch adequately resourced to coordinate a whole of government response to ALRC Privacy Act review**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: Is the branch adequately resourced to provide such a response?**

**Answer:**

The department's current view is that the branch is sufficiently resourced to coordinate the response to the ALRC Privacy Act review.



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**Question: PM115g**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Action taken by PM&C in relation to proposed review of Freedom of Information laws**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: What action has the Department taken in relation to the Government's proposed review of Freedom of Information laws?**

**Answer:**

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has undertaken work towards progressing the Government's election commitments to review the Freedom of Information Act. This has included giving advice to the Government and undertaking consultations with government agencies.

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**Question: PM115h**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6 – Freedom of Information and Privacy Policy.**

**Topic: Details of meetings relating to proposed review of Freedom of Information laws**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: Provide details of the nature, content, time, attendees and outcome of any meetings that have occurred in relation to proposed review of Freedom of Information laws.**

**Answer:** To date, meetings about the review of freedom of information legislation have been within government, involving ministers and a number of departments and agencies. Wider consultation will occur as policy development proceeds.



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**Question: PM115i**

**Outcome 1, Output 5.6**

**Topic: Budgetary provisions relating to proposed review of Freedom of Information laws**

**Hansard Page: Written Question**

**Senator Stott Despoja asked: Provide details of any budgetary provisions that have been made in relation to proposed review of Freedom of Information laws.**

**Answer:** It is currently intended that the review of freedom of information legislation be undertaken within existing resources.