

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Estimates Hearing 25-29 May 2009

Question: PM65

Outcome 1, Output 3

Topic: Did the Director-General of ONA write to the Prime Minister about the China debate

Type of Question: Hansard, F&PA 26 May p58

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 July 2009

Number of pages: 1

Senator TROOD-...Did the Director-General of the Office of National Assessments, Mr Varghese, write to the Prime Minister about the China debate and express alarm or concern that the nature of this debate within government could distort Australia's national security priorities?

Answer:

Mr Varghese directly answered this question on Tuesday, 26 May 2009 (F&PA p116 Ref No.12036 refers). His response is set out below:

“I am not going to go into the details of any correspondence I have with the Prime Minister, but what is very relevant to your question is that the issue I may have raised in a letter to the Prime Minister went to the methodology of the white paper and not to the issue to which you refer. And I should add that the methodology issue that I raised was very satisfactorily resolved.”