

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing 27 May-6 June 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Dunalley community hall, Tasmania

Senator: Senator the Hon Abetz

Question reference number: 3

Type of Question: FPA, Monday 27 May 2013 Page 48

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 July 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator ABETZ: The Prime Minister has previously said that we need a tough cop on the beat, that lawlessness has to be condemned wherever it appears et cetera, yet on this occasion, with 30 contempt charges and links to a notorious bikie gang, we have the Prime Minister willing to be associated with an organisation that has such a person in its vice-presidency. I assume also that the Prime Minister approved of the \$21 million haircut given to the building and construction inspectorate in the last budget, which all seems to suggest that a tough cop on the beat is no longer going to be there. But, Minister, if you could take all that on notice, given that we will not be getting an answer today, that would be very helpful. Perhaps I could now turn to the announcement of a grant to help rebuild the Dunalley community hall in Tasmania. Is anybody acquainted with that announcement? It was made by the Prime Minister.

Dr de Brouwer: We will find out.

Ms Leon: Senator, are you able to give me an indication of when that was?

Senator ABETZ: It was Friday 1 March 2013.

Ms Leon: And was it referenced to any particular program?

Senator ABETZ: I think it was in relation to regional development, in relation to the bushfires that we suffered in Tasmania, and her agreement to provide \$250,000 for the rebuilding of the Dunalley community hall.

Ms Taylor: I am aware of the grants in general that were announced in Tasmania. I believe that was a grant that was provided from the regional department.

Senator ABETZ: I think so, yes.

Ms Taylor: Other than that I do not have any further details with me, but I am happy to take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ: Okay. Could you please provide a detailed—and I stress "detailed"—answer on notice in relation to the due diligence undertaken, whether the

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing 27 May-6 June 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Prime Minister was actually advised in relation to this particular project, and on what basis the announcement was made and in consultation with whom? I ask because—and I cannot put it any stronger than this—I have been advised that the hall was fully insured and in those circumstances could be rebuilt with insurance moneys. So I am just wondering what due diligence occurred and led to the Prime Minister making this spur-of-the-moment announcement while she was in Tasmania that she was going to be providing this \$250,000.

Answer:

Former Prime Minister Gillard was advised that funding for this project could be provided under the Community Infrastructure Grants program. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet consulted the Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, the Arts and Sport before the announcement was made.