

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

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Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Cybersecurity encryptions

Senator: Senator the Hon Abetz

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Question:

CHAIR: Senator Abetz.

Senator ABETZ: Thank you, Chair. I want to talk about some areas in relation to our cybersecurity. Are there any existing government networks being hardened by excluding components from particular suppliers or countries?

Dr McCarthy: The security of individual agency networks is a matter for the individual agencies. I can take your question on notice.

Senator ABETZ: That is what concerns me a bit, because, as I understand it, our departments do not have universal encryption. Is that correct?

Dr McCarthy: I will take your question on notice.

Answer:

Huawei was excluded from supplying components for the National Broadband Network. We are not aware of any other existing Australian government networks being hardened by exclusion of components supplied by particular countries or suppliers.

Government departments do not have a universal encryption method. However, to maintain the integrity of classified and sensitive information, agencies must use a Australian Signals Directorate-approved encryption method. The Australian Government Information Security Manual (ISM), produced by ASD, lists these methods.