

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

Supplementary Budget Estimates 20 - 23 Oct 2008



Question: PM9

Outcome 1, Output 5

Topic: Coordination Comments

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Senator Fifield asked: Senator Faulkner, is it possible to take on notice whether that was the advice from Mr Moran to the department, to 'watch your language'? If that is true, it could be taken that that was encouraging staff to provide other than the full and frank advice which we know this government seeks.

Senator Faulkner-I will in this circumstance take it on notice. Neither I nor officials, in this case, Mr Mrdak, are aware of the comments. In that circumstance I do not think we have any alternative but to take it on notice.

Answer: Following the FuelWatch unauthorised release of Cabinet documents, the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet discussed security arrangements for Cabinet documents with portfolio secretaries and emphasised the need for appropriate practices to ensure the secure handling of all Cabinet documents, including coordination comments. The content of coordination comments remains a matter for individual departments.