

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 19 October 2009

Question: PM55a

Topic: Have any staff been employed in a media and/or corporate communications role within the department

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Senator RYAN-Have any of the additional staff been employed in a media and/or a corporate communications role within the department?

Ms Beauchamp-No, not that I am aware of.

Senator RYAN-If you could confirm that, it would be appreciated-whether it be corporate communications in the widest definition of the term, external communications or media relations.

Ms Beauchamp-Could you be more explicit around what you mean by media relations?

Senator RYAN-Departments have media officers-people who assist ministers' officers in drafting up press releases. They have staff preparing newsletters that may be sent out as a departmental newsletter. They prepare material that may not be of a political nature but may be of a government announcement nature. There are people answering queries from media about technical aspects of programs. So whether it is media relations or communications generally, they are usually located, I understand, in a corporate services or governance part of a department. I would be interested in whether there had been any increase in the last 12 months in those areas and what the increase was compared to where it was 12 months ago.

Dr Grimes-We can have a look at that for you.

Senator RYAN-Thank you...

Answer: In the past 12 months four staff have been employed in media or communications roles. Two of these staff were previously reported in Budget Estimates Question PM110a-b, in response to a question by Senator Ronaldson in July 2009. Since that last response two staff have been employed in media or communications roles, primarily to work in the Office of the Co-ordinator General.