



Additional Comments by Coalition Members

1. Coalition members endorse the Statement of Principles outlined in the *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report March 2000* with the fundamental aim to develop the Parliamentary Zone as “The place of the people, accessible to all Australians so that they can more fully understand and appreciate the collective experience and rich diversity of this country.”¹
2. Coalition members assert the government’s rationale to introduce pay parking in the Parliamentary Triangle, as shown in the [‘Budget Measures 2013-14 - Budget Paper No. 2 - Part 1: Revenue Measures - Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport’](#) section of the 2013-2014 Australian budget, to be a as a mechanism solely to generate revenue.
3. This inquiry was somewhat inappropriately styled an ‘Inquiry into provision of amenity within the Parliamentary Triangle’. In fact, the inquiry terms, set by the Minister, failed to address the ‘elephant in the room’ – the introduction of pay parking.
4. The committee heard from a number of witnesses and received over a dozen submissions in the inquiry – the 3rd inquiry of this nature in recent times.
5. In 2003 the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories rejected the currently proposed model of paid parking in the Parliamentary Triangle arguing that:

The Committee is not prepared to support the proposal without assurances that:

- Pay parking will not apply to visitors, volunteers and people with disabilities;

1 Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report March 2000 Prologue IV.

- pay parking will create a significant reduction in the number of vehicles entering the Zone over time;
 - pay parking will in no way impede or discourage visitors, volunteers, researchers and students to the national institutions in the Zone; and
 - the prospect of having two different jurisdictions, side by side, implementing two different systems of pay parking, and being driven by different motivations, will not create a predicament more disconcerting than the current situation.²
6. Coalition members believe that these assurances have not been met, yet in the most recent inquiry, forced by a budgetary imperative facilitated by Labor's economic mismanagement, government members have chosen to overlook them.
7. A serious concern raised with regards to introducing paid parking was the financial impact on the thousands of Commonwealth public servants working within the Parliamentary Triangle. In their submission to the inquiry, the Department of Defence note:

Most particularly – in terms of understanding the impact of paid parking on our staff – an APS 6 employee in Defence earns around \$2200 per fortnight after tax. Consequently, if paid parking was to be introduced at a rate of \$11 per day – or \$110 per fortnight – this would represent an effective salary decrease for these employees of 5% of take-home pay.³

8. The vibrancy of, and enthusiasm for, Canberra's cultural institutions is enhanced by many who, with the introduction of paid parking, may find themselves unable to enjoy our national institutes. In 2003 the committee conducting the inquiry into Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone noted:

The National Library has indicated that half of its readers are either researchers, senior citizens or the unemployed. Many of the volunteers are on low incomes and parking charges could have a considerable impact on whether they continue to offer their services. Similarly, the introduction of pay parking is likely to discourage students using the national institutions.⁴

2 p. 44. Not A Town Centre, The Proposal for Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone, 2003.

3 p. 2 Submission1.

4 p. 27. Not A Town Centre, The Proposal for Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone, 2003.

9. The position taken by several submitters and witness who support the introduction of paid parking in the parliamentary triangle presupposes that paid parking will result in the provision of amenities.
10. Coalition members are not convinced that the introduction of pay parking will necessarily lead to this outcome.
11. The investment into amenities and capital infrastructure development should be driven by the market, and not forced by government as is detailed in recommendation 1 of the committee report which states “The Committee recommends that the Australian Government direct the National Capital Authority to develop a strategy for the provision of amenity within the Central National Area, including the Parliamentary Zone, and provide funds for the development of the strategy in the 2014–15 budget...”⁵
12. Coalition members reaffirm the recommendation made in the 2003 inquiry into paid parking that stated certain conditions should be met before pay parking is introduced.
13. Coalition members cannot support the three recommendations made by the committee majority. The recommendations rest on the assumption that the provision of certain amenities is the responsibility of government, whereas this has not been a government role for at least half a century in the case of the national capital.
14. However, we note that the government has earmarked a significant amount of revenue from this measure. At the present time, with the commonwealth’s budget under substantial pressure, it is not responsible to oppose budget measures of this size. Nonetheless Coalition members do not believe that the introduction of pay parking satisfactorily addresses the deficiency of amenities in the Parliamentary Triangle.

5 p. 27. Provision of Amenity in the Parliamentary Triangle.

Senator Gary Humphries

The Hon Bruce Scott MP

Mr Luke Simpkins MP

Ms Natasha Griggs MP

Senator Stephen Parry

