

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Additional Estimates Hearing—February 2017

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Dips in power supply**

Question: **76**

Written **Senator Wong**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 13 April 2017

With reference to the Department of Parliamentary Services Information Circular “Possible dips in power supply to APH for the remainder of today” of 13 February 2017:

1. What was the cause of the power dips?
2. What areas of the building were affected?
3. Did the areas affected include the chambers?
4. To what extent was backup power generation required?
5. Did this kick in immediately?
6. If not, why not?
7. Does the Department of Parliamentary Services have the ability to control which areas of the building are prioritised for power in events such as this?

Answer

1. The local supply authority (ACTEW) indicated that the dips encountered were the result of High Voltage feeder faults on cables from Telopea Park Bulk Supply Substation.
2. The feeder voltage dip impacted on approximately 50% of general light and power in building, including the Senate, House of Representatives areas and Ministerial areas.
3. The Senate Chamber was impacted due to being on the feeder that suffered the significant voltage drop, however the House of Representatives Chamber was not impacted.
4. Backup power generation was not required as the backup generator only operates in total power failure situations or under test conditions. Critical equipment and life support functions including fire monitoring & detection, Early Warning Intercom System (EWIS) and emergency lights were maintained by Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS) during the dip.
5. As per the response to question 4, the backup generator only operates in total power failure situations or under test conditions.
6. As per the response to question 4, backup power generation was not required as the backup generator only operates in total power failure situations or under test conditions. Critical equipment and life support functions were maintained by Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS) during the dip.
7. DPS has some switching availability within the building; however this is limited by available supplies and criticality of loads. Automated switching is based on life support, critical building loads and type of supply availability. Switching for events such as power dips is not available for general light and power.