

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2015

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Political functions**

Question: **40**

Hansard Reference **p 83; 25 May 2015**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 July 2015

Senator WONG: Is there any guidance that DPS has about the use of Parliament House for fundraising or political purposes?

Ms Croke: I can answer that by saying that areas like the Great Hall and areas where bookings can be made through IHG can be booked for a whole range of functions that are not subject to anyone checking what the purpose of that is.

Senator WONG: Are they at commercial rates? There is a difference between a community event and a fundraiser.

Ms Croke: That is right. I would have to check that, but I think they are commercial rates.

Answer

Operating Policies and Procedures No 24 – Use of the Parliament House facilities for functions and events (OPP 24) provides procedures and guidance to all who manage and wish to book events and functions using Parliament House venues.

The criteria for approving any proposed function request in Parliament House are:

- a) that the function/event would be considered to be acceptable to the majority of Senators and Members;
- b) that the function/event is consistent with the dignity of the Parliament;
- c) that the function/event is not likely to cause offence to any significant part of the Australia community;
- d) that the function/event will not adversely impact on any other activities in parliament House, particularly the operations of parliamentary business, the Chambers or Committees/Hearings, also providing clear thoroughfare for Senators and Members; and
- e) That the function/event does not disproportionately affect public access to areas that are usually open to the public.

Non-funded functions are defined as a function that does not fall within any of the categories of funded functions. These non-funded functions include those sponsored or booked by Senators and Members. This also applies to Ministers and senior members of Executive Government. This includes the following:

- a) any function organised by a political party, regardless of whether that party is in Government or whether the function involves parliamentarians;
- b) functions that are organised or booked by government agencies or departments, even where it involves a Minister or other parliamentarians
- c) functions that are booked by a parliamentarian on behalf of an organisation external to the Parliament, even if the Senator or Member who makes the booking will be in attendance. This includes:

- i. a Press Club address, media launch or any conference at which the parliamentarian speaks;
- ii. a function for an industry, community or business group booked or supported by the local member or another parliamentarian; and
- iii. a function aimed at showcasing an activity, product or industry to parliamentarians.

Arrangements for non-funded functions are managed by the APH catering contractor, IHG, and are charged at full commercial rates.

A copy of OPP 24 is attached to Question on Notice No. 38.