

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—October 2014

## Answers to Questions on Notice

### Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Prime Minister's Office renovations – curtains

Question: 192

Hansard Reference p 98 & 99, 20 October 2014

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 31 December 2014**

**Senator FAULKNER:** Also, my question 312 details that the value of the purchase of curtains and cushions in the Prime Minister's office is \$20,684.54. I think you can confirm that that is right.

**Mr Skill:** That is the information I have before me, yes.

...

**Senator FAULKNER:** That is fair enough, but these curtains are in what I suppose are status A suites. They are internal design elements. There are rules about the furnishings for these areas, aren't there?

**Mr Skill:** There are design principles.

**Senator FAULKNER:** Do these particular new curtains conform with those design principles?

**Ms Mills:** They are consistent in terms of the design and style of fabric, and they are as close to the original colours as we were able to get at the time. But is if there is any variance, I can certainly report that on notice.

**Senator FAULKNER:** So the only real variance is colour, is it?

**Ms Mills:** Again, I would have to go back. I am not a fabric expert, but I certainly know that—

**Senator FAULKNER:** Nor am I, but I think we all understand, to a certain extent, the design and heritage principles that are applicable. This is why I am asking these questions, as I have over what appears to be decades now.

**Ms Mills:** Certainly, we were cognisant of all of that in finding appropriate fabric samples for the colour, the type of fabric, the ability for the fabric to fall and have the look of the room. All of that was taken into account.

**Senator FAULKNER:** So they are a similar colour but not identical to what used to be there.

**Ms Mills:** That is my recollection, yes.

**Senator FAULKNER:** You got as close to it as you could, effectively.

**Ms Mills:** Again, I am sorry, I can certainly get the fabric person to tell you exactly. But from my looking at the room as an individual, they certainly reflect the style that was originally there.

**Senator FAULKNER:** So you will take on notice how close the colour is to the actual design principles and heritage values, and what the curtains are made of. I had a look but could not find the details of any contract in relation to curtains. It may or may not be there; I do not know. Can you point me in the right direction as to where they were procured from?

**Ms Mills:** I believe they were procured from a Canberra based company. Because it was under \$30,000 we probably received quotations rather than having to go out to open tender. But, again, we can certainly provide that to you.

**Senator FAULKNER:** If you can do that I would appreciate it, and you might break down the costs between the curtains and the cushions and I will have a look at that.

## Answer

The original curtains that were installed in 1988 were significantly worn, faded and misshapen and the original fabric was no longer available. Given the urgency to deal with these issues over the summer recess, fabrics were chosen that were similar but not identical to that of the original curtains, and the colour was within the same broad colour spectrum.

The curtains, cushions and curtain tracks were purchased against two purchase orders:

- a) Cushions, curtains (sheers and drapes) – PO 450 29170 - \$20,325.45 (\$22,358 including GST)

b) Curtain track – PO 450 29171 - \$359.09 (\$395 including GST)

The total cost for the curtains (excluding curtain track) was \$21,506 (including GST) and the total cost for the cushions was \$852 (including GST).