

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—October 2015

## Answers to Questions on Notice

### Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Functions in Parliament House**

Question: **56**

Written **Senator Wong**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 December 2015**

Answer to BE QoN 39 notes that 17 requests occurred to provide equipment for functions held in the Speaker's Suite and courtyard, and that these requests came through the International Parliamentary Relations Office.

1. What does the Department do to satisfy itself that these functions are “funded” or “non-funded” events within the meaning of those terms contained in the *Operating Policies and Procedures – Use of Parliament House facilities for functions and events* [OPP 24] document (see also these definitions in the answer to BE QoN 40)?
2. Can a list of all functions booked by the International Parliamentary Relations Office for the presiding officers be provided, including details of the international delegation?
3. At what stage is the revised and updated policy on functions in Parliament House, noting that in the *Response of the President to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Department of Parliamentary Services* he stated the presiding officers were expecting to receive it in late October 2015?
4. Will this deadline be met?

### Answer

1. All requests from the International and Parliamentary Relations Office (IPRO) are processed and recorded by the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) as funded events. DPS refers to the following category of the current *Operating Policies and Procedures – Use of Parliament House facilities for functions and events* (OPP24) when supporting function requests from IPRO:

#### *Funded events*

Funded functions are defined as a function that is approved and supported by the Parliament as a whole. In this respect, a whole-of-Parliament perspective is taken rather than an Executive Government perspective.

The categories of funded functions include:

- a. A function for any parliamentary purpose, including the Parliament's education and public relations activities under the auspices of the International Community Relations Office (ICRO) and the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) – this category also included special ceremony events, such as the Opening of Parliament.

The ICRO is now the IPRO.

2. The IPRO is part of the Department of the House of Representatives and questions relating to functions booked by the IPRO should be directed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
3. The draft revised and updated policy on functions in Parliament House is in preparation. Due to the complexity of the issues and the need to ensure the policy is comprehensive, it is now expected that the new policy will be submitted to the Presiding Officers for their consideration in November 2015.

4. The expected time line for submission to the Presiding Officers in late October 2015 was not met.