

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: **Staff Changes**

Question: **61**

Written **Senator Wong**

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

Noting on page 125 of the Annual Report that there has been an increase in staff, but at the same time a separation rate of nearly a quarter of the workforce.

1. How does this rate, and the 11 per cent rate for ongoing staff, compare with other parliamentary departments and the public sector average?

Answer

There were 33 cessations in the Library in 2014-15, giving a separation rate of 24 per cent. Of these 20 were non-ongoing employees engaged to replace staff on long term leave, to fill other short term vacancies or to cover peak periods of client demand.

The separation rate of 11% of ongoing employees amounts to 13 employees from a total of 119 Library staff.

Notably, of the 13 employees, six left for reasons associated with retirement (including those associated with financial incentives for members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme to resign just before their 55th birthday—the '54/11 effect'), one retired on grounds of invalidity, one accepted a contract overseas, and one relocated interstate for family reasons.

This figure reflects the age profile of the Library's staff. As noted in the Parliamentary Library's Annual Report 2014-15, as 'at 30 June, 30 per cent of the Library's ongoing staff were eligible to retire (that is, aged 55 years and over)' (p.126).

This figure is broadly comparable to DPS and the Parliament more broadly:

- The separation rate of the Australian Parliamentary Service (ongoing staff) is 10.9% (Parliamentary Service Commissioner, *Annual Report 2014-15*, Staffing summary)
- Department of Parliamentary Service' separation rate (ongoing staff) was 12.8% (Department of Parliamentary Services, *Annual Report 2014-15*, p.156)
- The Australian Public Service separation rate was approximately 7.7% (APS Commission, Statistical Bulletin 2014-15—based on 10,612 separations from 136,498 ongoing staff)