# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee—Additional Budget Estimates February 2007

## Answers to Questions on Notice

## Parliamentary Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary Services

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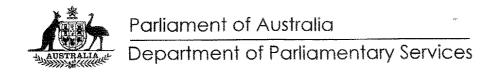
**Topic: Hansard CIR recommendations**

**Question P14 F&PA47**

**Senator FAULKNER**—Can you provide the committee with a copy of those 44 recommendations?

**Mr Kenny**—Certainly.

**Answer**

The following document detailing the 44 recommendations of the CIR (Hansard) Review Group was tabled before the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee on 12 February 2007.

## List of recommendations

The Review Group recommends the following:

| Recommendation | Reference |
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| That Hansard adopt a staged approach to the implementation of accepted recommendations to ensure that identified issues are adequately addressed. | Chapter 3—paragraph 30—page 31 |
| That the length of chamber and committee turns on fixed rosters should remain at 7½ and 5 minutes respectively at this time. | Chapter 3—paragraph 30—page 32 |
| That the staffing plan principles should be reviewed, noting that one is no longer relevant (eg "a balancing of staff numbers within editor classification levels to more closely reflect the workload ratio between committees and chambers") and that there should be a stronger focus on providing a safe working environment rather than zero tolerance of OOS and the provision of a normal working day. | Chapter 3—paragraph 30—page 32 |
| That Hansard develops an internal reporting framework, which provides information that can be used for decision-making purposes. | Chapter 3—paragraph 30—page 32 |
| That staff concerns identified in this report be examined and issues be cultural and communication issues be addressed. | Chapter 4—paragraph 22—page 36 |
| That the *Hansard* transcript should be subjected to a subediting stage before the production of the proof copy. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 51 |
| That the ideal editing process involving subediting occurring before the transcript is sent to pinks and greens is implemented in due course, with an interim arrangement involving subediting and a second pair of eyes is implemented initially. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 51 |
| That "quality assurance" is a misnomer and should be renamed "subediting". | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 51 |
| The devolution of the subediting task to competent PSL6 level staff who provide a second pair of eyes—but not ears, unless that portion of the transcript has been flagged as requiring the sound to be listened to or the transcript in its original form contained clear problems of sense. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 51 |
| That the current inconsistency in editing standards and subjective application of guidelines should be addressed. | Chapter 5—paragraph |

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| That clear subediting guidelines and a subediting audit regime should be established. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 51 |
| That the stint stage should be subsumed into the flat stage, and that further options for the distribution of flats should be explored. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That a process that speeds up the production of the Official Hansards should be explored as part of future continuous improvement processes. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That having smaller groups of staff allocated across several committees would be a more productive application of staff resources and improve timeliness of committee work. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That duties of logger allocation should rest at PEL1 level. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That options are explored to more effectively allocate resources to the production of the Main Committee, noting the module system is one option. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That options should be developed and arrangements formalised that enable editors with CAT skills to transcribe in times of high work demand in order to assist with the meeting of deadlines. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That contingency plans for extended hours of sittings should be drawn up in advance and from the broad pool of editors rather than from those allocated to a particular chamber. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That Hansard could explore the use of resources beyond the managerial cohort for drawing up rosters, in whatever roster system is eventually implemented. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That the use of external providers for interstate committees needs to continue to form part of the Hansard work allocation arrangements in given circumstances, and external providers should be held to agreed service standards. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That the performance management process of external providers should be reviewed and an overall contract manager considered, with a view to establishing a system that ensures that editors' feedback is documented and managed, that expectations of style and final product are clarified, and that performance issues are actively managed. | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 52 |
| That logging should remain an editor task, and monitors continue to be drawn from a wider pool (particularly during periods of peak demand). | Chapter 5—paragraph 95—page 53 |

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| That a method of delivering whole speeches to clients be explored and implemented, rather than the current process of sending in turns. | Chapter 5— paragraph 95—page 53 |
| That Hansard adopt a module system that divides staff into smaller groupings to produce transcripts for the House of Representatives, the Senate and parliamentary committees. | Chapter 6— paragraph 29—page 59 |
| That Hansard adopt a version of a module system that incorporates a subediting regime that allows qualified staff at the PSL6 level to take on responsibility for reading over the transcript, on a rotational basis throughout the sitting day. | Chapter 6— paragraph 29—page 59 |
| That a three-level structure below PEL2 level be implemented within Hansard, premised on formal movement from the PSL5 to PSL6 level through a broadband arrangement as allowed for under clause 189 of the DPS CA. | Chapter 7— paragraph 60—page 69 |
| The implementation of a structure that has Hansard managed by one PEL2 position, which has oversight of managerial PEL1 positions responsible for Hansard's operational and support functions (including the HSU). (This option should be implemented concurrently with the development of clear responsibilities for the PEL1 positions, who would support and report to the PEL2 position.) | Chapter 7— paragraph 60—page 69 |
| That DPS's nomenclature is applied within Hansard, meaning that senior editors are called "Assistant Directors" to reflect their managerial responsibilities. | Chapter 7— paragraph 60—page 69 |
| That an audit is undertaken of how effectively the current performance management arrangements have been introduced in Hansard, and remedial action is taken where deficiencies are identified. | Chapter 8— chapter 24—page 74 |
| That a position at the PEL1 level is established with a responsibility for the management of learning and development in Hansard. The position may also encompass other roles in relation to people and business support for the section. | Chapter 8— chapter 24—page 74 |
| That priority be given to the development and implementation of a structured learning and development program for Hansard—one which is based on Hansard's objectives and industry competencies. | Chapter 8— chapter 24—page 74 |
| That a workplace assessment be undertaken to review Hansard's total working environment, including overall workloads and work areas, to inform management on existing and emerging OH&S issues. | Chapter 8— chapter 24—page 74 |
| That in conjunction with the development of performance standards and a learning and development program, a capability | Chapter 8— chapter |

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| profile is developed for editor roles to outline the sort of person best suited to the editing task. This profile will assist in: <br><br>     determining where to target advertising of vacancies to get the best field possible; <br><br>     potential candidates making a self-assessment as to whether editing is the best job for them; <br><br>     defining the best methods of assessment of candidates eg the use of psychological testing, assessment centres etc; and <br><br>     development of learning and development programs for new and existing staff. | 24—page 74 |
| That the purpose of the HSU should be refined, and clarity around HSU staff's roles and responsibilities developed. (This may be an evolving process as the Hansard (editing) section refines its work practices and editing processes.) | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 80 |
| That the HSU has a PSL6 manager (and that the Hansard director/s would facilitate any higher level dealings as required). | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 80 |
| That the HSU should comprise two integrated subsections: <br><br>     administration: front desk/committee support; and <br><br>     editorial support: include systems administration. | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 80 |
| A shift in the way the committee support/front desk is staffed, so that the roles are interchangeable (two PSL4 positions would seem appropriate—this change would impact on current staffing arrangements). | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 80 |
| That the HSU should no longer be responsible for the publishing or distribution of *Hansard* transcripts, which would move with the Hansard publishing unit to the Information Access Branch—but that this transfer should only occur when HPS/ParlInfo issues are addressed and when there is a clear point in the publishing life cycle at which editing is fully and irrevocably complete. | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 81 |
| That the Deputy Secretary accelerates the ParlInfo redevelopment project. | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 81 |
| That a work group should be established to consider and provide advice on: <br><br>     how the HSU can better fit in with DPS's generalist support model, noting that a priority will be for the HPS to be properly supported as a critical system that is robust and sustainable; | Chapter 9— paragraph 36—page 81 |

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| how Hansard can "step HPS back from ParlInfo"; and<br><br>how Hansard editing processes can have a clear point at which editing is fully and irrevocably complete. | |
| That the systems administration function focuses on systems administration only (eg maintaining users, security, maintenance and archiving), and non-systems administration functions should migrate to other areas within the HSU/DPS. | Chapter 9—paragraph 36—page 81 |
| That the current system administrator positions remain while system issues are addressed. | Chapter 9—paragraph 36—page 81 |
| That advice be sought (from acting Director HSU and Director Publishing) regarding any service gaps between what the EMMU and MTS provides, and how these gaps might be addressed. | Chapter 9—paragraph 36—page 81 |
| That the determination of editor staffing numbers be postponed until such time that advice on skill levels and competencies in any proposed new model is finalised. | Chapter 11—paragraph 4—page 92 |
| That the Steering Committee selects an implementation officer/s to develop an implementation strategy and timetable, and help Hansard to successfully implement the changes. | Chapter 11—paragraph 4—page 92 |