

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Additional Estimates Hearing—February 2010

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Web filter

Question: P 21

Hansard reference: F&PA page 33, 8 February 2010

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010

Senator RYAN—...I have had new sites blocked; I am now compiling a folder of these particular printouts when sites get blocked...But can you have a look at this as soon as you can?

Mr Kenny—Yes, we will absolutely have a look and—

Senator RYAN—And particularly at those two examples: in January, Metro Trains—or Metlink, apparently is what the website was—and, on this occasion, the Punch in February.

Answer

1 The Parliamentary Computing Network (**PCN**) web-filtering vendor maintains a database of websites that are blocked for various reasons.

2 From time to time, the vendor updates its database, which may result in previously unblocked sites becoming blocked.

3 DPS can explicitly override a blocked site on request.

4 A request to unblock www.thepunch.com.au was received on 14 December 2009. In actioning this request, the site was found to be unblocked by the vendor on 15 December. The site has been specifically unblocked by DPS in case the vendor recategorises it again.

5 A request to unblock www.metrotrains.com.au was received on 11 January 2010. In actioning this request, the site was found to be unblocked by the vendor on 12 January. The site has been specifically unblocked by DPS in case the vendor recategorises it again.