

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Parliament Portfolio**

**Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff**

Budget Estimates 2003-04, May 2003

**Question:** Consultation by the government on spamming - P12  
**Outcome:** The Commonwealth Parliament to have international standard broadcasting, transcription and information technology services and the Australian community to be able to see, hear and read the work of the Parliament.  
**Output:** Infrastructure and Communications Support  
**Topic:** Spamming approach from Government  
**Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice:** Monday, 26 May 2003, Page 56-57

Senator Murray asked:

**Senator MURRAY**—So there has been no consultation by the government with you, who manages one of the prime targets of spamming in this country—that is, parliamentarians.

**Mr Templeton**—Not that I am aware of. If it were to happen, it would happen in the other department, because DPRS manages the network, but I have not been advised of any approach or consultation.

**Senator MURRAY**—But you head DPRS?

**Mr Templeton**—Yes, that is what I am saying: with my other hat on, I have not been advised of any approach, discussions or consultation. I would have assumed that, if it had happened, the National Office for the Information Economy might have been involved in that, but I have not been advised of any approach to us.

**Senator MURRAY**—Could you take that on notice, just to check that your department has not been approached.

**Mr Templeton**—Yes, certainly.

Answer:

The Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff (DPRS) has no record of being consulted by the government on spamming issues. However, in recent discussions with staff from the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE), they claim that 18 months ago an interim report on spamming was issued to 'all agencies' for comment. DPRS has no record of receiving the interim report.

In finalising the final report in March 2003, NOIE also sought details and feedback from specific agencies, but DPRS was not approached in this round of consultation.

DPRS recognises the annoyance faced by Senators and Members with the amount of email spam being received. Consequently, following consultation with the Presiding Officers Information Technology Advisory Group (POITAG) members, DPRS is planning to undertake a study into spamming in the Parliament, including a limited trial of 'spam filtering software' using POITAG members. Depending upon the findings and the success of the trial, it is hoped that Senators and Members may have access to enhanced spam filtering facilities by the end of 2003.