

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2011

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Law and Bills Digest Section

Question: 8 and 9

Hansard reference F&PA p.26, 23 May 2011

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 8 July 2011

Question 8

Senator MARSHALL: Or anything that might remotely constitute a legal opinion. So what did you say they do for parliamentarians?

Ms Missingham: The *Bills Digests*.

Senator MARSHALL: No, apart from that. Could you take that on notice for me—

Ms Missingham: Certainly.

Senator MARSHALL: and tell me how many people in your legal department are actually engaged in *Bills Digests* and what percentage of their time that entails; and how many people are involved in other activities outside of the *Bills Digests* and what that entails.

Ms Missingham: I can give you some information on that, but every person in the Law and Bills Digest section does a considerable amount of work on the *Bills Digests*.

Question 9

Senator MARSHALL: Okay. So, apart from the *Bills Digests*, what else does your legal department do?

Ms Missingham: The other service that we offer, consistent with the rest of the Research Branch, is answering individual client inquiries about policy issues. Total library answers come to 14,000 to 15,000 individual client inquiries a year. But I can take that on notice and get you some more information on that.

Senator MARSHALL: All right.

Answer to Qs 8 and 9

1 All members of the Law and Bills Digest section contribute to Bills Digests, as do very many other staff in Research Branch. One hundred and twenty-eight Bills Digests have been published during the 43rd Parliament (as at 31 May 2011).

2 Like their colleagues in the rest of Research Branch, members of the Law and Bills Digest section also work on other publications on issues of interest to the Parliament, and on direct client services and client commissioned research. During the 43rd Parliament, members of the Law and Bills Digest section have spent over 3,900 hours on client services and commissioned research, and over 4,300 hours on publications (including Bills Digests).