

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
—Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2013**

**Answers to Questions on Notice**

**Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services**

Topic: **Hansard trial**  
Question: **153**  
Written **Senator Kroger**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 July 2013**

- a. In planning the Hansard efficiency trial, how did DPS intend to use ParView?
- b. During Senate Estimates in May there were several times that ParView failed, what back-up mechanisms did DPS put in place in case ParView failed during the Hansard trial?
- c. Did ParView fail at any time during the Hansard trial? If so, how many times and how long did ParView go down for? What did Hansard staff do to ensure Hansard was still accurately recorded?
- d. What criteria were used to assess the Hansard trial?
- e. When will a report on the Hansard trial be completed? Please provide a copy of the report.
- f. When were the Hansard reporters and editors consulted regarding the impact of the trial?
- g. How were the Hansard reporters and editors consulted?
- h. What are the potential cost savings associated with permanently changing the Hansard system to introduce the trial measures?

**Answer**

- a. ParView provides editors with quick and easy access to chamber activity. ParView can be paused and rewind which is a new facility that editors did not have access to with the webcast of parliamentary activity.
- b. Editors have access to the audio recording, live minutes and information from the chamber departments such as speakers' lists.
- c. No. ParView operated throughout the trial.
- d. The primary criteria for assessing the Hansard trial are – accuracy and timeliness compared to a non-trial period.
- e. A report will be prepared during August/September 2013. Once finalised, DPS will provide a copy to the committee.
- f. The proposed trial of not having editors in the chambers, except for question time, was first raised with Hansard staff at an all Hansard staff meeting on 9 May 2013 at which time staff were asked to provide their comments, feedback and suggestions about the proposed eight day trial. A second meeting was held on 23 May. Editors were reminded by email on 4 June that ideas/issues/concerns were to be provided to their management.
- g. See response above.
- h. The potential savings for Hansard would be a reduction in the hours of work individual editors would be required to do during a sitting day. Any corresponding financial savings would be diverted to bringing on more sessional staff and further reducing the need for overtime.