

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation
Committee—Supplementary Budget Estimates 2005-06,
October 2005**

**Parliament Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary
Services**

Answers to Questions on Notice

Topic: Composting

Question: P4

Senator Bob Brown—Is composting built into that?

Ms Penfold—I do not think there is a requirement for composting.

Senator Bob Brown—Ought that not be considered as a major way of disposing of waste other than having it go to landfill in 2005?

Ms Penfold—We have considered in the past running our own compost heaps. I understand that that proposal has been abandoned for two reasons: one is because there are all sorts of difficulties in running a compost heap, as I know from personal experience—and I gather doing it on a much larger scale has its own problems—

Senator Bob Brown—Landfill just puts the difficulty over the hill, though, doesn't it?

Ms Penfold—Absolutely. The other reason that we have not decided to go into the composting business is that we do not actually use very much compost on the gardens because of our sandy soils and the specific composition of our soils. We would not have a great use for it. What I would prefer is to take that on notice and give you a full brief on the options.

Answers

Parliament House does not engage in composting for the reasons specified by Ms Penfold. However, early in 2006 DPS will go to tender for the provision of waste removal services. The tender will state that the service provider will work with DPS to develop strategies for capturing compostable waste generated within the building so that this waste is composted and not taken to landfill.

It is expected that during the life of the new contract (a minimum of 3 years) progress will be made towards capturing compostable waste and ensuring that it is composted.