

**Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing – October 2009

Department of Finance and Deregulation

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

**Outcome 3, Program 3.1**

**Topic: Printing and Communications Entitlement**

**Question reference number: F67a & F67b**

**Type of Question: Hansard (F&PA 93-94, 20 October 2009)**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 December 2009**

**Number of Pages: 2**

**Senator Parry asked:**

a. Did you take into account, Minister, the fact that we have all been elected on a political platform? I think people expect that we promote the Liberal cause or promote the Labor cause because that is what people elect us to do. To that extent, why is there the exclusion of seeking membership for a political party? I will give you a particular example: through a website. If the website says, 'If you wish to join the Liberal Party, click here,' would that be outside of entitlement?

b. Well, how would you invoice me if I claimed this and I had on my website, 'Click here if you wish to join the Liberal Party'?

Minister, do you have an idea as to how that would happen?

**Answer:**

a. Although the term party business is not defined under the *Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990*, using a website to solicit memberships for a political party can reasonably be characterised as party business. It would be outside entitlement for a website that was established or is maintained using the printing and communications entitlement to solicit memberships for a political party.

b. An invoice for the inclusion of website content that solicits memberships for a political party could not be met at Government expense under entitlement.