

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—October 2012

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Electricity usage and costs**

Question: **155**

Written **Senator McKenzie**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 30 November 2012

- a. For the financial year 2011-2012, how many kilowatt hour of electricity did the department consume? What was the total cost?
- b. What does this cost work out to per employee?
- c. What increases in electricity costs has the Department experienced since the introduction of the carbon tax?
- d. How has this changed the Department's spending pattern? What programs or services have been cut to meet the increased costs?
- e. What measures is the Department taking to reduce its electricity expenditure? When did these commence? What impact have they had?

Answer

- a) Electricity consumption of the building in financial year 2011-12 was 24,947,623 kilowatt hours (kWh).

The total electricity cost for 2011-12 was \$2,913,004.

Note—Electricity metering in Parliament House does not allow for metering of individual departments. Electricity is metered for the whole building with some breakdown into broad geographic areas and separate large items of equipment.

- b) Due to the significant variation in non-departmental building occupants throughout the year, it is not possible to calculate a "per employee" cost.
- c) In March 2012, ERM Power advised DPS that, upon commencement of the Clean Energy Scheme on 1 July 2012, an increase of approximately 2.3 cents per kWh would apply to all energy used.
- The actual price per kWh for the first three months of the financial year ranged from 2.0705 cents in July down to 2.0106 cents in September.
- d) The electricity costs have not impacted on DPS's spending pattern and no cuts have been made based on these costs.
- e) Measures to reduce electricity use have been in place since 1988, and to date have delivered a 42% reduction in electricity consumption. Commencing in 2009, the Department initiated a program of major building improvements aimed at reducing electricity expenditure further. Projects include:

- i. upgraded car park lighting;
- ii. consolidated IT server and network equipment;
- iii. upgraded 3 chillers with more efficient energy consumption;
- iv. commenced upgrade of office lighting to more energy efficient types of bulbs;
- v. installation of solar panels;

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Impact of projects:

- i. In 2011–12, electricity consumption was reduced by 1,744,145 kilowatt hours (6.5%) compared to the same period in 2009-10 (period before program of building improvements commenced).
- ii. In 2011–12, the solar electricity pilot reduced the requirement for grid electricity by 59,501 kilowatt hours providing a cost saving of \$9,077.