

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: **Making the Public Service more efficient**

Question: **194**

Written **Senator Ryan**

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

- a. Please detail how the department/agency will achieve savings over the forward estimates through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012 http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html).

In addition, please provide the following detail:

- b. How will reductions in air travel spending be achieved? What is the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- c. What restrictions will be implemented for business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- d. How will the use of external consultants and contractors be reduced? How will this impact on the Department/agency? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- e. How will the department/agency manage moving recruitment advertising online? Will all future recruitment advertisement be online only? If not, explain why. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- f. How will printing costs be reduced? Explain if and how the department/agency will reduce its printing costs by five per cent, or if it will not, why not? How will it be determined what documents will no longer be printed? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer

- a) DPS's operating funding has not changed significantly since 2004 and remains under pressure as purchasing power declines. DPS continues to pro-actively monitor and manage its resources. DPS is taking action by tightening recruitment processes (as over 60 per cent of DPS expenditure relates to employee and related costs), rationalising Information Technology purchases and usage, examining staffing logistics in the form of sessional employees as opportunities arise to meet demand. DPS is also reviewing its Capital Management Framework, seeking process improvements from branches, ensuring value for money from new procurements, and some positions being excess as a result of changes to practices.
- b) There is little likelihood of reductions in air travel, as most of DPS's travel expenditure is associated with Broadcasting and Hansard support to parliamentary committees. Any savings derived will be in correlation to reduced regional committee activity.
- c) Very little DPS air travel is in Business Class. The majority of air travel is Economy class and DPS travellers observe the Government's lowest practical fare policy.

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- d) Contractors and Consultant expenditure for DPS will be reduced in alignment with the activities as set out in part (a) of this question. At this stage, the number, amount or the savings that will be made is not known.
- e) DPS's recruitment processes comply with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's *Guidelines on Non-Campaign Recruitment Advertising (July 2010)*. All DPS recruitment activity has moved solely to online medium.
- f) Ninety-five per cent of the DPS printing budget is allocated to the publishing of Hansard. There are no immediate plans to alter Hansard printing arrangements.