

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Question No. 22

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 8 February 2010:

Regarding air conditioning and asbestos in the High Court, can the Committee be provided with:

- a. The cost of remedying these concerns;
- b. The names, titles, costs and copies of the consultancies and the reports;
- c. An outline of the remedial plans and costs to fix the problems; and
- d. An asset management plan and the likely future costs?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

- (a) The cost to date of remedying issues identified in a report prepared by Robson Environmental Pty Ltd is \$23,753 (inc GST).
- (b) A copy of the report by Robson Environmental Pty Ltd is attached. The report cost \$7,381 (inc GST).
- (c) The report identified four elements requiring removal as soon as possible and a list of items that were to be tagged and labelled.

The following three elements have been safely removed:

- an exposed formwork sheet at the base of the western wall to Court One;
- braided rope in the lights in the library area of Level Nine; and
- a service hatch in a plant room on Level 11.

The fourth element, the mill boards in electric duct heaters, has not been removed. Air quality monitoring tests performed in September and October 2009 found no evidence of asbestos fibres in adjacent areas. See (d).

All recommended items have been tagged and labelled.

The cost of remediation to date is \$23,753 (inc GST)

- (d) The Court has engaged a services consultant to audit and ascertain the condition, operation, maintenance, efficiency and effectiveness of the existing 30 year old heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. This consultancy report will also include advice concerning the removal of the asbestos-containing electric duct heaters.

Until the consultancy report is received and assessed it is not possible to assess the likely future costs.