

Questions on Notice

No. 1 - Question on Notice

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you provide the actual expenditure for the four separate items— budget, travel, catering and discretionary—for 2022-23 and also 2023-24?

The PRESIDENT: Happy, once again, to take that on notice.

Answer

FY22/2023 – please note President Franklin was only elected on 9 May 2023

Employee Related Expenses Full Year Budget: \$800,446

Actuals: \$745,557.57

Operating Expenses Budget (includes travel, catering, office administration, communications, vehicle expenses etc): \$117,154

Actuals: \$109,460.20

FY23/2024 – YTD Feb 2024

Employee Related Expenses Full Year Budget: \$834,000

Actuals: \$539,638.16

Operating Expenses Budget (includes travel, catering, office administration, communications, vehicle expenses etc): \$121,000

Actuals: \$57,440

No. 2 - Question on Notice

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you provide to me the total number of regional trips you've made since becoming President?

The PRESIDENT: I'm very happy to take that on notice.

Answer

Since my election to President on the 9th of May 2023, I have undertaken 17 regional trips across NSW with 22 events across those visits.

We are also hosting keystone events for the Bicentenary of the Legislative Council throughout the year in six regions that include **Lismore** (3-4 April), **Port Macquarie** (10-11 April), **Armidale** (1-2 May), **Bathurst** (29-30 May), **Bateman's Bay** (26-27 June) and **Wagga Wagga** (31 July – 1 August). I will be attending all of these Regional Roadshows.

No. 3 - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can I get a breakdown on all those components that add up to—

The PRESIDENT: Sure. I might just ask Mr—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: —because \$15 million is a lot of money, isn't it, so can I get a breakdown on the components that add up to \$15 million?

The PRESIDENT: Understood. I might ask Mr Webb to add further and then we can go from there.

MARK WEBB: Absolutely. Thank you, Mr Latham. As you say, it was one of the big budget items that came through. The four broad categories, as the President outlined, were the parliamentary staff—support from parliamentary staff—support for some of the committee actions that came out of that work and then the training and other related costs and there was—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What's the cost for each?

MARK WEBB: I'm about to go through that for you. Also, we did have a component for members' staff short-term relief. So if members' staff were required to attend training, we put a component in to allow for members to have short-term relief for any time that members' staff were involved. As you say, the \$15 million was over the forward estimates period. I can provide these figures to you directly. I'll give them to you now, but I can also provide them separately on notice, if you want to have them written down. In the first year, in 2023-24—and I'll round the numbers broadly, if that's okay, so that I'm not reading out huge numbers—it was about \$2.8 million for the parliamentary staff, \$470,000 for the support for committee actions, \$630,000 for short-term relief for members' staff and \$1.1 million for the training and the consultants associated with that training et cetera. That comes to about \$5 million. That's for the first year.

Answer

The full Broderick budget is \$15 million over 4 years.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28 ongoing
Support from Parliamentary staff	2,796	2,500	1,879	1,879	1,490
Support for Committee actions	474	486	498	498	510
Member staff relief	630	287	294	294	-
Consultants, Training, and other related costs	1,100	727	329	329	-
Total	5,000.00	4,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,000.00

No. 3a - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: How many extra staff are you employing?

MARK WEBB: Eleven extra staff.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Eleven extra staff?

MARK WEBB: For the first year, yes, that's correct. On the staff, and I think that's an area that's worth—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can I get, on notice, a list of all the job descriptions—

MARK WEBB: Sure thing.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: —for the 11 extra staff to implement this policy, and also a breakdown of the \$1.1 million for training and other items?

Answer

Senior Manager – Workplace Relations and Support (Clerk Grade 11/12)

Manager Wellbeing and Safety (Clerk Grade 9/10)

Senior Adviser – Wellbeing and Safety (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Senior Adviser – Employment Relations (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Wellbeing and Safety Coordinator (Clerk Grade 5/6)

Manager People Experience and Capability (Clerk Grade 9/10)

Senior Advisor – People, Experience and Capability (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Learning & Development Co-ordinator (Clerk Grade 5/6)

Learning & Development Support Officer (Clerk Grade 3/4)

Senior Advisor Workplace Planning (Clerk Grade 7/8)

HR Officer (Clerk Grade 3/4)

In the hearing, Mr Webb's answer was truncated after mentioning the HR staffing component of the Broderick funding. Other temporary roles, across both DPS and the House Departments, are also covered by the Broderick staffing funding.

2023-2024 Budget Allocation for Consultants, Training and other related costs		
REASON	2023-24	BRODERICK REVIEW LINK
Travel cost for DPS to increase capacity, training and guidance	\$ 20,000	5.2
Training cost for DPS to increase capacity, training and guidance	\$ 15,000	5.2
External review of Alcohol Policy	\$ 75,000	2.4a
Cost of external consultants	\$ 90,000	2.3a & b, 3.3a, 5.9
Independent investigator to examine complaints which fall outside ICO role.	\$ 80,000	5.1a
Specialist EAP support services specifically addressing LGBTQI+ people.	\$ 20,000	5.1a
Training of new Alcohol Policy for everyone at parliament	\$ 100,000	2.4d
Additional training of Catering staff	\$ 90,000	2.4d
Training and mentoring for "all leaders" in taking a trauma-informed approach to complaints handling	\$ 90,000	1.1b
Independent training developed by expert in appropriate behaviour	\$ 120,000	4.1a
Leadership and management development training for Members and senior staff	\$ 80,000	4.2a
Additional support systems for complainants	\$ 8,000	5.6
Communication of new policy initiatives, including production of collateral outlining inappropriate behaviour scenarios and how people can report complaints	\$ 60,000	4.3d
Independent expert training on diversity and inclusion to work across parliamentary workplaces	\$ 50,000	2.1c
Diversity and inclusion employment initiatives (Intern program)	\$ 90,000	2.1a
Diversity and inclusion employment initiatives (Leadership program for existing staff)	\$ 30,000	2.1a
Independent and expert facilitator for workshop looking at vulnerability of LGBTQI+ people in parliamentary workplaces	\$ 40,000	2.5
Document management system	\$ 35,000	1.4.1.1
Total Budget	\$ 1,093,000	

No. 3b - Question on Notice - Transcript Pg 7

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Could I get the same breakdown for the \$4 million in the following year, the \$3 million after that and the \$3 million that all add up to 15?

MARK WEBB: Yes, you can.

Answer

The full Broderick budget is \$15 million over 4 years.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	ongoing
Support from Parliamentary staff	2,796	2,500	1,879	1,879	1,490
Support for Committee actions	474	486	498	498	510
Member staff relief	630	287	294	294	-
Consultants, Training, and other related costs	1,100	727	329	329	-
Total	5,000	4,000	3,000	3,000	2,000

No. 4 - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It doesn't sound like we're running out of money these days. Could I get a breakdown of the other \$17 million in the so-called maintenance works? Does that include the room restoration that you mentioned earlier on and also the two Chambers?

MARK WEBB: Yes, it includes the two Chambers, the work done on the north and south atriums, which included replacing the glazed roofs, the Rum Hospital internal restoration and the facade.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Could I get a breakdown of the \$22 million?

MARK WEBB: Yes.

Answer

- Legislative Assembly (LA) and Legislative Council (LC) Chambers restoration - \$3.9M.
- North and South Atriums, including replacement of glazed roof - \$4.2M.
- Rum Hospital full restoration works \$8.8M.
- Facades restoration and conversation (excluding the Rum Hospital Level 8 veranda and the front forecourt landscaping) - \$5.1M.

No. 5 - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I've received a report of one drone, maybe more, parked outside the balcony of MPs' offices, seemingly peering in to who was having a meeting in that office. Is this something that's known to the Parliament? Is it our drone? What are we doing to stop drones infringing on the rights and the privilege, one would have thought, of MPs to have private meetings in their offices?

The PRESIDENT: This is the first that I've heard of it. No-one has raised this issue with me before. Instinctively, it is something of concern. I don't know if Mr Blunt or Mr Webb have anything to add.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It's not an HR drone, is it?

MARK WEBB: No, it is not an HR drone, I promise. The only use of drones I'm aware—

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: It's Broderick.

MARK WEBB: When I give you the breakdown—no.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: One of the 11 is not a drone operator?

MARK WEBB: The rumour is that we've set some secret bunker up somewhere.

The Hon. WES FANG: You've now got 12 staff coming, Mark.

MARK WEBB: The only drone work I'm aware of recently was doing some sweeping shots of the whole building. I cannot think of anything that would require a drone sitting outside.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: That was a drone from DPS?

MARK WEBB: We don't own it, but we hired someone to come in and take just some photos of the building from above.

The PRESIDENT: For promotional purposes.

MARK WEBB: Yes, that's right, and to show the works that we'd been doing. But there would be no reason for that drone to be sitting outside anyone's office in any way, shape or form.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The report was a bit concerning in that regard.

MARK WEBB: Absolutely.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Maybe you can take it on notice as to happened with that one drone.

MARK WEBB: I will.

Answer

On Thursday 22nd February at approximately 11.15am there was a drone above the Domain. It was identified by the Special Constables and an external patrol was conducted. The patrol located the operator of the drone. The Special Constables gave the drone operator a move on direction and informed the operator they are not to operate a drone in the vicinity of Parliament House. The drone operator was compliant and apologetic.

As outlined at the hearing, Mr Webb is available to undertake a private briefing on this matter.

Answer to QON 6 - Commission of Aboriginal artwork

Question on Notice 6:

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you. Just back on the bicentenary, how much has it cost to commission the Aboriginal artwork, so-called?

The PRESIDENT: I believe it's \$100,000.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Has that already got a location picked out for where it will hang?

The PRESIDENT: No. It will be somewhere prominent within the building, I suspect, within the public

confines of the Fountain Court area, but it depends on what the final artwork comes out with.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It won't replace the placement of the artwork Mr Rath mentioned.

The PRESIDENT: The Founding of Australia? No, not at all. My view is that both of them are important

to tell the story of Australia and the story of New South Wales, and both of them will have a similarly prominent place.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Right. Who's the artist for that?

The PRESIDENT: We have gone a substantial way through the process. I'm just not sure if we've made

the public announcement yet of the artist. Mr Latham, do you mind if we take that on notice? We may be able to

provide that information before the end of estimates today. If not, we'll certainly be able to provide it on notice.

Updated Answer:

As advised in the House on 21 March, the commission has been awarded to artist Kim Healey.

No. 7 - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: I've got a couple of questions around security, Mr President. I might just follow on from Mr Latham in relation to the drone.

The PRESIDENT: Please.

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: It may help to know that it was Wednesday last week, around 11.00 a.m., off a balcony of a member on the eleventh floor.

The PRESIDENT: When you say "off a balcony of a member", did the drone take—

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: About a metre off the balcony.

The PRESIDENT: Right. And it was hovering?

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: Hovering—hovering for some time. I'm happy if you take this on notice to find out whether you can provide anymore information about that incident. I understand it was reported to security shortly after it occurred. I just want to know what steps are being taken to ensure that we don't have this again if it was a drone from somewhere else.

The PRESIDENT: It's a very valid set of questions. As I made the comment to Mr Latham, I find this instinctively extremely concerning. I don't know that there's anything necessarily, but of course we'll come back to you with anything that we can do to guarantee that it will never happen again because it's an open public-facing building onto a very large expanse of open land. Nonetheless, it's concerning and we'll certainly look into it. We'll speak to security and we'll also come back to this Committee with a response. I think Mr Webb might wish to say something on this.

MARK WEBB: I just make the general point that we will do all the things that the President said. We don't to discuss security matters relating to the Parliament in public hearings. As you'd imagine, talking about the vulnerabilities and security measures that we've taken is not something we like having on the public record. I would ask, when we come back, to brief the Committee in private, but my very strong preference would be to not do so in a way that would put the information in the public domain.

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: Certainly, yes.

Answer

On Thursday 22nd February at approximately 11.15am there was a drone above the Domain. It was identified by the Special Constables and an external patrol was conducted. The patrol located the operator of the drone. The Special Constables gave the drone operator a move on direction and informed the operator they are not to operate a drone in the vicinity of Parliament House. The drone operator was compliant and apologetic.

As outlined at the hearing, Mr Webb is available to undertake a private briefing on this matter.

No. 7a - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: The second question I have is when was the last time the duress alarms in electorate offices were tested? How often is it required that they be tested?

MARK WEBB: I should say that as this estimates hearing focuses on the operation of the LC and DPS,

I don't traditionally answer any questions about the Legislative Assembly and how it works. I would say, however, that we have a regular regime of all duress alarm testing, both in this building and across the electorate office network on a regular basis. Again, sorry, I'm picking my words carefully for the aforesaid not talking too much about public, but if there is a specific threat brought to our attention in either a particular part of the building or more broadly, we do additional testing at that time.

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: Can you take that on notice and provide that to the Committee in the same way, where it's not made public?

MARK WEBB: Yes, absolutely.

Answer

As outlined at the hearing, Mr Webb is available to undertake a private briefing on this matter.

No. 8 - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: You might need to take this on notice for the reasons that were previously discussed, but I just want to know from what time are the front and back entrances of the building staffed by the special constables? Does that differ between sitting days, non-sitting days, weekends, public holidays et cetera?

MARK WEBB: I'll take that on notice. It does differ in those areas but, if you don't mind, again, even where and when we have special constables is something that I prefer not to put on the public record. I'm happy to brief the Committee privately on that matter.

Answer

As outlined at the hearing, Mr Webb is available to undertake a private briefing on this matter.

No. 9 - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Mr Webb, how many HR staff do we have now? Take these on notice if you like.

MARK WEBB: I can take it on notice, but I do have—actually, I'll have to take it on notice. The HR team is in with the property team and the security team. I only have the—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Staff performing HR functions.

MARK WEBB: Yes. I can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I asked previously for the job descriptions of the new 11. Can I get the salary bands as well, for each of those?

MARK WEBB: You can.

Answer

There are a total of 29 staff working within the Human Resources area, across both the Workplace Relations and Support and People and Capability teams. Some of those staff are in job-share roles and the number of Full Time Equivalent positions is 26.

Salary bands for the 11 new staff are:

Senior Manager Workplace Relations and Support (Clerk Grade 11/12)

Manager Wellbeing and Safety (Clerk Grade 9/10)

Senior Adviser – Wellbeing and Safety (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Senior Adviser – Employment Relations (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Wellbeing and Safety Coordinator (Clerk Grade 5/6)

Manager People Experience and Capability (Clerk Grade 9/10)

Senior Adviser – People, Experience and Capability (Clerk Grade 7/8)

Learning & Development Co-ordinator (Clerk Grade 5/6)

Learning & Development Support Officer (Clerk Grade 3/4)

Senior Adviser Workplace Planning (Clerk Grade 7/8)

HR Officer (Clerk Grade 3/4)

No. 9a - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thanks. What's been the cost of the Broderick process to date?

MARK WEBB: In 2023-24, as of January—I don't have February figures yet—the total cost associated with the review implementation has been \$1,249,380.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Prior to that? It's been going for years.

MARK WEBB: It has another year before that—I don't have the prior year in front of me.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You can take that on notice.

MARK WEBB: I'll take that on notice. Absolutely.

Answer

Broderick Costs by Category Current Year (29/2/24)	Budget	Actual	Remaining Funds
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Support from Parliamentary staff	2,796.	1,048.00	1,748
Support for Committee actions linked to Broderick Review	474	251.00	223
Member staff relief costs associated with training	630	0.38	630
Consultants, Training, and other related costs	1,100	177.00	923
Total	5,000	1,476	3,524

Broderick Operating expenses			
Employee related	3,900	1,299	2,601
Other operating expenses	1,100	177	923
Total Expenses	5,000	1,476	3,524

Broderick Costs by Category Prior Year (2022-23)	Budget	Actual
	\$'000	\$'000
Support from Parliamentary staff		828
Consultants, Training, and other related costs		62

Total

890

No. 9b - Question on Notice

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Given the expenditure and the different consultants that have been used, how do you explain that we've ended up with a two-tier system of eligibility for harassment?

MARK WEBB: This is related to your previous questions about the independent complaints—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Yes. If you haven't got certain personal characteristics, you can't be judged to be a victim of harassment. How did that ever come about?

MARK WEBB: The Parliament's administration's approach to dealing with people that are within our jurisdiction—of course, that does not include members, and I do grant you that—does not make such a distinction.

So if a member's staff was to come to us with a claim of harassment, the distinction that you're outlining is not one that we make.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are you sure? Have you read rulings of the Independent Complaints Officer?

MARK WEBB: I'm saying the ones that are within—this is about members staff and parliamentary staff. We do not make such a distinction.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The ICO is quoting parliamentary policy.

MARK WEBB: I will take it on notice; I have not seen that.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If you can check that and take it on notice and ask as to where that ever came from?

MARK WEBB: I will have a look at it.

Answer

The Parliament's draft Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy is intended to apply to all in the Parliamentary community equally in providing a commitment to a workplace free of harmful workplace behaviours.

Bullying and harassment are both covered by the policy, but each one refers to a particular type of harmful behaviour.

Bullying is a pattern of repeated inappropriate behaviour, and is not related to any type of particular personal characteristic. Harassment is any kind of behaviour that undermines someone's dignity and is unacceptable or humiliating to them. Unlike bullying, harassment is discriminatory and targets someone because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, disability or ethnicity. It can occur in a series of repeated events, or as a one-off incident.

Both bullying, and harassment, as types of harmful workplace behaviours are contrary to the policy, and can be investigated. In relation to Members, this involves the Independent Complaints Officer if the complaint is otherwise within the resolution of the Houses establishing the ICO.

No. 10 - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: These are probably best directed to Mr Webb. What extent of the workforce in the building are on labour-hire agreements?

MARK WEBB: I'd have to take an exact percentage on notice. Probably the two main areas where we have labour-hire arrangements are our catering area for ramping—we have a core catering team who are permanent members of the Parliament workforce but then we have labour-hire arrangements for when we have a lot of events on one night, where we can bring additional people in and out, coming through. The second area—actually, probably three areas—is in the cleaning team. Again, we have to backfill positions in cleaning when people are ill or otherwise unable to perform their duties, so we do have a significant labour hire in the cleaning area. The third area, we actually moved away from labour hire.

Traditionally, the other area of labour hire was the audiovisual space, where we used to use labour-hire arrangements for people to run the cameras, the audio and the like. As a part of the move to the new audiovisual system, we have brought a lot of that in house. We have a casual pool of people that can be drawn upon to do that work, so we have moved away from labour hire.

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: If you're taking it on notice, can you give me a dollar value of full-time equivalent staff, as well as a percentage?

MARK WEBB: Yes. That's no problem at all.

Answer

There are 23.40 FTE Agency Staff currently employed by DPS.

The Total Salary Cost so far this financial year is \$1,719,650.15

In addition to the general Agency Staff employed, Specialist Catering Agency Staff for Event Management have cost the following so far this financial year -

\$610,871 Clifford Wallace

\$23,745 Nosh

\$359,920 INAC Catering Staff

\$994,536 Total

The 23.40 FTE of Agency Staff represents is 7.60% of the DPS workforce (not taking into account any DPS casual employees paid directly through the Payroll).

No. 11 - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: This is one you may need to take on notice, but can you provide the number of full-time equivalent positions within each subdepartment of DPS each year for the last five years?

MARK WEBB: For the last five years? Sure. Yes, I can. We had an organisation restructure in the last five years, so it won't be—

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: It won't align?

MARK WEBB: Yes, it won't align fully. But, yes, I can do that.

Answer

Department of Parliamentary Services Total Staff Numbers

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Office of the Chief Executive	6	6	2	2	2
People and Engagement	21	21	-	-	-
Facilities	53	40	-	-	-
Finance	12	18	-	-	-
Catering	19	21	21	26	26
Information Services	74	84	-	-	-
Corporate Services	-	-	1	2	2
Parliament Services	-	-	1	1.5	1.5
Finance and Governance	-	-	28	21	28
People, Property & Security	-	-	59	60	69
Information Technology	-	-	14	17	28
Capital Works	-	-	12	13	15
Digital Transformation	-	-	20	26	26
Hansard, AVB, Library & Research	-	-	55	67	69
Communication, Engagement & Education	-	-	15	18	17

Please note: these Staff figures do not include Casuals & that these Staff figures do include 4 Hansard staff on pre-retirement leave who are still on the books.

No. 12 - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: I've got one last question. This relates to something before my time in this place. I've been told by a number of members that the printers in Parliament were specifically procured in part because they were supposed to have functionality that allowed them to print documents directly from mobile phones. Is that technology available to members and staff?

MARK WEBB: I thought so, yes. Is the feedback that it's not working?

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: Yes, feedback from a number of people is that it just doesn't work.

MARK WEBB: Let me check into that. I don't have that in front of me, but I'm happy to look into it.

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: If you can take it on notice—

MARK WEBB: That was the intent, so I'll take it on notice and give you a fuller explanation of where that's up to.

Answer

Mobile phone printing is a feature of the Toshiba multi-function devices (MFDs) in Members' offices.

This feature wasn't activated during the initial deployment of the MFD's and the IT Services team will assess its feasibility, considering factors like network infrastructure and cyber security.

No. 13 - Question on Notice

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: If I'm at a meeting after hours and I wish to organise for someone to drive in the following day for an early morning meeting, how do I organise that after, say, 5.30 p.m. of an afternoon?

MARK WEBB: That's a good question. You're right, the security desk that normally deals with that does finish up around that time. You can send an email to them and they would exercise that first thing in the morning when they come in, which, from memory, is around 8 o'clock. But if you were trying to organise for someone to be in earlier than 8 o'clock, of course, that would be problematic.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Could you take it on notice?

MARK WEBB: I can take it on notice. The special constables are here, of course, but don't, generally speaking, deal with car parking matters. I will take it on notice and get back to you with what the right protocol would be under those circumstances.

Answer

There is currently no ability to book a car space outside of 8am to 5pm.

However the Car Park Policy is currently under review which will include hours of operation and how to book parking at Parliament House.

No. 14 – Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: I've just got a couple of quick questions about the Cabcharges that are available for staff after 8.00 p.m. An issue has been raised where staff can't get the Cabcharges until 8.00 p.m. Would it be possible for them to be made available at the commencement of the dinner break at 6.30 p.m., because that's a period in which—after 8.00 p.m. staff are often busy and haven't been able to make arrangements to get down and get them, on the basis that they're then only able to be used after 8.00 p.m. in line with the guidelines. Is that something that can be looked at?

The PRESIDENT: That's a DPS thing—or is it Department of LC?

DAVID BLUNT: Yes, I think your staff obtain those Cabcharges from my team in the Procedure Office, and we just have to make sure that we're acquitting our responsibilities under the relevant award. Access to those Cabcharges to staff is an award condition and it is a condition that they're available for use after 8.00 p.m. Provided we can acquit that we're fulfilling our responsibilities, then I'm certainly happy to take that suggestion on notice.

The Legislative Council Procedure Office administers the distribution of Cabcharge vouchers for use by parliamentary and members' staff after 8.00 pm on sitting days. Cabcharge vouchers are provided to parliamentary staff in accordance with clause 57(xvi) of the Crown Employees (Parliament House Conditions of Employment) Award 2021. Cabcharge vouchers are provided to the staff of Members of the Legislative Council in accordance with longstanding custom and practice, even though a case could be made that such fares should now be funded from each Members' travel allowance. For each Cabcharge voucher issued, the Procedure Office maintains a record of the person to whom the voucher was issued and their destination, to allow for Cabcharge invoices to be subsequently reconciled. The current practice requiring members' staff to collect vouchers after 8.00 pm is to ensure that Cabcharge vouchers are used consistently with the award conditions applying to parliamentary staff. Allowing members' staff to access vouchers prior to 8.00 pm for use after 8.00 pm, in circumstances where it is not always clear when the House will adjourn, would require the Procedure Office to undertake a more detailed review of every Cabcharge invoice and follow up with members' staff, to ensure all relevant conditions of use have been met in each instance. It would also be inconsistent with the practice in relation to parliamentary staff who collect Cabcharge vouchers after 8 pm only.

No. 14a - Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: I understand ministerial staffers have access to an Uber account that they can all use. Has any thought been put into whether it's possible to do that? That might make it easier to track when it's used, also.

MARK WEBB: That's a really great question. We've actually just started trialling something with Uber for our IT team who have to stay after hours, just to test to see whether it can work in the broader context. I haven't shared the results of that with the Clerk yet, but it is certainly something that we could look into.

Answer

A trial is currently being undertaken with Uber to see if it is suitable in a larger context.

No. 14b – Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: Given that it is an award entitlement, I understand it's only available to LC staff. Is that right? It's not available to lower House staff—or is it?

DAVID BLUNT: I'd have to take that on notice.

The PRESIDENT: We'll have to take that on notice, Mr Murphy.

Cabcharge vouchers are provided to parliamentary staff from all three parliamentary departments (including the Department of the Legislative Assembly) in accordance with clause 57(xvi) of the Crown Employees (Parliament House Conditions of Employment) Award 2021.

No. 14c – Question on Notice

The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY: If the reasoning behind it is about safety and the difficulty travelling at that time of night, then, if you're taking it on notice, could you explain if it isn't available to lower House staff, why not?

The PRESIDENT: We may not be able to explain why not, but we're happy to provide an explanation that is provided to us why not. Obviously, your fundamental point is valid. If that is the case, then that's a perfectly reasonable request.

Cabcharge vouchers are provided to parliamentary staff from all three parliamentary departments (including the Department of the Legislative Assembly) in accordance with clause 57(xvi) of the Crown Employees (Parliament House Conditions of Employment) Award 2021.