

**QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE - UNCORRECTED PROOF – BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING
THE LEGISLATURE - WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2015**

QUESTION: The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:

Research by White Ribbon Australia shows that offering specific support to staff who are victims of domestic violence plays a "pivotal role in shifting the attitudes and behaviours that allow this violence to occur in the first place." Many local councils, for instance, have adopted specific policies that include leave for medical treatment and they also request changes to work arrangements such as phone numbers or email addresses to avoid harassment. Would you consider establishing a working group within the Department of Parliamentary Services [DPS] to examine the possibility of developing such a policy within the Legislature?

The PRESIDENT: It is an excellent suggestion but, rather than giving you a detailed response, I would like to take that on notice and discuss it with the Executive Manager of DPS. I am happy to respond in full.

ANSWER:

The development of the policy suggested has, in fact, been in preparation for some time.

It should be noted that special leave arrangements for employees experiencing domestic violence are already incorporated in the industrial awards and determinations that cover all parliamentary staff. These arrangements are consistent with NSW Treasury Circular 14/16, released 16 July 2014, which also provides guidance for agencies about practical steps they can take, including changes to work routines, phone numbers and email addresses of affected staff. The DPS People & Engagement Branch currently provides advice to managers and staff consistent with arrangements outlined in the Treasury Circular.

Recognising there is a broad range of circumstances which can expose parliamentary staff to threatening situations, including domestic violence and work situations involving aggression and violence, the DPS People & Engagement Branch is currently developing a set of guidelines that will communicate these arrangements and what other support is available for affected staff, such as the Parliament's Employee Assistance Program.

These guidelines will be the subject of further internal consultation via the Parliament's Policy Review Committee and then they will be published on the Parliament's intranet.

QUESTION: Dr JOHN KAYE:

Thank you, Mr President. On notice, will you provide us with the numbers of full-time and part-time casual staff employed in Parliament, leaving aside members' staff, for each of the last four financial years? This goes to the question you are taking on notice for the Hon. Peter Primrose but it also provides the base numbers for those.

ANSWER:

The total numbers of “non-ongoing” staff employed by the Parliament (excluding members' staff) for the last four years, are outlined in the table below. Please note that these figures do not include contract or labour-hire agency-supplied staff as they are not employed by the Parliament and they are not paid via the Parliament’s payroll system.

#Casual staff	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Full-time	33	35	36	36
Part-time	62	59	27	21

QUESTION: The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:

Mr President, I would be grateful if you would take this question on notice. What savings measures were implemented by the Parliament for each of the last three financial years? What actual savings were achieved by each strategy? What reduction of staff occurred as a result of each strategy and at what cost?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: As a gesture of goodwill I am happy to take that question on notice, even though I am rearing to go all the way through.

ANSWER:

The response below is for the Legislative Council and Department of Parliamentary Services.

2012-13

Saving Measure	Actual Saving	Staff Reduction (FTE)	Staff Reduction Cost
Change to 3 day sitting pattern	\$204,823	Nil	Nil
Positions kept vacant	\$328,333	Nil	Nil
Restructures	\$74,000	1	Nil
Utilising part-time staffing in Hansard	\$15,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing printed material	\$36,889	Nil	Nil
Reduction in Catering supplier costs	\$108,798	Nil	Nil
Migration to cloud-based Library Management System	\$32,000	Nil	Nil
Discontinuation of Visionbytes.tv chamber video on demand	\$47,000	Nil	Nil
Power savings settings enforced on Windows 7 computers	\$25,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing LC committee advertising costs	\$39,558	Nil	Nil
Revenue from LC in Practice courses	\$23,562	Nil	Nil
Total	\$934,963	1	Nil

2013-14

Saving Measure	Actual Saving	Staff Reduction (FTE)	Staff Reduction Cost
Change to 3 day sitting pattern	\$17,313	Nil	Nil
Positions kept vacant	\$166,150	Nil	Nil
Restructures	\$445,000	5	\$359,476

Utilising part-time staffing in Hansard	\$63,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing printed material	\$22,742	Nil	Nil
Reduction in Catering supplier costs	\$74,000	Nil	Nil
Migration to cloud-based Library Management System	\$5,000	Nil	Nil
Discontinuation of Visionbytes.tv chamber video on demand	\$47,000	Nil	Nil
Power savings settings enforced on Windows 7 computers	\$25,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing LC committee travel and support staff costs for off-site committee hearings	\$58,238	Nil	Nil
Cancellation of some Library print subscriptions	\$15,000	Nil	Nil
Total	\$938,443	5	\$359,476

2014-15

Saving Measure	Actual Saving	Staff Reduction (FTE)	Staff Reduction Cost
Positions kept vacant	\$207,351	Nil	Nil
Restructures	\$187,560	3	\$268,757
Utilising part-time staffing in Hansard	\$64,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing printed material	\$11,129	Nil	Nil
Reduction in Catering supplier costs	\$9,000	Nil	Nil
Reducing LC committee travel due to 3 month break over Election period	\$16,218	Nil	Nil
Re-negotiation of WAN data telecommunications contract	\$73,000	Nil	Nil
Review of WAN management and web hosting arrangements	\$60,250	Nil	Nil
Re-tendering of internal audit contract	50,000	Nil	Nil
Rental revenue for DPC Drivers and Transport Administration Team	\$25,705	Nil	Nil
Revenue from LC in Practice courses	\$6,438	Nil	Nil
Total	\$710,651	3	\$268,757

N.B. There were a total of 8 redundancies paid in 2013-14 and 2014-15 and all were voluntary.

QUESTION: Dr JOHN KAYE:

What was the capacity of the new building at the design phase? How many people was it designed to accommodate?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: That is a good question. I am advised that it was 39.

Dr JOHN KAYE: And how many does it carry at the completion stage?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: That is the number of people currently in it.

Dr JOHN KAYE: So it was designed for 39 and it accommodates 39. Have there been any structural issues with the building?

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: He is opening a new folder; that is a bad sign.

Dr JOHN KAYE: I know what that look on the President's face. Am I about to be turfed out?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: Dr Kaye, could you just remind me of the exact question you have asked?

Dr JOHN KAYE: It was not an exact question but the question I have asked is: Have there been any structural issues or other faults or defects with the building?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: How much time do we have left?

Dr JOHN KAYE: About two minutes. You could take that question on notice.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: I am happy to answer the question, but it will take the whole two minutes. Would you prefer me to give it to you on notice?

Dr JOHN KAYE: No, it is an important matter. I can put the other questions I have on notice.

CHAIR: Dr Kaye, you have one minute remaining.

Dr JOHN KAYE: I do not want to take time from Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile. Perhaps you could give us a short answer and then put the rest on notice; would that be convenient?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: I do not know that I would want to do that.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Let's do this by yes or no.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: The new office wing on level nine was constructed to address a staff accommodation shortage, as you are aware. There have remained some defects and outstanding works to be completed due to the performance of the building contractor. Facilities branch engaged an independent consultant to conduct a full audit of the construction and the resulting report was provided to the building contractors for their rectification works. This measure was taken to ensure the building works are completed according to the contract and the Building Code of Australia requirements. These outstanding matters are in the final process of being resolved. In terms of what outstanding matters there are, it might be better if I answer that on notice, if that is okay, rather than going into great detail now.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Yes, thank you; that will fine.

ANSWER:

Following completion of the new level 9 building, there have remained some defects and outstanding works to be completed due to the performance of the building contractor. Facilities Branch engaged an independent consultant to conduct a full audit of the construction and the resulting report was provided to the building contractors for their rectification. This measure was

taken to ensure the building is completed according to contract and Building Code of Australia requirements. These outstanding matters are in the final process of being resolved.

The structure of the new level 9 building was routinely inspected by structural engineers throughout the project. Structural certificates have been issued by the building contractor.

The majority of the defects have been completed, however a small number remain outstanding, including:

- Air conditioning commissioning and inspection
- Investigation and resolution of the water leaks in the subfloor space under the new building.

The building contractor has given an undertaking that all defects will be resolved. Fortnightly meetings have been scheduled between the building contractor and the Facilities Branch until the project is complete.

These defects did not prevent occupation of the building by DPS staff from the Accounting Services, Members' Entitlements, Human Services and the Office of the Executive Manager in early March 2015.