



Australian Government

Australian Heritage Council

Ms Christine McDonald
Secretary
Finance and Public Administration Legislative Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms McDonald

The Australian Heritage Council (the Council) welcomes your letter of 1 July 2011, concerning the Senate inquiry into the performance of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS). The Council would like to comment particularly on heritage issues that relate to the development of DPS's Heritage Strategy, required under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Under section 341ZA of the EPBC Act, there is a statutory obligation for a Commonwealth agency to prepare a heritage strategy. The heritage strategy is a commitment by an agency to identify and manage its heritage assets within its overall property planning and management framework. There is also a general obligation (s.341Z) for Commonwealth agencies to assist the Environment Minister and the Council in the identification, assessment and monitoring of a place's Commonwealth Heritage values.

It is noted that the DPS provided a draft of their heritage strategy to the Council on 26 May 2008 for its advice. The Council was satisfied with the way in which the draft heritage strategy addresses the requirements of the EPBC Act and provided its comments recommending minor amendments to DPS on 13 August 2008.

The final stage required to complete the heritage strategy is for the DPS to consider the Council's comments and then provide the Environment Minister with a final copy of its heritage strategy. I understand that representatives of the Heritage and Wildlife Division will be meeting with DPS officers to discuss the progress and finalisation of its heritage strategy.

Should you require any further information, please contact Ms Ilse Wurst, A/g Assistant Secretary, Heritage South

Yours sincerely

The Hon Prof Carmen Lawrence
Chair

12 August 2011