



Information Circular No: **2010/34** Date: 24 November 2010

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TO: SENATORS, MEMBERS AND OTHER BUILDING OCCUPANTS

**Reactivating Parliament House water features**

1 This circular provides an update to all building occupants about reactivation of a number of water features around Parliament House.

2 When new Parliament House opened in 1988, the numerous water features were a wonderful component of the surroundings. Unfortunately, as building occupants will recall, all water features around Parliament House were drained in 2006/07 because of the water restrictions in the ACT.

3 In 2008, to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building, the Forecourt water feature was reactivated using truckloads of treated water from the Lower Molonglo Treatment Plant. This improved the arrival experience for the building but was not ideal for a number of reasons, including cost and source of the water.

4 Commencing in early 2010, the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) launched a project to reactive a number of water features by treating and recycling waste water from the Parliament House "cooling tower". We are pleased to advise that this source of water is now supplying the water features in:

- (a) the Forecourt;
- (b) the courtyard north of the House of Representatives Chamber;
- (c) the courtyard north of the Senate Chamber; and
- (d) the formal garden just to the east of the House of Representatives entrance.



Water Feature near House of Representatives Chamber

5 I wish to thank all of the DPS officers who have worked to achieve these amenity improvements.

6 Our initial assessment is that we have now “fully committed” this source of treated water. However, we will review the situation through the coming summer.

7 Over the last 6 to 8 weeks, the very high rainfall over the ACT region has largely filled local storages. Formal water restrictions for the ACT have been relaxed but have been replaced by “Permanent Water Conservation Measures”, which require approval of the local water authority (ACTEW) before any water features in the ACT are reactivated using tap water.

8 DPS has now commenced discussions with ACTEW and, subject to their agreement, DPS plans to reactivate the water feature at the Ministerial entrance. For water features that are unlikely to be reactivated in the near future, DPS is investigating replacing the current temporary covers with more durable medium-term covers.

Alan Thompson  
Secretary