

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Department of Finance – Proposed Fit-Out of New Commonwealth Parliament Office at One Festival Tower, Adelaide, South Australia

Public Hearing - Questions on Notice

1. **Mr PITT:** Do they get issued a pass, or does any government pass get you access to the building?

Ms Bektas: No, they do get issued a pass. If I can take that question on notice—how many people have got access to the Adelaide CPO—I'll get that information for you before the end of the session.

Answer-

There are 152 pass holders for Adelaide Commonwealth Parliament Offices (CPO).

2. **CHAIR:** Sorry, Ms Bektas. I know we're relabouring this, but I just want to know. If the surge is one day a year, or one day every second or third year, that's a lot of capacity for one day every two or three years. I take you back to my earlier intimation about international visitors. What sort of international visitors have used the Adelaide CPO in the last few years—or used the Brisbane CPO or any CPO, for that matter. Rather than surmise, why don't you give me an idea of the sorts of people who have used Commonwealth parliamentary offices over the last little while, particularly in Adelaide?

Ms Bektas: In Adelaide, we've had the UK foreign secretary, and last week we had the PM from Tuvalu as well. I will have to take the other specifics on notice.

Answer-

Ten international delegations have visited the Adelaide CPO in the past 12 months, from various countries.

3. **Mrs ANDREWS:** Can you provide the committee with a summary of the calculation that was used to determine 15 as the number, if you've taken all of those other factors into account?

Ms Bektas: We will, absolutely. Again, the suites that we have aren't just for the residents; we also have quite a few visiting members who need a suite to work in whilst they're in Adelaide. We need to have that available for them and their staff as well. It accommodates visiting members and guests as well as residents.

Answer-

The Department of Finance has considered current and future needs of modern CPOs, current, past and future expected use including best practice/lessons learnt from other CPOs which has informed the inclusion of 15 suites.

The make up of the 15 suites is:

- 6 Ministerial suites (in previous years up to 5 ministers have been based in SA)
- 4 visiting ministerial suites including high office holders.
- 4 suites for use by Senators permanent, temporary or visiting (generally two suites used per Senator in lieu of an Electorate Office). These suites may also accommodate other visiting parliamentarians.
- 1 suite for former Prime Minister.

4. **Mrs ANDREWS:** If you could provide the basis for the calculation that was used to determine the number of 15, that would be appreciated. If you could also give us an indication of what the utilisation would be at the maximum level. Specifically, how often do you think, or have you factored in, that the maximum number of suites will be used?

Ms Bektas: I'll take that on notice.

Answer-

Occupancy and use of CPOs varies, in the past 18 months there have been over 230 bookings at the Adelaide CPO. It is expected that this level of use will continue.

The Department of Finance does not report on occupancy in CPOs. It is up to the relevant parliamentarian to determine office location of their staff.

5. **Mr DAVID SMITH:** Are any of those leases for those electorate offices expiring sooner rather than later in the next 12 months or 24 months?

Ms Bektas: I don't have that information with me. What I would like to add is that I'm not sure if you've been to the Adelaide CPO recently. I was there—

Mr DAVID SMITH: Never, actually.

Ms Bektas: You've never been? It's a shame we haven't had an opportunity to walk you through it. One of the reasons, as I said earlier, that we are looking for another premises and a new fit-out is that it is actually not fit for purpose, and any of the residents that are in there aren't very happy with the premises generally. In addition to limited resources and in addition to not having the facilities like a cabinet room and a proper media room, it is very poky. It is very small. It is very dark. The windows are quite small. They're not very well sealed. I was there last week and quite cold in the office. There are a lot of reasons why our members in South Australia possibly would not want to go into the current CPO.

Mr DAVID SMITH: I understand that. If there has been consultation with parliamentarians about the move, I would have imagined part of that consultation would have been trying to get an indication of whether the other parliamentarians were interested in moving into the new CPO.

Ms Bektas: I don't have that specific information, as to whether they would like to move in or not.

Answers-

Six leases for current Senator's Electorate Offices in the Adelaide metropolitan area are expiring between August 2025 and March 2026 (near to the new CPO establishment).