

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Australian Flag

Senator: Smith

Question reference number: 49

Type of question: FPA Tuesday 23 May 2017, page 75

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 July 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator SMITH: Are we able to put the issue in some context? How many national flags are issued annually?

Senator McGrath: We might have to take that on notice.

Mr Rush: Yes. I do not know the answer to that.

Senator SMITH: Or issued, as opposed to purchased. For example, as a federal parliamentarian, flags are made available to me, are issued to me. It is hard to track the number of Australians who might be out buying Australian flags from their local merchants.

Mr Rush: We can certainly take that on notice. We would have to source that information from the Department of Finance, who administer the Constituents' Request Program through which senators and members can request flags for constituents.

Senator SMITH: In the parliamentary precinct, how are the Australian national flags disposed of?

Mr Rush: You would have to ask the Department of Parliamentary Services. I am not aware.

Senator SMITH: How are they disposed of outside the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet?

Mr Rush: I am afraid I do not know how our department disposes of our old flags either. I would need to speak to my colleagues in the corporate area.

Answer:

The Department of Finance advises that the total number of flags ordered by Parliamentarians under the Constituents' Request Program for the 2015-16 financial year was 66,591 and from 1 July 2016 to 30 April 2017 was 61,044.

With respect to the flags flown outside the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's premises at One National Circuit, Barton, when they are no longer suitable for display they are disposed of privately, in a dignified way. The flags are disposed of by cutting them into small unrecognisable pieces then putting them in the normal rubbish collection, in accordance with the Australian National Flag protocols published on the Department's website.