

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
—Additional Estimates Hearing—February 2014**

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Executive appointments**

Question: **135**

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 April 2014

Senator HEFFERNAN: I will go to the security of the building, which I think is more important than the swimming pool and the library, but before I do that, could you take on notice if necessary how many new executive appointments you have made since you became the boss?

Ms Mills: Yes. I can certainly get you the total number, but it has been a mix of reduction and new positions created, because I actually changed the structure of the department as a whole.

Senator HEFFERNAN: In changing the structure of the department, could you outline the cost benefit analysis impact on the budget. In other words, by putting on new executive staff did you extend the fixed administrative overheads as opposed to the provision of services or vice versa?

Ms Mills: I can certainly provide you with details of that, but—

Answer

The Secretary commenced with the Department on 28 May 2012. Since commencing, the following changes to the Executive have occurred which resulted in a net increase of five SES positions:

- Positions unchanged: Secretary; Parliamentary Librarian; Assistant Secretary, Research Branch; Assistant Secretary, Information Access Branch; Assistant Secretary, Content Management Branch; and Assistant Secretary, Corporate Services Branch.
- Positions deleted: Deputy Secretary; Assistant Secretary, Building Services Branch; Assistant Secretary, Infrastructure Services Branch; and Assistant Secretary, Projects Branch.
- Positions created: Chief Information Officer; First Assistant Secretary, Building Management Division; Assistant Secretary, Security; Assistant Secretary, Strategic Asset Planning and Performance; Assistant Secretary, Asset Development and Maintenance; Assistant Secretary, ICT Strategy, Planning and Applications; Assistant Secretary, ICT Infrastructure Services; Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary Experience Branch; and Assistant Secretary, Strategy and Performance Management.

These changes were introduced to improve the performance of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) by bringing business areas into clearer functional alignments; increase levels of accountability; drive performance improvements; target specific areas of weakness in ICT, security, heritage and contract management. The changes also addressed the findings of the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee report following their inquiry into the performance of DPS - particularly with regard to leadership weaknesses – and the Roche Review – which led to the transfer of ICT functions from the chamber departments and the Department of Finance to DPS.

These changes have enhanced DPS' service delivery capacity. The additional costs of these SES positions is approximately \$1.3 million per annum. This is partly covered by the transfer of \$22 million in funding for ICT to DPS and more than offset by a range of measurable efficiency and effectiveness benefits including:

- Replacement of high cost, long-term contracts in ICT security with ongoing officers;
- More effective contract negotiation resulting in over \$1 million savings to date;
- Improved security planning and delivery including reduced security incidents;
- More efficient perimeter security arrangements and rostering;
- Improved ICT security protection of the Parliamentary Computing Network;
- Development of a Parliament of Australia ICT Strategic Plan to guide investment and maintain security;
- New arrangements for ICT allocations to Members and Senators resulting in more choice and flexibility and reduced support needs;
- Restoration of the Department's heritage management capacity leading to more appropriate conservation and project management; and
- Improved organisation-wide performance management and reporting.

All new SES positions have been independently evaluated by an assessor recommended by the Australian Public Service Commissioner to confirm their level and span of responsibilities.