

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
—Additional Estimates Hearing—24 February 2014**

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Generic email addresses**

Question: **155**

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

CHAIR: Okay. And what is the policy with respect to generic email addresses? I refer specifically to one here that is in a Weekend Australian advertisement—it has 'oppositionrecruitment@aph.gov.au'. What is the policy with respect to those sorts of email addresses.

Ms Seittenranta: I would have to take that on notice.

CHAIR: Why? Because you do not know the policy?

Ms Seittenranta: That is right.

CHAIR: Really?

Ms Seittenranta: Really.

Answer

It has been DPS practice to provide Senators and Members with up to two email accounts; one for public and one for private use.

For Members, the practice is based on the Members Handbook. For the 44th Parliament, page 21 states:

“To enable Members to conduct their parliamentary and electorate business, they may have access to a maximum of two electronic mailboxes for their internet email accounts. One account will be the office account and will be publicly available. The other account will be a personal account (i.e. not publicised) and for use by the Member”.

For Senators, the practice is based on the instruction approved by the then President, Senator the Honourable Paul Calvert in 2003:

“Electronic mailboxes and E-Mail addresses for Senators”
“a limit of 2 mailboxes per senator, to be used within the guidelines for parliamentary entitlements and with addresses that convey clearly the official nature of parliamentary business, using the senator’s name or part thereof”.

For Senators’ and Members’ staff the standard practice is to provide a single email address using the individual’s legal name. In a similar standard and process to that provided for staff of parliamentary departments. The practice is not to provide generic mailboxes for Senators’ and Members’ staff.

The oppositionrecruitment@aph.gov.au mailbox was created as a third mailbox outside of this guidance. The mailbox has been removed.