

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Additional Estimates Hearing—February 2017

## Answers to Questions on Notice

### Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Inadvertent disclosure of mobile telephone numbers

Question: 102

Written Senator Farrell

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 13 April 2017**

With reference to the inadvertent disclosure of mobile telephone numbers of many parliamentarians and their staff published in the Parliamentarians' Mobile and Telecommunications and Data Services Expenditure reports:

- a) Has the support offered to senators, members and staff, including support to change mobile telephone numbers, been extended to former senators and members and former staff?
- b) If not, why not?
- c) What support is able to be accessed by former senators and members and former staff, including but not limited to the support options outlined in the following table that was provided to senators and members on Thursday 23 March 2017:

Option 2	<i>Change your number to new number and disconnect old number</i>  This can be carried out remotely and does not require a visit to the service desk. The new number will activate on your existing phone. The old number will cease to operate
Option 3	<i>Change your Number on your Smart Phone and have your existing number ported to basic voice/sms DPS provided handset for a period of 6 months.</i>  This will allow you monitor your existing number and allow time to provide your new number to your existing contacts. <b>After 6 months the old number will be disconnected and the second handset returned to DPS</b>
Option 4	<i>Change your Number on your Smart Phone and have your existing number transferred to your own name as a private service</i>  Your DPS provided handset will require a new SIM card. Your existing SIM will be retained by you and can be placed in any phone and the account and account payment for the old number would be transferred to you (this is the same model used when parliamentarians leave office)

### Answer

- a) Advice on the data spill is being provided to former parliamentarians and staff including information to assist change of numbers. However, the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) is unable to provide direct assistance to change numbers.
- b) On request, before a parliamentarian ceases in their office, DPS provides a change of ownership authority which allows them to take their existing phone number to a telecommunications carrier of their choice and sign up for a new service as a private citizen in their own name. DPS does not have any authority to provide any instructions to telecommunication providers in relation to former parliamentarian or staff as the number is no longer the property of the parliament.
- c) DPS is unable to provide direct support to former parliamentarians or staff who have transferred one of the disclosed numbers into their own name. However, DPS is providing advice to the affected

parties and has offered to provide any guidance or additional information if requested. As the number is no longer the property of the parliament, DPS is not able to deal directly with telecommunication providers in relation to a number which is owned by a private citizen. As former parliamentarians and staff are no longer employed by the Commonwealth, DPS is precluded from using Commonwealth funds to provide additional equipment to private citizens. The exception being former Prime Ministers who have maintained mobile numbers which remain under management of the parliament. In these cases DPS is providing the same level of support which is being extended to current parliamentarians.