

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

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Enterprise bargaining**

Question: **67**

Written **Senator Wong**

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

With reference to an email dated 13 February 2017 from the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services, Mr Stefanic, noting that he advised all staff of the result on 22 December 2016 and further stating:

‘I notified the result of the EA ballot and briefly outlined the next steps, which included conducting a survey to understand why the majority of our staff did not vote to accept the proposed agreement. I will consider the information gathered from the survey and determine if further consultation processes (such as focus groups) might be required to explore aspects of the feedback received.’

The 13 February 2017 email went on to state:

‘Development of the survey is currently in progress and I’ll email you again once it is available for access.’

1. Is the Department of Parliamentary Services delaying the negotiations by stating they wish to do a survey and possible focus groups?
2. Why are a survey and focus groups necessary when union and staff representatives have spent the last few years explaining to why the Department of Parliamentary Services proposal would not get voted up?

Answer

1. DPS is not delaying the negotiations by running a survey and possibly running focus groups. It is reasonable for DPS to ensure it gives all employees who are not represented in negotiations an opportunity to give feedback to DPS about the proposed enterprise agreement.
2. DPS employs approximately 940 employees (based on a headcount) and it is estimated only about 200 DPS employees are represented by unions or other bargaining representatives.