

**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: **89**

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) When did the Department of Parliamentary Services first become aware of the breach?
- b) How did the Department of Parliamentary Services first become aware of the breach?
- c) When were senators and members first informed of the breach?

Answer

- a) The Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) became aware of the data spill at approximately 12.20pm on 20 March 2017.
- b) DPS was contacted by a journalist who indicated that cutting and pasting what appeared to be blank cells from the published reports into another document and changing the font colour allowed the data in the reports, which should have been redacted, to be viewed. The journalist was contacting DPS for comment.
- c) An email circular was sent to all parliamentarians advising of the circumstances of the data spill at 7.09pm on 20 March 2017. A further circular was sent to those parliamentarians where any mobile numbers allocated to their offices were found to be disclosed; this circular was sent at 7.55pm on 20 March 2017.