

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2015

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **DPS Visitor Services – Paid Tours of Parliament House**

Question: **54**

Written: **Senator Ludwig**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 July 2015

1. When were paid Parliament House visitor tours first introduced?
2. How many tour guides have held employment during this financial year?
3. What is the combined salary of these tour guides?
4. How many tours, on average does each guide perform per week?
5. What other tasks are tour guides responsible for when not performing Parliamentary tours?
6. How many visitors have purchased a tour during this financial year?
7. How much revenue has been generated by these tours during this financial year?
8. How many visitors have used the free Parliament House service during this financial year?
9. Apart from specialist tour guides, please list the primary role of all other personnel who have provided a paid tour during the last financial year. Please include the number of tours performed by each.

Answer

1. The earliest documentation found relating to regular paid tours being run at Parliament House is from the year 1999.
2. From 1 July 2014 to 31 May 2015, 36 people have been employed as Visitor Services Officers (VSOs). The VSOs do not all work full time; the 36 people equate to an FTE of 14.1.
3. The salary expenditure for the VSOs from 1 July 2014 to 21 May 2015 was \$1,107,202, including overtime and allowances.
4. Tour averages vary throughout the year due to fluctuations in visitation influenced by the sitting calendar, school tour demand and school holiday periods. The Visitor Experience Section develops its rosters based on low, medium and high periods of visitation. The average number of tours performed by each VSO during these periods for this financial year (2014/15) is as follows:

Low period – December to February – approximately 9 tours per VSO per week

Medium period – March to July – approximately 10 per VSO per week

High period – August to November – approximately 11 per VSO per week
5. When not providing tours, VSOs also meet and greet visitors as they enter the Marble Foyer; manage the cloaking service; assist visitors during their visit, for example they help manage the Question Time queue; and, in a 'roving capacity', provide information when asked by visitors during their visit.
6. From 1 July 2014 to 31 May 2015, 3,840 visitors purchased a paid tour.
7. From 1 July 2014 to 31 May 2015, paid tours have generated \$53,551. This revenue directly offsets the cost to deliver the tours.
8. From 1 July 2014 to 31 May 2015, 35,980 visitors have taken a free tour delivered by the VSOs.

9. Specialist paid tours led by staff and experts were offered during festivals and special events during the last financial year (2013-14). The details of these tours are listed in the following table:

Specialist staff	Tours given
<p><i>Floriade</i> (number of tours: 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Landscape Services • Assistant Director Landscape Services • Senior Gardener 	<p>4 2 2</p>
<p><i>Enlighten Festival</i> (number of tours: 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Art, Content and Exhibitions • Wolf Mayer, contracted senior geologist 	<p>2 4</p>
<p><i>Canberra and District Heritage Festival</i> (number of tours: 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Heritage • Heritage and Design Integrity Officer • Senior Heritage Officer 	<p>2 3 1</p>
<p>Note: three tours were offered and two specialist staff were allocated to each tour</p>	