

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee — Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2017

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **PSS staff leaving**

Question: **41**

Written: **Senator Bernardi**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 July 2017

At the 22 May hearing, Mr Cooper mentioned that PSS officers “are all leaving for good reasons. We are probably training them so well that they have been snapped up elsewhere.” What does Mr Cooper base his comment on? Please provide information for the reasons why each PSS officer left PSS/DPS within the last two years.

Answer

Mr Cooper’s evidence at the 22 May hearing was in response to Senator Bernardi’s comment on the PSS attrition rate.

In the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, 14 ongoing PSS officers separated from Security operations. In the period 1 July 2016 to 31 May 2017, 18 ongoing PSS officers separated from Security operations. The majority of separations were age retirements (11) and resignations (13). The remaining eight separations comprise five voluntary retrenchments, one transfer to the APS, one invalidity retirement, and one death. Capture of information regarding reasons for resignation is reliant on exiting staff voluntarily completing an exit statement. Only four of the 13 staff who resigned opted to complete this information; career change and promotion or career advancement were listed as the most influential reasons for their departure.

Mr Cooper commenced with DPS in April 2016. Since Mr Cooper’s commencement with DPS, a number of PSS staff have met with him to discuss their professional development and other aspects of establishing a career in the security sector. Mr Cooper gave a generalised opinion based on anecdotal information including a discussion with a departing PSS officer who made specific comments of his appreciation for the opportunities he had been provided in the PSS that had allowed him to be recruited by a Commonwealth security agency.