

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
—Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—November 2013**

**Answers to Questions on Notice**

**Parliamentary Departments: Department of Parliamentary Services**

Topic: Office Fit-outs

Question No: 127

Written: Senator Ludwig

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 January 2014**

1. Are you responsible for fit outs of offices in parliament house?
  - a. If not, who is?

**Answer:** The Department of Parliamentary Services is responsible for fit outs, refurbishment works, including changes to building fabric and infrastructure, and the provision of Status B furniture.

2. What does a standard parliamentarians office fit out include?

**Answer:** Standard parliamentarian's office fit out areas include reception, office, Senator and/or Member's office, Ministers suite, Minister's office and meeting room.

- a. Please detail, divided by office holder and item (i.e. Leader, minister, MP etc.)

**Answer:**

Senator's or Member's suite

- Reception area
  - Reception desk;
  - 2 seater box lounge;
  - Visitors chairs;
  - Coffee table;
  - Waste paper bin;
  - Desk lamp;
  - Table lamp
- Senator's or Member's office
  - Executive desk;
  - Executive desk chair
  - Mobile desk return;
  - Visitor chairs;
  - 3 seater lounge;
  - Coffee table;
  - Credenza with shelving unit;
  - Cocktail cabinet;
  - Shelving units;
  - Waste paper bin;
  - Desk lamp

Minister's suite

- Reception area
  - Reception desk;
  - Desk return,
  - Mobile desk pedestal;
  - 2 seater box lounge;
  - Tub chairs;

Coffee table;  
Waste paper bin;  
Desk lamp;  
Table lamp;

- Minister's office  
Executive desk;  
Minister's desk return;  
Executive desk chair;  
3 seater lounge;  
Tub chairs;  
Coffee table;  
TV cabinet;  
Wall unit;  
Waste paper bin;  
Desk lamp;  
Table lamp;
- Meeting room (optional)  
Tub chairs;  
Conference table

Furniture for staff of a Senator, Member or Minister is provided by the Department of the Senate, the Department of the House of Representatives or the relevant home department, respectively.

3. Can Members or Senators request additional items or fit outs to their parliamentary office?
- a. If so, since 7 September 2013 how many members or senators have requested additional fit outs?

**Answer:** Yes. a) No requests for this period have been received by the Department of Parliamentary Services from Members or Senators. There have been requests in the Ministerial Wing.

4. How does a member or senator request additional fit outs? Please detail that process

**Answer:** A formal request is made through the Department of the Senate, the Department of the House of Representatives or, in the case of a Minister, through the Department of Finance. Consultation occurs, depending on the nature of the request.

5. What guidelines, rules or regulations determine the assessment of requests for additional fit outs by members or senators?
- a. Please detail them and provide a copy
  - b. Please detail what officers are included in the decision making process, please list their classification level
  - c. If no guidelines, rules or regulations exist, why not?

**Answer:** The Heritage Management Framework, Parliament House Office Furniture Style Guide and the Commonwealth Property Management Framework are used to assess a request.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

6. What officers or office holders are consulted in the determination of requests for additional fit outs by members and senators?
- a. please list their classification levels

**Answer:** Consultation may occur between the parliamentary departments, or with the Department of Finance, as appropriate.

7. Who makes the final decision on requests for additional fit outs requested by members and senators?

**Answer:** The Usher of the Black Rod (SES Band 1) has overall responsibility for Senators' offices within the Senate wing. The Serjeant-at-Arms (SES Band 1) has overall responsibility for Members' offices within the House of Representatives wing. Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by Senior Executive Officers within the relevant department.

8. In the event that a Senator requested an additional fitout than was provided, how would cost break downs be determined?
- a. Materials and construction
    - i. Who would decide what materials would be used and how they would be acquired?
    - ii. Are there any guidelines to determine what materials can be used, including, but not limited to: types of wood used, types of varnish used; any fastening materials used (nails, screws, glue etc.)?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - iii. Are there guidelines that determine how much can be spent on these materials?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - iv. Are there any guidelines to determine where the materials can be purchased?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - v. Are there any guidelines to determine how much it can cost to transport these materials to Parliament House?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - vi. Should further expenditures be required to use the fixtures to their full potential, after the initial approval has been granted, what is the process for applying for this additional expenditure?
    - vii. Are there any guidelines to determine how additional fixtures can be attached or installed onto the wall or into the floor of an office?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - viii. Are there any guidelines to determine any considerations that should be given to costs that would be associated with restoring the office to its prior state, once the Senator no longer required use of the office?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
  - b. Labour
    - i. Are there any guidelines to determine who should be commissioned to construct additional fixtures?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?
    - ii. Are there any guidelines to determine the tender process of additional fixtures?
      1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
      2. If Not, why not?

- iii. Are there any guidelines to determine how much money can be spent on Labour to construct additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - iv. Are there any guidelines to determine how much can be spent to transport contractors to and from the work site?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - v. Are there any guidelines to determine how many people can work on the construction of additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - vi. Are there any guidelines to determine how many hours can be spent by labourers to construct additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
- c. Consultation
- i. Are there any guidelines to determine the selection of people who will be involved in the consultation process?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - ii. Are there any guidelines to determine what was the consultation process will be?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - iii. Are there any guidelines to determine how much can be spent on consultation?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - iv. Are there any guidelines to determine how long this consultation process should last?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
- d. Administration
- i. Are there any guidelines to determine which people should be involved in organising additional fixtures and who they work for (and hence who would be paying their wages)?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - ii. Are there any guidelines to determine how much can be spent on the administration for constructing additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
  - iii. Are there any guidelines to determine how many hours can be spent on the administration required to request additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - 2. If Not, why not?
- e. Maintenance
- i. Are there any guidelines to determine who is responsible for the maintenance of additional fixtures?
    - 1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.

2. If Not, why not?
- ii. Are there any guidelines to determine how much maintenance additional fixtures can receive?
  1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  2. If Not, why not?
- iii. Are there any guidelines to determine how much maintenance can cost?
  1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  2. If Not, why not?
- iv. Are there any guidelines to determine how long additional fixtures are expected to last?
  1. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  2. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the request. Consultation occurs across various departments.

Advice is provided in consultation with the Heritage team and in accordance with the Parliament House Furniture Style Guide on the appropriate design, type and finishes to be used for particular items and for the maintenance and repair of heritage items.

The Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the purchase of goods that cannot be sourced internally or between departments.

#### 9. Alternative Solutions

- a. Are there any guidelines to determine how many alternative solutions need to be considered before approval for an additional fixture will be approved?
  - i. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - ii. If Not, why not?
- b. Are there any guidelines to determine the types of justification that need to be used to approve one option vs alternative, cheaper options?
  - i. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - ii. If Not, why not?
- c. Are there any guidelines to determine who should be involved in making this final decision?
  - i. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - ii. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

10. Are there any guidelines to determine how a decision to request additional fixtures should be made?
  - a. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - b. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

11. Are there any guidelines to determine who can be involved in making the decision to request additional fixtures?
  - a. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - b. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

12. Are there any guidelines to determine what factors they should consider when making the decision to request additional fixtures?
  - a. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - b. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

13. Are there any guidelines to determine who should formally request additional fixtures be constructed?
  - a. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
  - b. If Not, why not?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

14. Are there any guidelines to determine the process used to have the funds for additional fixtures approved?
  - a. How was it determined that this was the appropriate process?
  - b. Are there any guidelines to determine who approves the construction of additional fixtures?
    - i. If so, what are they? Please provide a copy.
    - ii. If Not, why not?

- c. If so, has this process been used to construct any fixtures in any offices?
  - i. If so, Please provide a list of these fixtures.

**Answer:** The Commonwealth Financial Framework and Commonwealth Procurement Rules are applied to the procurement of any goods that cannot be sourced internally or between the parliamentary departments.

The Heritage Management Framework and Parliament House Furniture Style Guide may also be applied for particular requests/items.

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the senior executive officers within the relevant departments.

15. How are additional fixtures funded?
- a. Are there any other ways Senators can fund additional fixtures?
  - b. If so, what other sources can be considered?
  - c. Can a Senator request an additional fixture be placed in their office and fund it themselves?

**Answer:** Any additional fixtures may be funded from the relevant department's appropriation. Depending on the value and nature of the item, funding may be operational or capital.

Consistent with the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, any fixtures in the custody or control of the Commonwealth are considered public property.

Senators do not have the option to fund their additional fixtures.

16. Do all MPs and Senators have access to all of these processes?

**Answer:** Yes.