

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—October 2016

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Restoration of ICT services

Question: 8

Hansard Reference p 17; 17 October 2016

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 December 2016

Senator McALLISTER: Is there a protocol within your area that goes to which user groups or which functions should have priority in the case—

Ms Seittenranta: Yes, the priorities are set in conjunction with the house departments and with DPS's business areas based on their risk assessments and assessments of the criticality of systems. It varies from a sitting day to a non-sitting day. There is quite a detailed list of priorities.

Senator McALLISTER: And that is embodied in some sort of internal policy or protocol?

Ms Seittenranta: It is, yes.

Senator McALLISTER: Is that something you would be able to provide to the committee?

Ms Seittenranta: We can provide it.

Answer

DPS maintains a detailed ICT restoration priority list under our business continuity processes. This list contains the order in which ICT services are restored in the case of a major outage. DPS does not make this list publically available as it contains details related to key systems which could present security concerns if it were available in the public domain.

Systems are designated as Underpinning, Gold, Silver and Bronze and are restored in this order.

The key stages/categories for restoration are:

1. *Underpinning operating systems* required by all ICT systems and those that allow safe operation and occupation of the building, such as power, cooling, ventilation, building management systems, network, security and emergency warning systems, backup systems etc.
2. *Chamber systems (sitting period)* which are required for the operations of both parliamentary chambers.
3. *Communication Systems*- such as email, telecommunication systems, printing
4. *Other Applications* – based on predefined priority order

The recovery plan prioritises the areas where ICT staff will dedicate and direct their time to restore systems following a major outage. This may not reflect the actual order that systems will be restored as some minor systems may restart automatically once the error condition which caused the outage is cleared.

Alternatively some bronze or silver systems may share infrastructure with Gold systems and be reinstated as a by-product of returning Gold systems to operation.