

**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING
21 FEBRUARY 2011 – DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
FURTHER ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Question 3: Broadcasting from Room 1R1

Senator Cormann asked Mr Kenny of the Department of Parliamentary Services questions related to broadcasting from room 1R1 and responses were requested from both DPS and the Senate department. When this matter was raised by Senator Cormann, I wrote to him explaining the situation. A copy of that letter is attached as the Senate department's response to this question. Attachment 1[PDF]

From: [Clerks Office \(SEN\)](#)
To: [Cormann, Mathias \(Senator\)](#)
Subject: Economics Committee - room bookings additional estimates hearings
Date: Monday, 21 February 2011 11:49:29 AM



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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21 February 2011

Senator Mathias Cormann
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Cormann

Economics Committee – room bookings additional estimates hearings

The immediate answer to your question is no, the situation cannot be changed, unless another committee agrees to swap rooms with the Economics Committee. In addition to the advice provided by Mr Hawkins, more information follows:

1. Four estimates committees operate at once, but only two Senate committee rooms, 2S1 and 2S3, plus the Main Committee Room, can best accommodate the needs of senators, departmental and support staff during estimates. Other Senate committee rooms are, for estimates purposes, less ideal, plus most are used to accommodate departmental support staff awaiting their appearance before a committee.
2. The other preferred suitable venue is 2R1, administered by the House of Representatives.

The Senior Clerk's Office made the original booking of 2R1 for estimates hearings on the morning of 24 November 2010 (the sitting pattern was issued on 22 November). It was then advised by the office of the Serjeant-at-Arms that 2R1 was not available on the morning of Wednesday 23 February because the House Regional Australia Committee was booked in 2R1 and would not relocate to another room. House committees have priority for those committee rooms just as Senate committees have priority for Senate committee rooms.

However, the Serjeant's office did arrange for the Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade Committee, which is also scheduled to meet on Wednesday morning, to relocate from 1R1 to 1S4 to allow the Economics Committee to have the larger (1R1) room.

The Clerk Assistant (Committees), Chris Reid, contacted Broadcasting to see if a temporary arrangement for broadcasting from 1R1 could be made. Broadcasting advised that they did not have sufficient staff to operate mobile cameras in 1R1. I understand that three staff members would be required, rather than one in the case of the larger rooms fitted with robotic cameras. Broadcasting also advised that they operate at capacity during sitting weeks, where estimates, both House of Representatives chambers and their committees meet.

3. If there are witnesses scheduled for Wednesday morning where the committee would particularly like to have footage of the hearing, it may choose to rearrange the program slightly to assist this.
4. Audio of the hearing in 1R1 will be available and, as usual, Hansard will be able to arrange rushes of the transcript if required.
5. 2R1 has been reserved for Senate estimates for the whole of the Budget and Supplementary rounds (but there can be no guarantee that we will not be "bumped" by a House committee).

Mr Reid is available to discuss the matter further, if required. I am sorry that the pressure on committee rooms has led to this outcome.

Yours sincerely

(Rosemary Laing)