

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2012

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Desk originally used by Prime Minister Menzies**

Question: **105**

Written **Senator Faulkner**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 6 July 2012

Was the desk modified in any way?

Answer

When Mr Howard started using the Menzies desk in 1997, it was found to have some ergonomic issues—particularly in regard to knee space. Following consultation with the House of Representatives (the asset steward), Joint House Department (JHD) was tasked with finding a solution.

In March 1999, JHD furniture makers produced template 30mm height blocks for trial on the desk. These blocks raised the desk to enable the Prime Minister to slide his chair under the desk.

In April 1999, following the successful trial, the specially designed height blocks were attached to the desk. The blocks were designed to be fully removable.

The temporary blocks were removed before the desk was returned to Old Parliament House.