

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2013

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Storage facilities at PH**

Question: **106**

Hansard Reference **p43, 27 May 2013**

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 July 2013

Senator FAULKNER: ... I have had communication with a couple of former staff of the old Joint House Department, who ... have pointed out to me that at the time of the transfer from Old Parliament House to new Parliament House staff were engaged with developing and finalising an inventory. They noted that there were storage areas at East Block and West Block, and the Hotel Kurrajong, even at the then Hotel Canberra, as well as some form of storage facility on the Kingston foreshore. They have identified a range of old fittings, such as the Queen's dinner setting with gold inlay. ... My interest is in what has happened to these facilities, what has happened to the very important, historic items that one would hope are enclosed in those facilities and whether there exists a formal inventory beyond what we have seen, obviously, at the DPS inquiry.

... at the moment I am interested in the storage areas, whether an inventory is known to exist and, if so, where it is held.

Answer

There were a number of lists prepared for furniture and other items to be moved from the Provisional Parliament House (PPH) to the new Parliament House. A comprehensive inventory titled the "Furniture Re-use Catalogue" is in four large volumes and is dated from late 1986 to early 1987. The Catalogue also contains a Database Printout that indicates where the furniture from the Provisional Parliament House was placed in the new Parliament House. There is no reference to items in storage.

There is correspondence on file from 1988 that refers to "movement of furniture from PPH and annexes to store"; however, DPS is unable to verify the name or location of the "store".

Files from the Joint House Department (JHD) indicate that, from 1991 to 1998, artworks from the Parliament House Art Collection (PHAC) were stored in a JHD facility in the Australian Government Printing Service (AGPS) building on Wentworth Ave Kingston. In 1998, when the AGPS building was transferred to the ACT Government, alternative PHAC storage was required. JHD rented space for the artworks in the National Gallery of Australia storage facility in Hume for a little over two years; eventually moving the PHAC artworks into an Art Store area in Parliament House around March 2001.

There was a facility at Queanbeyan that was made available from the Parliament House Construction Authority that was used to store construction materials and some building components. JHD, and then DPS from 2004, leased this facility until 2008 when a review of the costs resulted in a reduction of items that were not required for future use and the relocation of required items to storage in Fyshwick. The items from this Fyshwick facility were relocated in 2012 to a secure storage area behind the public carpark at Parliament House. There is a list of items stored in the Parliament House storage area. This area is now used by DPS and the two Chamber departments.

While DPS is aware that some staff were temporarily located in East Block, West Block and the Hotel Kurrajong, these locations were not considered "storage areas". DPS is unable to verify the use of the then Hotel Canberra as a storage location.

DPS is able to confirm the ceremonial crystal, cutlery and dinner service (with a gold brocade pattern), that has been used for the Queen is located in (new) Parliament House.