Entity-specific questionnaire – Parliament

1. Telecommunications expenditure figures for 2016-17 financial year

The figures provided by DPS in its response to the general questionnaire (ref: Q25) are presented below.

Please provide updated figures for the 2016-17 financial year (or best estimate of the full year costs).

The updated estimated figures as at 30 June 2017 are as below:

Year	Data ($)	Fixed Voice ($)	Mobile ($)	Internet ($)	Unified Communications ($)
2016-17	**2,129,295**	**370,956**	**507,173**	**63,034**	**n/a**

2. Managing telecommunications usage and expenditure

(a) To what extent are the Executive/Senior management of the Department apprised of total telecommunications expenditure across the Department and at what intervals this information is reported to the Department's Executive? - Ref: Response to Q26(a)

The executives are provided with management reports on monthly basis that include the total telecommunication expenditure for the system and for their respective unit/department.

(b) DPS advises that *'All Parliamentary departments/units and members of Parliament receive a monthly report on mobile expenditure for the month, which the manager/member is required to review.'* - Ref: responses to Q26(b), (e) and (f). Also responses to Q27(c) and (d).

- Please provide details of processes to be completed after this review of the monthly report by the manager/member.

    The unit/department managers and members query and/or dispute any unrecognised usage. Information Technology and Budgets and Risks units investigate with the service provider, obtain any required additional information and initiate appropriate action.

    If applicable, any device found to be not in use is cancelled and any disputed amount is recovered from the service provider.

- Is there any review or follow-up of this process by Departmental senior management?

    Monthly telecommunications reports are sent to two levels of management. The manager of the unit and their supervisor.

(c) DPS advises that Information Services conduct periodic monitoring of mobile data usage – Ref response to Q26(d)

- How regularly, or at what intervals, does this monitoring take place?

  The data usage is reviewed every fortnight and excessive usage is reported to senior management. In consultation with management, those users exceeding reasonable data downloads are contacted and assistance and advice is provided on how they can reduce their data usage.

  PoV has amalgamated to a single data plan the aggregated data usage is currently well under the shared limit so there is currently no financial penalty to PoV for excessive individual usage.

3. Managing the use of Mobile phones

(a) DPS advises that a specific *Mobile Phone Policy for Parliamentary Officers* and an *ICT Systems-Conditions of Use Policy* exist to govern acceptable personal use of ICT equipment - Ref: response to Q27(b)

- Please provide a copy of the policies referred to in the response?

  Please refer to following two attachments:
    o **Attachment 1** - Mobile Phone Policy - Parliamentary Officers
    o **Attachment 2** - ICT Systems - Conditions of Use policy

  Please note that the Mobile Phone Policy applies to Parliamentary Officers only and not to Members or Electorate Officers. The ICT Systems – Conditions of use policy applies to all users.

- Are staff required to formally agree to the terms and conditions of usage of a mobile phone?

  No, parliamentary officers are required to follow all policies of the department under the condition of employment.

- If so, please provide a copy of the agreement/acknowledgement form which staff are required to complete.
  N/A

(b) How is allowable or acceptable personal use defined? Are there thresholds or benchmarks set for what is allowable?

  Personal use of ICT systems is acceptable provided that it complies with this policy. General activities such as web browsing, accessing private email and personal use of social media sites is considered acceptable provided such use is reasonable.

  Downloading or streaming of movies, television, radio, music or games for personal use, or use of the ICT systems for commercial or personal financial gain is unacceptable.
  IT services monitor downloads and usage and can action non-compliance.

(c) Who follows up the recovery of any personal or excessive usage? - Ref: response to Q27(d)

  Excessive personal usage by parliamentary officers is recovered under Part 3 of the Parliamentary Administration Act 2005 following a process involving unit managers and department head. No such power exists in the Act to recover excessive personal use by members or electorate officers.

4. Identifying cost savings in telecommunications

(a) TPAMS2025 – DPS advises it is currently reviewing the WoVG arrangements – Ref: response to Q28(a)

- Please advise when the Department expects this review process to be completed and a decision to be made on future adoption of arrangements offered through the TPAMS2025.

    A recommendation has been prepared and will go to the Presiding officers and audit committee for approval. Sign off is expected in August 2017

(b) DPS advises that Parliament is looking to replace ISDN and PSTN voice circuits with SIP - Ref: response to Q28(b)

- Please provide further explanation of SIP and how it will achieve economies and efficiencies for the Department?

    The use of SIP potentially enables all electorate office and parliamentary precinct phone lines to be aggregated and channelled through a single link to Parliament House from where they will be distributed across the internal data network. This replaces the current and traditional approach of ISDN (typically multi-line services) and PSTN (typically single line) services with a single service.

    Initial discussions and cost modelling show SIP to be less expensive than ISDN and PSTN due to inter-electorate office calls using the data network rather than the telco networks and costs for each number in use being lower.

    This solution using SIP also potentially allows for Members electorate office numbers to be maintained when sites are relocated (reducing number change advertising costs) or redirected to an alternative on-network location in case of an extended outage at an Electorate Office.

    It should be noted that these efficiencies are pursued against a backdrop of continuously increasing demand for telecommunications services and increased costs which are not funded by the normal escalation provided in the appropriation.

- When is it anticipated that this review will be completed?

    It is expected to be completed in August 2017

(c) Has DPS considered or investigated savings in telecommunications expenditure which may be available through:

- VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) technology?
    DPS implemented internal VoIP telephony across all electorate offices and the Parliament Precinct in 2012-13. The use of SIP as outlined above is being explored.

- Unlimited data plans for mobile phones?
    Under TPAMS2025, both Telstra and Optus offer unlimited call plans, but not data plans. These plans are subject to "fair usage" (e.g. unlimited so long as you do not exceed a threshold) which they claim they do not enforce, however this is not clearly defined.

Based on our analysis of current data usage it is more economical to use a data aggregation plan where usage across all our mobiles services is shared. If we find we exceed the total shared data we can either increase the "data bucket" or move high end users across to fair usage plans

- Rationalising billing statements for telecommunications?
  Our mobile data bills have been progressively rationalised over the last 12-18 months. All mobile plans are now on a single rationalised account thus maximising the aggregated data pool. Land lines, mobile services and internet are currently with different vendors making rationalisation impossible.
  The new TPAMS contract is expected to see some rationalisation across these services.

(d) DPS advises that savings targets for telecommunications are '*not appropriate as expenditure varies between Electorate Offices, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Staff*' - Ref: responses to Q28(f) and (g).
Can the Department advise how controls and processes in place to effectively review and manage telecommunications costs varies between:

- Electorate Offices
- Members of Parliament
- Parliamentary Staff

DPS continuously monitors, manages and reports the various elements of telecommunications to members, electorate officers and parliamentary officers. Against that backdrop, the following points are made:

- Department Heads (Clerks and Secretary DPS) are able to direct usage and change operations to achieve changes in the use of telecommunications, achieve savings or recover over expenditure for parliamentary officers and parliamentary departments

- There is no power under the legislation to direct Members to change the manner in which they wish to use the telecommunications infrastructure. No Parliament wide savings targets are set since Members manage their own budgets and no saving targets can be enforced.

- The role of Members and electorate officers is changing in the context of global digitisation and social media to the effect that telecommunications usage is increasing exponentially (refer to PAEC Estimate hearing presentation on Internet usage)

- DPS undertakes initiatives such as review of TPAMS2025 against current usage and spend, pooling of data, cancellation of redundant services etc. on regular basis. These reviews lead to aggregation, re-negotiation of contracts, introduction of new technology, etc. which allow us to buy increases services for the same or lower cost.