Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation

Government Response to Report No. 56 in relation to The Ability to Conduct Electronic Meetings and the Trial of !pads by Committee Members

Background

The Committee referred its Report to the Premier on 13 September 2012 into the above matter.

Standing Order 191(1) of the Legislative Council requires that:

"Where a report recommends action by, or seeks a response from, the Government, the responsible Minister or Leader of the House shall provide its response to the Council within not more than two months or at the earliest opportunity after that time if the Council is adjourned or in recess."

A response is due to be provided, at the latest on 13 November 2012.

The Department conducted an iPad trial in mid-2011 with 15 Members of Parliament, including the members of the Committee on Delegated Legislation.

The Report and recommendations of the trial were noted by the Hon Premier and were then passed to the Presiding Officers of Parliament and all members in January and February this year.

The recommendations were:

- Members fund the procurement of devices and associated services from their electorate allowance.
- The Department would only support Members who purchased iPads for the time being, pending a re-examination of the use of tablets in 2013-14.

In its deliberations on this matter the Committee found:

"Finding 1
The Committee finds that iPads are a useful tool in enabling Members to manage the large number of documents required to be accessed in the course of their work."
“Finding 2
iPad provides greater flexibility than a laptop and is an invaluable communication tool which is ideal for the day to day business of a Parliamentarian.”

The Committee finds that the use of electronic meetings will result in significant cost savings to the Department of the Legislative Council and hence the tax payer.

The Committee’s only recommendation was: “The Committee recommends that the Government provide tablet devices to Members of Parliament to conduct electronic meetings.”

Government’s Response
The Government notes and thanks the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation’s Report which provides positive feedback on its Members’ experience with the iPad for their business use subsequent to the trial conducted by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet last year.

Both the Premier on behalf of the Government and the Presiding Officers of Parliament endorsed the findings of the trial conducted and it has been agreed that Members of Parliament fund the procurement of such devices and associated services from their electorate allowance.

It was also agreed that the Department of the Premier and Cabinet would re-examine the use of tablet devices in 2013-14. This re-examination could also be part of the next technology refresh for Members and their electorate office scheduled at this time.

In the meantime it could be open for the Parliament recognising the usefulness of the iPad to Committee members to supply and provision such devices to support the work of Parliament.”