LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Chief Minister:

Annual Report – Department of the Legislative Assembly

It is noted that the level of satisfaction with IT services reduced by 4% and that shared services for ICT remains an ongoing challenge.

1. Can you please advise how many outdated Lotus Notes databases the Department still relies on? Are there any plans to migrate to modern database software?

2. What contingency is the Department considering in light of possible ICAC reform to assist in having live data of Members' interests on the DLA website? Looking at examples from other Parliaments, such as the Federal Government, Members' pecuniary interests are publically available, current and easy to access.

3. It is noted that the Department is looking at providing advanced search capability for both tabled papers and Parliamentary records for all Assemblies. The current Hansard search capability is extremely limited, whereas other Parliaments have dynamic, user friendly internet sites with strong site navigation and search capability. Does the Department's plan to provide a more effective Hansard search function equal that of other Parliaments?

ANSWER:

1. The Department of the Legislative Assembly (DLA) has 21 Lotus Notes databases in operation as at 15 December 2017. By the end of December 2017 this will be reduced to 6. The Department is working to have this number reduced to 3 by the end of February 2018.

2. As required by a resolution of the Assembly which has ongoing effect, the DLA made the Members' Registrable Interests available online upon being tabled in the Assembly during March 2017, as a PDF download. The provision of live data would require additional resources not available to the DLA at this time.

3. In 2017, the DLA migrated to a new website: *www.parliament.nt.gov.au*. The new website was established:

- To implement the recommendation of the Subordinate Legislation and Publications Committee from the 12" Assembly to deliver electronic access to tabled papers
- To address online access to Assembly records, given that the Lotus Notes database (the repository for parliamentary records) is outdated technology no longer supported by the Northern Territory Government.

The www.parliament.nt.gov.au site replaced a 2001 website.

The DLA was able to adapt the "look and feel of the whole of Northern Territory Government www.nt.gov.au platform with a budget of $127,250. It was a "like for like" replacement.

The new website platform is not custom built for Assembly specific requirements and cannot provide seamless access to 43 years of parliamentary records including full text transcripts, debates, minutes and questions. The *nt.gov.au* platform does not offer database functionality or an advanced search function.

To address these shortcomings, the DLA is in discussion with the Northern Territory Library about the increased use of its *Territory Stories* database as a repository for tabled papers and Parliamentary records.

Territory Stories already houses and stores the parliamentary records for the 1st to the 5th Assemblies, in addition to documents from other Northern Territory Government Departments.

The *Territory Stories* database has advanced search functionality and the Northern Territory Library has indicated a willingness to customise the design of the ParliamentNT Collection that forms part of Territory Stories to meet user requirements.