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# **Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, November 27, 2014**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Joe Preston**



## Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Thursday, November 27, 2014

•(1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC)):** This is meeting number 59 of the procedure and House affairs committee. We're here today pursuant to Standing Order 81(5) on supplementary estimates (B).

We have some great friends in the room today. It's always good to have our House administration friends with us.

Speaker Scheer, I understand you have an opening statement for us, so we'll go from there.

If you could introduce the guests who are with you, then we'll ask you some really hard questions.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Speaker of the House of Commons):** Thank you. It's always a pleasure to be in front of my favourite committee. Thanks for having me.

[Translation]

I am pleased to be here today, along with Mr. Marc Bosc, Acting Clerk of the House of Commons, and Mr. Mark Watters, Chief Financial Officer.

We are also joined by the other members of the House Administration's executive management team: Mr. André Gagnon, Acting Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons; Mr. Soufiane Ben Moussa, Chief Technology Officer; Mr. Louis Lefebvre, Director, IT Operations and Services; Mr. Richard Denis, Deputy Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel; Mr. Pierre Parent, Chief Human Resources Officer; and Mr. Kevin Vickers, Sergeant-at-Arms.

[English]

Today I will be presenting the House of Commons supplementary estimates (B) for 2014-15. These proposed supplementary estimates for the House of Commons total \$15,913,000. I would like to note at the outset of this discussion that all items included in the supplementary estimates (B) were presented to and approved by the Board of Internal Economy.

For reference purposes, you have received the document showing the appropriations. The first line item is for \$10,307,000 in funding in accordance with the carry-forward policy. This policy, which has been in place since 1995, allows members, House officers, and the House administration, to carry forward lapsed funds into the new fiscal year up to a maximum of 5% of the previous year's main estimates voted authorities. The ability to carry funds forward increases budgetary flexibility, reduces the pressure to spend at year-end, and provides an incentive to underspend budgets. The House of

Commons carry-forward policy is similar to that of the federal government, except that for the House of Commons, unlike the case for federal departments, funding for the carry-forward must be obtained through the supplementary estimates and not from the Treasury Board.

[Translation]

The second item allocates \$3,820,000 towards enhancing transparency through the *Members' Expenditures Report*.

Further to approving quarterly reporting and an enhanced reporting format for 2014-2015, at its meeting of April 7, 2014, the board decided that members' travel expenses incurred under the travel points system, as well as hospitality expenses, be reported in a manner similar to the ministerial-style proactive disclosure used by the Government of Canada.

As a result, the second-quarter report of 2014-2015, which will be published in December of this year, will include the names of travellers (except for dependants), the departure dates (except for regular travel points), the points of departure, the destinations, the purposes of travel, the numbers and types of points used, the total costs of transportation, as well as accommodation and per diem expenses for all regular and special trips charged against the travel points system.

For hospitality expenses, the report will include the dates, types, purposes and locations of the events, the suppliers, the number of guests, and the costs of the events. All subsequent quarterly reports will also contain these disclosures.

•(1110)

[English]

Increasing the disclosure of travel and hospitality expenses to the standards currently used by ministers involves significant system changes and business process improvements for members, their staff, and the House administration. The additional funding will also be used for resources to expand claim processing and verification, as well as for monthly and quarterly reconciliation processes, to respond to additional inquiries from members' offices, and to provide more assistance and training to members and their staff.

Increasing transparency has been a priority of the Board of Internal Economy for some time, and the board remains committed to finding ways in which we can continue to improve.

The next line in the amount of \$1,616,000 involves severance pay for some House administration employees, more specifically the procedural clerks and analysis and reference group, which is the last bargaining unit to reach an agreement. In the summer of 2011, the Treasury Board informed the House of Commons of its intention to eliminate the accumulation of severance benefits for voluntary departures. It requested that all federal departments, crown corporations, and separate employers, including the House, address this issue with their staff. The board accordingly decided to adopt the same approach to voluntary departures.

[Translation]

This decision eliminates the accumulation of severance benefits, and presents employees with three options: to immediately cash out their severance, to retain the previously accumulated weeks of severance to be paid out upon resignation or retirement, or to cash out a portion of severance with the remainder to be paid upon departure.

As such, additional funding was sought through the supplementary estimates (B) in order to account for the cash-out of these benefits. As per Treasury Board directives, unlike federal departments, funding for severance cash-outs for the House of Commons must be obtained through the supplementary estimates

[English]

The final line item is funding of \$170,000 for the 24th annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum. The APPF is a conference for parliamentarians representing the 27 member countries of the Asia-Pacific region as well as parliamentarians from eight observer countries and members of the diplomatic corps of these countries.

According to an established rotation, Canada was expected to host in 2017, 20 years after hosting its last annual meeting. However, given that many events are planned across the country for the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017, Canada was able to negotiate with other member countries to allow a deviation from the normal rotation. As a result, Canada was invited to host the conference in Vancouver in 2016. This conference is an excellent opportunity to showcase Canada, foster parliamentary diplomacy, and advance Canadian objectives internationally. Funding in 2014-15 will be used to initiate the planning process for the 2016 conference.

[Translation]

This concludes my overview of the House of Commons supplementary estimates (B) for 2014-2015.

At this time, we would be happy to answer your questions.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With such a thorough speech, I'm sure there are no questions from the members, but we'll check just to be sure.

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** It's always a pleasure to be able to question the Speaker.

Thank you very much for your presentation.

I have one question in two parts. Are there any anticipated programs or additional expenditures that might occur later in this fiscal year that haven't been contemplated in these supplementary estimates? I'll give you two specific examples. One, Mr. Speaker, in light of the current environment and some of the stories that are gripping the media and much of Parliament on anti-harassment policies that may be yet to be developed and implemented, you had made mention that you, perhaps, have services of the House that would be made available to all members who may wish to avail themselves of such services. Is there a cost implication—I assume there would be—to the services that you would be offering and has that been captured in these supplementary estimates?

• (1115)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Sorry, what was the last thing?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Are the costs associated with any services offered to members who may wish to avail themselves of such services regarding harassment in the workplace in the supplementary estimates?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I should mention that the policy I referred to is an existing policy that the House administration has, at the moment, for House administration employees, so it's not part of the supplementary estimates. I don't think, depending on their usage, there would be additional cost because it's already here. It's already available for the House administration employees. That's what's been made available. It's an existing program.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** So no existing costs are necessary to be identified here.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** No.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** The second one I assume would be, potentially, an increased cost, and that's on security. We've heard now that there will be an amalgamation of security, a unification of security forces as opposed to the previous system. Are those costs or anticipated costs captured in these estimates?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** As I've stated in the House and in other forums, there is a very comprehensive review being done right now, not only of the incident on October 22 but also of the overall security posture on the Hill. As those reviews are conducted and as the security officials identify areas where improvements need to be made or changes need to be made, there are some costs associated with that. It's my understanding that those changes, some of which have already been approved by the board, won't be included in the supplementary estimates (B) but they will be in the supplementary estimates (C).

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** When do we expect that? February-March?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Yes.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** A question we always have for you when you appear before this committee is this. Are there any anticipated savings? You have always, in previous presentations, been able to identify some of the cost savings that you've been able to implement.

Are you confident that will continue for the remainder of this fiscal year and the upcoming years, and have you been able to identify any potential areas for cost savings?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Yes. This is something I spoke to a couple of times in the mains and in previous fiscal years, but the Board of Internal Economy was invited to match the strategic and operating review and identify savings.

We were very successful. We worked with all members of the board and House administration to come up with savings. The fiscal period 2014-15 is the final year of the three-year strategic and operating review program. It saw the House identify a 7% budget reduction and a \$30-million operating expenditures reduction.

In addition, we've noticed significant savings in travel costs with the expanded use of the flight pass system. Members have been using that now for...Is this our second year?

**Mr. Mark G. Watters (Chief Financial Officer, House of Commons):** Since June, yes. On the corporate side, since June.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** We've expanded that to include what's called the corporate flight pass, which sees even more significant savings. It's bulk purchasing, in essence, by the House of Commons with the airline provider.

The advantage of making those bulk purchases at the beginning is that we get a significantly reduced cost. Purchasing flights one at a time à la carte, as when you and I were first elected, versus the House administration doing it in bulk has really seen those costs come down.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I don't know the exact cost savings on flights alone. Have you got any figures that you can share with us before the introduction of the flight passes, for example, what the costs were, average costs for a fiscal year, as opposed to what the costs are now just on travel?

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** When we did the strategic review, our budgeted savings were estimated to be about \$5.5 million on flight passes with the introduction of corporate flight passes. Another factor that we're noticing is that there are fewer travel points that are being used.

Last year and so far this year, the trend is about a 10% drop in usage of travel points. With the introduction of corporate flight passes in June, which basically allows us to buy 200 segments at a time, so the discounts are quite significant, so far this year we're trending at about another \$7 million in savings.

I'm hesitant to quantify that as a final number because those numbers are based on the data that we had until the end of September. But certainly, if the trend continues, when we're looking at the main estimates with the board next year, we will be factoring another significant reduction to the statutory vote for travel.

• (1120)

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** How much time, Chair?

**The Chair:** You have about 30 seconds.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I'll cede my time, then, to my colleagues in the opposition.

**The Chair:** Madame Latendresse, you get an extra 30 seconds. Mr. Lukiwski gave you a gift today.

[Translation]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP):** That's very kind of Mr. Lukiwski, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Scheer, I thank you for being here today. We are always happy to have you.

I will pursue the topic of security brought up by Mr. Lukiwski.

Obviously, there are costs to integrating the services. Do you believe we'll see savings in the long run? Do you think this merger will help improve security, as well as be more economically efficient?

[English]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I can say with confidence that the unification of the security forces inside the Hill will lead to some savings on the administrative level. It has been something that was identified by the Auditor General, not only as something that would lead to cost savings but also something that would enhance security in general.

Of course, as we identify other aspects that we want to implement to make the precinct more secure, those will have a cost. The idea is that we may save some on the administrative side and behind-the-scenes side, but there will be costs associated with increasing the security posture on the Hill, whether that's through personnel, material, or other things. Physical changes, those all come with costs, so there will be increased spending on those items.

[Translation]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** There are changes right now that involve House of Commons security guards, in particular. I know many of the guards are putting in a lot of overtime and feeling a lot of pressure. Do we intend to help them out with their mental well-being? Can we at least make sure they get the rest they need to function properly? Is that being taken into account?

[English]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I could ask Mr. Vickers for some of the very specific aspects of what the security department offers its employees.

[Translation]

**Mr. Kevin Vickers (Sergeant-at-Arms, House of Commons):** Mr. Chair, since the events of October 22, we have prepared various options for our members. For example, several of them took leave so they could rest up properly.

We also have administrative policies here, at the House of Commons, including the Employee Assistance Program. They have access to those, but I am convinced that our members are in good health. If they did require some assistance, it would be at their disposal.

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Very well. I am pleased to hear it. Since they are looking after us, we want to take good care of them also.

I have a question about the increased number of members of Parliament under Bill C-20, adopted two years ago. Do you have a better idea of the costs involved in adding 30 seats to the House of Commons?

[English]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** We do. It's relatively simple to work out because every member outside the National Capital Region gets the same entitlement to the travel points system and there are certain usage patterns that we can predict based on that. Of course the members' operating budgets, the MOB's, are set for all members. So we do have those numbers and they will be coming through in the main estimates for next year.

There will be a \$25-million addition to the mains, when it's fully implemented.

• (1125)

[Translation]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Would the House be ready in case of a spring election? Would the House be ready to seat 338 mps? Will the system be set up?

**Mr. Marc Bosc (Acting Clerk of the House of Commons, House of Commons):** Yes indeed, Ms. Latendresse, steps were taken over two years ago to begin to prepare the House for that. Our carpenters have managed to develop, with great imagination I might add, a proposal that was submitted to the Board of Internal Economy, and accepted.

The new seats will therefore be installed during the dissolution of Parliament. Our solution is reasonable, financially-speaking. I remind you that we will be in this building for only a few more years, before moving to the West Block. We wanted to find a workable solution for the current premises without generating too many costs. Your own committee chair was part of a focus group that tested a mock-up of the new seats.

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Thank you very much.

How much time do I have left, Mr. Chair?

[English]

**The Chair:** They wanted to see if small people like me would also fit in these new seats we're going to use. A few of my same-sized colleagues and I tested it and it's very beautiful. It will work for us very well.

I'm sorry; I'm using your time. You're at six minutes. You have one and a half minutes, when you count the extra time from Mr. Lukiwski.

[Translation]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I understood the explanations pertaining to the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum. These funds are only to be used to prepare to host in 2016. They are not slated for the forum that will take place this year, is that correct?

**Mr. Marc Bosc:** That is correct. Those funds will allow staff to begin to prepare, which includes site visits, for example.

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** That is fine.

That is all I wanted to know.

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Great.

Mr. Lamoureux, I'm giving you lots of time today, so take what you need.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Oh, a bonus.

I want to pick up on a couple of points. I'm glad, Mr. Speaker, that you made reference to security. Yes, there is a net benefit to our amalgamating into one security service, but there's no doubt that there's a need for us to enhance the amount of security on the Hill. That's obviously a fair assessment.

What is our actual total budget for security today?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** It's approximately \$22 million in the main estimates.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** When you look forward, do you anticipate that we will have a minimum of \$22 million going forward? I think there's a certain degree of expectation that we can learn a lot from this. There may have been some deficiencies for which we'd be able to compensate going forward.

Are you anticipating an increase in the security budget?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Already a couple of items have been approved by the board. Some of those are one-time costs associated, for example, with arming the constables. Some of them are ongoing costs. Those costs that are associated with the increased measures will include one-off spending, such as for equipment or materials that are provided. But things that relate to, say, training, or for example on the security side, some of the HR issues that may lead to longer shifts and a unified force will be incorporated into the main estimates.

So yes, the overall picture in the main estimates, as these measures are implemented, will change.

**Mr. Marc Bosc:** Mr. Lamoureux, I would just add that because of the announcement made by the Speaker on Tuesday regarding a unified force, much needs to be worked out with our colleagues on the Senate side. We're planning at an administrative level to meet and discuss those kinds of details, financial and otherwise, that need to be worked out to make this unification work at an administrative level. Necessarily the Senate has a security budget and we have a security budget, and both of them have money assigned to them, so that's part of the discussion.

• (1130)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Pardon me, because I'm learning. I realize that you don't want to disclose some information, and I can appreciate that, but I have personally noticed a stronger presence, for example, of RCMP officers on the Hill.

How is that taken into consideration? Is it a part of your budget? Is it something that's just provided through the RCMP? I don't quite understand that aspect.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** The RCMP is responsible for security on the grounds, for everything outside the doors. After the events of October 22, I made a request for an increased presence. As you mentioned, you can notice that at entry points to Centre Block there are now armed RCMP personnel. That will be reflected in the RCMP budget.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Right.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** As Marc mentioned, we're very pleased internally that we were able to unify the two forces. A lot of good work was done by counterparts on the Senate side and members of the board subcommittee on security. We have now tasked our respective administrations to make it happen. As Marc mentioned, there are many things to do associated with this, everything from HR to certain systems, and that's all being done.

I think it's safe to say that the direction that was given from the Speaker and from the Board of Internal Economy to the House administration, and the same thing on the Senate side, was that we want this accomplished in short order. As this happens, we'll be able to speak more to it, but right now it's being ironed out at that level.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** But as far as, let's say, the RCMP are concerned, are they incorporated into this particular budget? It's separate, is it?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** It's separate. As Marc said, the House has a budget and the Senate has a budget. As the forces are amalgamated, we're looking at the most effective way to roll those budgets together. But that's separate from what the RCMP provides.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** If you take a look at the bigger picture, it's well in excess of \$22 million. It's probably closer to \$50 million, but that would be a pure guesstimate. The \$22 million we're referring to is just in-House security.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** What the House of Commons has to seek in the estimates is \$22 million.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Can you very briefly provide a sense of overtime versus new hires? Is the amount of overtime something the board monitors, and do you then say, given the amount of overtime, we need to hire more? How do you balance that?

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

A large amount of the overtime that's spent right now is because of the need to train the officers on the use of firearms. That's something you can't hire other people to do. You need the officers who don't have the training to do the training, and they have a job to do here as well, so they're having to do that in overtime hours.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Then averaged out, year over year, overtime would be relatively about the same.

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** It would have been, up until probably October 22 when our lives changed and the whole framework changed.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Yes.

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** Maybe the sergeant can answer.

**Mr. Kevin Vickers:** Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Watters has covered it very well. It's taking trainers, who would normally be doing another function, off the floor to train our constables with the firearms. This has certainly impacted our operations and obviously increased the overtime until we get everybody trained up.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** That's great stuff. I appreciate that. It's wonderful to see you here, Mr. Vickers. I trust you might get a Christmas bonus or something of that nature.

Having said that, I did want to go into one of the lines, "Acquisition of machinery and equipment, and land buildings and works". I don't quite understand. Are we acquiring additional lands? I don't want to read anything into it. It's on page 2 of the document.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Do we have the same document?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** I just don't understand what that line really is.

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The bulk of the items in personnel are obviously for salaries and for the statutory costs for EBP. The main item in the submission for supplementary estimates (B) is the carry-forward. We do an allocation of that line across different standard objects. It's just a temporary allocation that we make across the standard object lines, and the bulk of that pertains to the carry-forward that members and House officers have. It will not necessarily be spent in those lines, Mr. Chair, it's just that for the purposes of public accounts we need to make an allocation across standard objects.

According to a historical profile of how funds are spent, we use those averages and we apply those funds, but they will not necessarily be spent that particular way.

• (1135)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** It doesn't have anything to do with any of the construction we see on the Hill or anything of that nature.

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** No. That's all funded by Public Works.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** That's wonderful. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lamoureux. You win the prize for finding the one thing that might stump people today, so that's good.

We're moving to the second round. Mr. Lukiwski, you have four minutes, please.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Just a general comment, Chair, before I begin. I would suggest to you that if there's one member of this entire House to whom you never want to use the phrase, "Take all the time you need", it might be my friend and colleague, Mr. Lamoureux—just as a caution.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** The chair recognizes that. Yes, thank you.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** All kidding aside, this question is out of curiosity, frankly. It's on travel points. I've been here 10 years. I've never come close to using 64 travel points. I know there's no cost if you don't use them, obviously. Has there ever been a time when anyone has used all 64 travel points?

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** Yes, and some members have gone over 64. When that happens, it's a personal expense for the member. Very few do, but it has happened. As you know, the leaders of the opposition parties have access to 80 points, and most of them come close to using them as well. There's potential for that.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** It's understandable for leaders of the opposition, as for any leader of any political party, to do a lot of travel.

Again, I'm curious, even though very few people have exceeded 64—we certainly don't need to know who those people would be—what would an average member's travel point allocation be?

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** On average the usage is around 44.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Mark G. Watters:** When you think there are about 27 sitting weeks, a lot of that is back and forth to the constituency, and then the balance would be special trips. There are 25 of those, so on average 15 or so of those might be used; 44 is the number we work with. When we do an annual report to the board on the use of points, that number comes out as either the median or the average.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you very much. I have a last question, if I have a moment, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate the fact that the unification of security forces is a work in progress. Would we be able to—and we being this committee—get status update reports from you? I say that because I've been a member of this committee for close to 10 years, and the concept of unification and security has been one that this committee has embraced for all of that time. It has never happened until now. Unfortunately it took an incident such as October 22 to get us to that point. It's certainly a move in the right direction. I think it's the right thing to do.

I would certainly like to know the progress of that unification program. Would we be able to receive such updates from you, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Certainly I can commit to that. Obviously once everything is ironed out from the administrative level and it's put into place, there will be an announcement for members and people in the parliamentary community that it has taken place, but absolutely, as we move closer to getting there, we can provide an update. Of course we'll have the opportunity in the mains as well to come back. We'll probably have a better idea of what the merging of the two budgets would look like at that point as well.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Chair:** Mr. Scott, you have four minutes, please.

**Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks very much for being here, everyone.

I just want to follow up on what Mr. Lukiwski was asking about. I think when Tom referred to unification of forces on the Hill, he might have been referring specifically to the two security services. Of course, there's an ongoing discussion about a broader unification. I'm wondering if any kind of financial planning is taking place in parallel to any discussions that may be taking place about whether a broader unification is needed, not just inside the building, so to speak, but also almost in sort of a Capitol Hill police approach.

Were that to take place and a dedicated service be part of a broader parliamentary precinct than we currently have, let's say an expanded parliamentary security force moving out, do you have any thoughts about how that would look financially? Would that all be assumed by

Parliament? Would somehow or other that get partly put over to a public security budget?

• (1140)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I think it might be a little bit early to put down hard numbers on that. Right now we have been able to accomplish the unification, as we mentioned. That was something that has long been identified. There are several reviews going on at this time, and those reviews and those analyses will spark more conversations about the best way to move forward. Until that happens and those reviews and reports come back, any kind of discussion would be kind of theoretical, hypothetical, and not based on information coming from experts in the field.

We went after what we could accomplish. We kind of achieved the achievable, something that had already been identified as necessary to do regardless of what other changes were made on the Hill. That's what we're proceeding on. It's an incremental approach. We control what goes on in the building. It's something we can more easily do because it did take some back and forth on it. Now that we've accomplished that, we'll be in a better position when the reports come in to look at these other areas that you brought up.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** So just to be clear, it's premature to be talking about what those costs would be because the actual planning on that is not sufficiently advanced.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I think it's safe to say that we'd like to see what the reports come back with and what the recommendations are, bring those to the boards, have a larger discussion, allow Kevin and his team look at them, and then proceed from there. We're waiting on those reports to be completed.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** My only comment would be that it was kind of a forensic question about whether the budget would be the House of Commons, Parliament as a whole, or broader public security. I guess the point would be that it doesn't really matter, that whatever is necessary to do is necessary to do, and it's all coming from one big coffer.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Currently the things the RCMP spends money on comes from the RCMP, Public Safety, and the things that the House of Commons does.... That's what exists now, but going into a different structure or looking at other things, it might be different. It would depend on what Parliament wants to be responsible for, and what the RCMP feels that it needs to do to do its job. They have a different focus on some aspects like the anti-terrorism units, things like that, which are slightly different from what the House has. Those will all be negotiated out and worked out. I think you touched on the key point that there is a strong recognition to work with all the partners on the Hill, while remaining an open precinct, to create a safer precinct.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I recognize that this may be a question that you can't or shouldn't answer, but I think Mr. Watters mentioned—no, you did, Speaker—that while there may be savings with the unification of the internal Senate and House of Commons security, there may well be additional spending on other enhancements. I'm assuming that you can't really talk about what those enhancements would look like, but are there categories you could tell us about versus specifics?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Sure. Some of it we will be able to. Some of it will come through in various reporting mechanisms. I would say, in terms of broad categories, it's personnel and materiel. Those would probably be the two biggest, the physical security. Whether we're looking at enhanced security measures at entrances that are more structural in nature versus extra personnel on the job, deployed at any given time, training, those types of things. Physical infrastructure versus human resources spending, those would be the two broader categories. From there, there are slight differences.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I would also like to echo what my colleague, Alexandrine Latendresse, said in French in a conversation with Mr. Vickers, that indeed it's good to hear that attention is being paid to the well-being of the security forces. As she put it so well, they take good care of us, so it's important that we take good care of them. Thank you for that.

• (1145)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I do appreciate those comments. I think October 22 was a very difficult day for everyone on the Hill. I know the feedback I received was that the House of Commons constables provided a very high level of professional service, not only in keeping us safe but also throughout the day, dealing with individual members, their staff, visitors on the Hill. The feedback I received from people who were on the Hill that day was that they very much appreciated the role House of Commons constables played in helping keep everyone calm and secure. I appreciate that.

I can speak to a few things in terms of changes. We have installed security posts outside Centre Block to conduct the preliminary screening of visitors before they enter the building.

We've eliminated tours during caucus meetings. That was identified as something that would assist the constables, having fewer people moving around at any given time during that sensitive timeframe. We've also reduced the size of tours, again to reduce the number of people moving around the building that guards have to deal with.

We've locked the doors of all the buildings after business hours. We've also requested some funding for enhanced security measures in constituency offices. That was identified as a potential area the House wanted to turn its attention to. I think a communiqué has already gone out that members can have an assessment of their constituency office done, and if they want to make some enhancements in terms of alarms and automatic locking doors and things like that, the House of Commons central budget would cover it.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have no one else on my speakers list.

Mr. Christopherson, would you like to speak?

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** If I may, I have one quick question.

During my time at Queen's Park I served on a speaker's security committee to do exactly what we're doing here now, and that's to review all of the security. One of the things we did was visit here on Parliament Hill.

Again, we had the same issue, though instead of the RCMP it was OPP and the Queen's Park security people. But there's a third component to that. In that case it was the Toronto Police. As we saw on October 22, when all hell breaks loose, all three components are now moving parts and interacting together.

Number one, can you speak to how well that worked or didn't work on October 22? Secondly, what's some of the thinking is right now about incorporating that third piece. If you're dealing with something happening here on the Hill, you can't leave it to only the Hill security folks inside the building and the RCMP on the immediate grounds. It has to involve the Ottawa city police because we're now into city streets, city property right outside the Hill. Could you comment on that sort of third component of the security pieces that come to bear to protect the Hill?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I'll invite Kevin to speak about some of the specifics. I do know that there's a strong partnership between the Sergeant-at-Arms' office and all the entities you've mentioned. I know that over the years, as incidents happened, they've worked to enhance that.

Kevin, perhaps you want to speak to how that actually operates.

**Mr. Kevin Vickers:** Times are changing in 2014, Mr. Christopherson. I was just over to Israel to attend an Israeli national police conference on these types of issues.

It seems to me we always think there are one, two, three, or four services doing the Hill. In fact the Americans, for example, are finding that's the reality no matter where they are. All the different agencies—the FBI, Homeland Security, and the municipal police force—have mandated roles.

Now, instead of that old question, “Who's in charge?”, the trend in security is shifting to an emergency management cell, where you have the police leaders of each respective agency in a cell working together and being able to respond.

On that day in question our director general of security, Pat McDonnell, very shortly established very close relationships with the Ottawa city police, who were also allowed to come into the building. The RCMP and the RCMP command site out on St. Joseph were all activated very quickly. When you get into these types of situations it's what we term now a management cell where you have the leaders of each jurisdiction next to one another working in collaboration in a seamless manner and dealing with these issues.

• (1150)

**Mr. David Christopherson:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have no one else on the speakers list. I thank you for coming.

Referring back to October 22, you're absolutely right. We had acquaintances with some of the constables up until that day. I think some of us have formed lifelong friendships with some of them now. I thank not only the security force, but the whole precinct for how it reacted on that day, and the reaction since has been fantastic.

I thank you for coming and answering our questions today. It was pretty painless today.

We will suspend for a couple of minutes. We'll go in camera, as a committee. *[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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