

## Output Group 2—Table Office

### Outputs

Provision of programming and procedural support to the Senate.  
 Processing of legislation and maintenance of related information systems.  
 Preparation and maintenance of the record of proceedings of the Senate, records of current and outstanding business, and statistical information on the business of the Senate.  
 Processing of tabled documents and maintenance of safe custody of Senate records, and provision of a document distribution and inquiries service to senators, staff, government departments and the public.  
 Provision of secretariat support to the Appropriations and Staffing Committee, Selection of Bills Committee and Senate and Joint Publications Committees.

	Performance indicators	Performance results
Quality	<p>The degree of satisfaction of the President, Deputy President, committee members and senators, as expressed through formal and informal feedback mechanisms, with the quality and timeliness of advice and support and the achievement of key tasks.</p> <p>Key business documents are accurate and of a high standard.</p>	<p>The 2005 survey of senators confirmed high levels of satisfaction among senators who had used the services of the Table Office, with the quality of advice and support. Informal feedback (for example, in comments made during debates in the Senate) confirmed senators' high levels of satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of advice and support and the achievement of key tasks.</p> <p>Business documents remained of a high standard, and the 2005 survey confirmed senators' very high levels of satisfaction with them.</p>
Timeliness	<p><i>Order of Business</i> finalised and distributed prior to sittings and advice prepared proactively or as required.</p> <p>Running sheets available as soon as practicable; proposed amendments distributed in accordance with requirements; schedules of amendments and prints of bills available in accordance with predetermined requirements.</p> <p><i>Journals of the Senate</i> for the previous day and <i>Notice Paper</i> for the current day available prior to sittings; statistical and other documentation available as required or in accordance with predetermined requirements.</p> <p>All inquiries answered and documents stored or distributed on a timely basis.</p> <p>Meetings held, documentation provided and reports produced within timeframes set by the Senate or the committee, as relevant.</p>	<p>The <i>Order of Business</i> was distributed in advance of sittings in all cases.</p> <p>Advice was given proactively or as required.</p> <p>Running sheets were available in all cases to assist consideration of legislation.</p> <p>Amendments were distributed in accordance with requirements.</p> <p>Schedules of amendments and prints of bills were available in all cases to meet requirements.</p> <p>The 2005 survey confirmed that 87% of senators who responded were satisfied or very satisfied with the processing of legislation and the provision of running sheets.</p> <p>The <i>Journals of the Senate</i> and the <i>Notice Paper</i> were available prior to each sitting.</p> <p>Statistical summaries were published at the end of each sitting week in accordance with agreed timeframes. More comprehensive statistics were published on the website after each sitting fortnight.</p> <p><i>Business of the Senate</i> was prepared and tabled twice in the year in accordance with agreed timeframes. Requests for statistics were responded to promptly.</p> <p>All documents were distributed in a timely manner, and 95% of inquiries were responded to within five minutes. Of the senators who used the inquiry and documents distribution services, 94% were satisfied or highly satisfied, and none was dissatisfied.</p> <p>Committee meetings were held, and documents and reports were provided, within agreed timeframes.</p>
Quantity	<p>As required to facilitate proceedings; quantities meet predetermined distribution requirements or are accessible electronically or both.</p>	<p>The 2005 survey indicated continued high levels of satisfaction among senators provided with documents by the Table Office.</p> <p>All distribution and electronic publishing targets were met.</p>

## Analysis

The Table Office is divided into three functional areas, as shown in Figure 5. It is led by the Clerk Assistant (Table), who also performs duties as a clerk at the table in the Senate chamber, as do the two directors.

Figure 5 Elements and responsibilities of the Table Office

<p><b>Executive and Programming</b>  <i>Rosemary Laing, Clerk Assistant</i>                      Procedural advice                      Business programming                      Production of the Senate <i>Order of Business</i>                      Secretariat services to the Selection of Bills Committee</p>	
<p><b>Legislation and Documents</b>  <i>Rosa Ferranda, Director</i>                      Processing of legislation                      Processing and custody of Senate records                      Inquiries and document distribution services                      Secretariat services to the Publications and Joint Publications Committees</p>	<p><b>Journals and Notice Paper</b>  <i>Neil Bessell, Director</i>                      Production of the <i>Journals of the Senate</i> and <i>Notice Paper</i>                      Processing of questions on notice and petitions                      Collection and dissemination of statistical information                      Secretariat services to the Appropriations and Staffing Committee</p>

During 2004–05, the Table Office provided effective support for the Senate chamber by:

- giving accurate and timely procedural and programming advice to facilitate and expedite chamber proceedings
- processing legislation promptly and accurately, and producing relevant documents to assist the legislative process
- preparing accurate and timely records of proceedings (the *Journals of the Senate*) and of current and outstanding business (the *Notice Paper*), as well as statistical information
- processing and maintaining custody of tabled papers
- providing prompt and effective inquiries and document distribution services.

In addition, the office enhanced its information services within existing resources by developing the *Dynamic Red*, an on-line tool to monitor Senate proceedings (see ‘Significant changes in functions and services’). Through the timely publication of key business documents and less formal sources of information, such as the on-line statistical collection, the office contributed to public awareness of the Senate and its work.

Staff continued to contribute significantly to the seminar program administered by the Procedure Office (see the report on Output Group 3), and to the training and development of departmental staff. We also supported committees effectively by providing secretariat support to certain committees and by liaising with Senate and joint committee secretariats to facilitate necessary interaction between the chamber and those committees.

The workload across the office was affected by the holding of a general election on 9 October 2004, and by the light pattern of sittings in the second half of the financial

year. As a result, the Senate sat on only 41 days in 2004–05, considerably fewer than the long-term average of around 70 days. This was the lowest number of sitting days in any year since the early 1950s.

The election break provided an opportunity to undertake longer-term projects, including research projects, as well as routine ‘end of parliament’ tasks and preparations for the opening of the Forty-first Parliament. As described in more detail below, some of the longer-term projects, including business continuity planning and the development of the *Dynamic Red*, involved information technology.

The full-time equivalent staffing level for the Table Office during the year was 16.3, down marginally from last year’s average of 16.5. Because there were fewer sitting weeks than usual, there was more scope for modest savings to be made with flexible staffing arrangements. As was the case in previous reporting periods, we applied the Staff Numbers Management Policy and balanced tasks between sitting and non-sitting periods to achieve those savings.

The cost of providing this procedural and administrative support for the conduct of Senate business was \$2.6 million, the greatest proportion of which was salary costs. This was equivalent to the cost incurred in 2003–04.

### **Programming and procedural support**

In providing programming and procedural support for the operation of the chamber, staff met clients’ needs for accurate and timely documentation and assistance by:

- providing procedural advice to the Leader of the Government in the Senate, other ministers, the Manager of Government Business in the Senate, government senators, committee chairs and party whips, in response to requests and proactively as required
- preparing a draft *Order of Business* (or daily program) for briefing the whips’ meetings in advance of each sitting day
- publishing and distributing the *Order of Business*, both electronically and in hard copy, before the sittings commenced on all sitting days
- maintaining the roster of temporary chairs of committees at all times
- providing an accurate and timely broadcasting captioning service for Senate proceedings (known as Events in Progress) on the Parliament House television monitoring system and the internet webcast
- making necessary preparations for the opening of the Forty-first Parliament on 16 November 2004, and for the filling of casual vacancies that arose during the year
- preparing an average of 20 procedural scripts per sitting day—comparable with the 2003–04 and 2002–03 averages of 19 and 17 per sitting day, respectively—for the use of ministers, whips, committee chairs and other senators, often at short notice and in response to changing requirements
- providing accurate advice in the chamber as required
- liaising with committee secretariats to facilitate interaction between the chamber and its committees
- making administrative arrangements for the tabling of documents and reports by ministers, the Auditor-General and committees on days when the Senate was not sitting
- preparing a revised edition of the *Standing Orders and Other Orders of the Senate*, incorporating changes made to 30 August 2004
- preparing revised editions of the *Brief Guides to Senate Procedure* and the *Pocket Guide to Senate Procedure*, incorporating changes made to February 2005.

All documents were produced on or ahead of time to high standards, and no document was shown to be inaccurate.

Providing advice to the Manager of Government Business and other senators to assist the efficient conduct of the business of the Senate is an important aspect of the Table Office’s role. During the year, we provided advice on a range of issues, including on the effect of a prorogation on questions on notice, arrangements for the opening of parliament, the allocation of departments to legislative and general purpose standing committees, temporary orders of the Senate, condolence motions, the hours of meeting and the routine of business, and procedural options for handling certain bills and motions. Advice was also provided to the Selection of Bills Committee as required.

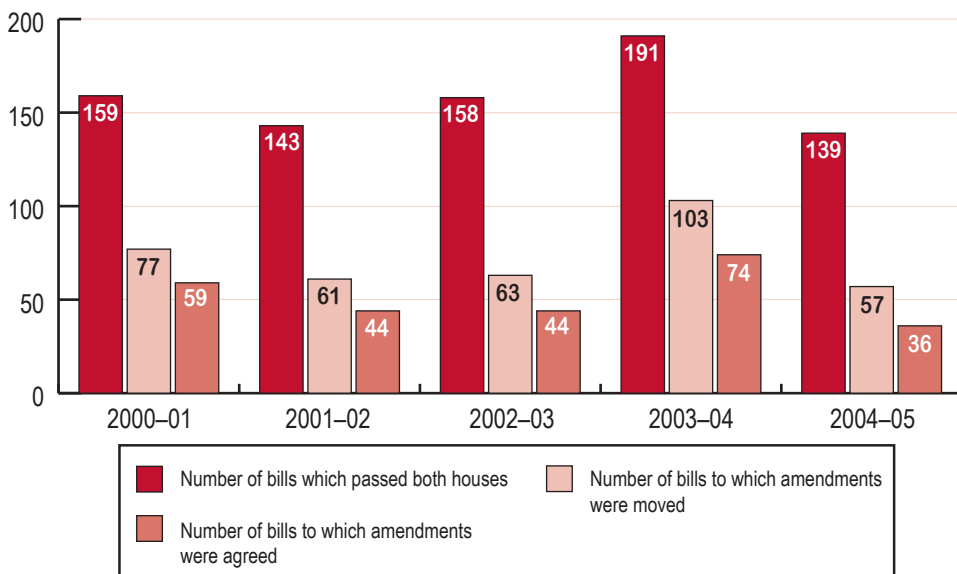
**Legislation**

The Table Office processed all bills considered in the Senate during 2004–05, meeting accuracy and timeliness standards in all cases.

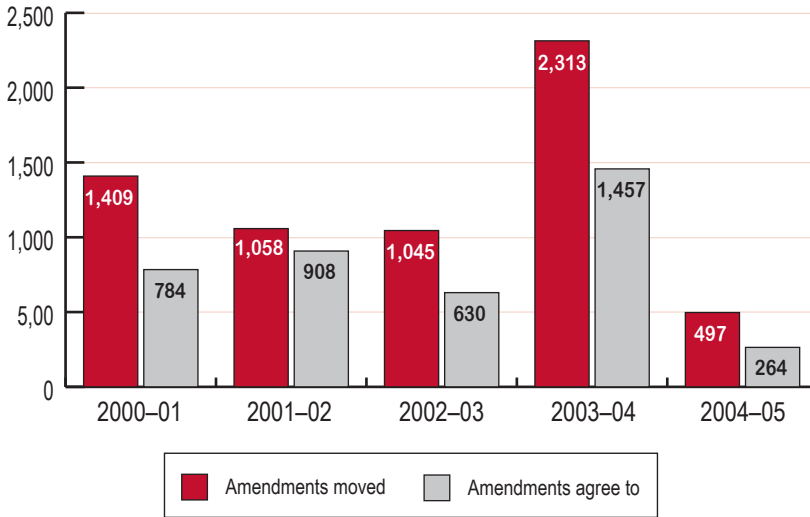
Legislative activity fell during 2004–05 to levels similar to those experienced in 2001–02, also an election year, and in 2002–03, when the low volume of legislative activity was the subject of comment in the Clerk’s review in the annual report. The low level of legislative activity in 2004–05 is attributable to the election break and to the relatively few sitting days scheduled for the first half of 2005. It appears likely that the government also refrained from introducing or dealing with certain legislation before 30 June 2005, in anticipation of having a majority of seats in the Senate after that date.

Overall, there was a significant reduction in the numbers of amendments moved and agreed to during 2004–05, compared with numbers in recent years. These reductions, shown in figures 6 and 7, are in turn reflected in the reduced numbers of schedules of amendments and running sheets prepared by the Table Office. However, this reduction in the Table Office workload was offset by an increase in workload caused by the initiation of a larger number of bills in the Senate and the concomitant requirement to produce third reading and assent prints of those bills.

**Figure 6 Legislation considered by the Senate**



**Figure 7 Amendments moved and agreed in the Senate**



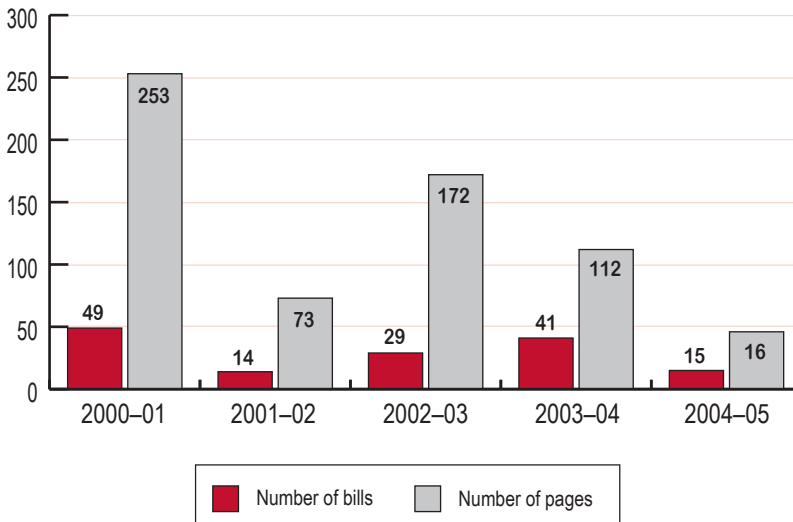
Note: The figures for amendments also include requests for amendments and proposals to omit clauses or items from bills.

Staff produced 23 schedules of amendments (comprising 43 pages) during 2004-05; 83 schedules (367 pages) were prepared in the previous reporting period. All schedules accurately reflected the decisions of the Senate and all deadlines were met.

Staff also continued to prepare running sheets to assist the Senate’s consideration of amendments to bills. The running sheets were generally produced in consultation with the senators, or members of the staff of senators, who circulated amendments.

There was a substantial decrease in both the number of running sheets and the total number of pages of running sheets, as shown in Figure 8, reflecting the reduced volume of legislative activity in this election year.

**Figure 8 Running sheets**



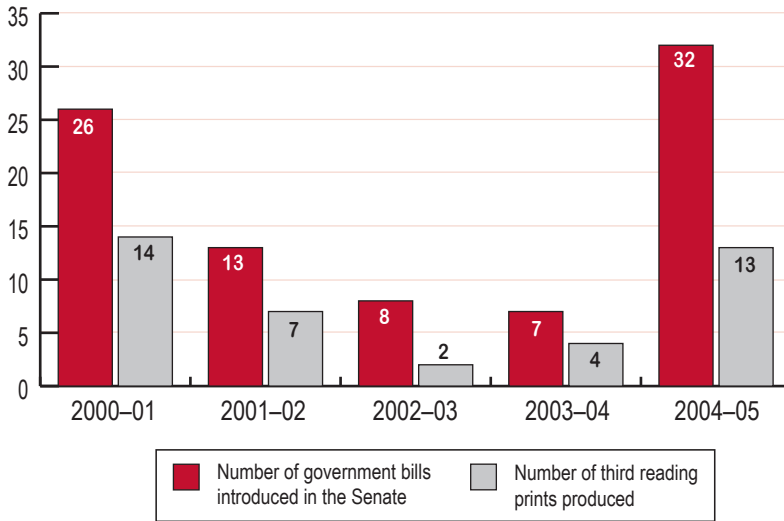
In 2004–05, the average number of bills passed per sitting day was just under 3.5, which is significantly higher than the average of just over 2.8 for the previous year. However, the numbers of bills (or messages considered in relation to bills) dealt with on the last days of the Spring 2004, Autumn 2005 and Winter 2005 sittings fell significantly to 4, 7 and 16, respectively (15, 16 and 30 were dealt with in the equivalent periods last year). The reduced concentrations of legislative activity on the last sitting days enabled staff to complete the processing and checking of legislation well before all deadlines.

The Table Office produced 153 messages relating to the passage of bills (225 in 2003–04) and 21 messages of an administrative nature (10 in 2003–04). These were also processed accurately and promptly, in time for use in the House of Representatives.

The recent trend for few government bills to be initiated in the Senate was reversed during the reporting period. Although it is common for government bills to be introduced in the Senate at the beginning of a new parliament, to ensure that the Senate has sufficient legislation to consider while it waits for bills to be dealt with by the House of Representatives, the trend continued throughout the reporting period. Figure 9 shows the number of government bills introduced in the Senate and the number of third reading prints prepared when Senate-initiated bills were amended in the Senate. The number of third reading prints prepared includes one private senator’s bill that was amended and passed by the Senate. Printed copies of third reading prints of bills were available to meet requirements in all cases.

The increased number of government bills initiated in the Senate also resulted in an increase to 22 (11 in 2003–04) in the number of assent prints produced.

**Figure 9 Government legislation introduced in the Senate**



*Bills Lists* and *Daily Bills Updates* indicating the progress of legislation were produced to satisfy inquiries received from clients, including senators, ministerial and departmental advisers, parliamentary liaison officers, members of the press and members of the general public. These documents were published in accordance with agreed timeframes and made available through the BillsNet page on the internet and in printed form.

### *Journals of the Senate and the Notice Paper*

The Table Office prepared and maintained the record of the proceedings of the Senate (*Journals of the Senate*), records of current and outstanding business (*Notice Paper*), and statistical information on the business of the Senate.

Staff met clients' needs for accurate and timely documentation and information by:

- publishing *Journals of the Senate* and the *Notice Paper*, and providing procedural advice on the contents of those documents
- compiling and publishing statistical information relating to the Senate, including *Business of the Senate* and the *Senate Statistical Summary*
- providing procedural advice on and publishing questions on notice, and processing and circulating answers received from ministers
- maintaining information systems to assist with the preparation and publication of Table Office documents.

Records of the proceedings and outstanding business of the Senate were promptly and accurately produced, published and distributed for each sitting day in the reporting period.

The *Journals of the Senate* continued to provide an accurate and comprehensive record of proceedings. Proof journals were made available online shortly after each adjournment of the Senate, and published and distributed in hard copy to senators the next day. In 2004-05, 40 proof journals were produced, at an average of just over 26 pages for each journal, representing a small increase on last year's average of 25 pages. Final journals and bound volumes were produced promptly, after thorough checking of the material.

The *Notice Paper*, the formal agenda of Senate proceedings, continued to provide an essential source of information for senators and others on the current and future business of the Senate and on committee matters.

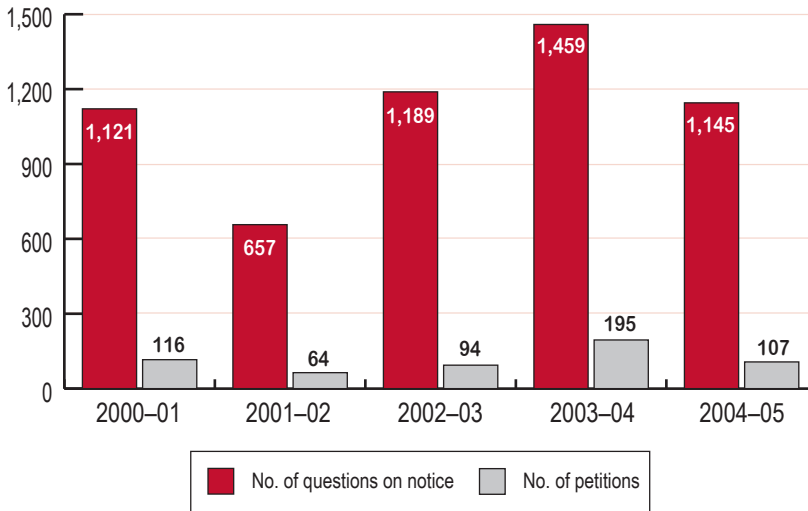
*Notice Papers*, averaging 59 pages, were published and distributed to senators each sitting day before sitting and were available on-line. The full *Notice Paper*, averaging 134 pages, was also maintained, updated and made available daily, on the internet and the ParInfo database. The average figures for the previous reporting period were 79 pages for the printed document and 288 pages for the on-line version. The numbers for the previous year were higher because they were recorded near the end of the Fortieth Parliament, and the *Notice Paper* increases in size during the life of each parliament, as unfinished business accumulates and the number of unanswered questions on notice increases.

Questions on notice lodged by senators were edited for consistency with standing orders and published in the *Notice Paper* for the next sitting day. In non-sitting periods, the on-line *Notice Paper* was updated weekly to provide for the timely publication of questions on notice. During non-sitting periods, questions were also forwarded to ministers' offices and departments.

Figure 10 shows the number of questions placed on notice in each of the past five financial years. During 2004-05, 1,145 questions were placed on notice. This number was comparable to those reported in the previous two periods and shows that the electoral cycle did not have a significant impact on senators' use of this important accountability procedure. All questions were processed accurately and within agreed timeframes.

Figure 10 also shows the numbers of petitions lodged in each of the past five financial years. During 2004-05, 107 petitions were presented. It is difficult to identify discernible trends in the number of petitions lodged. All were processed promptly and reported in the Senate on the first sitting day after their receipt.

Figure 10 Questions on notice and petitions



**Statistical information on the business of the Senate**

The collection of statistics relating to the Senate chamber was maintained and further enhanced during the year. For example, the collection now compares statistics on the work of the Senate on a parliament-by-parliament basis from the Thirty-first Parliament onwards.

Statistical summaries of business conducted by the Senate were produced at the conclusion of each sitting week. The biannual compilation of statistics, *Business of the Senate*, was presented to the Senate in accordance with agreed timeframes.

The enhanced on-line version of these statistics was updated after each block of sittings, providing timely access to the most commonly sought statistics on the work of the Senate.

Requests for statistics from senators and other clients were met within timeframes agreed to with inquirers.

Statistics were also collated and published in the *Questions on Notice Summary*, which was presented to the Senate in accordance with agreed timeframes. Statistical information on questions on notice was also provided promptly to senators and other clients as requested.

**Documents and inquiries**

The Table Office processed all documents presented to the Senate during 2004-05. Details of documents presented on any sitting day were recorded in the *Journals of the Senate* for that day. The documents were forwarded to the Table Office after being presented, and copies were made publicly available.

The commencement of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* on 1 January 2005 had a significant effect on the documents workload. The volume of instruments tabled increased substantially in 2005, increasing the amount of time taken to process them for tabling and archiving.

The original documents presented were added to the records of the Senate, which the Table Office continued to maintain. The record archives include all documents presented to the Senate since its first meeting in 1901.

The documents and inquiries workload is affected by the number of documents presented. Approximately 5,700 documents were presented to the Senate in 2004–05, a substantial decrease from 2003–04, when about 9,360 documents were presented. This decrease is largely attributable to the general election and the lower number of sitting days.

All processing and distribution requirements were met. For example, staff continued to distribute government documents to senators' Parliament House offices, usually within one hour of documents being presented, or within one hour of receipt of a request, in accordance with agreed timeframes.

More than 6,800 inquiries were recorded during 2004–05, as indicated in Figure 11. This was comparable to the previous year, in which over 7,300 inquiries were recorded. Although full staffing in the inquiries area was not maintained during the election period, staff maintained their excellent response record, as indicated in Figure 12.

Figure 11 **Inquiries—number recorded**

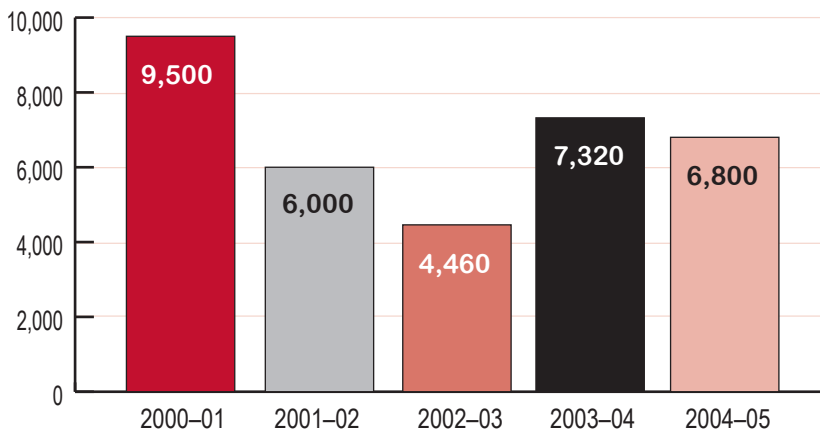
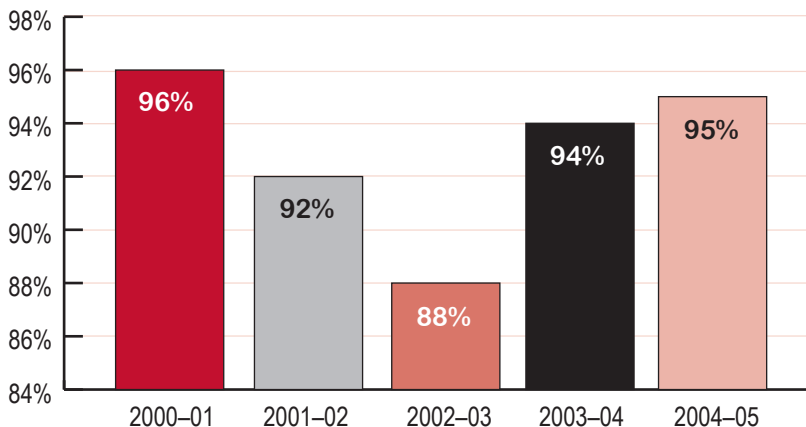


Figure 12 **Inquiries—percentage dealt with within five minutes**



**Microfilming project**

The Table Office's microfilming project, which commenced in 1994-95 with the aim of conserving and filming all original documents tabled in the Senate since 1901, had its tenth anniversary in April 2005. Shortly afterwards, the filming, indexing and archiving of papers tabled between 1901 and the end of 2001 was completed. In 2004-05, more than 427,000 pages of tabled documents were filmed in the 10 months to April 2005, making it comparable to the previous reporting period, in which more than 490,000 pages were filmed. Filming was halted in April 2005 to enable the next phase of the project to be set up (see 'Performance outlook').

**Secretariat support for various committees**

During the year, the Table Office provided secretariat support for all meetings and reports of the Selection of Bills Committee, the Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing, and the Senate and Joint Publications committees. At the commencement of the Forty-first Parliament, primary responsibility for providing the secretariat for the Joint Publications Committee passed to the Department of the House of Representatives, in accordance with the usual practice of rotating the secretariat each parliament.

The Table Office also provided research support to the Committee of Privileges in connection with its general inquiry on unauthorised disclosure of parliamentary committee proceedings, evidence or draft reports.

All meetings were held, and documents were provided, within agreed timeframes.

**Significant changes in functions and services**

Last year's annual report indicated that work had begun on an on-line Senate *Order of Business*. Development proceeded more rapidly than expected, and the *Dynamic Red* was launched to general acclaim at the beginning of the Forty-first Parliament. The *Dynamic Red* provides real-time information on the progress and outcomes of business during each sitting day. Users can follow proceedings in the Senate by periodically refreshing the screen, which updates the information contained in the document. Available to all users of the parliamentary computing network, the *Dynamic Red* gives users the choice of viewing results of all business or selecting information about specific categories: legislation, committees and documents. The ability to filter results in this way was also included to facilitate the preparation of the *Senate Daily Summary* (see the report on Output Group 3).

We also enhanced our services to senators, their staff and other users of the House Monitoring Service by launching the redeveloped Events in Progress captioning system. This system allows captions describing the business currently before the Senate to be transmitted on the internal television broadcast of proceedings as well as over the internet webcast. It replaced an older system which had become technologically outdated. In addition to standard captions, the new system enables the transmission of more detailed information and information foreshadowing upcoming business, using scrolling text across the bottom of the screen.

Last year's annual report predicted that Events in Progress would be released during the election break, along with other enhancements to the in-house broadcasting system. However, all the foreshadowed improvements were significantly delayed by a decision of the Department of Parliamentary Services to replace the debate timers in the chambers and by a lack of coordination between that project and the other enhancements. The redeveloped Events in Progress was finally released for the Budget sittings in May 2005.

## ***Factors, events and trends influencing performance***

The workload of the office is determined in large part by the sittings of the Senate and the volume and type of Senate business. Specific factors include:

- the days and hours of the sittings of the Senate, the nature of the proceedings undertaken in the Senate, and the scheduling of those proceedings
- the legislative workload, including the number of bills passed, the number and complexity of amendments to bills and the complexity of negotiations between the Houses on disputed legislation
- the number and complexity of questions and notices from senators
- the number of documents tabled
- the number and complexity of inquiries and requests for information from Table Office clients.

Because of the reduced number of sitting days, workloads were generally lower in most areas of the Table Office, although senators continued to place questions on notice throughout the year in numbers similar to those last year. Although the general election in October 2004 provided an extended break from programmed sittings, staff were fully occupied during that period carrying out ‘end of parliament’ and long-term tasks, and in preparing for the opening of the Forty-first Parliament.

In addition, the office approached the lower number of sitting days and the consequential reduced workload in a practical manner, restricting staff numbers by leaving some vacancies unfilled during long adjournments, the election break and the second half of the year. The timeliness and accuracy of our key business documents remained high, and our other services were delivered promptly and efficiently.

Information technology issues continued to be of considerable importance in the Table Office. Problems encountered last year in loading the *Journals of the Senate* and the *Notice Paper* into the ParInfo database were addressed, and the upgraded system worked well. Minor software modifications continued to be made to the document production system used by the Table Office, particularly in relation to the questions on notice database.

The Table Office relies heavily on the computer infrastructure provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services, and on its own computing systems, to produce timely and accurate documents. Although no major disruptions to the parliamentary computing network affected the work of the Table Office during the year, considerable time and resources were committed to business continuity planning in the wake of the major disruptions to the network that occurred in February 2004. The office participated, with the House of Representatives Table Office and the relevant parts of the Department of Parliamentary Services, in a risk management project that involved mapping critical processes to understand which information technology applications and infrastructure individual staff relied on to carry out critical functions.

The resulting report, containing an inventory of information technology components, an analysis of risks associated with the failure of any of those components and a list of actions that could be taken to provide better disaster recovery services, was nearing completion at the end of the year. Implementation of the report will be considered during 2005–06. The report will also provide a useful basis on which to assess the likely impact of proposed information technology changes and upgrades on the work of the Table Office and on existing applications and infrastructure.

## Evaluation

The principal medium for evaluating Table Office services is the biennial survey of senators' satisfaction with the services provided by the department, conducted most recently in February and March 2005. The 2005 survey revealed high levels of satisfaction among senators with the advice, documents and services of the office, comparable with levels reached in the 2003 survey, and did not suggest any areas of major concern.

Senators were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the provision of programming services (including procedural scripts, broadcast captions and the *Order of Business* or 'Red'); the processing of petitions, notices of motion and questions on notice; and the preparation of the records of the Senate (*Journals* and *Notice Paper*). Most senators were either satisfied or highly satisfied, and none was dissatisfied, with the inquiries and document distribution service, and with the provision of statistical information and procedural resources such as the *Brief Guides to Senate Procedure*.

The only area of dissatisfaction was in relation to the processing of legislation and the provision of running sheets. Most senators were satisfied or highly satisfied with this service, but two senators commented that running sheets seemed to be taking longer to appear in the chamber, a concern related to the perception that a lack of drafting resources for non-government senators had led to delays with the drafting of amendments. While any delay in the circulation of amendments has a direct effect on the ability of Table Office staff to finalise running sheets, staff were not particularly conscious of any changes over recent times to the timeframes for circulation of amendments. The report on Output Group 3 makes further comments about legislative drafting services for non-government senators.

The survey report confirmed senators' appreciation of the department's efforts to make more information available on-line, while retaining the option of providing it in hard copy. Particularly encouraging feedback from the survey was the finding that 65 per cent of respondents had used the *Dynamic Red*; the majority expressed strong satisfaction with this new service. Anecdotal feedback following its launch was also very positive. When the survey was conducted, the *Dynamic Red* was on a temporary site, access to which was emailed each sitting day to senators, their staff and departmental staff. The survey report highlighted the potential for further promotion of the service, which subsequently occurred. In preparation for the Budget sittings in May 2005, work was completed on the permanent *Dynamic Red* site, making it easily accessible to all users of the parliamentary computing network.

The office also monitors its own performance—for example, by keeping track of response times for inquiries. This monitoring indicates that the high level of service noted in recent surveys continued during 2004–05.

Much of the work of the office involves frequent direct contact with senators, their staff and other clients. This presents an ongoing opportunity for feedback in relation to the office's services. Informal feedback continued to be very positive.

The achievement of individual performance targets was evaluated under the performance communication scheme, as required by the department's certified agreement. All Table Office staff were assessed as being 'effective or better'.

## **Performance outlook**

The Table Office will continue to provide effective procedural, practical and documentary support to the Senate chamber. Demand for these services will depend largely on the sittings of the Senate and the business it conducts. Workloads are expected to increase, in accordance with normal expectations for a non-election year, and in view of the fact that the government's majority in the Senate from 1 July 2005 may result in a greater volume of legislation being considered by the Senate.

The office will continue to review the services it provides and to respond to feedback, so as to make improvements where practicable. In this regard, the 2005 survey of senators will be closely analysed so that any suggestions for improvements to services can be considered. We will continue to promote the *Dynamic Red*, including through presentations to senators, their staff and departmental staff, and will also explore the next phase of this service's development, which involves making it available to a wider audience by publishing it on the internet.

The microfilming project will enter a new phase in July 2005 when the conversion to digital images of the microfilm of tabled papers from 1901 to 2001 will commence. At the same time, papers tabled from the beginning of the Fortieth Parliament (in 2002) onwards will be digitally imaged (with microfilm also generated for conservation purposes). The digital images of tabled papers from both periods will then be made available to users through a web-based repository. Conversion of the 1901 to 2001 microfilm archive is expected to take a little over three years, at the end of which users will have on-line access to most documents tabled in the Senate since Federation.

Previous reports have drawn attention to the growing pressure on storage space in Parliament House caused by the ever-increasing volume of tabled papers, which are required by the standing orders of the Senate to remain in the custody of the Clerk and to be kept in the chamber or Senate offices. Last year's report mentioned that a proposed reallocation and redevelopment of storage space in the basement was on the Capital Works Program for 2006–07. During the year, this proposal was abandoned because of its cost, and because the progress made on the microfilming and digitisation project has opened up other options for storing the tabled papers. These options will be explored during the next reporting period.