



MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Ministers
on the amendment moved by Mr Mackin (Deputy Leader of the
Opposition). Question put on amendment. Second reading.
Speaker to report a message from the Governor-General recommending
appropriation.
Consideration in detail, third reading, by leave.
At 2 p.m.
Speaker to call on —
Questions without notice
Presentation of documents — Speaker
leave
IMPORTANCE — If matter
the Chamber.
move —
2005
hour of
for
Mr Abbott (Leader of the House)
2.00 p.m., unless the Speaker
meeting
LEAVE OF ABSENCE — Mr Abbott (Leader of the House)
leave of absence to all Members
Reports from Main Committee
Speaker to present reports from the Main Committee.
Reports from committees
COMMITTEE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS — Mr Ciobo (Chair — Moncrieff) to
present the following document from the Committee of Members'
Interests:
Register of Members' Interests — Notifications of alterations of interests
and Statements of Registrable Interests received during the period 10
February 2005 to 22 June 2005.
PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE — Mrs Draper (Chair — Makin) to present
report (copies available to Members in Chamber).
Mrs Draper, by leave, to move that the report be agreed to.
Business — continued
continued
adment (Small Business Employ
second reading; sec

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE



The Speaker of the House of Representatives is responsible to the Parliament for the department. The Clerk of the House of Representatives, who is responsible for managing the department, reports to the Speaker. Key elements of the department's corporate governance framework are outlined below.

LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURES

The department's operations are governed by the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* and the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, and are subject to provisions of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* and other legislation. Those Acts set out the responsibilities of the Clerk for the management of the department.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The Parliamentary Service Values and Code of Conduct, set out in the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, provide a framework for the department's ethical conduct.

The department actively promotes sound ethical behaviour. During the year, we republished and distributed to all staff a pamphlet outlining the values and the code of conduct, and published further educational articles in the staff newsletter, *In House*.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Senior management of the department consists of the Executive and managers at the Executive Band 2 level.

The Executive comprises the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, and three Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 staff, each of whom has management responsibility for one or two of the five output groups.

The Executive met periodically to discuss and decide on a wide range of departmental management issues.

In July 2004, October 2004 and March 2005, the broader senior management group met to review achievements and confirm future strategic directions. These meetings incorporated comprehensive written reports on implementation of the departmental business plan for 2004–05 and progressive performance against the external and internal performance indicators outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT COORDINATION GROUP

The Senior Management Coordination Group (SMCG) comprises the heads of corporate services of the three parliamentary departments; the Serjeant-at-Arms represents the department. The position of Chair rotates yearly between the three members. The role of SMCG is to coordinate corporate and related matters between the parliamentary departments. Formal terms of reference for the SMCG have recently been drafted and agreed to by SMCG, and await the approval of the heads of the parliamentary departments.

They are:

- coordinate, where appropriate, corporate and related matters of common concern to the parliamentary departments
- develop, where appropriate, a common approach to corporate issues in each of the parliamentary departments
- identify, and seek to reduce, where appropriate, duplication of corporate functions, responsibilities and procurement across the parliamentary departments
- seek to strengthen the parliamentary service and its values
- provide a forum for open and frank exchange of views on matters of mutual interest to the parliamentary departments.

During the year SMCG met six times. Among the issues considered by SMCG were: the accommodation at Parliament House; the tender for a travel contract for the parliamentary departments; workplace relations; guidelines for management of the Parliament House website; and common approaches to procurement in some areas (as discussed in the annual report last year).

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

Audit Committee

The department's Audit Committee comprises the Clerk Assistant (Committees), the Clerk Assistant (Table), the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Chief Financial Officer and an independent member. The committee, chaired by the Clerk Assistant (Table), met four times during the year.

The functions and responsibilities of the Audit Committee include:

- planning the department's internal audit resources and activities
- reviewing internal and external audit reports, and ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken in response to audit recommendations

- overseeing and appraising risk management planning and implementation within the department
- advising the Clerk on the preparation and review of the department's financial statements, and on any significant audit matter that may have an impact on the operations of the department.

The department's contracted internal auditor is KPMG.

All audits and reviews finalised by KPMG were reviewed by the Audit Committee, including the audits and reviews of:

- governance arrangements
- credit card controls
- output costing
- committee web publishing
- human resources systems
- business risk, fraud risk and development of fraud control policy
- members' entitlements
- the department's preparedness for the adoption of Australian Equivalents to the International Financial Reporting Standards (AEIFRS)
- official hospitality.

While a number of recommendations were made in these audits, no serious issues were identified. The audit committee monitors implementation of all recommendations.

One of the recommendations of the governance review was that an independent member be appointed to the Audit Committee. The Clerk agreed to the recommendation, the Audit Charter was amended, and the new independent member, David Toll, Director, BETR Project from CSIRO, attended the meetings of the committee in 2005.

Consultative Committee

The department's Consultative Committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Clerk, continued to be an important mechanism for communicating and consulting with staff on workplace issues. The committee's other members are:

- two union-nominated representatives
- two elected staff representatives
- four departmental representatives.

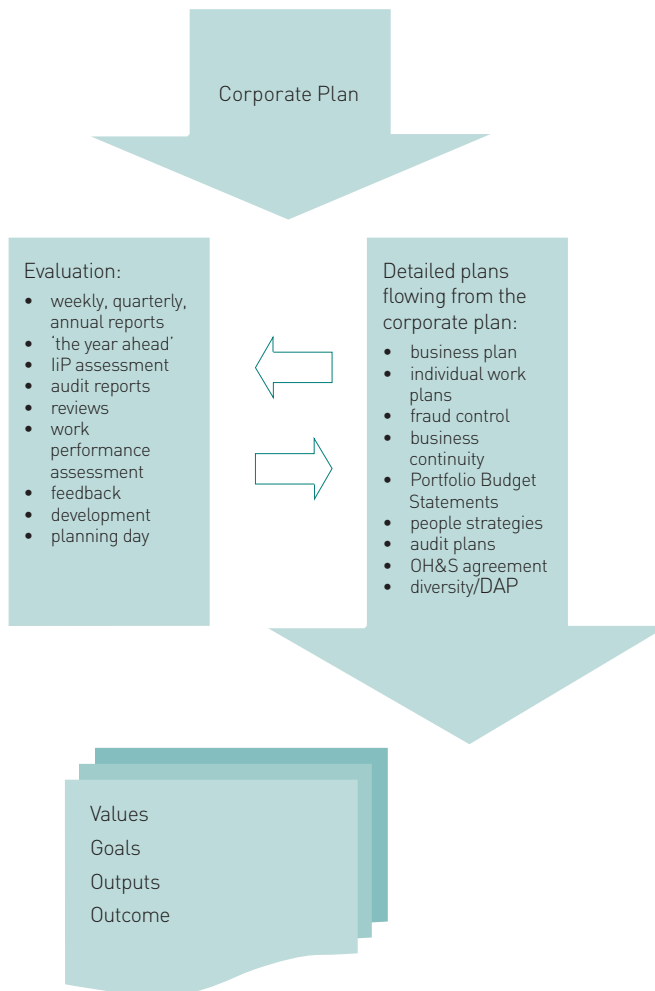
The committee met six times during 2004–05. Discussions covered a broad range of matters, such as monitoring the implementation of the certified agreement, recruitment, departmental staff surveys, and other employment policies and practices. Particularly noteworthy were discussions about the treatment of staff recreation leave credits after problems in the department's human resources management information system led to a leave audit.

The committee was also briefed on and discussed plans the department had been considering to change work area structures and processes. These included the finalisation of changes to the delivery of mail to work areas, a review of the department's internal printing facilities, and the current parliamentary security initiatives.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The department's managers continued to emphasise planning, reporting and accountability. The main elements of our planning and reporting framework are set out in Figure 11.

Figure 11 Departmental planning and evaluation framework, 2004–05



More than 90 staff attended the department's annual planning day on 18 May 2005. We used the day to examine and review, through workshops, three important aspects of departmental operations. The topics, which are priorities in the corporate plan for 2004–07, were:

- the ways in which the department develops the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of staff to align with business requirements
- the department's approach to corporate decision making
- the function of providing advice to members of the House of Representatives.

The planning day was very successful, and generated many ideas about how the department might deal with these matters. All three issues will be taken forward as part of the business plan for 2005–06. Ways of improving corporate decision-making and advice to members will also be examined by the Knowledge Management Steering Committee (discussed in more detail under 'Management of people').

The Clerk's 'Setting the Direction' address, in June 2005, also formed part of the department's evaluation and planning framework. The address, in which the Clerk shared and discussed with staff his view of the department's general direction and challenges, complemented the objectives and priorities set out in the corporate plan.

Corporate plan

We continued to implement the corporate plan for 2004–07 throughout the year, substantially achieving the plan's priorities for:

- serving our clients better
- improving the skills, responsiveness and flexibility of our staff
- building and improving on our current high standards.

Specific achievements, detailed elsewhere in this report, included the issuing of a revised Serjeant-at-Arms' Office service charter, improvements to internet services and information on members' portals, and completion of work for the commencement of the Forty-first Parliament.

Business plan

The department launched its business plan for 2004–05 in July 2004. The plan is effectively a subset of the corporate plan that concentrates on the achievement of defined corporate objectives and priorities for the year. Senior departmental managers continued to report very high levels of achievement against the business plan through the quarterly report meetings and other reporting opportunities, such as the weekly senior management meeting.

MEMBERS' SURVEY

The department requires regular and continual feedback from members to gauge the effectiveness of our services and to know whether we are meeting our objectives.

We conducted a further members' survey in June 2005, in a format very similar to the 2004 survey. One superfluous question about the services provided to parliamentary committees was deleted. Another, about security, was deleted because the responsibility for this function has been transferred to the Department of Parliamentary Services.

As in previous surveys, we used a random sample of 30 members, 19 of whom responded (17 participated last year). All participants were asked whether they were satisfied with the services and support they had received from the department. Once again, members were overwhelmingly satisfied with our work: 98 per cent expressed high levels of satisfaction (97 per cent last year).

See Appendix 11 for details of the survey findings.

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

The department's main external accountability mechanisms are the Portfolio Budget Statements and the annual report, which is prepared pursuant to section 65 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*. The annual report for 2003–04 assessed our performance against the targets outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements and presented the financial statements of the department.

Copies of both documents were provided to all members.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND FRAUD CONTROL

The department is committed to risk management as a corporate and individual responsibility. During 2004–05, we continued to integrate risk management strategies into our operational systems and processes.

In 2004–05 an update of the business risk assessment, fraud risk assessment and fraud control plans occurred. The assessments concluded that the department has a low risk profile. Most work areas also completed business continuity plans. The department also participated in the Comcover benchmarking survey, the results of which confirmed the department's low risk profile.

SERVICE CHARTERS

The department's service charters for members and the community continued to provide the basis for the standards of service that members and the public can expect from the department. The service charter for members is included in the handbook provided to members at the start of each parliament. Specific reference was made to the charter in the new members' seminar and in the seminar for the staff of members. KPMG is to undertake an audit of the charters in 2005–06.



EXTERNAL SCRUTINY



The department's operations are primarily administrative and are therefore not usually subjected to formal external scrutiny.

JUDICIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS

No judicial decisions or decisions in administrative tribunals during 2004–05 had, or may have, a significant impact on the operation of the department.

REPORTS BY THE AUDITOR-GENERAL, A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OR THE COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN

In November 2004, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) completed its review of the financial management and reporting of special appropriations. The findings were general and, as they related to the department, required the Department of Finance and Administration to provide greater guidance to agencies about the management, disclosure and reporting of Special Appropriations. The department advised the ANAO that the audit had assisted the department to clarify the administrative arrangements surrounding the financial management of Special Appropriations, and resulted in changes in the management of Special Appropriations within the department.

During 2004–05, as in previous years, we contributed to inquiries by the House Standing Committee on Procedure. The Clerk made a submission to the inquiry into the Anticipation Rule and participated in a number of round-table and other discussions.

No investigations by the Commonwealth Ombudsman in 2004–05 involved the department.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The department is not considered to be a department or agency for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. However, we try to comply with the intent of the Act in relation to the release of administrative information. No freedom of information requests were made during the year.

We provide extensive information about the structure of the department and employment opportunities on our website and in printed documents that we publish, such as the annual report. We also widely disseminate information on how members of the public can interact with the work of the House and its committees.



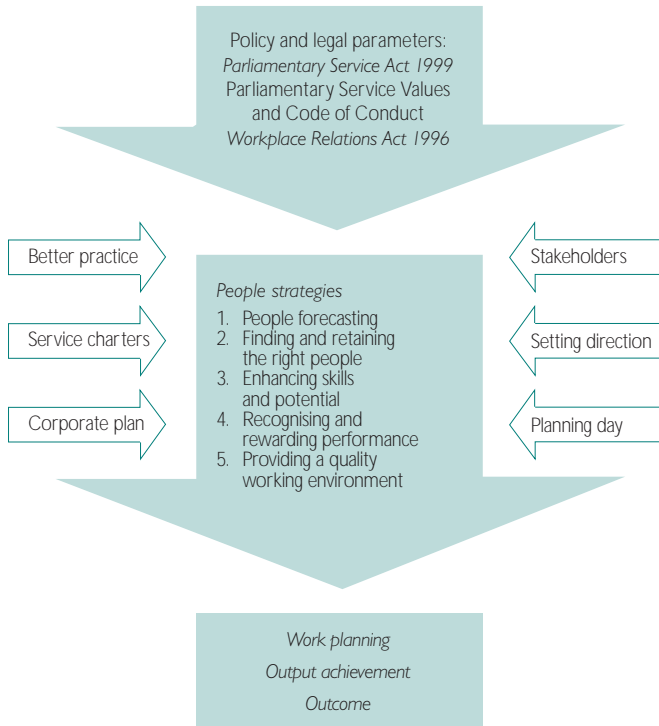
MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE



PEOPLE STRATEGIES PLAN 2005–06

The department has an annual people strategies plan that sets in place a framework for achieving corporate outcomes through departmental staff (shown in Figure 12). The current plan applies until June 2006 and details the proposed actions, responsibilities, timeframes and performance indicators for improvements across five people strategies.

Figure 12 People Strategies Framework 2005–06



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

In September 2004, the department once again achieved reaccreditation against the Investors in People standard, an international quality standard that sets a level of good practice for improving departmental performance through people. The standard provides a basis for continuous improvement of the department and its people. The key principles and indicators have recently been amended, and the standard is now as shown in Figure 13.

NATA Certification Services International awarded the reaccreditation after an audit inspection that involved an assessment of relevant people policies and practices and in-depth individual interviews with a cross-section of our staff. The audit commended the department on the strategies we have developed and implemented. The audit also commented on the department's commitment to raising the benchmark and improving the quality of outcomes through its people.

The next annual reaccreditation assessment will take place in October 2005.

Figure 13 Investors in People Standard 2005



- The Standard and Profile level 1
- Profile levels 2 and 3
- Profile level 4

COMMONWEALTH DISABILITY STRATEGY

All the department's employment policies continued to comply with the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

During 2004–05, in keeping with the principles of the Act, we developed a mature age workers' strategy and reviewed our recruitment and selection guidelines.

The department's certified agreements and all Australian Workplace Agreements in place during 2004–05 contained clauses to allow staff with disabilities to lodge a complaint or grievance about any matter affecting their employment. These processes were the same for all staff members. During the year, there were no complaints or grievances about employment practices from staff with disabilities.

We made recruitment information available to potential job applicants in electronic and non-electronic formats that are accessible to people with disabilities, as defined in the Act. We received no requests for accessible formats during the year. No staff were recruited who required the department to make 'reasonable adjustments' to the workplace or work practices to accommodate additional needs caused by a disability.

All the department's training and development activities catered to the needs of staff with disabilities. We did not offer any training and development program on disability issues during the year.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 1: PEOPLE FORECASTING

Workforce planning

In June 2005, the department undertook its annual forecast of the future availability of existing staff. The forecast uses various internal and external demographic indicators to assess availability.

We also analysed staff age profiles and separations over the past three years to look at the likelihood of staff taking the early retirement option.

The Executive has considered the data and believes that no additional action to meet future staffing requirements is required at this stage.

Organisational reviews

Organisation reviews are conducted regularly, to ensure workload is matched with the number of staff required to undertake the work in all areas, and that the classification levels or work value requirements of individual jobs are appropriate.

The review of the messengerial service was finalised during the year. The only changes recommended and implemented were to mail collection and delivery during non-sitting periods.

As discussed in the performance report for Output Group 1.5, a major review of the printing operation was completed during the year.

Since the departure of staff members (some temporarily and some permanently) from the People Strategies and Finance offices, both offices have reviewed their operations and have been performing their responsibilities with fewer staff.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2: FINDING AND RETAINING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Recruitment of staff

The department advertised to fill 42 ongoing vacancies during 2004–05 (31 in 2003–04), 17 of which were filled by internal applicants. Of the 25 successful external applicants, 20 were women (in 2003–04, two of the 21 successful external applicants were women).

Although we did not use full assessment centre processes in staff selection during the year, we made general use of written exercises to complement personal interviews and referee assessments.

Comprehensive, revised recruitment and selection guidelines were distributed to staff during the year.

Retention of staff

SES managers continued to conduct exit interviews with staff leaving the department. Feedback from departing staff demonstrated that most left to pursue different work or promotion. Most feedback from interviews continued to be very positive, particularly about people practices. Some negative comments were received about the use of non-ongoing staff for long periods of employment.

Appendix 10 summarises the reasons given by departing staff in 2004–05.

Retention of older workers

During the year, the department established a working group of staff volunteers to examine the efforts we have made to retain mature age staff in employment. Demographic trends suggest that retaining older staff will be a crucial factor in the future. The working group assessed that the department had an effective range of options in place, particularly through the certified agreement, that matches the practices of a range of other leading employers in this field.

The group prepared a paper, *Employment retention strategies for older workers*, to better inform staff of the options available. The paper covered variable employment scenarios and options for superannuation, leave and hours of duty.

Graduate placement program

The department continued its graduate placement program during the year. The program involves three-month placements of people from the graduate recruitment programs of other Australian Government agencies. The key objectives of the program were outlined in the 2003–04 annual report.

The program continued to be very successful in generating interest from individual graduates and a range of agencies. We placed six graduates on three-month placements from February to June 2005.

An evaluation report to the Executive on last year’s placements concluded that all had been very successful and that the objectives of the program had been achieved. The evaluation process included a survey of participants and a workshop involving participants and their supervisors.

Non-ongoing employment register

This temporary employment register, which was established in 2004, from time to time provided the department—mainly the Committee Office—with staff at the Parliamentary Service Level 6 and Executive Band 1 level. The flexibility provided by the register was especially useful during the fluctuations in workload that occurred in the election year.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 3: ENHANCING SKILLS AND POTENTIAL

Training and development

Table 4 sets out the department’s training and development expenditure as a percentage of salaries expenditure and person-days spent on training in 2003–04 and 2004–05. The average number of training days for staff decreased from 5.1 days to 4.4 days off-the-job training per person per year.

Table 5 shows the attendance of staff at training courses in 2003–04 and 2004–05, while Figure 14 provides a visual summary of training days attended per staff member, by classification, in 2004–05.

Table 4 Expenditure on training and development programs

	2003-04	2004-05
Expenditure as percentage of annual payroll	2.9%	3.4%
Average training days per person	5.2 days	4.4 days
Average staffing level	188 staff years	152 staff years

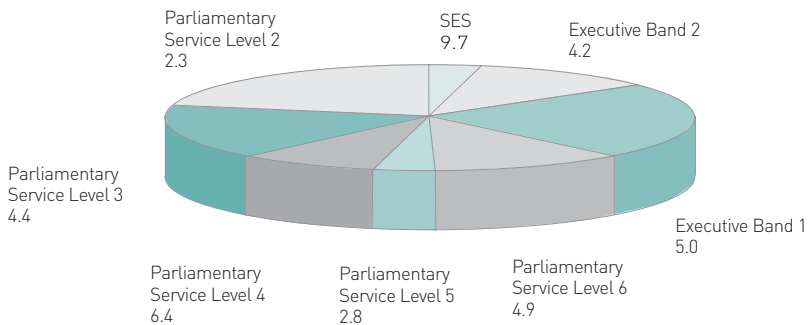
Note: All figures exclude staff of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Second Deputy Speaker and staff undertaking secondments and internal and external placements.

Table 5 Average formal training days attended, by staff classification

Classification	Average staffing level in department	Total number of training days attended by staff	Average number of training days	Average number of training days
	2004–05	2004–05	2004–05	2003–04
SES	5.0	48.4	9.7	10.6
Executive Band 2	18.2	76.7	4.2	5.9
Executive Band 1	33.7	168.4	5.0	4.0
PS 6	19.1	94.1	4.9	4.8
PS 5	5.3	14.7	2.8	1.3
PS 4	13.5	86.8	6.4	8.0
PS 3	24.4	107.9	4.4	3.0
PS 2	33.3	78.1	2.3	2.5
PS 1	-	-	-	-
PSS 1-2	-	-	-	11.0
Totals	152.5	675.1	4.4	5.1

PS=Parliamentary Service, PSS=Parliamentary Security Service, SES=Senior Executive Service
 Note: Figures have been rounded.

Figure 14 Average formal training days attended, by classification, 2004–05



Knowledge management

In 2004–05, the Knowledge Management Steering Committee, chaired by the Serjeant-at-Arms and comprising staff from all areas of the department, continued its work on departmental knowledge management and our records management project.

Records management project activities included consultation with many areas of the department on a new file classification structure for file titling. A new version of the records management software was implemented, allowing the file titling structure to link to a records disposal authority. The steering committee considered components of the department's records disposal authority that are also referred to in the general administrative disposal authority issued by the National Archives of Australia.

The revised records management arrangements are being implemented initially for hard-copy records. During the next financial year, we will explore the management of electronic records using the new arrangements.

The committee has begun a program of knowledge audits to improve the sharing and use of information across the department. The first audit examined how we deal with telephone queries from the public. The data for the project was obtained from workshops involving most of our staff who deal directly with such calls, and from discussions with Parliament House switchboard staff who are the first point of contact for many external callers. The review made a number of recommendations, including better information for the switchboard staff so that they can direct callers to the right areas in the department. These recommendations have been implemented. The committee will undertake two more audits—on corporate decision making and on advising members—in the new financial year.

Executive coaching program

The department's executive coaching program continued through the year. The program involves an external provider working with individual managers to achieve mutual goals set at the beginning of the program. Individual programs typically run for three months and involve six to ten meetings between the provider and the manager. One senior manager entered a program during the year (three in the previous year).

Studybank

Seventeen staff (a decrease on the 21 staff who participated in 2003–04) participated in the department's Studybank program during the year. Collectively, they received financial assistance of \$16,229 (\$14,072 in 2003–04), along with some study leave on full pay.

Security awareness training online

Following a recommendation by the ANAO that we improve the security awareness of staff, an online training program has been provided by the Protective Security Coordination Centre since 2003–04. All staff have completed the training, which all new staff are required to do as part of their induction program.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 4: RECOGNISING AND REWARDING PERFORMANCE

Performance assessment processes

Universal work performance assessment and feedback against measurable standards contributes to:

- a stronger performance culture in the department
- commitment to, and a shared understanding of, business directions being pursued at the team and individual level
- better communication between staff and their supervisors
- the progression of individuals through classification levels and bands
- the identification of the development needs of staff to help them improve their work performance
- the management of the unsatisfactory work performance process.

All eligible staff participated in the annual work performance assessment cycle completed on 31 October 2004. The cycle encompasses setting individual work objectives, conducting performance assessments, preparing individual development plans and providing feedback to supervisors.

Table 6 shows the spread of ratings by classification level or group for 2003 and 2004.

Table 6 Work performance assessment ratings, 2003 and 2004

Classification grouping	'Exceeds requirements'		'Meets requirements'		'Needs development'		Total staff assessed	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Executive Band 2	8	9	10	7	-	-	18	16
Executive Band 1	24	14	10	11	-	2	34	27
Parliamentary Service Level 4-6	17	14	23	16	-	-	40	30
Parliamentary Service Level 1-3	22	18	52	21	1	-	75	39
Total	71	55	95	55	1	2	167	112
Percentage	42.5%	49.1%	56.9%	49.1%	0.6%	0.8%	100%	100%

Note: The reduction in the number of staff assessed was a result of reduced staffing at the end of the Fortieth Parliament.

Performance pay

Under arrangements outlined in their Australian Workplace Agreements, the three SES Band 1 staff members shared \$13,500 (average \$4,500 each) in performance bonuses during the year.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 5: PROVIDING A QUALITY WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Certified agreement

The *Department of the House of Representatives Certified Agreement 2004–05*, certified in January 2004, covers all staff in the department except SES staff and those who are covered by a comprehensive Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA).

The agreement aims to better enable the department and staff to work together to maximise the delivery of support and services and to achieve the objectives and outcomes set out in our planning documents. The agreement sets out a detailed range of objectives, salaries and conditions of employment.

The second 4 per cent pay rise, outlined in the agreement, was paid with effect from 1 January 2005. The salaries available under the agreement at 30 June 2005 are set out in Table 7.

Table 7 Administrative staff salary scales

Classification	Salary scale \$
Executive Band 2	85,908–95,412
Executive Band 1	70,606–78,950
Parliamentary Service (PS) Level 6	56,018–63,877
PS Level 5	51,608–54,739
PS Level 4	46,366–50,265
PS Level 3	41,828–45,026
PS Level 2	37,035–40,552
PS Level 1	32,593–35,780

Australian Workplace Agreements

All SES staff continued to be covered by comprehensive AWAs, negotiated individually with each member of staff. The aims and conditions of service set out in the AWAs are consistent with those in the certified agreement.

Twelve staff members below SES level were also covered by AWAs.

Salaries expenditure

In 2004–05, salaries and allowances totalled \$12.6 million (\$13.7 million in 2003–04).

New people management system

In December 2004, the department decided to replace the PeopleSoft system with a system known as Chris 21. The decision was based on the assessed greater efficiency, cost effectiveness, and user friendliness of Chris 21. Implementation of the new system began in February 2005. The first live pay for members and staff was processed in July 2005.

Workplace diversity

The department has continued the implementation of a workplace diversity program, in accordance with section 18 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

During the year, a comprehensive *Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy* was written and distributed to all staff. We also prepared comprehensive *Guidelines for Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Prevention* and distributed them to all staff.

Following a successful pilot program with senior staff, training in bullying and harassment prevention was provided for all staff, either as a general member of staff or in a supervisory context.

The harassment contact officer (HRO) network was reviewed during the year with nine new HROs appointed and trained.

Occupational health and safety

The department's occupational health and safety (OH&S) policy and agreement with relevant staff representatives was originally formulated in 1991 under the terms of section 74 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* (the OH&S Act). The agreement was reviewed in 1996 and again in 2001. The department's policy places OH&S responsibilities on all managers and staff. Those responsibilities continued to be met during 2004–05.

During the year, no dangerous occurrences required notification under section 68 of the OH&S Act.

No investigations were carried out and no directions or notices were received by the department in relation to sections 30, 45, 46 or 47 of the OH&S Act.

Table 8 summarises compensation claims received from staff for each of our past three Comcare reporting periods.

Table 8 Claims incidence, by injury group, 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05

Injury group	Incidence		
	Mar 2002– Feb 2003	Mar 2003– Feb 2004	Mar 2004– Feb 2005
Back	1	–	–
Fracture excluding back	–	–	2
Strain excluding back	2	3	–
Open wounds	1	–	–
Contusion/crush	–	–	–
Other injuries	–	–	–
Occupational overuse syndrome	1	1	1
Stress	–	–	–
Other diseases	–	–	–
Totals	5	4	3



PURCHASING AND ASSETS MANAGEMENT



PURCHASING

All purchases made in 2004–05 were within financial delegations. The number and amount of purchases in the financial year were significantly lower than in 2003–04 because of the transfer of security funding to the Department of Parliamentary Services (as a result the department made no security purchases) and reduced activity during an election year.

During the year all staff were given training on purchasing and, as part of that training, were provided with a copy of the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines. The guidelines were updated during the financial year. In addition to this training, the finance office provided purchasing advice to staff where appropriate.

Table 9 provides comparative information on the department’s purchasing in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Table 9 Purchasing summary, 2003–04 and 2004–05

Purchasing performance indicators	2003–04	2004–05
Number of payments	2,658	1,900
Total amount of payments	\$14 million	\$5 million
Number of suppliers	980	1,430
Type of supplier:		
• Government	2.9%	2.1%
• Non-government	52.7%	42.8%
• School or university	44.4%	50.1%
Number of credit cards	77	65
Total amount of credit card transactions	\$691,910	\$524,273

ASSETS MANAGEMENT

The department's assets management strategy assists it to achieve its outcome. The strategy focuses on efficient asset utilisation and allows us to identify underperforming assets and, if necessary, to redeploy capital to more value-added activities.

The total written-down value of the department's assets at the end of 2004–05 was \$4.61 million.

There were no losses of equipment during the financial year.



CONSULTANTS AND COMPETITIVE TENDERING AND CONTRACTING



CONSULTANTS

During 2004–05, no consultancy contracts were entered into by the department. This is a reflection of the reduced activity usual in an election year. This compares to the 2003–04 financial year when five consultancy contracts worth \$75,121 were entered into.

COMPETITIVE TENDERING AND CONTRACTING

Under the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, the department must report on any competitive tendering and contracting undertaken in 2004–05. The requirements define competitive tendering and contracting as the contracting out of the delivery of government activities, previously performed by a Commonwealth agency, to another organisation.

The department has no competitive tendering or contracting to report for 2004–05. However the Department of Parliamentary Services provided some services that were not the subject of competitive tendering processes. Those services, which are provided free of charge, include:

- computing, telecommunications and audiovisual infrastructure, facilities and support
- building support systems
- library.



ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH



Section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* requires the department to detail amounts paid to advertising agencies, market research organisations, polling organisations, direct mail organisations and media advertising organisations during the financial year.

The department's total advertising expenditure for 2004–05 was \$182,341, showing a small reduction compared with last year's total (\$183,260). The expenditure was as follows:

- the amount paid for publicising the work of the House and committees decreased to \$80,853 (\$124,830 was paid in 2003–04). This reduction reflects the department's use of other methods to publicise the work of the House such as *About the House*.
- the amount paid for advertising in relation to inquiries being undertaken by parliamentary committees increased to \$90,043 (\$48,989 in 2003–04). This increase was due to increased levels of advertising in metropolitan newspapers.
- the amount paid for recruitment advertising increased to \$8,740 (\$5,964 in 2003–04)
- the amount paid to the Attorney-General's Department for chamber-related gazettals decreased to \$2,705 (\$3,477 in 2003–04).

The majority of the advertising was placed with hma Blaze.



ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE



Although the department is not subject to the provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, we adopt policies and practices in energy use and recycling that contribute to sound environmental performance.

The Department of Parliamentary Services prepares a collective report on behalf of all parliamentary departments, in accordance with section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The report addresses Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and environmental performance for 2004–05. The Department of Parliamentary Services is responsible for managing the building assets of Parliament House.



OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES



STAFF SURVEY

In June 2005 the department conducted a revised staff survey, 2005 Survey Feedback Action. The survey was derived from a benchmarking exercise conducted in July 2004 and incorporated the features of previous separate surveys, particularly the previous staff survey and leadership questionnaire, completed in 2003.

The survey has questions that measure the strengths of the department, particularly the core elements needed to attract, focus and keep the most talented staff. The survey also has questions that measure the quality of our leadership and the satisfaction of our staff with pay and conditions of service.

Nearly all the department's staff (90 per cent) participated in the survey in 2004–05. We intend to conduct the survey every year.

The department has established a number of internal benchmarks from the survey including a core elements satisfaction index (currently 71 per cent), a leadership satisfaction index (currently 72 per cent), a benefits satisfaction index (currently 70 per cent) and a business model index (currently 59 per cent).

Follow-up action has been identified during the coming year to address two initial issues that arose from the survey:

- staff perceptions relating to the way grievances are treated within the department
- staff perceptions on internal fairness in the delivery of benefits.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY

During the year the department commenced development of the skills and knowledge inventory (SKI), an online database to extend and replace the Clerk's Statement of Skills (a basic tool used by staff to benchmark the development of their employment skills and knowledge).

At year end a working group of the Knowledge Management Steering Committee was preparing to refine the SKI in preparation for consultation with departmental staff on its implementation in 2006.

INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

During the year the Finance Office developed the Finance Procedures and Chief Executive's Instructions folder. The folder provides staff with an easily accessible reference to financial policy and procedures. During the roll-out of the folders, staff were reminded of fraud control procedures. An updated fraud control pamphlet is being developed.



OUTLOOK



RELATIONSHIP WITH DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

The department's evolving relationship with the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) will have an important influence on our ability to deliver services to the Chamber, committees and members. The DPS supports the department with services that are crucial to our being able to perform our roles effectively. We have insisted, and will continue to insist, that DPS consults us about any decisions that may impinge on members or on our ability to deliver services to members. We will work with DPS to develop mechanisms that allow us to be involved more directly in DPS decision-making as it relates to us.

The DPS has claimed, in correspondence between the Secretary of the DPS and the Clerk of the House, that the DPS has not received sufficient appropriation in the transfer of security funding. The Clerk has responded that the level of appropriation transferred was consistent with the appropriation received by the department for the function, and was also consistent with the amount that had been agreed between the chamber departments and the DPS as the maximum amount the chamber departments would pay the DPS to provide the security function at the time the chamber departments were funded for the function.

AGREEMENT-MAKING ROUND

During the first half of the year significant attention will be given to developing the department's next certified agreement and Australian Workplace Agreements. The existing certified agreement has a nominal expiry date of 31 December 2005, and the department expects to make a seamless transition to the next agreement, proposed to commence on 1 January 2006.

The department is committed to providing pay and employment conditions that meet its people strategies, particularly in attracting and retaining staff that have the skills, capabilities and commitment we need to succeed. This will enable current and emerging requirements to be met and enable the department to best serve the House and the Parliament.