

Output Group 3—Procedure Office

Outputs

Provision of advisory and drafting services to non-government senators.

Provision of procedural advice and training to senators, staff, public servants and officials from other parliaments both within Australia and overseas.

Provision of secretariat support to the Regulations and Ordinances Committee and Scrutiny of Bills Committee.

Provision of parliamentary information services to the community.

Provision of parliamentary education services to schools, teachers and students.

Provision of policy advice and secretariat support for the maintenance and development of inter-parliamentary relations, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, overseas conferences and delegations program for senators.

	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>Procedural advice is accurate and covers all foreseeable eventualities.</p> <p>Amendments and bills are accurate and legally sound.</p> <p>Public information and parliamentary research is accurate, comprehensive and targeted for particular needs.</p> <p>Education Centre teaching and other PEO projects accurately reflect the parliament and its work.</p>	<p>The 2007 survey of senators revealed high levels of satisfaction with the group's outputs. In 2007–08, a non-survey year, the Procedure Office received consistently favourable feedback across all outputs.</p> <p>Senators consistently acknowledged the accuracy and value of procedural advice.</p> <p>Amendments were prepared to the satisfaction of senators.</p> <p>Public information was updated to reflect changes for the new parliament.</p> <p>The Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) conducted a major revision and upgrade to present information in web-based formats, which provide a greater range of more accessible and interactive resources to the public.</p>
Timeliness	<p>Procedural advice is timely.</p> <p>Scrutiny committee meetings held, documentation provided and reports produced within timeframes set by the Senate or the committees, as relevant.</p> <p>During sitting periods, amendments drafted as soon as possible after receipt of instructions.</p> <p>Seminars and lectures held on time and in accordance with advertised schedule; public information projects delivered according to programmed schedule.</p> <p>PEO teaching programs held on time and in accordance with booking schedule.</p> <p>PEO projects delivered according to programmed schedule.</p> <p>Information available on the internet and in publications is up to date and available as soon as practicable.</p>	<p>Procedural advice met all chamber deadlines.</p> <p>All meetings of the scrutiny committees were held as scheduled and documentation was provided within the timeframes set by the committees.</p> <p>Amendments were drafted in accordance with timetables set by senators.</p> <p>All seminars and lectures were held on time and in accordance with advertised schedules. Additional seminars were held in response to increasing demand.</p> <p>All programs were held in accordance with schedules and 59 additional classes were held in response to increasing demand.</p> <p>Projects, programs and outreach activities were delivered as scheduled.</p> <p>Internet timetables for the provision of information were met. The new website launched by the PEO, as reported last year, was extensively upgraded.</p>

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Analysis

As shown in Figure 10, the Procedure Office is divided into six functional areas to assist with the efficient management of the services it provides to senators. The office is headed by the Clerk Assistant (Procedure), who manages the office, provides procedural, advisory and drafting services, makes a large number of presentations on Senate procedure, and performs duties as a clerk at the table in the Senate chamber.

Figure 10 Elements and responsibilities of the Procedure Office

Executive and Legislative Drafting <i>Cleaver Elliott, Clerk Assistant</i> Procedural advice and training Legislative drafting of amendments and private senators' bills				
Biographical Dictionary Unit <i>Ann Millar, Director</i>	Parliamentary Education Office <i>Chris Reid, Director</i>	Regulations and Ordinances Committee <i>James Warmenhoven, Secretary</i>	Research Section <i>David Sullivan, Director</i>	Scrutiny of Bills Committee <i>Cheryl Wilson, Secretary</i>
Production, editing and publication of <i>The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate</i>	Provision of parliamentary education services to schools, teachers and students	Secretariat, advisory and administrative support to the committee	Provision of seminars, exhibitions, and research on matters of parliamentary significance	Secretariat, advisory and administrative support to the committee

The cost of the Procedure Office in providing its various legislative drafting, procedural advice, research and education services was \$6.3 million (\$6.2 million in 2006–07).

The full-time equivalent staffing level for 2007–08 was 32, up slightly from the 2006–07 figure.

Legislative drafting and procedural advice

The Procedure Office met the requirements of senators for procedural advice and legislative drafting services by:

- providing procedural advice to non-government senators, in response to requests and proactively
- providing procedural training and briefing to senators and senators' staff, in response to requests and proactively
- providing accurate advice, both in the chamber and for use in the chamber
- drafting amendments to bills, primarily for non-government senators but also for backbench government senators, in response to instructions received from senators and senators' staff
- drafting private senators' bills for non-government senators, in response to instructions received from senators and senators' staff.

The office also prepared an average of eight procedural scripts per sitting day, two more than last year's average. These scripts included notices of motion, terms of reference for committee inquiries and related documents for senators' use in the chamber and in committees. The tendency of senators and their staff to seek this advice at very short notice continued during the year.

A significant change for the drafting and procedural advisory service followed the 2007 federal election, with a change in the main client group for the service. A new opposition made requests for procedural advice and drafting support from December 2007. The number of requests increased significantly after February 2008.

The most notable example of a change in procedural advice resulted in the establishment of six select committees during the reporting period.

A further significant change for the drafting and procedural advisory service, also arising from the 2007 federal election, was the departure of all senators from the Australian Democrats party. Although four senators from that party continued to sit in the Senate to the end of the financial year, there was a significant reduction in their legislative drafting requests. This considerably reduced the legislative drafting workload, as this group had been major users of the drafting service in previous years.

The Procedure Office drafted and processed all non-government amendments and private senators' bills required by senators for use in the Senate, to assist with Senate committee work, or for the purpose of discussions with interested constituents. In 2007-08, government senators continued to request drafting assistance, both before and after the federal election.

During the year, senators continued to make many requests for the drafting of private senators' bills, with 28 bills prepared and 19 introduced. In 2006-07, 41 private senators' bills were produced and 20 were introduced.

The numbers of amendments were as follows: 83 sets of amendments and 423 individual amendments were circulated and 56 second reading amendments were prepared and circulated. The reduced number of sitting days and the significantly reduced legislative program caused a corresponding reduction in the number of amendments required to be drafted for the Senate.

Table 2 summarises non-government senators' use of legislative drafting and procedural services over the past three reporting periods.

Table 2 Legislative drafting and procedural advice services provided to non-government senators, 2005-06 to 2007-08

Service	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Committee of the whole amendments	736	1,524	423
Second reading amendments	56	111	56
Private senators' bills prepared	34	41	28
Private senators' bills introduced	6	20	19
Procedural scripts prepared	274	353	304

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Legislative scrutiny committees

During the year, the office provided secretariat, research and administrative support to the Regulations and Ordinances Committee and the Scrutiny of Bills Committee.

The secretariats of the two scrutiny committees assisted the committees to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with their standing orders. This included:

- publication each Senate sitting week of the required reports and digests
- publication of the *Delegated Legislation Monitor* (every Senate sitting week) and the *Disallowance Alert* and *Scrutiny of Disallowable Instruments Alert* (updated online as required)
- preparation of disallowance notices.

In addition to its regular alert digests and reports, the Scrutiny of Bills Committee published *The Work of the Committee during the 40th Parliament February 2002–August 2004*, which provides an overview of the legislative scrutiny work undertaken by the committee during that period, along with statistical data. The Regulations and Ordinances Committee published its 113th Report—*Interim Report on Consultation under the Legislative Instruments Act 2003*.

It is the responsibility of the two committees to examine all bills and disallowable instruments within their jurisdiction. The secretariats, assisted by their legal advisers, completed all of the necessary administrative work to assist the committees to undertake these tasks. The Regulations and Ordinances Committee staff processed 2,982 instruments during 2007–08 (2,349 in 2006–07). The Scrutiny of Bills Committee secretariat processed 207 bills during 2007–08 (241 in 2006–07) and the committee commented on 108 bills (112 in 2006–07).

Staff from both secretariats briefed several international delegations about the role and operations of the Senate legislative scrutiny committees, and conducted a training seminar for public servants as part of the seminar series offered by the Procedure Office.

Secretariat staff also accompanied members of the two scrutiny committees to the Australia–New Zealand Scrutiny of Legislation Conference, held in Wellington, New Zealand.

Public information and parliamentary research

The Research Section of the Procedure Office continued to coordinate and deliver parliamentary information and education services through lectures, exhibitions, seminars, publications, programs for other parliaments in Australia and overseas, and internships and fellowships.

Biographical dictionary

The Biographical Dictionary Unit continued its work on the third volume of *The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate*, covering senators whose terms ended between 1962 and 1983. Following the verification of entries, work on the manuscript concentrated on supplementary research and editing and thorough checking of endnotes in preparation for submission to the publisher.

Genealogical research about senators and clerks and their families neared completion, with the acquisition of a further 41 birth, marriage and death certificates and the compilation of evidence from cemetery records and other sources for certificates that are unobtainable from registrars. Work began on tracking down records for senators who had married or divorced overseas or in obscure circumstances in Australia.

Progress was made on the acquisition of photographs and caricatures to illustrate the volume, and an indexer and readers were engaged to work on the volume.

Work continued on the 109 entries for Volume 4, which will cover 1983 to 2002. A total of 69 entries have been allocated to authors.

Lectures

During 2007–08, the department continued to host lunchtime lectures as part of the popular Occasional Lecture series. Topics ranged from the selection of judges for Commonwealth courts, presented by former chief justice Sir Gerard Brennan, to the United Kingdom’s *Scotland Act 1998* and the Scottish devolution movement, presented by eminent political theorist Sir Bernard Crick.

The department publishes lecture transcripts in its free *Papers on Parliament* series and makes audio recordings available on the departmental website. Since May 2008, lectures have been filmed and broadcast on television and the internet by the ABC, increasing the audience for, and accessibility of, the lectures.

Exhibitions

In March 2008, the department launched a major revision of the Women in Federal Parliament exhibition in the Presiding Officers’ exhibition area. This exhibition, which displays an image and brief details of every woman who has sat in the parliament, had outgrown its space and needed to be redesigned, upgraded and updated. The Research Section also updated the exhibitions in the public areas outside the Senate chamber and in the Members’ Hall to reflect changes brought about by the 2007 federal election.

The Peace, Order and Good Government exhibition, which was erected in 2001 to commemorate the first federal parliament, was dismantled in preparation for a new exhibition featuring the work of the current parliament.

The department participated in the Parliament House Open Day on 10 May 2008, providing information, publications and other material to visitors, and arranging for senators to address the public about their experiences from the floor of the Senate chamber.

Seminars

The department’s seminar series continued to provide members of the Australian Public Service with comprehensive training in the operations of the Senate and the accountability to parliament of Australian Government departments and agencies. During 2007–08, a total of 1,323 people attended 44 seminars.

The seminar series remained an integral part of most graduate training programs in the Australian Public Service. Some of the larger departments enrolled all of their graduates in the full-day Introduction to the Senate seminar, and a range of half-day seminars were also well received. The seminars were conducted by senior officers of the department.

The Research Section also continued to provide seminars to other interested groups, such as a seminar for a group of Indigenous graduates and tailored programs for the Journalist Fellowship Program and the Defence and Industry Study Course.

Tailored seminars and training programs were provided for officers visiting from overseas parliaments, including from the Cook Islands, Indonesia, Jordan and Sri Lanka. A fortnight-long training program, sponsored by the United Nations Development Program, was conducted for 18 officials from the National Assembly of Vietnam.

The Inter-Parliamentary Study Program, conducted jointly with the House of Representatives, provided training for 14 officers from overseas parliaments. A pilot training program for

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members of the Canberra diplomatic community was also conducted jointly with the Department of the House of Representatives.

A series of training seminars was offered to the staff of senators, and was well attended. The seminars, delivered by senior officers, explained in detail the operations and procedures of the Senate and its committees.

The Research Section organised the first of two orientation seminars for senators-elect in February 2008, focusing on administrative arrangements. A further seminar scheduled for July 2008 will examine in detail the operations and procedures of the Senate and its committees.

Publications and information services

The Research Section edited and published two editions of the department's journal *Papers on Parliament* during 2007–08. Entitled *National Parliament, National Symbols* (July 2007) and *The Senate and Accountability* (January 2008), these editions largely comprised papers in the Senate Occasional Lecture series. The *Senate Briefs* series was revised and reissued to account for changes brought about by the 2007 federal election.

The section issues a range of free publications raising awareness of the Senate and parliamentary processes. Details of the publications available in 2007–08 are provided in Appendix 4.

During the year, the Research Section responded to requests for information and research support from a range of sources, including senators, the Clerk and Clerks Assistant, and members of the academic community and the general public.

Internships and the Richard Baker Senate Prize

As in previous years, the department successfully ran the Australian National Internships Program in partnership with the Australian National University. During 2007–08, 19 students were placed in parliamentary departments and 22 students were placed in other departments and agencies. Interns continued to see Parliament House as an outstanding venue in which to be placed. The Research Section coordinated an induction seminar for each group of interns and organised some of the functions associated with the program.

The Research Section continued to provide secretariat support to the judging panel for the Richard Baker Senate Prize. The 2007 competition attracted 11 entries, ranging widely in subject matter and format. The prize was awarded to a major study edited by Professor John Halligan, Mr Robin Miller and Professor John Power, entitled *Parliament in the Twenty-first Century: Institutional Reform and Emerging Roles*.

Strengthening Parliamentary Institutions program

Early in 2007, the department entered into a formal research partnership with the Australian National University's Parliamentary Studies Centre, which is conducting a three-year program, entitled Strengthening Parliamentary Institutions, funded by the Australian Research Council. The primary outcome will be a series of edited books containing a selection of research papers prepared by officers of the departments of the Senate and the House of Representatives and by the Parliamentary Library, and by parliamentary scholars from Australia and overseas.

During 2007–08, officers of the department drafted papers on topics ranging from accountability and measuring committee effectiveness to community participation in committee inquiries. Details are provided in Appendix 5.

A series of workshops starting in June 2008 will enable authors to receive input from colleagues across parliament, playing an important role in building a research community among the officers taking part in the project. Following the workshops, revised papers will be published on the Parliamentary Studies Centre website, and will be eligible for subsequent inclusion in the edited books.

Parliamentary education services

During 2007–08, the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) continued to deliver a high level of educational services to schools, teachers and students. The PEO has two main functions:

- Through the Education Centre (which includes a dedicated committee room modified to represent a parliamentary chamber), the PEO delivers a role-play that involves simulations of chamber and committee proceedings of the House of Representatives and the Senate, for students visiting Parliament House.
- Through a sophisticated outreach strategy, developed over many years, the PEO delivers education opportunities for students and teachers who might not visit Parliament House. To support this strategy, the PEO produces materials and resources in print, on CD and on its website.

In addition, the PEO undertakes joint ventures, and builds professional networks, to extend the reach of parliamentary education.

Education Centre activities

The Education Centre delivered its one-hour role-play program to more than 89,000 students in approximately 2,500 groups during 2007–08. The extended availability of the program discussed in last year's report is now a permanent service. Trends in Education Centre attendance are shown in figures 11 and 12.

Following the installation of replica chamber benches with reversible red and green cushions, in June 2007, the PEO conducted a review of the role-play program. The review, which was completed in December 2007, recommended the introduction of concept-based role-plays that focus more on the functions of the parliament; the introduction of multimedia; and the use of student-initiated bills and topics for debate.

The office also conducted market research surveys of classroom teachers visiting the Education Centre. The results of the survey will be used to assist with providing improved educational services.

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Figure 11 **Students who visited the PEO Education Centre, 2003–04 to 2007–08**

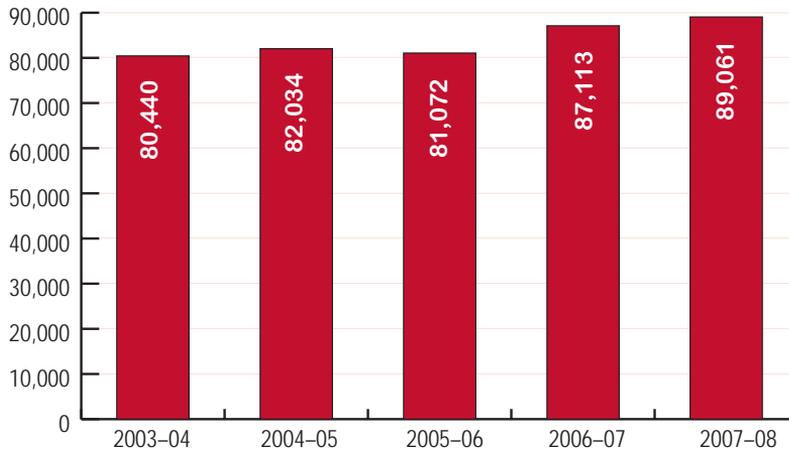
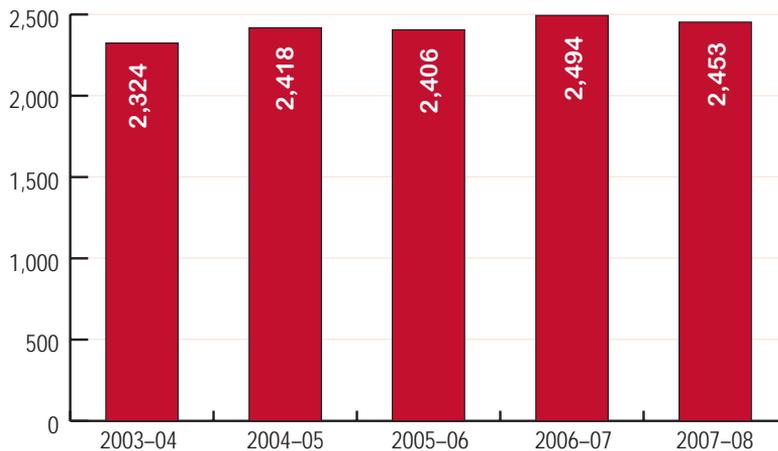


Figure 12 **Groups that visited the PEO Education Centre, 2003–04 to 2007–08**



Outreach activities

Officers of the PEO travelled widely and delivered many resources for school, TAFE and English as a second language course teachers and students in 2007–08.

The PEO participated in activities in Adelaide; Alice Springs; Brisbane; Canberra and surrounding regions; Hobart; Melbourne; and Sydney and surrounding regions. An important feature of these outreach activities was the involvement of local senators and members.

No activities were undertaken in Western Australia during the reporting period, because a range of services had been delivered there during recent previous reporting periods. The PEO is planning to return to Western Australia in 2008–09.

Website and other resources

The PEO continued to develop its website, emphasising interactivity, video learning and accessibility. The promotion of the website was a focus for the publishing team during 2007–08. Web patronage increased substantially, reaching a record 2.8 million page views.

The website also introduced a service to raise the profile of the PEO in the parliament and to assist all members of parliament in their work with schools, teachers and students. The service includes a range of resources and products, such as a calendar of upcoming PEO joint-venture events.

The PEO continued to produce new and updated resources. These included the completion of a trial version of a new teaching resource, *Parliament of Wizards*, which introduces primary school students to the work of parliament through the world of magic. A series of 10 posters, titled *Parliament in Pictures*, was released; at the request of the Presiding Officers, the posters will feature as a public display in the schools hospitality area of Parliament House.

In 2007–08, the PEO reprinted the pocket-sized *Australian Constitution*, *Peeling back Parliament* and *Unravelling the parliamentary role-play* publications. Resources such as these are posted to all parts of Australia every year.

Joint ventures and networks

An ambitious program that brings together the PEO, senators and members and their staff, and schools, in order to deliver parliamentary education programs to a school audience in groups, was developed during the year. Planning has been completed for programs in regional Victoria and outer Brisbane.

The PEO continued to work with the National Museum of Australia to produce Talk Back Classroom, a program in which senior secondary school students interview distinguished guests in front of a live audience in a recording studio. The museum ended this program on 30 June 2008.

The Rotary-sponsored Adventure in Citizenship program, which brings Year 11 students from across Australia to Canberra to take part in a week-long program run by the PEO and other partners, continued to attract excellent feedback. The PEO has developed the capacity to customise responses to a range of special programs that bring visitors to parliament, such as *Heywire*, an ABC program for rural youth; the National Youth Science Forum; and the National Schools Constitutional Convention.

As in previous years, Little Lunch Sittings were delivered during sitting periods at Parliament House, this year to four groups of older Australians—several more sittings were booked but were subsequently cancelled due to the announcement of the federal election.

The PEO continued to forge strong and useful networks during the year, including by:

- working closely with senators and members
- meeting with the PEO Advisory Committee
- attending
 - the Australasian Study of Parliament Group annual conference in August 2007
 - the joint conference of the Australian Primary Principals Association and the Australian Secondary Principals Association in October 2007
 - the Australia and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table professional development seminar in January 2008
- interacting with a range of visiting delegations from parliaments overseas.

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Staff training and development

In 2007–08, the PEO further developed a training module for casual staff, to increase teaching capacity and flexibility during busy periods and staff absences. The training is based on observation, team teaching and mentoring. The module will be repeated and further refined in 2008–09.

All PEO staff are encouraged to undertake training and development activities, such as parliamentary training sessions, seminars and conferences, university and TAFE courses, online training courses and face-to-face workshops.

International activities

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) brings together representatives of the parliaments of sovereign states to foster contact, coordination and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians.

During 2007–08, the department supported the work of the IPU by funding the attendance of:

- a delegation from the Australian Group of the IPU at the 118th IPU Assembly, held in South Africa in April 2008 (an Australian Group delegation was not sent to the 117th Assembly, because the date conflicted with the 2007 federal election)
- a delegate from the Australian Group at a parliamentary briefing by the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS, held in the United States in June 2008.

The Director, Journals and Notice Paper, Table Office, continued to serve as secretary to the Australian IPU delegation, providing administrative support and advice.

The department also provided experienced officers to serve as secretaries:

- on two parliamentary delegations participating in bilateral visits, to Brazil and Uruguay and to the European Institutions
- to the Thirty-eighth Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference, held in the Cook Islands in July 2007
- to the Standing Committee on Community Affairs participating in a committee exchange visit to the New Zealand Parliament.

Factors, events and trends influencing performance

The core business of the Procedure Office—its legislative drafting and procedural advice services—continued to be used extensively by senators and their staff. During 2007–08, an additional full-time legislative drafter was engaged on a one-year trial basis to assist with the office's legislative drafting work. The addition of this resource meant that private senators' bills, which are usually drafted during non-sitting periods only, could also be drafted during sitting periods.

Evaluation

The Procedure Office continually monitors all of its activities through formal and informal appraisal, including through letters, emails, phone calls, seminar evaluation forms and direct advice from senators, their staff and members of the public. Each of these evaluation methods assists the office to make timely and responsive adjustments to the way it delivers its services. High levels of satisfaction were indicated for the office's services; Figure 13 provides a few examples of the positive feedback received in 2007–08.

Figure 13 **Comments on Output Group 3 services**

On the legislative drafting service
From senators and senators' staff
 'Thank you very much for being proactive on these. It helps enormously.'
 'This [explanatory memorandum] wouldn't have been possible if it weren't for all your hard work in the drafting stages! We really appreciate it.'
 'I appreciate that the time for pulling this together was absolutely crazy and am grateful you were able to do so much so quickly.'
 'Thanks so much for your supa-efficient help on this.'

On the seminar series
Parliament, Privilege and Accountability
 'I found it to be very informative and will greatly assist my future development—all speakers were very knowledgeable regarding their areas.'
Introduction to the Senate
 'I found the seminar was extremely well run and organised and very interesting. It was helpful to me in my area of work. Thank you.'
 'This was an excellent seminar. The presenters were engaging and knowledgeable. I really enjoyed myself and it was time well spent.'
Getting Bills through the Senate
 'Excellent course and presenter; a real insight gained into procedures and experiences of the Senate.'
 'Overall a fantastic course, delivered in a professional yet entertaining manner—10 out of 10.'
The Budget and the Senate Estimates Process
 'Highly informative seminar, well-directed session, used relevant examples.'
 'Great course, easy to understand, good reading material to take away.'
Legislative Scrutiny of Bills and Regulations
 'Absolutely met my expectation of gaining a more detailed comprehension of parliamentary processes in this area—it was an excellent presentation.'

On the Parliamentary Education Office
From senators and members
 'I have found the work of the PEO over the five years of my time in the Senate to have been of a high standard and of great support in my role.'
 'I congratulate ... the PEO team for the ongoing work that you commit to parliamentary education and the youth of today. With over 82,000 students visiting Canberra to learn more about parliament, it is a real testament to your hard work.'
From teachers and students
 'The students especially enjoyed the opportunity to debate a new bill, and found this experience contributed greatly to their understanding of how parliament works.'
 'I ... have taken so much from the day and your fantastic resources which I will be using in my classroom.'
 'You have extraordinary people on your team. The program is so effective; I hope many other young people get the same experience and benefits that I did.'

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Performance outlook

In 2008–09 the Procedure Office will again give priority to providing drafting support for legislative amendments and private senators' bills for non-government senators and to providing procedural advice and training. With an influx of new senators, and a return to 'balance of power' politics, there will be an increased requirement for briefing on Senate practices and procedures.

The committees' secretariats will continue to provide full and effective support to the Regulations and Ordinances Committee and the Scrutiny of Bills Committee.

The Biographical Dictionary Unit will publish Volume 3 of the dictionary and continue its work on Volume 4.

The Research Section will update its seminar programs to take account of changes to the dynamics of the Senate, and will otherwise continue to provide research and training support. A major new public exhibition on the legislative work of the parliament will be unveiled, and both the Research Section and the PEO will be involved in an interdepartmental review of the public display spaces at Parliament House.

The PEO will extend its established 'teaching and reaching' strategy, working towards implementing a national agenda to educate all students of school age in Australia about the parliament. Use of technology will continue to expand, adding interactive features to the PEO website and increasing the production of DVDs and web-based visual learning products. A strategic plan to engage the secondary school student audience will be completed.

In 2008–09, the PEO will educate a near-capacity number of students in the Education Centre, as it did in 2007–08. Implementing the recommendations of the role-play review will support continuous improvement and ensure the PEO maintains its position as a leading exponent of parliamentary education.

The PEO will also work closely with the Australian Primary Principals Association and the Australian Secondary Principals Association, offering a standing invitation for their respective executive meetings to be held at Parliament House where possible. Outreach programs in schools, universities and the TAFE sector will also continue.