

Standing Committee on
Appropriations and
Administration

Budget Estimates 2018–2019

REPORT NO.15

MAY 2018

DEPARTMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Speaker (ex officio, Chair), Hon Tony Smith MP

Ms Julie Owens MP (Deputy Chair)

Mr Ross Hart MP

Mr Chris Hayes MP

Ms Nola Marino MP

Mr Rob Mitchell MP

Mr Ben Morton MP

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP

Mr Bert van Manen MP

Secretariat

Secretary Mr James Catchpole

Research Ms Kate Moore

THE COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration, appointed pursuant to standing order 222A, considers estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of the House of Representatives for each year and provides to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance, estimates of amounts for inclusion in the appropriation bills for the Department.

The Committee also considers proposals for changes to the administration of the Department of the House of Representatives or variations to services provided by the Department, other matters of finance or services as may be referred to it by the Speaker or the House, the administration and funding of security measures affecting the House, and proposals for works in the parliamentary precincts that are subject to parliamentary approval. The Committee reports on these matters to the Speaker or the House as appropriate.

When conferring with the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security, the Committee may consider estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) each year, and provide to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance, estimates of amounts for inclusion in appropriation bills for DPS.

The Committee makes an annual report to the House on its operations (standing order 222(a)(vi)).

Introduction

Standing order 222A(a)(ii) requires that the Committee provide to the Speaker for presentation to the House the amounts for inclusion in the appropriation bills for the Department of the House of Representatives.

Proposed Appropriation for 2018–19

1. Departmental Annual Appropriation

The amount to be included for the Department of the House of Representatives in Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2018–2019 is calculated in accordance with current Commonwealth funding policy. Under this policy, the prior year's appropriation amount is adjusted by application of an efficiency dividend (ED), wages and prices indices adjustments and any applicable Budget measures.

The Government provided supplementary funding of **\$12.4m for the Department** over four years, commencing in 2017–18. The first element of the additional funding (**\$5.8m over four years**) is being used to strengthen the Department's procedural capacity and provide additional support to meet the increasingly complex procedural advice and services required by Members and their staff. In particular, the funding has allowed the Department to establish a specialist Procedure Office to assist provide this support. The second element of the additional funding (**\$6.6m over four years**), is providing further support to parliamentary committees administered by the Department. The number of committees administered by the Department has increased, as has the inquiry workload of committees, and they require additional staffing and administrative support as well as access to specialised expertise in the complex and, at times, technical matters they are examining.

The Committee has found the funding very welcome, and it is enabling the Department to plan and budget with certainty for the forthcoming years.

The Committee commends the Department's careful financial management over many years. It will continue to closely monitor the Department's financial position in 2018 and into the future.

The table below illustrates the movement in the Department's Appropriation since the 2017–18 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

Item	Departmental \$'000	Administered \$'000	Total \$'000
Estimate of Appropriation 2018–19 as reported in the 2017–18 PBS	24,725	313	25,038
Adjustment for prices and wages indices	25	-	25
Expense Measures			
Nil	-	-	-
Other Movements			
Efficiency dividend increase	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2018–2019	24,750	313	25,063
<i>Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2017–2018</i>	<i>24,882</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>25,202</i>

2. Departmental Capital Appropriation

The annual departmental appropriation includes an amount for capital expenditure of \$0.637m as disclosed in the departmental capital budget.

3. Accumulated Prior Year Appropriation and Operating Results

The Department also has access to resources accumulated from prior years. The Department can use these funds to fund liabilities (including provisions for employee expenses) and capital purchases that are not provided for in the departmental capital budget. They can also be used to fund operational losses should the situation arise.

Estimated Actuals as at Budget May 2018	2017–18 (\$'000)	2018–19 (\$'000)
Prior year departmental appropriation	14,742	14,402
Total Comprehensive Income attributable to the Department	905	300

4. Special Appropriations (Members' remuneration and entitlements)

Special appropriations for 2018–2019 comprise the following amounts:

Department of Finance	(\$'000)
<i>Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017</i>	42,142
<i>Parliamentary Superannuation Act 2004</i>	5,207
<i>Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (section 66)</i>	3,596

The Department accesses these special appropriations by way of third party payments on behalf of the Department of Finance. The amounts are disclosed in the Department of Finance's resource statement.

In summary:

The **total appropriation** to be approved by the Parliament for the Department of the House of Representatives in the Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2018–2019 will be **\$25.063m** (compared to \$25.202m in 2017–18).

The Department will also draw down on **special appropriations** of **\$50.945m** (compared to an estimate of \$48.686m in 2017–18).

The Committee reports to the House of Representatives accordingly.

Hon. Tony Smith MP
Chair

May 2018