
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Appropriations and Administration Committee

House of Representatives
Annual Report 2018-2019

November 2019
Canberra

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Membership of the Committee – 46th Parliament

Chair Hon Tony Smith MP (Speaker)

Deputy Chair Ms Julie Owens MP

Members Mr John Alexander OAM MP

Hon Kevin Andrews MP

Ms Libby Coker MP

Mr Vince Connelly MP

Mr Chris Hayes MP

Mr Rob Mitchell MP

Mr Bert van Manen MP

Secretary Mr James Catchpole

Researcher Ms Kate Moore



Membership of the Committee – 45th Parliament

Chair Hon Tony Smith MP (Speaker)

Deputy Chair Ms Julie Owens MP

Members Mr Ross Hart MP
 Mr Chris Hayes MP
 Mrs Nola Marino MP
 Mr Rob Mitchell MP
 Mr Ben Morton MP
 Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
 Mr Bert van Manen MP

Secretary Mr James Catchpole

Researcher Ms Kate Moore

Annual Report 2018-2019

The Committee

- 1.1 The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration, appointed under standing order 222A considers estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of the House of Representatives for each year. The Committee provides its estimates of amounts for inclusion in the appropriation and supply bills for the department to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The Committee may confer with the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security to consider estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) each year. The Committee may also provide to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance, estimates of amounts for inclusion in appropriation and supply bills for DPS. The two committees did not confer in this manner in 2018-19.

- 1.4 Standing order 222A(a)(vii) requires the Committee to make an annual report to the House on its operations, the subject of this report being the reporting period of 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

Reports

- 1.5 In 2018-2019, the Committee tabled two reports:
- *Report no. 16 – Annual Report 2017-2018; and*
 - *Report no. 17 – Budget Estimates 2019-2020 for the Department of the House of Representatives.*

Report no. 17

- 1.6 Report no. 17 was presented in accordance with standing order 222A(a)(ii) which requires the Committee to 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. The report was tabled in the House on Thursday 4 April 2019 following the presentation of the Budget two days earlier. 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) 2019-2020 was \$25.968m, compared to \$25.063m in 2018-19.
- 1.7 The Committee is pleased that the department secured supplementary funding over four years commencing in 2017-18 and which continues to enable the department to strengthen its procedural capacity and to provide further support to parliamentary committees administered by the department.
- 1.8 In the 2019-20 Budget round the department also sought and was provided additional funding for:
- the 2019-20 financial year to support the Parliament to host the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in January 2020, and
 - the 2021-22 financial year to support the Parliament to host the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) in January 2022.
- 1.9 This additional funding is also very welcome as it will enable the department to support the Australian Parliament's national, international and regional relationships through engagement with other parliaments (see below).

Meetings of the Committee of the 45th Parliament

- 1.10 During the reporting period the Committee met twice, on 24 October 2018 and 3 April 2019.
- 1.11 The following were among the matters considered at the two meetings:
- rollout of the Electronic Access Control System (EACS) to suites, with particular reference to the suites of Members in the House of Representatives wing
 - cyber security on the Parliamentary Computing Network
 - the Parliament House Private Area Access (Pass) Policy
 - the hosting by the Australian Parliament of the APPF in 2020 and CSPOC in 2022
 - the proposed Parliamentary Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme and
 - the renaming of the Senate and House of Representatives alcoves in honour of the first female Senator (Senator Dame Dorothy Tangney) and the first female member of the House of Representatives (Dame Enid Lyons) respectively.

Security Related Works

- 1.12 During the year the Committee maintained its interest in security enhancements at Parliament House. This reflected the ongoing security related capital works on the precincts, the roll out of EACS in the House of Representatives wing and new electronic monitoring enhancements, all of which the Committee was briefed on and endorsed. The Committee is likely to continue its interest in security related matters as it and other Members and Senators seek to balance security needs with as easy as possible access to the building for occupants and visitors alike.
- 1.13 The Committee also sought assurances about the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information held and transmitted on the parliamentary computing network. As such, the Committee was briefed by DPS on ICT security initiatives to control access and safeguard information held on the network from cyber threats.

Parliamentary Conferences

- 1.14 The Committee supports opportunities for dialogue between Members of the Australian Parliament and Members of other similar parliaments and those in our region. For this reason the Committee endorsed the Presiding Officers' agreement that the Australia Parliament host APPF and CSPOC and is pleased that necessary additional funding has been secured. These conferences bring together parliamentarians from countries with which Australia has strong strategic, economic and social ties and the conferences strengthen the Australian Parliament's institutional and professional relationships with regional parliaments.
- 1.15 The APPF is an assembly of members of national parliaments in the Asia-Pacific region which has met each year since 1993 to discuss a range of issues of mutual concern. The annual meetings take place in January each year and are hosted by a national parliament. The Australian Parliament will be making a particular effort to encourage some of the smaller Pacific Island nations in our region to attend in 2020. In the first half of 2019 the Department established a secretariat to support the Forum and Members and Senators will be canvassed by the Presiding Officers to attend as Australian representatives.
- 1.16 Preparations for hosting CSPOC will commence closer to 2022.

Proposed Parliamentary Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme

- 1.17 The Committee noted a recommendation by the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security in its June 2018 advisory report on the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Bill 2018 that the two Houses develop a parallel parliamentary foreign influence transparency scheme equivalent to the scheme established under the *Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018*. Such a scheme had not been developed at the end of the reporting period.

Hon Tony Smith MP
Chair
November 2019