

Corporate governance

The department's operations for 2018–19 were governed by the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* and other legislation.

Corporate plan

The department's *Corporate Plan 2018–19* outlines our objectives, role and structure, the environment in which we operate, and our approach to maintaining the capabilities of our key resource – our staff. Work reports provided to the Clerk throughout the reporting period showed continued progress in key areas and work tasks. Planned outcomes are explained in the department's portfolio budget statements and performance results, including our annual performance statements, and are included in this report.

Management and assurance

The department's corporate governance mechanisms include two senior committees, the Program Managers' Group, chaired by the Deputy Clerk, and the Audit Committee, chaired by an independent member. These committees provide advice, support and assurance to the Clerk to ensure that effective governance and statutory responsibilities for the management of the department are met. The role, membership and activities of these groups are described in figure 16.

The department also participates in a range of interdepartmental committees through which the parliamentary departments coordinate common and joint activities. Chief among these were meetings of the heads of the four parliamentary departments; the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group; the Security Management Board; the Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board (and its subordinate ICT committees); and other bodies managing joint projects.

Figure 16 – Management and assurance, 2018–19

Audit Committee

Role	Provide independent advice to the Clerk on the department’s financial and performance reporting responsibilities, risk oversight and management, and systems of internal controls.
Activities	Five meetings Based on the committee’s charter, the committee undertook a progressive annual work plan against its four main areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• financial reporting• performance reporting• risk oversight and management, and• systems of internal control An annual report of the committee’s activities is provided to the Clerk in October each year.
Membership	Three independent members (of whom one is the Chair), the Deputy Clerk and one program manager. Observers: Usher of the Black Rod (Secretary), Chief Finance Officer, representatives from the Australian National Audit Office and the department’s internal audit service provider.

Program Managers’ Group

Role	Coordinate corporate governance matters, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• human resource management• risk management and planning• performance reporting• financial planning, and• departmental service quality.
Activities	Nine meetings. Examined a range of issues in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• budget• staffing (including learning and development)• health and well-being strategy (including work, health and safety)• ICT and associated risk strategies• compliance, auditing and reporting requirements• risk management• administrative arrangements, and• administration in common with other parliamentary departments.
Membership	Deputy Clerk and program managers. Chaired by the Deputy Clerk.

Fraud control and risk management

Consistent with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, the *Clerk's Instructions* and associated financial management policies promote the proper use of the department's resources. The *Clerk's Instructions* are reviewed annually to ensure their applicability and coverage.

The department has in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting mechanisms that comply with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework. No incidents of fraud were detected in this reporting period.

During 2018–19, risk areas and associated controls and mitigation strategies were routinely considered by senior management and reported to the department's Audit Committee. The framework for managing risk is revised regularly and made available to staff on the department's intranet. Risk oversight and management is a standing agenda item for meetings of the program managers. The risk management and fraud control framework will be reviewed in the coming year.