

Part 1

Secretary's review

The Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) provides essential services to support the work of the Parliament, maintain Parliament House as a symbol of Australian democracy, and ensure that the building, and the important activity that takes place within it, is accessible and engaging. A more detailed description of the work of DPS is provided in Part 2 of this report.

The Presiding Officers of the Parliament—the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives—are jointly responsible for the administration and operation of Parliament House. As Secretary of DPS, I report directly to the Presiding Officers.

Following my appointment as Secretary in May 2012, I commenced a transformational change agenda to reshape DPS into a more professional, outward-looking and service-focused department. The year 2012–13 was therefore one of significant transition across many areas of DPS, marked by changes in senior management, functional realignments and an increased focus on quality service delivery.

Main highlights of 2012–13

Inquiry into the performance of DPS

On 28 November 2012, Senator Polley tabled the final report of the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee's inquiry into the performance of DPS. On 7 February 2013, the President tabled DPS's response to the Report, and provided a further response to the recommendations on 21 March 2013. DPS's response addressed all the Report's recommendations as well as additional areas of concern identified by the Committee. The response included specific action plans and delivery dates for each of these. Further detail is provided in Part 3 of this report.

An important theme of the Report was the need for greater accountability and transparency. The Committee noted that the number of performance measures reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements and annual report was too great, and that many existing indicators did not facilitate useful analysis of DPS's performance. We reviewed our annual report and key performance indicators to enable us to provide more accurate and meaningful information. The first phase of these changes is reflected in this

report; more significant improvements will occur in the 2013–14 annual report, based on the new structure introduced in the DPS Portfolio Budget Statements for 2013–14.

Transforming DPS

Appointments to the new senior leadership team were made throughout 2012–13, enabling us to begin our structural realignment and to put in place the organisational building blocks for the transformation of DPS. This included the appointment of the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Parliament. Work units have been regrouped to improve clarity of function and strengthen strategic planning, project delivery and reporting capabilities.

Ongoing communication is a central part of our change process. I therefore made it a priority to meet regularly with staff and their union representatives to inform and seek feedback on our new directions. New measures brought in to realign DPS management structures, strengthen ethical behaviour in the workplace, and refresh corporate planning processes took shape throughout the year. A series of staff briefings was held, where I talked directly to staff about my priorities for change, DPS's response to the recommendations of the Committee Inquiry, and the rebranding of DPS. I also instituted quarterly meetings with each of the six unions representing our diverse workforce.

DPS now has a new corporate plan with a clear mission statement, key result areas, sign posts of success and priorities. This was developed through an inclusive process of workshops with senior and middle managers and 'Town Hall' style discussions with a large representative sample of staff from across DPS. We now have a corporate plan that reflects our shared understanding of, and commitment to, the work we do to support the Parliament and parliamentarians. The corporate plan is reproduced in Part 5 of this report.

In recognition of issues raised in submissions to the Committee Inquiry and in its findings, we established a fostering inclusion and respect framework to guide the implementation of measures to promote ethical behaviour across all levels of DPS.

During the year, we also strengthened the role of independent, external advice to DPS. This included establishing a new Audit Committee with two independent members. Another significant milestone was the creation of an Expert Advisory Panel to assist in the development of the first ever Conservation Management Plan for Parliament House.

Creation of Parliamentary ICT

The 2012 *Review of information and communication technology for the Parliament* (the Roche Review) recommended an improved Information and Communication Technology (ICT) service delivery model for the whole of Parliament, to be provided by DPS, as well as the establishment of a one-stop shop for parliamentarians' ICT needs. It also recommended that parliamentarians have greater flexibility in selecting their ICT equipment within the existing budget cap. During the year, the majority of the Review's recommendations were implemented, resulting in services more aligned to the needs of parliamentarians.

As part of this process, I chair a new Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board (PICTAB) created to oversee the development of strategic ICT policy for the Parliament. Comprising Senators and Members, the Parliamentary Service Commissioner, and senior staff from the parliamentary departments, the Board was instrumental in the development of the first Parliament of Australia ICT Strategic Plan, which was endorsed by the Presiding Officers in mid-2013. The Plan's strategic vision is to connect parliamentarians to the information and services they need, anywhere, at any time, and on a range of devices. A complementary entitlements model has also been established to enable parliamentarians to choose the equipment that best suits their needs.

The transfer of parliamentary ICT previously provided by the chamber departments and the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DoFD) to a single ICT Division within DPS took effect on 1 July 2013. DPS is now responsible for all ICT services in Parliament House and to parliamentarians and their staff nationally. Further detail is provided in Part 3 of this report.

25th anniversary of Parliament House

Other high points of the year were the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Parliament House and of the Centenary of Canberra. Events included a Silver Anniversary Morning Tea, the launch of commemorative coins by the Royal Australian Mint, and the premiere of the Australian Ballet performance *Monument*. Further detail is provided in Part 2 of this report.

Commitment to reconciliation

In 2013, the parliamentary departments, under the leadership of DPS, worked towards developing their first Reconciliation Action Plan. As an initial step, DPS issued a Commitment to Reconciliation statement, which outlines what DPS will be doing to be more actively involved in the journey of reconciliation and to play our part in closing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. Staff from across DPS were involved in developing the statement, which was launched during NAIDOC week 2013.

Looking ahead into 2013–14

The 2013–14 financial year will see a general election and the commencement of the 44th Parliament. The new Parliament will provide an opportunity for us to engage with new and returning parliamentarians and showcase the range of improved services provided by DPS.

Last year, I reported that a very tight financial situation would continue into 2012–13 and beyond. Since that time, the 2012–13 MYEFO decisions resulted in further budget reductions over the forward estimates. Another round of

efficiency dividends was announced during the election campaign. DPS's operational budget has not increased significantly since 2004–05 when it was formed. In fact, in real terms it has reduced by more than 22 per cent over this period. In this context, the forthcoming financial year presents us with major challenges; and DPS will need to make substantial changes to its programs and services to manage within its operating budget.

Acknowledgments

I thank the Presiding Officers—Senator the Hon. John Hogg, President of the Senate, Ms Anna Burke MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives—and the Hon. Peter Slipper, former Speaker of the House, for their support and for championing the DPS change agenda. I would also like to recognise the heads of the other parliamentary departments: Dr Rosemary Laing, Clerk of the Senate; Mr Bernard Wright, Clerk of the House of Representatives; and Mr Phil Bowen, Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Finally, I sincerely thank all my staff for their ongoing commitment to supporting the Parliament and parliamentarians. Without their contribution there would be no power, ICT, or security for the Parliament; there would be no broadcast or records of proceedings; no library and research services; no maintenance of the infrastructure, landscape and collections; and no ability for the press or the public to access Parliament House and the important activity that takes place here. Our work is very diverse and complex, yet I believe we are building an agency with a commitment to quality, customer focused service delivery.