



Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates 2023–24
Monday, 12 February 2024
Daily summary

The committee met from 9.00am until 11.28pm.

The committee called the following departments and agencies:

- Parliamentary Budget Office
- Department of the Senate
- Department of Parliamentary Services
- Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Office of National Intelligence
- Department of Finance
 - Outcome 2 – Electoral Policy only
 - Outcome 3
- Australian Electoral Commission
- Parliamentary Workplace Support Service
- Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

Topics discussed by the committee included:

Parliamentary Budget Office

- Sourcing of data for PBO budget predictions and accuracy of forecasting.

Department of the Senate

- Senator Services and building maintenance; and
- Legislative drafting capacity.

Department of Parliamentary Services

- Disability accessibility, health and wellbeing;
- ICT projects feasibility and rollout—modern telephony;
- Parliamentary Library: staffing, bullying and harassment claims, and workplace culture;
- DPS SES staffing arrangements and role restructuring;
- Guidelines around meeting room use, in relating to sponsored pass holders;
- Utilisation of building spaces including: theatre, space for First Nations elders, and lobbyists; and
- Procurement of art and management of existing heritage assets.

Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

- Australia Day Honours (General and Military divisions);
- SES external board service and management of conflicts of interest;
- OOSGG staffing, including conflicts of interest; and

- Appointment of a new Governor-General.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

- High Court NZYQ decision;
- Australian participation in military operations over Yemen and in the Red Sea;
- PM overseas travel and DP acting period;
- Net Zero Economy Agency;
- Cost of living relief, taxation, and housing affordability measures;
- Tracking of election commitments;
- ASEAN summit;
- Independent Review of Commonwealth funding for strategic policy work;
- Chinese Navy use of active sonar near HMAS Toowoomba navy divers;
- Correspondence and advice regarding Ukraine and Palestine;
- Parliamentary Sitting Calendar;
- The contents and timing of answers to questions on notice; and
- Freedom of Information decisions and requests.

Office of National Intelligence

- Political change in Tuvalu; and
- Concerns over Australian RNA research.

Department of Finance (SMOS)

- Update on the establishment of the PWSS; and
- PEMS and MOPS staffing allocations.

Australian Electoral Commission

- Victorian federal electoral redistribution;
- Appointment of a new Electoral Commissioner; and
- JSCEM 2022 recommendations.

Parliamentary Workplace Support Service

- Progress of establishment of the PWSS.

The committee will next meet at 9.00am on Tuesday, 13 February in Committee Room 2S1, for examination of the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio as well as the Finance portfolio.