

The Senate

Appropriations and Staffing Committee

Annual Report 2009 – 10

51st Report

October 2010

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Members

President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. John Hogg (Chairman)

The Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz

Senator the Hon. John Faulkner

Senator the Hon. Kate Lundy

Senator Stephen Parry

Senator the Hon. Nick Sherry

Senator John Williams

Senator Nick Xenophon

The Committee

The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing, appointed under standing order 19, determines the amounts for inclusion in the parliamentary appropriation bills and reports to the Senate on its determinations prior to the Senate's consideration of those bills.

The Committee examines matters affecting the staffing and administration of the Department of the Senate, including proposals to vary the staffing structure, and other matters referred to it by the Senate. The Committee provides an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters (standing order 19(3)).

The Committee has the explicit capacity to scrutinise security funding and administration and to advise the President and the Senate as appropriate. Under a resolution of the Senate agreed to in 1987, the Committee also examines proposed changes concerning the structure and responsibilities of the parliamentary departments. The Committee is chaired by the President and includes the Senate Leaders of the Government and the Opposition as *ex officio* members.

Secretary

Bronwyn Notzon
Senate Table Office

2009-10 Annual Report

Standing order 19(3) provides that the Committee make an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters.

During the reporting period, the Committee tabled four reports, three of which were the:

- Annual report 2008-09;
- 48th report in which the Committee endorsed the decision of the President of the Senate to appoint Dr Rosemary Laing as the Clerk of the Senate; and
- 49th report in which the Committee, in accordance with standing order 19(2) and (3), determined that the total appropriation for the Department of the Senate by the Parliament in the appropriation bill for 2010-11 would be \$20.540m.

The fourth report tabled was the 50th report, in which the Committee considered the question of the ordinary annual services of Government, the interpretation of which has been contested between the Government and the Senate for some time.

In this report, the Committee recommended that the Senate restate its position on ordinary annual services of the Government in a new resolution (which incorporates other previous relevant resolutions) and that the President continue to draw to the attention of the Minister for Finance and Deregulation any items of expenditure which appear to be inappropriately included in the appropriation bill for the ordinary annual services of the Government.

A resolution reflecting the Committee's recommendations was agreed to by the Senate on 22 June 2010.

During the reporting period, the Committee met on 17 September 2009, 28 October 2009 and 12 May 2010, and considered the following matters:

17 September 2009

- Security at Parliament House and the construction of a Parliament House Briefing Room. The Committee was briefed on these matters by Mr Alan Thompson (Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services) and Mr Duncan Lewis AO DSC CSC (National Security Adviser, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet).
- Further advice regarding the proposed processes to be followed for the selection and appointment of the next Clerk of the Senate, and advice from the Clerk of the Senate (Mr Harry Evans) on the Department of the Senate's financial position.

28 October 2009

- The decision of the President of the Senate to appoint Dr Rosemary Laing to the position of Clerk of the Senate. The Committee endorsed the President's decision, and noted the President's intention to include a statement in the Committee's report to the Senate on the process of appointing the Clerk.

12 May 2010

- Various financial matters, including the Senate's Quarterly Financial Reports, a note from the Department of Parliamentary Services on security funding, and correspondence regarding the Department of the Senate's Net Cash Appropriations.
- The Department of the Senate's Estimates for 2010-11. The Committee determined that the total appropriation to be approved by the Parliament in the appropriation bill for 2010-11 would be \$20.540m (as agreed between the Department of the Senate and the Department of Finance and Deregulation).
- A letter from the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, dated 13 November 2009, relating to the matter of ordinary annual services.

(John Hogg)
Chairman

October 2010