

The Senate

Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee

Annual Report 2016-17

October 2017

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Members of the Committee

The President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Stephen Parry (Chairman)

The Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Sue Lines

The Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator the Hon. George Brandis

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Penny Wong

Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins

Senator David Fawcett

Senator the Hon. Mitch Fifield

Senator Katy Gallagher

Senator Dean Smith

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The Committee

The Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security, 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 makes an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters (standing order 19(3)).

Under standing order 19(3)(d), 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 in the structure and responsibilities of the parliamentary departments and, following the adoption by the Senate on 27 November 2012 of the recommendation in the Committee's 54th Report, the Committee may advise the President and the Senate on the administration and funding of information and communications technology services for the Parliament.

The Committee is chaired by the President and includes the Deputy President and the Senate Leaders of the Government and the Opposition as *ex officio* members.

Secretary

(James Warmenhoven)

Annual Report 2016-17

Introduction

1.1 The Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security is appointed under Senate standing order 19. The Committee inquires into:

- proposals for the annual estimates and the additional estimates for the Senate;
- proposals to vary the staff structure of the Senate, and staffing and recruitment policies; and
- other matters as are referred by the Senate.

1.2 Following the Senate's adoption in March 2015 of the recommendations of the Procedure Committee in its *First Report of 2015*, the name of the Committee was changed from the Appropriations and Staffing Committee to the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee.

1.3 Standing order 19(3)(d) was also amended, giving the Committee the capacity to consider the administration, operation and funding of security measures affecting the Senate and advise the President and the Senate as appropriate.¹

1.4 Under a resolution of the Senate agreed to in 1987 the Committee also examines proposed changes in the structure and responsibilities of the parliamentary departments and, following the adoption by the Senate on 27 November 2012 of the recommendation in the Committee's 54th Report, the Committee may advise the President and the Senate on the administration and funding of information and communications technology services for the Parliament.

1.5 Under standing order 19(3)(c) the Committee is required to make an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters.

1.6 The Committee is chaired by the President of the Senate and includes the Deputy President and 8 other senators. The Senate Leaders of the Government and the Opposition are *ex officio* members.²

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No 89, 25 March 2015, pp 2412-13

2 Senate Standing Order 19(4).

Committee membership

1.7 During the year, following the dissolution of the Senate on 9 May 2016, the following senators were Committee members:

- The President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Stephen Parry (Chairman)
- The Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Sue Lines
- The Leader of the Government in the Senate (Senator the Hon. George Brandis)
- The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator the Hon. Penny Wong)
- Senator Chris Back (discharged on 22 June 2017)
- Senator the Hon. Jacinta Collins
- Senator David Fawcett
- Senator the Hon. Mitch Fifield
- Senator Katy Gallagher
- Senator Dean Smith (from 22 June 2017)

Committee activities

1.8 During the reporting period, the Committee tabled two reports:

- the Committee's Annual Report for 2015-16 (tabled on 1 December 2016) and;
- the Committee's 59th report entitled *Estimates for the Department of the Senate 2017-18* (certified on 12 May 2017).

1.9 The Committee met on two occasions. At its meeting on 28 November 2016, the Committee:

- endorsed the unanimous decision of the Selection Committee that Mr Richard Pye be appointed as the new Clerk of the Senate, with effect from March 2017;
- discussed the proposed 2017-18 Departmental budget, noting that deficits were inevitable over the forward estimates without supplementation in some form. The Committee authorised the President to continue to pursue proposals for an independent funding model for the Department;
- noted the financial report for the 2015-16 financial year, the internal budget for the 2016-17 financial year, and the financial report for the first quarter of the 2016-17 financial year;

- noted the 2015-16 annual report of the Department's Audit Committee, and, particularly, the changed composition of the Committee;
- approved the draft 2015-16 Annual Report; and
- received a briefing on security capital works.

1.10 At its meeting on 11 May 2017, the Committee:

- noted correspondence concerning the Department's 2017-18 Budget, and the financial report for the third quarter of the 2016-17 financial year, which included ongoing supplementation;
- approved a draft report on the Department's Estimates for 2017-18 and authorised that it be presented to the Senate;
- received a briefing on new arrangements concerning the funding of overseas travel on official business by the President; and
- received a briefing on security capital works from the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services (Mr Stefanic) and the Acting First Assistant Secretary, Building and Security Division, Department of Parliamentary Services (Mr Paul Cooper).

Senator the Hon Stephen Parry
Chairman

October 2017