



## COMMITTEE OF SENATORS' INTERESTS

REPORT 1/2005

ANNUAL REPORT — 2004

March 2005

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ISSN 1322-2783

*This document was prepared by the Committee of Senators' Interests, and printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra.*

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE – 2004

Senator K. Denman	(ALP)	TAS	<b>Chair</b>
Senator R. Lightfoot	(LP)	WA	<b>Deputy Chair</b>
Senator L. Allison	(AD)	VIC	
Senator M. Forshaw	(ALP)	NSW	
Senator G. Humphries	(LP)	ACT	
Senator L. Kirk	(ALP)	SA	(appointed 18/11/2004)
Senator J. McGauran	(NPA)	VIC	
Senator R. Webber	(ALP)	WA	
Senator P. Wong	(ALP)	SA	(ceased membership 15/11/2004)

### Committee Secretary:

Dr Rosemary Laing (*Acting*) (*till 2 July 2004*)

Miss Anne Lynch (*from 5 July 2004*)

Registrar of Senators' Interests

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**COMMITTEE OF SENATORS' INTERESTS  
MARCH 2005**



*Seated left to right: Senator Michael Forshaw, Senator Kay Denman (Chair),  
Senator Ross Lightfoot (Deputy Chair)  
Standing left to right: Senator Ruth Webber, Senator Lyn Allison,  
Senator Julian McGauran and Senator Linda Kirk  
(Not pictured: Senator Gary Humphries)*

## REPORT 1/2005

### ANNUAL REPORT — 2004

#### Introduction

1. Standing order 22A requires the Committee of Senators' Interests, as soon as practicable after 31 December each year, to prepare and table a report on its operations during the year. This report is the eleventh annual report of the committee.

#### Background

2. On 17 March 1994 the Senate adopted a resolution on the registration of senators' interests which requires that each senator provide a statement of registrable interests within 28 days of making and subscribing an oath or affirmation of allegiance as a senator. The senator is also required to provide a statement of the registrable interests of which the senator is aware of the senator's spouse or partner and of any children who are wholly or mainly dependent on the senator for support. The resolution also requires any alterations in these interests to be notified within 28 days of the alteration occurring and, since September 2003, requires all senators to provide full statements once at least in each Parliament.
3. The statements of senators' interests are kept on a public Register of Senators' Interests. Statements of the registrable interests of a senator's spouse or partner and of any dependent children remain confidential to the Committee of Senators' Interests except where the committee considers that a conflict of interest arises, at which time the committee may table the declaration.
4. The resolution provides that the statements of registrable interests must accord with the resolution and must be in a form determined by the Committee of Senators' Interests. The resolution also provides that the Register of Senators' Interests shall be maintained by the Registrar of Senators' Interests in accordance with procedures, and in a form, determined by the committee, and that the public register shall be available for inspection by any person under conditions laid down by the committee.
5. Also on 17 March 1994 the Senate adopted standing order 22A which established the Committee of Senators' Interests. The committee was given the responsibility of overseeing and reporting on the registration requirements. The committee met once in 2004, on 1 December. At that meeting, both the chair and deputy chair were re-elected to their respective positions, and the committee welcomed one new member.
6. The committee's terms of reference require it to report on a number of matters. The committee reports on these matters as at 31 December 2004. All documents referred to in the above paragraphs are available on the committee's website. Copies of the documents, which have been compiled into a booklet tabled by the chair in the Senate in October 2003, may also be obtained from the Registrar of Senators' Interests.

## **Arrangements for the compilation, maintenance and accessibility of the Register of Senators' Interests**

7. The committee reported in detail last year on changes to the resolutions relating to senators' interests, and the concomitant explanatory notes. The implementation of the new system worked well during 2004; however, the full test of its effectiveness is likely to come following the swearing-in of new senators, and the implementation of the requirement that all senators make fresh declarations, in the second half of 2005. Territory senators, in accordance with the resolution, were required to, and did, submit full statements of interests by the due time.

### **Register of Senators' Interests**

8. There was no requirement to table a full register of senators' interests in 2004. As indicated above, a full register will be tabled following fresh declarations of interests, late in 2005.

### **Notifications of alterations of interests**

9. In accordance with established practice, the Registrar of Senators' Interests writes to each senator at least twice a year about the need to notify changes to statements of interests. The Registrar wrote to senators accordingly before each register was tabled. There were relatively few notifications in comparison with the previous year.

### **Requests for access to register**

10. Despite the more relaxed conditions for access to the register, as reported in 2003, only four requests were received during 2004 — a dramatic decrease in comparison with the previous two years, when access was sought and given on 20 and 22 occasions respectively.

### **Register of Gifts to the Senate and the Parliament**

11. Under the Senate resolution of 26 August 1997, senators must declare receipt of gifts received by them but intended by the donor for the parliamentary institution. The President of the Senate declared a gift under this resolution; at year's end, the committee had agreed to the placement of the gift in the President's office.
12. The committee, at its meeting of 1 December, considered and agreed in principle to changes proposed to a draft handbook prepared by the Parliamentary Relations Office for official parliamentary delegations. It also noted that the changes could entail amendments to its procedural rules. These will be considered at a meeting to be held in 2005 with a view to implementing the changes before the committee's booklet, published in 2003, is updated for distribution to all senators.

(Kay Denman)  
**Chair**  
March 2005