



Departmental overview

Role and functions

The department's role is to serve the Senate and its committees, and its functions are almost entirely determined by their activities. The department provides services in four main categories: Senate support, committee support, senators' services, and public education and awareness.

The department is responsible to the Senate and all senators, and maintains complete impartiality in serving senators from all political parties and independent senators.

Aim and objectives

Our aim is to provide effective services to support the functioning of the Senate as a House of the Commonwealth Parliament.

During 2011–12, the department:

- continued to develop its expertise in the constitutional and procedural bases of the Senate and its committees
- maintained and improved services to the Senate, its committees, senators and other users of departmental resources, using efficient and up-to-date technology
- ensured the highest standard of accurate and prompt procedural advice and legislative support
- published a range of practical, procedural resources on the work of the Senate and the Parliament and maximised awareness of and access to these resources
- produced and delivered effective education and information programs
- implemented effective workforce planning, recruitment and staff development practices to ensure the department maintained a highly skilled, knowledgeable and motivated workforce.

The department's results against the performance indicators and targets in the portfolio budget statements are described in the 'Report on performance'.

Organisational structure

The department is responsible to the Senate through the President of the Senate. In 2011–12 Senator the Hon. John Hogg continued in his role as the President of the Senate.

The Clerk of the Senate is the administrative head of the department. In 2011–12, Dr Rosemary Laing was the Clerk of the Senate.

The department is organised into the Clerk's Office and four other offices, as shown in figure 1. Figure 1 also identifies the elements that make up each of the offices. Contact details are in appendix 5.

The following is a summary of the functions of each office:

Clerk's Office—provides procedural and constitutional advice in relation to the proceedings of the Senate and its committees; strategic direction for the department; oversees the Senate Public Information Office; provides secretariat support for the Procedure Committee, the Committee of Privileges and the Committee of Senators' Interests; and maintains the Register of Senators' Interests

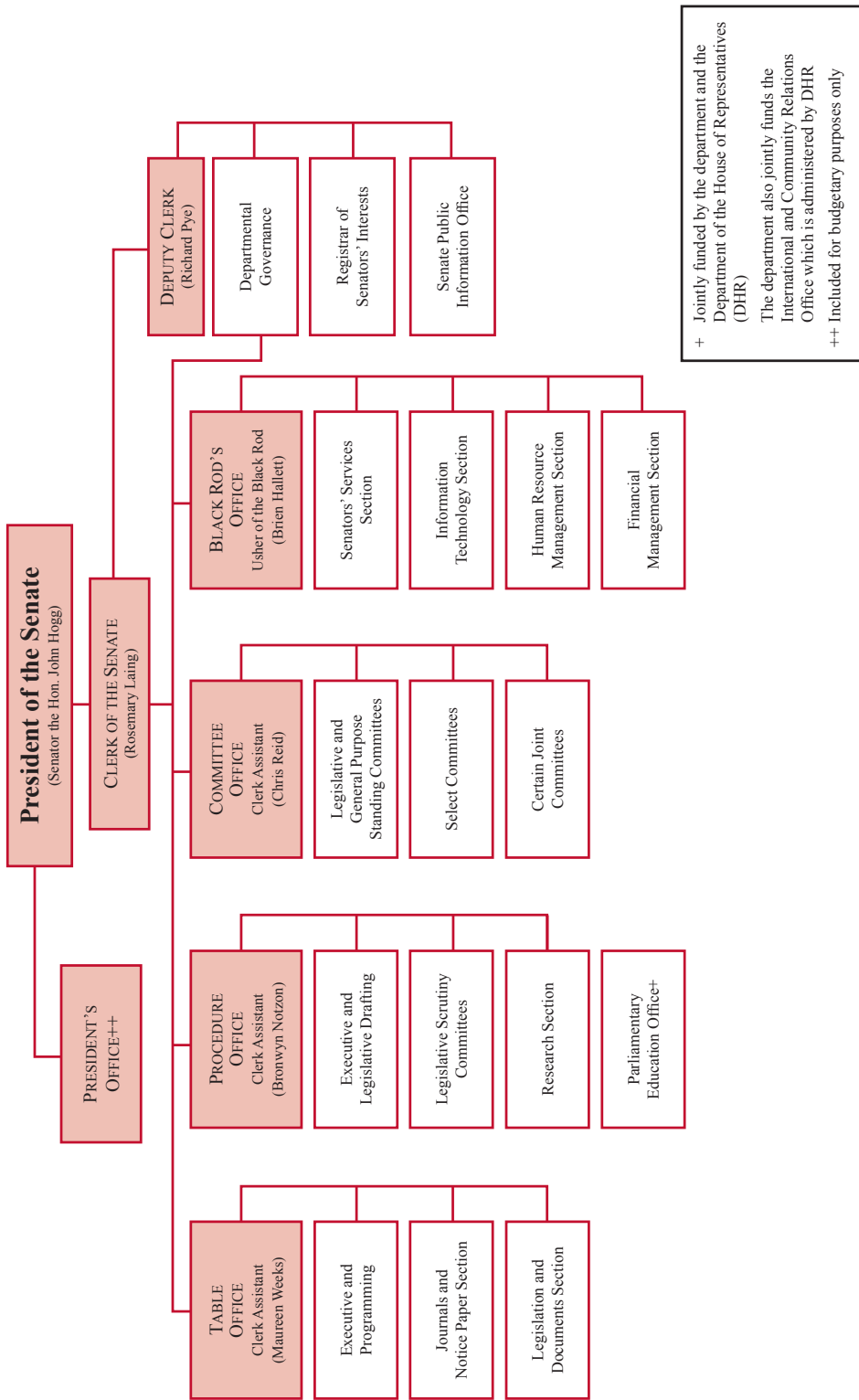
Table Office—provides programming and procedural support to the Senate; processes legislation and documents, and archives records of the Senate; produces records of Senate business and proceedings, and disseminates information on the work of the Senate; provides document distribution and inquiries services; and provides secretariat support to several domestic committees

Procedure Office—provides advisory and drafting services to non-government senators, secretariat support for the legislative scrutiny committees and policy support for inter-parliamentary relations; conducts parliamentary research; and promotes community awareness and knowledge of the Senate and the parliament

Committee Office—provides secretariat support for most Senate and certain joint committees; and facilitates the public's awareness of and involvement in the work of committees

Black Rod's Office—provides office, chamber and committee room support; information technology and ceremonial services; security advice; and corporate services to the Senate, senators and departmental staff.

Figure 1 Organisational structure, 30 June 2012



Senior staff from across the department provide direct support to the Senate on sitting days as clerks at the table. The following staff performed such duties during 2011–12:

Rosemary Laing	Richard Pye
Brien Hallett	Maureen Weeks
Bronwyn Notzon	Chris Reid
David Sullivan	Sue Blunden
Rosa Ferranda	James Warmenhoven

In addition to duties as a clerk at the table, the Usher of the Black Rod performs certain ceremonial and security functions on sitting days. During 2011–12, the following staff assisted with these duties:

John Baczynski	Glenn Krause
Anthony Szell	

Outcome and program structure

The department has one outcome:

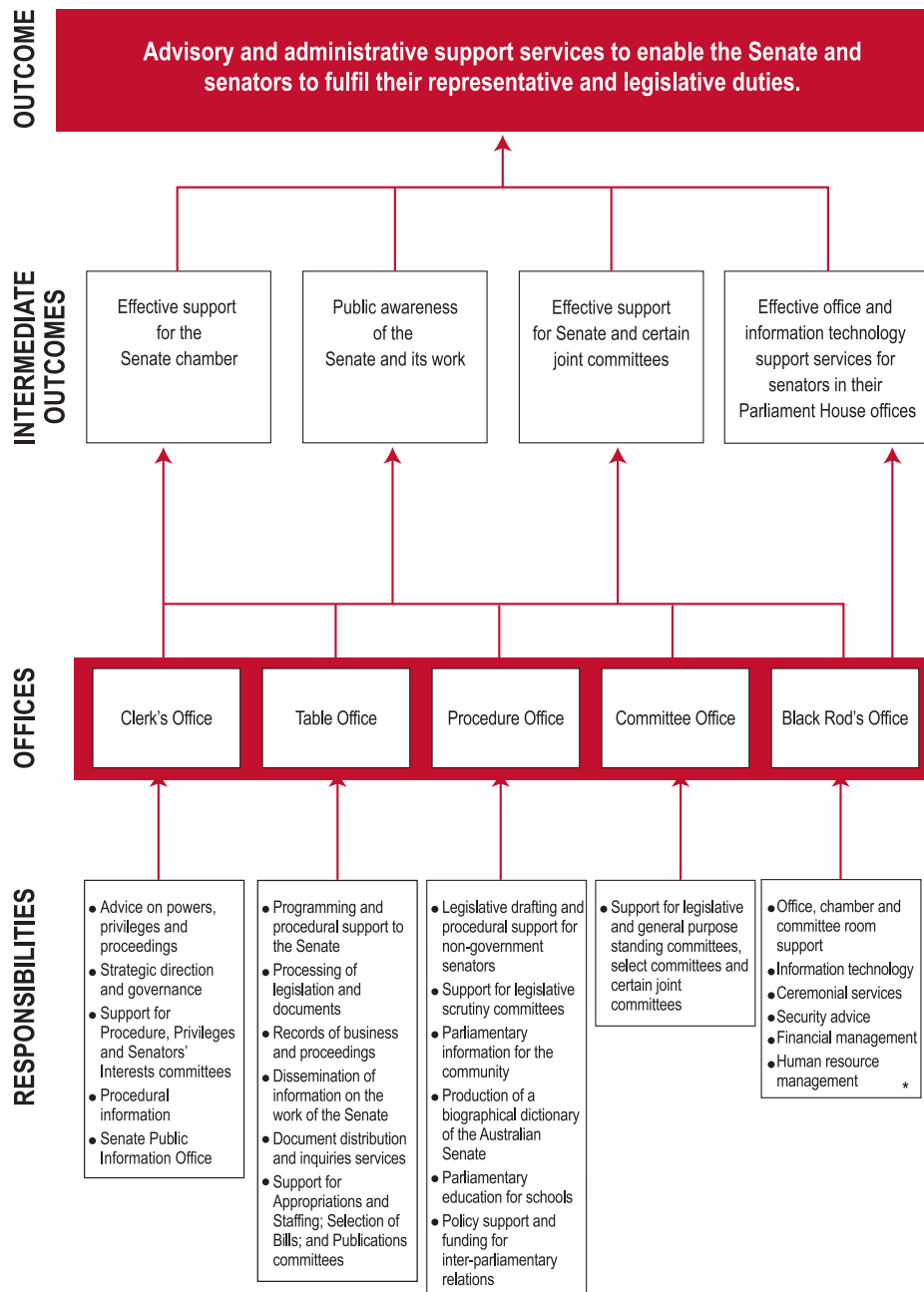
Advisory and administrative support services to enable the Senate and senators to fulfil their representative and legislative duties.

In 2011–12, the department’s portfolio budget statements provided for program-based annual reporting. The department planned to deliver its outcome through its departmental program which comprises the services provided by the five offices of the department.

In this annual report, the ‘Report on performance’ describes how the activities and outcomes of the five offices contributed to achieving the departmental outcome in 2011–12.

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the department’s organisational and program structures.

Figure 2 Outcome and office structure, 30 June 2012



* The department draws on special appropriations for, and administers the payment of, senators' salaries and allowances, superannuation, postage and freight expenses.