



DEPARTMENT
OF THE SENATE

2016–17

Annual Report



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Contact officer

For further information about the content of this report, please contact the annual report coordinator:

Usher of the Black Rod

Department of the Senate

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: 02 6277 3398

Email: blackrod.sen@aph.gov.au

Letter of transmittal



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

CLERK OF THE SENATE

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600
TEL: (02) 6277 3350
FAX: (02) 6277 3199
E-mail: clerk.sen@aph.gov.au

D17/65760

12 October 2017

Senator the Hon Stephen Parry
President of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Mr President

Pursuant to section 65 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, I give you a report, for presentation to the Senate, on the activities of the Department of the Senate for the year ended 30 June 2017.

The report includes the department's audited financial statements, prepared under section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, and an annual performance statement as required by section 39 of that Act.

In addition, and as required by the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework, I certify that I am satisfied that the department has in place appropriate fraud control mechanisms that meet its needs and comply with the guidance applying in 2016-17.

(Richard Pye)

About this report

This annual report of the Department of the Senate documents the department's performance for the financial year ending 30 June 2017.

The report is presented in six parts.

Overviews	Commentary by the Clerk on performance and significant matters that affected the department, and a description of role, aims, structure and functions
Report on performance	The department's Annual Performance Statement and a description of each office's contribution to the department's outcome
Management and accountability	A report on corporate governance and the management of resources
Financial statements	The auditor's report and audited financial statements
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resources2. Staffing3. Contact details
References	Tools to assist the reader: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a glossary and abbreviations list• an index showing how the report complies with annual reporting requirements• an alphabetical index

The report is presented for tabling in the Senate pursuant to section 65 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*. It is also produced to meet the information needs of interested people, including:

- senators and their staff
- the Australian community
- staff of the Department of the Senate and other parliamentary departments
- staff of other legislatures
- staff of executive government departments and agencies
- the media.

The report is available on the department's website:

www.aph.gov.au/senate/dept/annreps/2017

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Clerk's review

Rosemary Laing

This has been a year of major change for the Senate department with the retirement of the 13th Clerk of the Senate, Dr Rosemary Laing.

At the start of the 2017 sittings the President informed the Senate that Rosemary had commenced a period of leave pending her retirement on 8 March, after more than 7 years in the role. Institutional continuity was a focus for Rosemary throughout her Senate career. It was therefore fitting that, at the same time, the President tabled the 14th edition of *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*, the second edited by Rosemary, and her final substantive contribution as Clerk. The work, which has borne the name of its originating author, James Rowland (Jim) Odgers, since its seventh edition, acquired in its latest edition a new subtitle – *As revised by Harry Evans* – to acknowledge the unsurpassable contribution of the Senate's longest-serving Clerk. As the preface notes, 'The documentation and analysis of the work and the rationale of the Senate undertaken by these two Clerks is a legacy of inestimable value.' In this context, Rosemary's work in systematising Odgers and keeping it current was invaluable.

The capacity of the department to undertake its work effectively – to serve the Senate and senators – rests on two things: its people and their collective knowledge. Finding the right people, training them well and making sure they have up to date, accessible information resources. This was exemplified in Rosemary's approach to the professional development of staff, through targeted learning and development activities aimed at enhancing both workplace skills and parliamentary knowledge. Rosemary also did much to embed orientation programs for new senators as an essential induction activity, having participated in or led nine such programs, most recently in August last year.

An important aspect of our institutional continuity lies in understanding the principles which underpin the Senate's powers and procedures. Rosemary's own reference work, the *Annotated Standing Orders of the Australian Senate*, in particular exemplifies this: illuminating the standing orders, through their history and rationale; bringing them to life, to assist in interpreting and adapting them to the changing needs of the Senate and senators. Of course, knowledge is of no use unless it is accessible, and Rosemary brought a strong focus to innovation in raising awareness of the Senate's role and work, including through gateway resources like the *Dynamic Red*, the *Senate Daily Summary*, and the popular *Pocket Guide to Senate Procedure*, and by championing the establishment of the Senate Public Information Office, to coordinate the Senate's information resources and improve the way we compile and share information.

When Rosemary announced her retirement, the Commonwealth Attorney-General, Senator the Hon. George Brandis, wrote:

Dr Laing has brought to her role a scholar's instinct. This has been evident in her careful consideration of difficult issues and her impartial and practical advice to Senators of all persuasions. It has also been evident in, for example, her work as the current editor of *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*. This reflects her prodigious

knowledge of Senate practice and her unrivalled command of the Standing Orders. Like all great Clerks, Dr Laing has been a strong and effective defender of our parliamentary system, and of the Senate in particular. We are greatly in her debt.

Equally apt, in my view, was Annabel Crabb's description of Rosemary as 'cult hero of the Senate', tweeted in conjunction with ABC TV's recent documentary series, 'The House'.

I count myself extremely fortunate to have been mentored by Rosemary and by her predecessor, the late Harry Evans. There could be no better grounding in parliamentary law and practice as it relates to the Senate. Rosemary, equally, would acknowledge the expertise and guidance of long-time Deputy Clerk, the late Anne Lynch; a trailblazer for women in the parliamentary administration.

The work of the department

The Senate itself began 2016–17 with the proverbial clean slate. The first double dissolution election in a generation saw an interruption in its status as a continuing House, and a hiatus in its legislative work. Instead of the usual half-Senate election, all 76 places were determined by voters on 2 July 2016. The Coalition government was returned; the ALP opposition gained a senator, and the large, diverse cross-bench of the previous Parliament was further enlarged: 20 of 76 senators represented minor parties when the new Senate met on 30 August. This rose to 21 in the new year when a government senator joined their ranks.

These developments affected the work of the Senate department. We provide the secretariat to the Senate and to dozens of parliamentary committees. Our advisory and support services facilitate the Senate's legislative and accountability activities, which rely on the work delegated to its network of committees. As indicated in our corporate plan, 'it is the senators themselves who determine our workload, by the decisions they make individually and collectively, in undertaking their legislative, investigative and representative roles.' This means that the demand for the department's services is directly influenced by the composition and dynamics of the Senate.

That being the case, trends noted in recent years – substantial demand for legislative and procedural advice and support; increased number and variety of committee references – were again evident. Recent elevated levels of committee activity, in particular, seem to have become entrenched. Record rates of referrals in fact increased further this year, challenging the capacity of the department to meet the demand for its services. A factor in the number of references appears to be the number of parties in the Senate seeking to pursue matters of public policy and political interest.

As an indicator of the level of activity, the Senate referred more than 160 matters to the committees supported by our Committee Office in the first 10 months of the 45th Parliament (including readopting matters not concluded in the previous parliament) This compares with around 130 in the equivalent period in the 44th Parliament and 'only' around 110 in the 43rd. Since October last year, the number of inquiries taking place at any given time has not fallen below 60; rising as high as 71 (albeit fewer than the 83 taking place at one time in the previous reporting period).

The department provides updates on committee activity at each round of estimates, prior to appearing before the Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee. It is clear that senators remain concerned at the impact this level of activity has on secretariat staff, and it is a tribute to those staff that they continue to produce substantial, high-quality draft reports to the satisfaction of chairs and other committee members. As has frequently been noted, however, the final determinant of the capacity of Senate committees to undertake the work delegated to them is the availability of senators to attend hearings, and to consider, reflect, and respond to the evidence they receive. It is a matter for senators themselves whether recent activity levels can or should be sustained.

Other aspects of the department's workload, and its success in meeting its performance criteria, are detailed throughout this report, but particularly in the annual performance statement for this year. The department succeeds in its work when the Senate and its committees are able to meet in accordance with their own decisions; and when senators (and others) have the advice and support they require to participate in those meetings. The performance statement shows that the department met these, and other, criteria well throughout the year. Assurance for the performance statement rests on records kept by managers; assessment of senators' satisfaction, through formal and informal means; and advice from the department's Audit Committee that appropriate systems are in place to support the department's compliance and reporting obligations. During the year, the independence of the Audit Committee was further enhanced by the appointment of an external chair. Among the observations made by the chair in providing the committee's annual report was that 'the department is performing very well in an environment of increasing demands on the department's capability and capacity to support the Senate'.

Budget and planning

The need to secure adequate funding to support the Senate's work has been a perennial topic in these reviews. My predecessor noted last year that 'the department has an expected shortfall of approximately \$3m a year as additional efficiency dividends continue to have a disproportionate effect on a small agency'. The budget for 2016–17 included 'one-off' supplementation of \$3m, principally for committee support. The department's final audited outcome was a deficit of \$0.5m; around 2% of its budget. This year, the President and the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee again supported the department in seeking funding commensurate with the demand for its services, and succeeded in securing an ongoing increase of \$3.7m from the 2017–18 budget year. This is slightly less in the out years than the funding sought but, as it is ongoing, it allows the department more flexibility in planning for future requirements. (The original proposal had also sought funding to counter the inevitable clawback of efficiency dividends, however that's a discussion for another day.)

During the year, the department progressed negotiations for a new enterprise agreement covering non-SES staff. As occurred across the public sector, the department's initial proposal was rejected in a ballot of staff, sending us back to the bargaining table. (While the matter was pending at the end of the reporting period, staff approved the department's second formal offer in a ballot in August 2017.) A challenge for the department is to streamline its work to provide the productivity offsets necessary to fund

its new agreement while, at the same time, bringing more resources to bear in direct support of senators' legislative and committee work. The delivery of new IT arrangements in support of committees, and a realignment of the duties of some staff to increase their involvement in procedural and legislative support during sitting weeks, provide the focus for our strategy here.

One of Rosemary's last administrative acts was to finalise with the heads of the other parliamentary departments our first Strategic Plan for Parliamentary Administration, which signals our continuing efforts to develop a more effective partnership across the parliamentary service. While the departments have their individual roles and responsibilities, and must maintain the capacity to provide independent advice and support, there is much that we do together and much to be gained by continuing to strengthen the parliamentary service.

In that vein, I'd like to thank my colleagues – Clerk of the House, David Elder; DPS Secretary, Rob Stefanik; Parliamentary Budget Officer, Phil Bowen (and, following his retirement, Jenny Wilkinson); and their respective staff – for their support and cooperative engagement since my appointment earlier this year. The degree of collegiality is very welcome.

Senate staff routinely go 'above and beyond' in supporting the work of the Senate and senators, in the face of sometimes unrelenting work demands, and this year has been no exception. They have been particularly welcoming of my appointment as Clerk, and supportive of the new management team as we all have transitioned into new roles during 2017. It is a team that I am proud to lead.

Senators have also been very generous in their response to my appointment, for which I am again very grateful. In particular, I'd like to thank the President, Senator the Hon. Stephen Parry, and the Deputy President, Senator Sue Lines, for their ongoing support.

Richard Pye
Clerk of the Senate

Departmental overview

The Senate secretariat

The Senate department provides secretariat support for the Senate and its committees, and advice and support to enable senators and others to participate in their meetings. Its work is substantially driven by the requirements of the Senate and senators.

The department provides services and undertakes activities in the following areas:

- Advice about Senate and committee proceedings
- Secretariat support for the Senate
- Secretariat support for committees
- Administrative advice and support for senators
- Public information and parliamentary education
- Capability, governance and accountability.

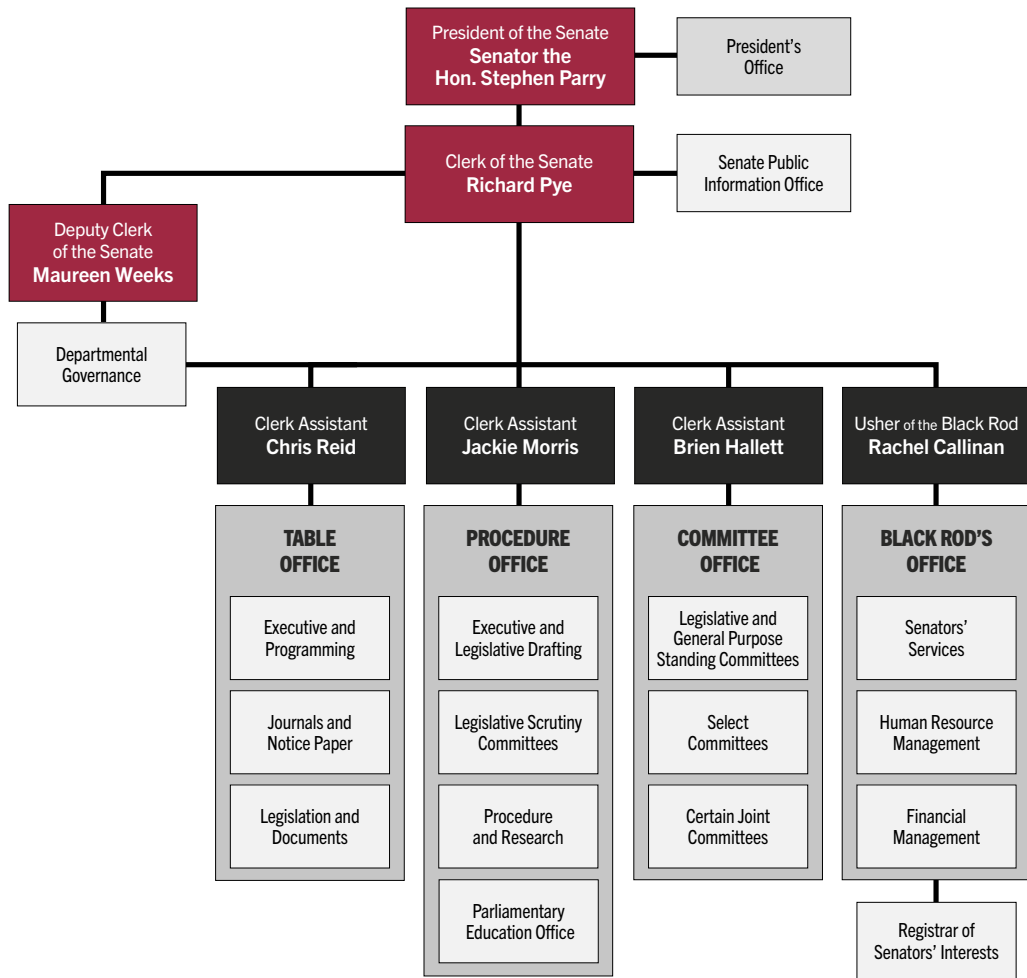
In undertaking its functions the department is responsible not to the government of the day but to the Senate and all senators, maintaining complete impartiality in serving equally senators from all political parties and independent senators.

Before turning to the department's performance during 2016–17, this overview sets out the department's organisational structure, program structure and objectives.

Organisational structure

The department is responsible to the Senate through the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Stephen Parry, who was first elected to that position on 7 July 2014 and re-elected at the commencement of the 45th Parliament on 30 August 2016. The administrative head of the department is the Clerk of the Senate, Mr Richard Pye, who was appointed as Acting Clerk on 30 January 2017 and formally succeeded Dr Rosemary Laing on 9 March 2017. The department is organised into the Clerk's Office and four other offices, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1 – Organisational structure



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 the year:

- Rosemary Laing
- Chris Reid
- Jackie Morris
- James Warmenhoven
- Stephen Palethorpe
- Richard Pye
- Rachel Callinan
- Tim Bryant
- David Sullivan
- John Baczynski
- Maureen Weeks
- Brien Hallett
- Sue Blunden
- Toni Matulick

The Usher of the Black Rod performs certain formal and ceremonial duties on sitting days. During 2016–17, the following staff assisted with these duties:

- John Baczynski
- Jedidiah Reardon
- Anthony Szell
- Glenn Krause

Outcome and program structure

In order to achieve its outcome, the department’s objectives, set out in its corporate plan, are to:

- continue to develop expertise in the constitutional and procedural bases of the Senate and its committees
- ensure the highest standard of accurate and prompt procedural advice
- maintain and improve services to the Senate, its committees, senators and other users of departmental resources using efficient and up-to-date technology
- publish a greater range of information about the Senate’s role and work, faster and in a variety of formats
- ensure our workforce planning, recruitment and staff development practices deliver a highly skilled, knowledgeable and motivated workforce.

The department delivers its outcome through a single departmental program comprising the services provided by its five offices. Figure 2 identifies their responsibilities.

Figure 2 – Office responsibilities

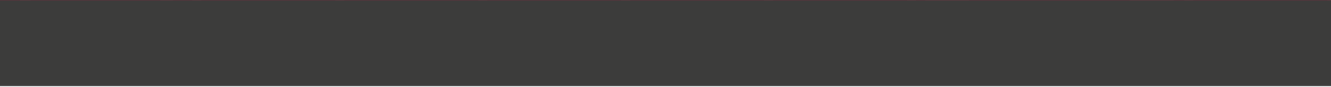
ADVISORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE THE SENATE AND SENATORS TO FULFIL THEIR REPRESENTATIVE AND LEGISLATIVE DUTIES

Clerk's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advice on powers, privileges and proceedings• Strategic direction and governance• Support for Procedure and Privileges committees• Procedural information• Senate Public Information Office
Table Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programming and procedural support to the Senate• Processing of legislation and documents• Records of business and proceedings• Document distribution and inquiries services• Support for Appropriations, Staffing and Security; Selection of Bills; and Publications committees
Procedure Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative drafting and procedural support for non-government senators• Support for legislative scrutiny committees• Procedural research services• Parliamentary information for public servants and the community• Parliamentary education for schools• Policy support and funding for inter-parliamentary relations
Committee Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for legislative and general purpose standing committees, select committees and certain joint committees
Black Rod's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chamber, committee room and office support• Ceremonial services• Support for Senators' Interests committee• Security advice and support• Financial management• Human resource management• Corporate governance

The department also participates on a range of interdepartmental committees through which the parliamentary departments coordinate common and joint activities. Chief among these are regular meetings of the heads of the four parliamentary departments; the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group; the Security Management Board; the Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board; and numerous boards managing joint projects and endeavours such as the implementation of the Parliament's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Reporting on performance

The next chapter contains the annual performance statement for 2016–17. It also contains a performance report for each of the department's five offices, each of which commences with a table reporting results against the criteria contained in the department's portfolio budget statement and in office work plans.



Report on performance

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Annual performance statement



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

As the accountable authority of the Department of the Senate, I present the department's annual performance statement for 2016–17, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

In my opinion, this statement is based on properly maintained records, accurately reflects the department's performance, and complies with subsection 39(2) of the Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Pye'.

(Richard Pye)
Clerk of the Senate

12 October 2017

Figure 3 – Planned performance

PURPOSE

The Senate department is the secretariat to the Australian Senate. All of our functions derive from this purpose and our work is substantially driven by the requirements of the Senate and senators.

We facilitate meetings of the Senate and its committees. We succeed when the Senate and its committees meet in accordance with their decisions, and when senators and others receive the advice and support they need to participate in those meetings.

OUTCOME 1

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

DELIVERY

The department's outcome is delivered under a single program, comprising services and activities in the following areas:

- Advice about Senate and committee proceedings
- Secretariat support for the Senate
- Secretariat support for committees
- Administrative advice and support for senators
- Public information and parliamentary education
- Capability, governance and accountability.

ASSESSMENT

The department's activities enable the Senate and its committees to meet in accordance with their decisions – **target: secretariat support is provided for all meetings**

Senators (and others) have the advice and support they require to participate in meetings of the Senate and its committees – **targets: advice and support are consistently sound and timely; satisfaction of senators**

Senators are satisfied with the administrative advice and support that fall within the department's responsibilities
Accountability obligations to the Senate are met

Public governance and accountability obligations are met

Performance reporting framework

Overview

In 2016–17, the department successfully achieved its purpose of facilitating all meetings required under decisions of the Senate and its committees. In doing so, the department provided comprehensive, timely and high-quality support to senators, the Senate and committees, as well as prompt and accurate procedural advice and legislative support. The department achieved this result against the challenging environment of the continued elevated demand for its services, particularly in assisting a very large number of committee inquiries, and providing support to senators drawn from the parties of government and opposition, as well as the largest cross-bench since Federation.

The department:

- Prepared for the successful opening of the 45th Parliament on 30 August 2016
- Provided a comprehensive induction program for new senators elected at the 2016 federal election so that they could perform their constitutional roles
- published a range of materials on the role and work of the Senate and the Parliament, and delivered effective education and information programs
- managed its staff in accordance with its enterprise agreement and provided learning and development opportunities to maintain the department's capabilities
- delivered its services in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with accountability requirements.

The department continued to work with the other parliamentary departments to deliver its services, to improve support for the Parliament and the work of its members and to enhance the strategic direction of the parliamentary service. The four parliamentary departments continued to co-operate across various fronts to advance a seamless model of support for the Parliament and parliamentarians, particularly in the areas of security, information communication technology, and the integration of the business systems that support the work of the Houses and their committees.

After one-off supplementation of \$3m, the department's financial result for the year was a deficit of \$0.5m. This result reflects the costs of the additional resources required to support high levels of committee activity, as well as adjustments to the department's leave liabilities. The deficit was funded through the department's reserves. The department's financial statements commence at page 71.

This performance statement records the department's results against the planned performance table in figure 3 (above), which is derived from its 2016–20 Corporate Plan and its PBS for 2016–17. The subsequent parts of this chapter report on the activities and performance of each office against the criteria contained in the departmental workplans.

This performance statement is based on records of feedback kept by departmental staff, surveys conducted by particular work areas and comments made by relevant groups and committees. An audit conducted by the department's internal auditors assessed how this feedback was collated and interpreted. This audit provided helpful suggestions to improve the processes in future reporting periods.

In summary, this data shows both a high level of demand for the department's services and advice, and satisfaction with what is provided. This is against a backdrop of a new Senate commencing in August 2016, a large cross-bench, and continued high levels of legislative and committee activity.

Results

Secretariat support for the Senate

Assessment: The department's activities enable the Senate and its committees to meet in accordance with their decisions

Target: Secretariat support is provided for all meetings

This criterion was fully met during 2016–17 through two program components:

1. Secretariat support for the Senate

The department provided secretariat support for the Senate on each of its 48 sitting days.

During the sittings the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and senior officers provided advice in the Senate to the President, temporary chairs and other senators and their staff. The Table Office and the Procedure Office provided procedural scripts and advice to assist senators participating in proceedings. Feedback from senators acknowledged the value and accuracy of this advice and support.

Formal and ceremonial support for sittings was provided by the Black Rod's Office, particularly in organising the opening of the 45th Parliament. While the ceremonial side of this event attracts the most attention, it is also an important day procedurally as the returned election writs are tabled, new senators take their seats, the President is elected and the Senate commences business.

The Table Office published the Senate's formal records and informal guides to its work. These resources were accurate and timely and produced to meet the needs of senators and Senate deadlines. Documents supporting the Senate's legislative work were also uniformly accurate and timely. Documents received for tabling were processed, and all recorded in procedural documents and archived. Increasingly documents and business information are published online, enhancing the ability of senators and others to follow and participate in Senate proceedings and improvements to digital publishing processes were implemented during the reporting period.

2. Secretariat support for committees

The department provided secretariat support for all committee meetings required under decisions of the Senate and of committees themselves, including those joint committees to which the department provides such support. This support was primarily provided by the Committee Office, although the Clerk's Office, Table Office and Procedure Office also supported a number of standing committees.

Secretariat support for committees encompasses:

- procedural advice for the chair and other members, including advice and support to new senators

- logistical support for meetings (particularly interstate hearings)
- preparation of meeting documents, including minutes and agenda
- managing and publishing submissions, and organising witnesses
- research, analysis of evidence and briefings to members
- preparation of draft reports, and their finalisation for tabling.

The Committee Office experienced another sustained period of very high workload, supporting 16 legislation and references committees, four select committees and three joint committees undertaking between them, at one point, 71 separate inquiries. Secretariat staff in the Committee Office processed more than 9,200 submissions, arranged 299 public hearings (which heard from more than 7,143 witnesses) and 593 private meetings. The Senate made 140 references during the year and the office assisted in drafting 151 reports.

Advice, documentation and draft reports were consistently provided to committees in accordance with their requirements. Reports were drafted and presented to the Senate in accordance with the timeframes agreed by committees and by the Senate.

Secretariat staff work closely with senators in supporting committees and, in particular, work closely with the chair in preparing draft reports. This provides an ongoing opportunity for direct feedback about senators' satisfaction. Despite the high workload this direct feedback indicated high levels of satisfaction. The department responded to concerns raised occasionally that, because of workload, secretariats could not always provide assistance with preparing dissenting reports or additional comments. Although where possible, this assistance was provided. The workload and performance of committee secretariats was also considered by the Chairs' Committee during the reporting period and considered to meet the needs of senators.

Senators referring to committee reports during debates in the Senate indicated their high levels of satisfaction with the support provided by secretariat staff.

Advice about the operations of the Senate and its committees

Assessment: Senators (and others) have the advice and support they require to participate in meetings of the Senate and its committees

Targets: advice and support are sound and timely; satisfaction of senators

One of the key outputs of the department is advice about the operations of the Senate and its committees. Much of this advice is given orally and instantaneously by the Clerk and other senior officers in the Senate, and by the Clerk Assistant (Committees) and committee secretaries and their staff during committee meetings. These officers also provide procedural advice to senators and their staff at other times, both orally and in writing. Committee secretaries are supported in providing advice by the Clerk Assistant (Committees) and Senior Clerk of Committees, ensuring advice to committees is consistent and accurate.

Senators and other recipients of written advice continued to acknowledge its value, and it was invariably provided in time to meet the purposes for which it was sought. On numerous occasions during the year, recipients of advice published it as a

contribution to public debate, at the same time subjecting it to public scrutiny. When committees seek the Clerk's advice it is almost always for the purpose of publishing it, to show the basis on which committees may have taken particular decisions or reached particular conclusions. No committee expressed dissatisfaction with advice received.

Advice about the programming of business in the Senate is the responsibility of the Clerk Assistant (Table). Procedural advice and support for non-government senators is a particular responsibility of the Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and the Deputy Clerk. Senators continued to acknowledge the value of their advice. The Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and her office also drafted large numbers of legislative amendments and private senators bills, helping senators participate in legislative proceedings. Amendments and bills were accurate, and were prepared within required timeframes and to the satisfaction of senators.

Advice provided by the department was also tested during estimates hearings and in other Senate proceedings and senators relied on such advice throughout the year. In addition to comments made by senators recorded in *Hansard*, surveys of senators seeking advice and of other key stakeholders such as Whips, indicated high levels of satisfaction with both advice and the levels of administrative support provided.

Procedural briefings among senior officers and the contemporaneous publication and dissemination of procedural resources assisted in maintaining the capacity of officers to provide advice and support.

The department continued its program of providing seminars, training programs and lectures; as well as publishing material on the role of the Senate and its committees within the parliamentary framework. A key achievement here was the successful delivery of an orientation program for new senators.

The department also administered a comprehensive education program to students visiting Parliament House from more than 1600 Australian schools as well as an outreach program to students in Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Attendance levels, requests for training and educational programs and feedback collected from these sessions indicated high levels of satisfaction among those accessing this information. Continued demand for PEO services was complemented by formal and informal feedback which demonstrated high levels of satisfaction with these services.

Administrative advice and support for senators

Assessment: Senators are satisfied with the administrative advice and support that fall within the department's responsibilities

The department, principally through the Black Rod's Office, provides support services to the Senate, to Senate committees and to senators at Parliament House. These services include preparing and supporting the Senate chamber for each sitting day, general office support, asset management, maintenance of equipment and furniture, and stationery services. The office also paid senators' salaries and allowances as required, organised office accommodation within the Senate wing and provided other services such as arranging transport and delivery services.

Security matters continued to be a focus during the period as a range of physical security upgrades continued to be implemented at Parliament House. The Usher of the Black Rod provided security advice and support to the President, committees, senators and the department. The Black Rod and Deputy Black Rod also worked with colleagues in the DPS Security Branch and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, and with the Australian Federal Police, providing the Senate's perspective into security matters.

Services were delivered within established timeframes and met relevant legislative requirements. This aspect of the department's work involves regular and direct contact with Senate office holders, senators and their staff, and other stakeholders, all of whom provided regular informal feedback which was generally positive. Positive comments were also recorded in *Hansard* about the quality of the administrative advice and support for senators provided by the department.

Governance and accountability

Assessment: Accountability obligations to the Senate are met

The department met its accountability obligations to the Senate during the year, particularly through the appearance of officers before estimates hearings and by answering estimates questions placed on notice.

Senate committees provide opportunities for senators and others to monitor the department's performance. The Clerk and other officers appear at estimates hearings of the Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee during each round of Senate estimates, and also provided responses to 37 estimates questions, which were published on that committee's web pages. These activities provide an important accountability mechanism by which senators may test advice provided by departmental officers and evaluate the department's performance in a public forum. The Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee also has a specific role in relation to the department's appropriations as well as matters concerning the department's structure, staffing and ICT and security arrangements. Quarterly reports on the department's financial performance were provided to the President of the Senate and the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee, as was the annual report of the department's Audit Committee.

Assessment: All known public governance and accountability obligations are met

As the accountable authority, the Clerk complied with all known public governance and accountability obligations, including in relation to the matters certified in this report.

The department's services are enabled by its governance and accountability arrangements. These facilitate the department's work and provide assurance to the Clerk, as its accountable authority, in fulfilling accountability obligations to the Senate, under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* and under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The department's Audit Committee provides assurance to the Clerk on its financial and reporting responsibilities, risk oversight and management, and systems of internal controls. The committee was reconstituted under a new charter in 2015–16, with increased independent membership, and during the reporting period the Clerk appointed

an external chair. In line with its charter, the committee reviewed the appropriateness of the department's financial reporting, performance reporting, risk management and system of internal controls; and provided advice that appropriate systems and practices were in place to support the department's compliance and reporting obligations.

In presenting the committee's annual report to the Clerk the chair observed that:

- the department is performing very well in an environment of increasing demands on the department's capability and capacity to support the Senate
- the department's financial statements were well prepared and accurate, and financial systems, controls and processes are strong
- key risks are clearly identified, assessed and monitored, with this year seeing further work undertaken to review and embed its risk management practices
- the department has robust compliance practices and strong results; and
- management engages with the committee in an open and constructive manner

The department's activities are also scrutinised by both an internal audit service provider and the Australian National Audit Office. These activities inform the work of the department's Audit Committee.

Further details are set out in the *Management and Accountability* chapter.

The department also works within a strong ethical framework guided by the Parliamentary Service Values, Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct set out in the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

Analysis

The department reports against the performance indicators contained in its portfolio budget statements, tabled in the Senate in May 2016, and those in its Corporate Plan for 2016–20. Those indicators have two dimensions, comprising an assessment of the demand for the department's services and an evaluation of the department's performance in delivering those services.

Factors influencing demand

A constant in the department's planning and reporting has been the recognition that much of the demand for its services shifts in line with levels of Senate legislative and committee activity. Demand is overwhelmingly driven by the requirements of senators, and the decisions and activities of the Senate and its committees. Each year, significant factors include:




- the political dynamics of the Senate
- the number of days and hours, and distribution, of its sittings
- the legislative workload of the Senate
- the number of committees on which senators serve, and
- the number and complexity of committee inquiries.

Each of these is in turn affected by the electoral cycle. 2016–17 was the first year of the 45th Parliament, and the Senate’s large and diverse cross-bench continued to affect the level of demand for advice, and the character of advice and support required.

Following the opening of the new Parliament, the Senate sat on 48 days and committee activity resumed levels seen in the previous parliament. The need to support this activity saw continued high levels of staff numbers in committee secretariats, which was funded by one-off supplementation in the department’s resourcing.

Performance in delivering services

Evaluation of the department’s performance is based upon the degree to which its services meet the requirements of the Senate and its committees, and senators, principally measured against criteria centred on:

-  **accuracy**—frequently assessed by considering whether advice or documents were demonstrated to be inaccurate
-  **timeliness**—particularly whether advice, documents or services were provided in time to meet the purpose for which they were sought
-  **satisfaction of senators** (including committees of senators) with the advice, documents or other services provided—the assessment of which is considered further below.

The particular criteria which apply are described in the department’s portfolio budget statements and in the performance summary tables for each office contained in this chapter.

Monitoring and assessing satisfaction

Much of the department’s work involves contact with senators and their staff, presenting the most direct means of eliciting feedback about services and performance, and an avenue for addressing concerns as they are raised. As noted throughout this report, this direct feedback was positive across all service areas during the year, particularly in relation to core advisory and secretariat support roles. Senators’ comments about the department and its staff, placed on the public record during Senate and committee proceedings, constitute another valuable source of performance information. These comments continued to be overwhelmingly positive during 2016–17. The department also monitors its performance through formal and informal channels, including letters, emails, phone calls, seminar evaluation forms and outputs from management information systems. Again these sources were generally positive. The direct accountability of the department to the Senate through its committees was noted, above, at page 19.

Following the introduction of the Annual Performance Statement last year, program managers adopted a more formal process for recording and providing feedback to the Clerk to provide assurance for his certification of this statement. As previously mentioned this was the subject of an internal audit which has provided useful information to improve this process.

The following sections of this report describe the department’s operations and performance using the additional performance indicators for each office described in the 2016–17 PBS.

Clerk's Office

Outputs

Advice on, and support for, proceedings of the Senate and its committees.
 Leadership and strategic direction for the department.
 Secretariat and advisory support to the Procedure and Privileges Committees.
 Procedural information and related resources for senators and the department.

Performance information

Performance results

Advice and support are sound and timely, and provided to the satisfaction of the President, other officeholders, Senate committees and senators so that they are able to fulfil their roles.

Senators and other recipients of advice on powers, privileges and proceedings continued to acknowledge its accuracy and value.
 Advice and support was invariably provided in time to meet procedural and operational requirements.

The capacity of the department and its employees to provide advice and support meets operational requirements.

Activities under the learning and development framework underpinned the department's advisory and support capacities.

Governance structures advance the department's accountability and the achievement of its outcome.

Governance forums achieved all significant targets for the year, including managing budgeting and staffing targets, in response to elevated demand for committee and legislative support services.
 Contributions to interdepartmental forums advanced the strategic aims of parliamentary administration.

Coordination of information resources advances awareness of the role and work of the Senate.

SPIO further developed and managed public information resources.
 Intranet sites for senators and staff enhanced dissemination of information.
 Planned progress was achieved in significant parliamentary ICT projects affecting Senate and committee information resources.

Advice, documentation, publications and draft reports are accurate, of a high standard and produced to meet the required timeframes.

All advice, documents and draft reports produced in support of committees supported by the office were of a high standard and met required timeframes; none were shown to be inaccurate.

Odgers' Australian Senate Practice is updated to reflect significant changes in the Senate.

The 14th edition of *Odgers'* was published in February 2017.

The *Procedural Information Bulletin* is produced after each sitting period and other procedural resources are updated and augmented as required.

The *Procedural Information Bulletin* was produced promptly after sitting periods and estimates hearings.
 Procedural and administrative information for senators was published to intranet site, Senate Connect.

Overview

The Clerk is the administrative head of the Department of the Senate and, in accordance with the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, is responsible, under the President of the Senate, for managing the department. The Clerk is also the principal adviser to the President and senators on proceedings in the Senate, parliamentary privilege, committee proceedings and their outcomes in the Senate. The Deputy Clerk supports the Clerk in these roles and, with the Clerk Assistant (Procedure), provides procedural and legislative advice and support to non-executive senators. The Deputy Clerk also has particular corporate governance roles, including as the department's senior representative on the Audit Committee and as chair of the Program Managers' Group.

The Clerk also oversees the Senate Public Information Office (SPIO).

The cost of the office for 2016–17 was \$2.3m, including \$1.2m for SPIO (\$2.2m and \$1.1m, respectively in 2015–16).

Advice and information

The provision of advice, particularly to the President, senators and parliamentary committees, is a core function of the department and has always been a priority for the Clerk's Office. Much advice is provided orally and instantaneously, particularly in the Senate chamber and to senators who seek advice in person. Such advice is impossible to quantify in any meaningful way, but the number and kinds of written advices provide some indication of work undertaken.

Written advice

Due to the election, the number of advices written by the Clerk declined in comparison with the previous year, however the number of requests remained within the normal range. Advice requested by committees reflected the slow build up of committee activity in the early days of the 45th Parliament. However, advice to senators remained high and continued to account for the majority of written advice. Matters on which advice was sought included the seizure of a senator's documents under search warrant, and consequent claims of parliamentary privilege; the allocation of 3- and 6-year terms to senators in the new Senate; the reference of questions to the High Court concerning the qualification of senators under section 44 of the Constitution; and the protection of witnesses before Senate committees, among many others.

In addition to these topics, requests for advice on privilege and submissions to parliamentary committees increased. Figure 4 shows the number and kinds of written advices provided, and each kind as a proportion of the total, while Figure 5 shows demand over recent years.

Figure 4 – Types of written advices provided by the Clerk, 2016–17

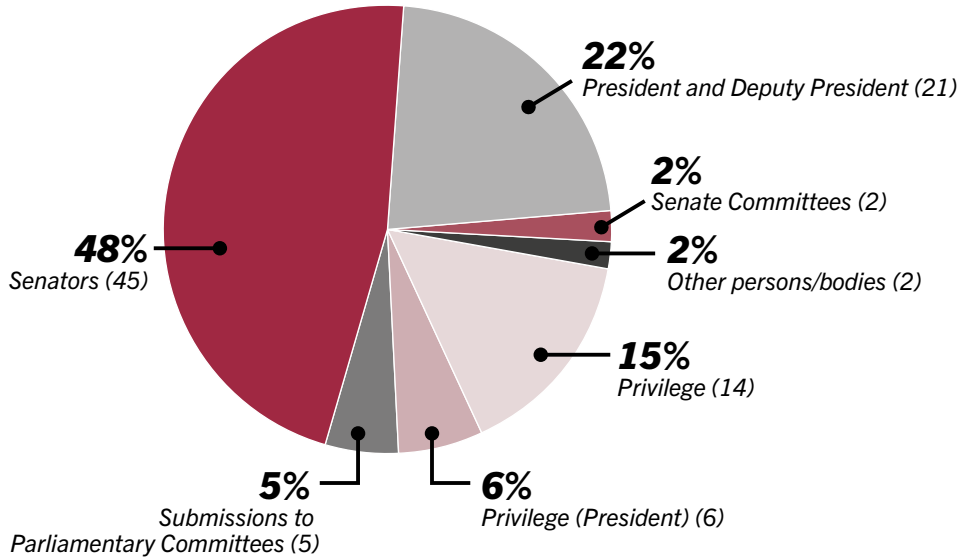
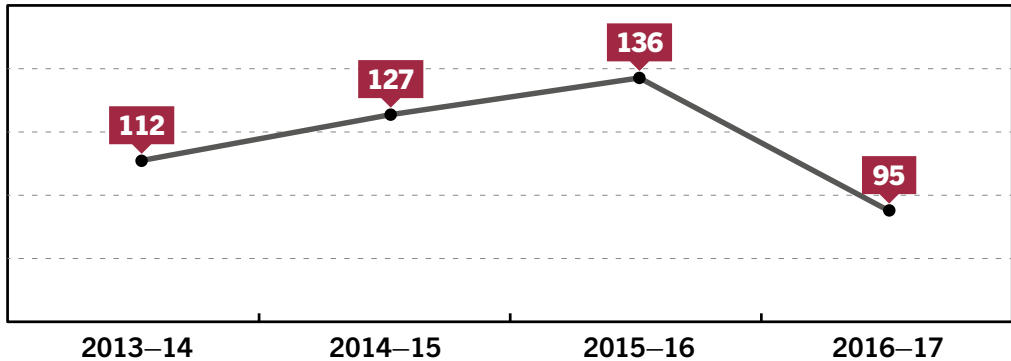


Figure 5 – Number of advices provided by the Clerk’s Office, 2012–13 to 2016–17



Performance indicators for provision of advice focus on timeliness and accuracy. Senators and other recipients of advice continued to acknowledge its accuracy and value, and it was invariably provided in time to meet the purposes for which it was sought. Most advice is provided on a confidential basis and any decision whether to release it, and on what basis, is for the recipient to make. On numerous occasions during the year, recipients of advice published it as a contribution to public debate, at the same time subjecting it to public scrutiny. As this advice can inform the actions of senators, the Senate and its committee as well as public debate, all advice is prepared to the highest standards and on the soundest possible basis.

Advice provided by the office was frequently tested during estimates hearings and in other Senate proceedings, with senators seeking and relying on such advice throughout the year.

Procedural information

The Clerk produced issues of the *Procedural Information Bulletin* after each sitting period and each round of estimates hearings, covering all the major procedural developments and matters of procedural interest which arose. Updates on procedural and administrative matters affecting senators were also published to an intranet site developed for senators and their staff, Senate Connect.

Prior to her retirement as Clerk, Dr Rosemary Laing finalised the 14th edition of *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*, discussing the practices, procedures and precedents of the Senate to December 2016. It was published in February 2017, both in hard copy and online.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk prepared and presented sessions in the department's learning and development activities. They also presented at briefing sessions offered in August 2016 to those senators who had been newly elected. Introductory briefings were also offered to three senators selected to fill vacancies in the representation of states arising during the year.

Committees

The office provided secretariat support to three Senate standing committees. Advice and support was acknowledged as meeting the needs and timeframes of the committees and their members.

Procedure Committee

The Clerk of the Senate served as secretary to the Procedure Committee, which responds to references from the Senate or the President by evaluating, and recommending improvements to, Senate procedure.

During the year the committee met twice and presented one report, its first of 2016. The report revisited discussion on the matter of photographs in the Senate, with the Senate later rescinding long-standing and outdated restrictions. The report also noted the success of the temporary order that allowed debate on ministerial statements, recommending that it become a standing order. It also recommended that standing orders be amended to allow senators to care for infants in the Senate. The Senate adopted both recommendations on 8 November 2016.

Committee of Privileges

The Deputy Clerk served as secretary to the Committee of Privileges, which met 11 times in 2016–17 (six in 2015–16) and presented three reports. The committee protects the integrity of Senate and committee proceedings by considering matters possibly amounting to contempt of the Senate. Those matters, which arise from concerns raised by other committees or individual senators, are referred to the committee by the Senate.

The committee's 163rd and 164th reports related to the same matter – the execution of search warrants by officers of the Australian Federal Police in circumstances where parliamentary privilege may be involved. The Senate accepted the committee's recommendations and the committee is pursuing a related matter with an inquiry into intrusive powers.

The committee also administers the right-of-reply mechanism for people seeking to respond to adverse comment made about them in the Senate. One request was received and reported on during the year, with the Senate adopting the recommendation that the reply be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Committee of Senators' Interests

The Deputy Clerk also served as secretary to the Committee of Senators' Interests and, as Registrar of Senators' Interests, helped senators to fulfil the requirements of Senate resolutions relating to declarations of pecuniary interests and gifts. These duties were transferred to the Usher of the Black Rod in a realignment of duties from 30 January 2017.

The secretariat publishes statements of senators' interests online and prepares 6-monthly volumes of statements and alterations for tabling in the Senate. Two such volumes were presented, in October 2016 for the period 30 August to 7 October and February 2017 for the period 8 October to 31 December 2016. The Committee also tabled Report Number One of 2017 during the reporting period.

Governance

The Deputy Clerk chaired the Program Managers' Group, provided liaison between that group and the Senate Management Advisory Group, and was the department's senior representative on its Audit Committee. Following the changes made in the last year to appoint more independent members, the committee amended its charter to require that the committee is chaired by an independent member. More information on these forums is in the chapter 'Management and accountability'.

During the year, the Deputy Clerk and then the Clerk also served on the Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board (PICTAB), which oversees a strategic plan for parliamentary ICT, and on a subsidiary group which provides strategic direction and business information from across the parliamentary service.

More broadly, the Clerk and other senior officers liaised with their counterparts in the other parliamentary departments on matters connected to parliamentary administration. This included the Clerk's attendance at the quarterly meetings of the four department heads.

Managing public information resources

SPIO has a brief to coordinate the department's information resources and improve approaches to publishing and sharing information. The office has two broad streams of work. The first involves developing and publishing information resources, which in 2016–17 included:

- assuming responsibility for the production of the Senate Dynamic Red and the new ParlWork application, the redesigned *Week Ahead* and the *Senate Daily Summary*
- working with the Table Office to redesign some traditional procedural publications, particularly the Senate *Notice Paper*, improving the online versions and allowing the cessation of an external distribution of physical copies to departments and agencies
- working with the Committee Office to develop templates for committee briefing packs, further develop committee web pages and produce accessible, online versions of the large number of committee reports presented to the Senate
- further development of the Senate Connect website, which provides practical and procedural resources for senators and their staff, and the Senate department's intranet, *SENNET*, which provides procedural, administrative and policy materials required by our staff
- producing video, print and web resources for the Parliamentary Education Office, and continuing development of the *Senate Discovery series*
- providing assistance to the ABC's production of *The House*.

The second stream of work involves management of, and liaison on, projects affecting information resources. The continued focus has been on strategic projects undertaken with DPS and DHR to redevelop core parliamentary business systems, including the ParlWork application that went into live production in May this year. This system, which was developed by DPS in collaboration with the House departments, is a web app that organises the mass of online information about parliamentary proceedings around the questions: what is the business before each House today and what is happening now?

The rollout of the committee report builder, a new application to improve the production and publishing of committee reports, continued albeit at a slower pace than expected. Good change management and the continued high volume of committee work particularly, has seen a slower and more cautious roll-out to avoid disrupting the work of the Senate. Nonetheless, the report builder is expected to improve productivity by automating a number of tasks thereby allowing staff to focus on the activities that provide higher value support to the Senate.

Work continued on the development of a system to receive and publish digital copies of tabled documents. There have been meetings across parliamentary departments and government agencies and the Clerk provided advice on the project in a written submission to the Joint Committee on Publications. There are significant improvements to productivity and portability of information to be achieved in this space.

Performance outlook

The next reporting period will cover the second full year of the 45th Parliament, during which the department expects a period of sustained legislative activity, along with a continuation of the very high levels of committee workload which have typified this parliament to date. This activity will no doubt drive the demand for procedural advice during 2017–18. Advice and support for the committees managed by the office will also be provided in accordance with their requirements.

In the area of governance the next year will see the first year of the department's new management team, whose participation in the Program Managers' Group and as the department's representatives on the Audit and Evaluation Committee will bring fresh eyes to how the department complies with the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

We will continue to work with the other parliamentary departments to improve the systems which support the core work of the Senate and its committees, and implement the strategic plan for parliamentary ICT. SPIO is currently working with DPS on a number of projects that will enable more efficient publication of Senate and parliamentary information in accessible and innovative ways. Building on the ParlWork application platform and the Senate's established practice of providing live updates on its agenda while sitting through its Dynamic Red, the department is extending this concept to committees' estimates hearings. The online database for browsing and searching Senate estimates questions on notice and their answers is on track for release later this year.

The development of a system to receive and publish digital copies of tabled documents remains a high priority.

Table Office

Outputs

Programming and procedural support to the Senate and the legislative process
 Publication of formal and informal records of Senate business
 Receipt, dissemination and storage of documents
 Inquiries service
 Secretariat support to the Appropriations, Staffing and Security; Selection of Bills; and
 Publications committees.

Performance information	Performance results
<i>Order of Business</i> ('the Red') produced for each sitting day.	The draft and final <i>Order of Business</i> was published in advance of each sitting day.
Procedural advice and legislative documents are accurate and timely.	Advice was given proactively or as required. Legislative documents were accurate and produced within required timeframes.
<i>Notice Paper</i> and <i>Journals of the Senate</i> are accurate and published within required timeframes. Other publications are accurate and timely.	All information resources were accurate and published according to required timeframes, including <i>Notice Paper</i> published in advance of each sitting day and proof <i>Journals of the Senate</i> published at the end of each sitting day (followed by final journals).
Tabled documents are accurately processed and stored, and available online wherever possible.	Senate records were safely stored and documents were distributed in a timely manner.
Inquiries assistance is effective and supported by online information services.	Inquiries were responded to immediately, or within reasonable timeframes for more complex queries.
Committees are supported; advice, documentation, publications and draft reports are accurate and timely.	Committee meetings were held, documents provided and reports prepared within agreed timeframes.

Overview

The Table Office is led by the Clerk Assistant (Table) and has three functional areas, as shown in figure 6.

Figure 6 – Elements and responsibilities of the Table Office

Executive	
Chris Reid, Clerk Assistant	
Procedural advice, programming support and production of the <i>Order of Business</i> Secretariat to the Selection of Bills Committee	
Legislation and Documents	Journals and Notice Paper
Ivan Powell, Director	James Warmenhoven, Director
Processing legislation	Production of the <i>Notice Paper</i> , and the <i>Journals of the Senate</i> , processing questions on notice, orders for the production of documents and petitions, Secretariat to the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee
Processing and custody of documents	
Inquiries services	
Secretariat to the Publications Committee	

The Table Office provided support for the Senate on each of its 48 sitting days in this reporting period. All performance results as outlined in the above table were achieved within relevant timeframes. Projects work was completed or has continued as forecast.

Much of the work of the Table Office involves direct contact with senators and their staff, as well as other clients. This presents an ongoing opportunity to receive and respond to ad hoc feedback about the services provided by the office. In addition, a formal survey of senators' satisfaction with the services provided by the office was conducted in this reporting period. While the participation levels were lower than hoped for, the results indicate high levels of satisfaction with services. Across the fourteen services canvassed, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated they were 'excellent', with a smaller number indicating they were 'good'; no respondents indicated that any services were 'poor'.

Staff numbers remained steady during the reporting period, with an average full-time equivalent (FTE) level of 16. The cost of the office was \$2.5m (\$2.8m in 2015–16).

Programming and procedural support

The Table Office supported the operation of the Senate by providing procedural and programming advice to senators, preparing procedural scripts for use in the chamber (1,425 in 2016–17 – almost 30 per sitting day) and providing a broadcast captioning service of Senate proceedings.

The *Order of Business* (the program for each day's sitting) was prepared in draft form to assist senators (especially the whips) and published as a final edition prior to each sitting.

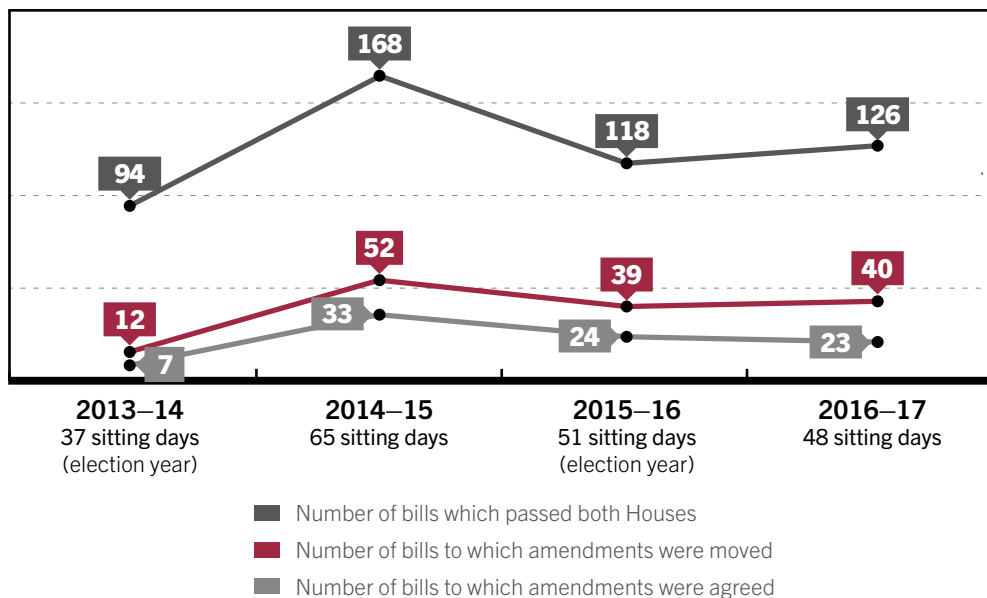
Legislation

The office facilitated the legislative work of the parliament by processing all bills considered in the Senate, preparing legislative documents, preparing third reading and assent prints of bills passed, and processing assent messages.

The office also prepared the formal messages by which the two Houses communicate on legislative and other activity. In 2016–17, 190 messages were prepared, of which 136 related to the passage of bills (the remaining messages related to matters such as committee memberships). These figures compare to 164 messages relating to the passage of 141 bills in 2015–16.

The chart in figure 7 reflects the level of legislative activity in recent years.

Figure 7 – Senate legislative activity, 2013–14 to 2016–17



Formal and informal records

The *Notice Paper* is the formal agenda of Senate proceedings. During the reporting period, the *Notice Paper* contents were streamlined, with a large portion of information made available separately online.

The *Journals of the Senate* are the official record of decisions made by the Senate. Proof Journals were published online shortly after the end of each sitting day, and printed versions distributed the next morning. Final Journals were produced following thorough checking of source material. In 2016–17, 48 Journals and 47 Notice Papers were produced.

Questions on notice, notices of motion and petitions

Senators continued to use the questions on notice process – written questions to ministers on the administration of public policy – as an important accountability mechanism. Throughout the year, 486 questions were asked on notice. These were published to a searchable online database.

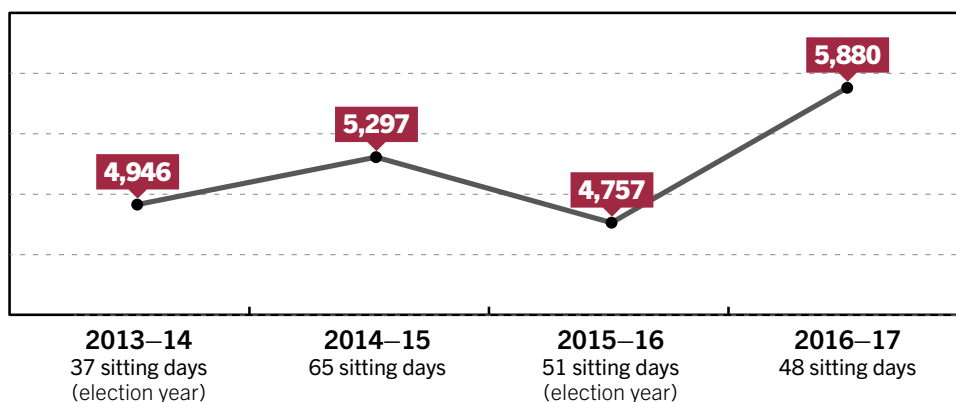
In 2016–17, the office processed and published 586 notices of motion (similar to the previous reporting period of 588). These notices of motion signal senators' intentions to move particular motions on specified days. The office also processed 13 petitions, with 24,071 signatories, which senators had lodged for presentation to the Senate (compared to 30 petitions with 128,950 signatures in 2015–16).

Documents

The office received and processed 5,880 documents for presentation to the Senate during 2016–17, recorded their details in the *Journals of the Senate* and the *Index to the Papers Presented to Parliament*, and archived them. This is an increase of approximately 1,000 documents from the previous year, due largely to the two month period during which the parliament was prorogued after both houses were dissolved in May 2016, after which documents could not be tabled. Figure 8 shows the number of documents tabled in the Senate in recent years.

Documents from ministers, the Auditor-General and committees may be presented when the Senate is not sitting, although not after the Senate's dissolution. The office administers this procedure, which is a useful avenue for the timely publication of material of interest to, or required by, the Parliament. In 2016–17, a total of 398 documents (or approximately 7 per cent of all documents tabled in the Senate) were presented using this procedure. This number is lower than the previous reporting period (547) as there were no out-of-sitting presentations during the double dissolution period in July and August 2016.

Figure 8 – Documents tabled in the Senate, 2013–14 to 2016–17



Inquiries

Copies of all documents presented to the Senate are made available through the inquiries and distribution services provided by the office. In 2016–17, 3,416 inquiries were received (approximately 40 per cent coming from senators or their staff). This compares to 2,494 inquiries received in the previous reporting year. The majority of inquiries – which are communicated by telephone or email – were responded to immediately, with the remainder responded to within timeframes agreed with the requestor.

Digitisation and preservation of tabled papers

Documents presented to the Senate from 1901 to 2013 (which includes documents presented up to the end of the 43rd Parliament) are now available online through the Senate Tabled Papers database. Documents presented to the Senate during the 44th Parliament are being progressively scanned or downloaded to ParInfo. This work will be completed in the next reporting period.

All original documents presented to the Senate since its first meeting in 1901 are stored in Parliament House. Documents presented to the Senate in 2016–17 added a further 6 metres of shelf space to this archive.

Support for committees

During the year, the office provided secretariat support, including the preparation of draft reports, for the Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security, the Selection of Bills Committee and the Senate Publications Committee. All committee meetings were convened, and documents provided, within the timeframes required by the committees.

Performance outlook

In 2017–18 the Table Office will continue to serve as the secretariat to the Senate, and to certain committees.

The existing timeframes set for the provision of various services continue to remain appropriate and reporting of non-compliance on an exception basis will be undertaken to monitor performance.

The office will also continue to support various ICT related activities, including contributing to the ongoing maintenance, enhancements and testing of existing systems, as well involvement in projects such as the development of a system to facilitate the electronic receipt of tabled documents.

A key staffing focus for the next reporting period will be to share skills and knowledge among staff in the office (and by bringing in staff of other areas of the department from time-to-time) to ensure that expertise in relation to specialised tasks is not unduly concentrated.

Procedure Office

Outputs

Advisory services and procedural support to non-government senators.

Drafting services to non-government senators.

Secretariat support to the Regulations and Ordinances Committee, Scrutiny of Bills Committee, and Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Parliamentary and research information for senators, staff, public servants, officials from other parliaments, and the community; and support for inter-parliamentary relations.

Parliamentary education services to schools, teachers and students.

Performance information	Performance results
Procedural advice is accurate and timely, and support is provided to the satisfaction of senators.	Senators and their staff continued to acknowledge the accuracy and value of procedural advice including through responses to an evaluation survey.
Amendments and bills are drafted promptly, are legally sound, and are provided to senators in time for their use in the Senate chamber or elsewhere.	Legislative amendments and bills were accurate, and were prepared within required timeframes and to the satisfaction of senators.
Advice, documentation, publications and draft reports are accurate, of a high standard and produced to meet the required timeframes.	Advice and documentation provided to, and publications prepared for, the scrutiny committees were accurate, of a high standard and provided within the timeframes set by the committees.
Parliamentary research information is accurate, timely and comprehensive. Seminars, lectures and other parliamentary information projects are provided to increase the awareness of the work and role of the Parliament, in particular the Senate and its committees. Inter-parliamentary functions are supported to the satisfaction of stakeholders.	Accurate and comprehensive parliamentary research was provided within required timeframes. Seminars and lectures were held in accordance with the programmed schedule, and public information projects were delivered in accordance with the required timeframes. Training was provided to the satisfaction of stakeholders, demonstrated by consistently favourable feedback from evaluation processes. Inter-parliamentary functions were carried out to the satisfaction of stakeholders.
Education Centre teaching programs and other Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) projects accurately reflect the Parliament and its work. PEO teaching programs held on time and in accordance with booking schedule. PEO projects delivered according to programmed schedule.	PEO role-play programs, website and publications were promptly updated to ensure accuracy and to accommodate electoral and parliamentary events. Teaching programs were consistently conducted in accordance with the booking schedule. PEO projects were managed and delivered in accordance with current implementation plans.

Overview

The Procedure Office is led by the Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and has four functional areas, as shown in figure 9.

Figure 9 – Elements and responsibilities of the Procedure Office

Executive and legislative drafting		
Maureen Weeks (July 2016 to March 2017)		
Jackie Morris (May 2017 to June 2017), Clerk Assistant		
Procedural advice, support and training		
Drafting of legislative amendments and private senators' bills		
Public information and parliamentary research	Parliamentary education	Legislative scrutiny
Tim Bryant, Director, Research Section Publications, seminars, public lectures, exhibitions and research on parliamentary matters Production of <i>The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate</i>	Tim Grainger (September 2016 to June 2017), John Studholme (July 2016 to September 2016) Director, Parliamentary Education Office Parliamentary education services and resources for schools, teachers and students	Anita Coles, Secretary, Scrutiny of Bills Committee Toni Dawes, Secretary, Regulations and Ordinances Committee and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights Secretariat, advisory and administrative support to the committees

The office provides a range of advisory, research and public information services closely aligned with the role and work of the Senate, including legislative drafting services and support for the Parliament's legislative scrutiny committees. The Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) produces educational programs and resources for schools, students, teachers and others. The office also supports the Parliament's international programs.

The demand for procedural and legislative services is substantially driven by the requirements of senators and the Senate. The work of the secretariats of the legislative scrutiny committees is similarly driven by the volume of legislation coming before the Senate and any additional inquiries undertaken by the committees.

The Procedure Office monitors levels of satisfaction with its performance through formal and informal channels such as letters, emails, phone calls, seminar evaluation forms and direct advice from senators and their staff, educators, students, and members of the public. This continuous performance appraisal was supplemented during the reporting period by a survey of senators and their staff to gauge satisfaction with legislative drafting and procedural advice services.

The full-time equivalent staffing level for the Procedure Office in 2016–17 was 28 (28 in 2015–16). The cost of providing the services of the Procedure Office in 2016–17 was \$5.5m (\$5.7m in 2015–16).

Procedural support

In 2016–17, the office assisted non-executive senators and their staff by providing advice, both written and oral, relating to the role and work of the Senate and its committees, and the Parliament more generally. There was strong demand for such advice, particularly during sitting periods. Advice was provided on many procedural issues including the constitutional powers of the Senate, the legislative process, the process for disallowance of delegated legislation, reference of matters to committees and opportunities for debate.

Staff of the office ensured the accuracy of advice by researching appropriate precedents and consulting other departmental officers particularly the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk. Advice was non-partisan, consistent, and provided to senators and their staff in a timely fashion often within extremely short time frames.

In 2016–17, the office prepared an average of 15 procedural scripts per sitting day for use by senators in the chamber. This was an increase on the previous year when an average of 12 scripts per sitting day were drafted. These scripts assist senators to pursue matters of concern to them through, for example, orders for the production of documents, committee references and following up unanswered questions on notice.

The office also checked material for procedural accuracy on request from senators and their staff. The advice provided was accurate and provided in time to enable senators to use the material in the Senate and elsewhere.

Legislative drafting

In 2016–17, the office provided legislative support to senators by drafting amendments to bills and drafting private senators' bills, primarily for non-government senators.

The office drafted and circulated 142 sets of committee of the whole amendments, comprising 667 individual amendments. This was a reduction on the 1,158 amendments circulated in the previous year though an increase on the 119 sets of amendments circulated in 2015–16. A further 81 sets of amendments to 39 different bills were drafted but not circulated, because, for example, they were drafted to inform negotiations between parties or as an alternative position to circulated amendments.

In accordance with section 53 of the Constitution, 25 sets of amendments were framed as requests to the House of Representatives. For these requests, the office also produced statements required under Senate procedure explaining the applicability of section 53 and the precedents of the Senate. The office also prepared and circulated 43 second reading amendments (an increase on the previous year, when 22 second reading amendments were circulated).

Senators and non-government parties continued to use private senators' bills as a means of furthering policy debate and, in some cases, influencing the government to pursue legislative action. In 2016–17, the office received requests for 64 private senators' bills, of which 21 bills were introduced. The remaining bills were at various stages of drafting or were not proceeded with.

Given that 2016–17 included part of the election period, the level of demand for legislative drafting services was unusually high.

Table 1 summarises legislative drafting and procedural services provided to senators over the last four years.

Table 1 – Legislative drafting and procedural advice services provided to senators, 2013–14 to 2016–17

Service	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Committee of the whole amendments circulated	222	825	1158	667
Second reading amendments circulated	24	30	22	43
Private senators' bills introduced	32	30	17	21
Procedural scripts prepared	484	626	593	701

Feedback from senators and their staff confirmed the quality of the advice provided by the office. In particular, 23 responses were received to an electronic survey seeking feedback from senators and their staff regarding the legislative drafting and procedural advice services provided by the office. Survey responses revealed very high levels of overall satisfaction with the timeliness and quality of those services (all respondents considered those services to be either excellent or good). A few respondents acknowledged the high workload of the office sometimes delayed drafting of private senators' bills and expressed the view that additional resources should be made available for that purpose.

Support for legislative scrutiny committees

During the year, the Legislative Scrutiny Unit provided secretariat, research and administrative support to the Regulations and Ordinances Committee, the Scrutiny of Bills Committee and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

The committees examine all bills and instruments according to each committee's terms of reference. The committees report each sitting week on the scrutiny review undertaken and also report annually, outlining their work for each year and highlighting the significant matters they have pursued.

The Regulations and Ordinances Committee secretariat examined 1,483 legislative instruments (1,976 in 2015–16) and drafted 12 *Delegated legislation monitors*, containing comments on 480 legislative instruments (189 in 2015–16), raising matters related to the committee's scrutiny terms of reference (under Senate standing order 23).

The Scrutiny of Bills Committee secretariat examined 254 bills (189 in 2015–16) and drafted 12 reports, containing comments on 115 bills (75 in 2015–16), raising matters relating to the committee's scrutiny terms of reference (under Senate standing order 24).

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights secretariat examined 255 bills (187 in 2015–16) and drafted 10 reports containing comments on 64 bills (43 in 2015–16), raising matters relating to the committee’s scrutiny terms of reference (contained in the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*). The secretariat also examined 1,720 disallowable and exempt legislative instruments (2,370 in 2015–16) and drafted comments on 44 instruments (96 in 2015–16). In addition, the secretariat provided support for an inquiry referred to the committee by the Attorney-General regarding freedom of speech. The committee held nine public hearings and produced a report on the inquiry.

The work of the committees in scrutinising bills and instruments supports parliamentary consideration of legislation in a number of important ways, including:

- influencing the drafting of bills and legislative instruments so that they conform with human rights obligations and good legislative practice;
- improving explanatory material;
- informing consideration of issues in legislation committee reports;
- informing debate in the Senate and the House of Representatives; and
- resulting in amendments to bills and the disallowance of legislative instruments.

Public information and parliamentary research

The Research Section helps raise awareness of the role and work of the Senate by coordinating a range of public information activities and producing publications and exhibitions.

Seminars, training programs and lectures

During 2016–17, the section coordinated and delivered seminars and professional training programs for senators’ staff, parliamentary staff, public service officers and others, and a series of lectures for the general public.

Nine seminars were offered to senators’ staff to provide specialised training about the operations and procedures of the Senate and its committees. One seminar was cancelled following the simultaneous dissolution. Six bespoke training sessions were also delivered to new staff of senators. Staff training seminars were well attended and anecdotal evidence indicates that the subject matter is appropriate and well received.

Twenty one seminars on aspects of Senate practice were provided for 537 public service officers. This was the third consecutive increase in both seminars and attendees since 2013–14. A further seminar was provided to a community group. Staff from across the department contributed to the delivery of the seminar series which successfully met the learning objectives of those participating. Evaluation surveys of participants indicated that 92 per cent considered that their learning objectives had been fully met.

The section organised two orientation seminars for new senators who commenced their terms on 1 July 2016. The three-day program in August and a full day program in October 2016 focused on administrative arrangements, the operations and procedures of the Senate and its committees, as well as services provided in Parliament House.

Feedback indicated that the program is regarded by new senators as an essential part of their preparation for legislative duties. The section also maintains online information to augment the training program for senators and their staff and to provide accessible information to staff located outside of Canberra.

The section arranged ten public lectures during 2016–17 as part of the department’s occasional lecture series on aspects of Australian governance and democracy, attended by approximately 900 people. Lectures are generally live streamed and are available ‘on demand’ on ParView. There were 222 online views of the lectures in the reporting period. Transcripts of the lectures are made available on the Senate website. The department convened the annual Harry Evans Lecture, commemorating the service of the longest serving Clerk of the Senate. The lecture was presented by Professor Anne Twomey on 4 November 2016 with 180 people in attendance.

The Research Section also runs the Australian National Internships Program in partnership with the Department of the House of Representatives and the Australian National University. Due to the 2016 election, no students were placed with senators and members in semester two 2016. The intake of students for semester one 2017 increased to 87, of which 43 were placed with senators and MPs.

Publications, exhibitions and conferences

The section continued to produce publications and exhibitions with a focus on the work and role of the Senate and its committees and the operations of the Parliament.

Two editions of the department’s journal, *Papers on Parliament*, were edited and published during 2016–17. Volume 4 of *The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate* was launched by the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Stephen Parry on 28 February 2017. The volume contains biographies of senators whose terms concluded between 1983 and 2002. This brings to a close a project that commenced in 1993 to record the lives and careers of senators who served in the first one hundred years of the Senate. The complete Biographical Dictionary is available online.

Parliamentary Education Office

Jointly funded by the Department of the Senate and the Department of the House of Representatives, the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) delivers parliamentary education services to teachers, students and other learners across Australia through:

- experiential learning programs that enable students and teachers to understand and engage with the work of the Parliament
- comprehensive websites covering fundamental concepts such as representation, law-making, the separation of powers and responsible government
- teaching resources aligned to the Australian Civics and Citizenship Curriculum.

To date, almost 2.3 million students have expanded their knowledge of the role, function and value of the Australian Parliament through participating in a PEO program.

Education Centre activities

Regarded as a highly effective method of parliamentary education, the PEO's immersive learning program at Parliament House continued to run at capacity, with 88,169 students from 1,621 schools across Australia participating in 2016–17.

While these figures represent a very small decrease on the previous period, student participation rates at Parliament House remain ahead of most national institutions in Canberra and parliaments in a number of significantly larger countries.

Outreach, online and classroom resources

The PEO maintained its focus on providing and expanding options for schools, students and teachers unable to travel to Canberra.

In 2016–17, the PEO delivered three weeks of outreach to 3,585 students in 64 schools in Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

The PEO's primary website, www.peo.gov.au, continued to perform strongly, with 1.35 million visitor sessions (representing a total of 3.06 million pageviews) over the past year. Similarly, the PEO's supporting websites – Your Questions on Notice, the Federal Parliament History Timeline and To Our Last Shilling – remained popular, each recording increases in visitor sessions in 2016–17.

Dedicated video conferencing capability – allowing the PEO to run 'virtual' education sessions in classrooms across Australia – was successfully introduced, with full implementation of the technology in teaching programs expected in the coming year.

In response to the release of version 8.3 of the Australian Curriculum, the PEO made significant updates to education resources – including lesson plans, assessment rubrics, activity sheets and videos – for teachers of students in Years 6–9. In addition, the PEO produced and distributed a range of publications about the Parliament, including:

- 11,049 copies of the *Australian Constitution Pocket Edition*
- 6,864 copies of *Get Parliament*, an easy-to-understand booklet that explores Australia's system of governance
- 3,386 copies of *Role-play the Parliament: a Teacher's Guide*, a step-by-step guide to conducting immersive parliamentary education in the classroom.

Support for Senators, joint ventures and other initiatives

In 2016–17, the PEO delivered several tailored education programs, including:

- Rotary Adventure in Citizenship, a week-long program for 25 Year 11 students from around Australia
- committee and chamber debate role-play sessions for over 400 Year 12 students participating in the 2017 National Youth Science Forum
- professional development to assist 40 science teachers incorporate civics and citizenship in their work as part of the Australian Science Teachers Association's STEM X Academy.

In conjunction with the Parliamentary Skills Centre, the PEO facilitated *The Outrigger – Navigating Gender Equality through Pacific Parliaments*, a three-day training workshop on gender equality for parliamentary clerks and senior officers from 13 nations around the Pacific.

The PEO continued to support and assist senators and members engaging with schools and students. During the year, five senators and 99 members met with students undertaking a PEO program at Parliament House.

Senators and members are also offered an annual allocation of materials to support their educational activities: 35 senators and 116 members requested their allocation in 2016–17 (an increase of 25 per cent from 2015–16).

Inter-parliamentary relations and capacity building

The Australian Parliament's international program focuses on parliamentary engagement, cooperation and strengthening, with an emphasis on parliamentary relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Activities and projects in 2016–17 were coordinated primarily through the International and Parliamentary Relations Office (IPRO) and the Parliamentary Skills Centre (PSC), with input from all four parliamentary departments. IPRO manages incoming and outgoing delegation programs, membership of inter-parliamentary organisations, and the international interests and travel of senators and members. The PSC is responsible for all parliamentary strengthening and capacity building programs of the Australian Parliament.

IPRO is administered by the Department of the House of Representatives and funded jointly by the Department of the Senate and the Department of the House of Representatives.

Parliamentary engagement

During 2016–17, IPRO coordinated 12 official visits overseas, including bilateral visits to 10 countries; attendance at 6 assemblies, conferences, workshops and seminars; and other visits, including Presiding Officer visits. There were seven official visits to Australia by parliamentary delegations from other countries as guests of the Australian Parliament, and 23 other visits coordinated by IPRO or the PSC, including a range of capacity-building activities.

A regional focus was maintained in the visits programs. 19 of the 30 visits to Australia were from parliaments in the Asia-Pacific region, including the annual visit by a combined delegation from ASEAN countries. Four of the 12 overseas visits were to countries in Asia or Oceania.

In October 2016, the Presiding Officers hosted the second annual MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia) Speakers' Consultation in Hobart, Tasmania. The meeting was attended by more than 120 delegates from the five member countries. The speakers met in Hobart to consult on the topic 'Open parliament for open government', which generated a wide-ranging discussion on the challenges, solutions and benefits of maintaining open parliaments.

The work of incoming and outgoing parliamentary delegations continued to be promoted through the Parliament of Australia website, including publication of short articles and video interviews with delegation leaders.

Parliamentary cooperation

The Australian Parliament maintained its strong commitment to regional and international parliamentary cooperation in 2016–17. However, due to the timing of the election, the parliament was not represented at some association assemblies. Nevertheless, delegations attended an Inter-Parliamentary Union assembly and the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum.

Parliamentary strengthening

The PSC has responsibility for coordinating the parliament's capacity-building activities. The centre is funded by the Department of the House of Representatives and draws on the support of members, senators and colleagues from throughout the parliamentary service, as well as some state and territory parliaments. The centre facilitates the parliament's capacity-building and parliamentary strengthening activities with Pacific Island nations and other countries' parliaments.

The PSC continued to coordinate activities under the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Program (largely funded by the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) and the work of the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships Project (funded under the Australian Government's Pacific Women's Shaping Pacific Development Initiative), with assistance provided by the PEO. The major focus of the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program during the year was work with the parliaments of Fiji and Samoa.

Staff from all parliamentary departments contributed to study programs for visiting members and staff of a number of overseas parliaments. In March 2017, an Inter-Parliamentary Study Program was conducted for parliamentary staff, with participants from China, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu.

Performance outlook

In 2016–17, the Procedure Office will continue to provide its procedural and legislative services to meet the requirements of the Senate and senators, and to support the work of the legislative scrutiny committees.

The historically large number of senators on the cross bench has increased demand for procedural and legislative drafting support and advice for non-executive senators in this Parliament. In order to support the needs of these senators, duties of staff in the rebadged Procedure and Research Section will be revised to provide increased focus on providing support to the chamber. In addition, the Office of Parliamentary Counsel has agreed to provide legislative drafting training to Procedure Office staff in order to enhance the drafting skills of the office and respond to increased demand for these services.

The numbers of bills and legislative instruments examined by the legislative scrutiny committees was reasonably consistent with previous years, though higher than expected considering the election period at the beginning of the year. The workload of the Legislative Scrutiny Unit in coming years will largely be determined by the number of additional inquiries undertaken by the legislative scrutiny committees.

With advance bookings for learning programs at Parliament House remaining high, the PEO will continue to explore strategies to effectively meet demand and maintain program quality in 2017–18. As part of this, the PEO expects to increase options for students and schools unable to travel to Canberra, including a greater use of video conferencing and digital technology, to extend and enhance access, and help teachers deliver parliamentary education in their own classroom.

Demand for training and seminar programs, including requests for bespoke programs for departments and agencies, was increasing towards the end of the year and this is expected to continue in 2017–18. The office will continue to give priority to providing tailored training to new senators and their advisers.

Committee Office

Outputs

Secretariat support and procedural advice to the legislative and general purpose standing committees, select committees, and certain joint committees.

Performance information

Performance results

The degree of satisfaction of the Chair of Committees, committee members and other senators with the quality and timeliness of advice and support.

Formal and informal feedback, including reference to committee reports during debates in the Senate, shows that senators consider the support provided by the Committee Office to be effective.

Draft reports, reports and other documents are timely, accurate and of a high standard. Tabling deadlines are met.

Accurate advice, documentation, and draft reports were provided to committees in accordance with their requirements.
Reports were drafted and presented to the Senate in accordance with the timeframes agreed by committees and deadlines set by the Senate.
As a result of workload, assistance with preparing dissenting reports or additional comments could not be provided in some cases where it was requested.

Inquiry information, evidence and reports are published promptly upon authorisation.

Information was updated promptly and accurately on committee web pages though the volume of inquiries meant that committees sometimes had to set priorities in relation to which material should be published first. Submissions and other documents and reports were published consistent with the decisions of committees.

Inquiries from the public regarding committees are handled promptly and professionally.

Telephone and email queries from the public were responded to promptly and accurately.
Members of the public had ready access to the material they requested regarding committee activities or procedures.

Overview

Committee Office secretariats supported the legislative and general purpose standing committees, eight select committees and five joint committees (see figure 10). During the year committees continued to experience a sustained period of heavy workload, with high numbers of inquiries and hearings. The cost of the office in 2016–17 was \$10.6m (\$10.7m in 2015–16), with staff salaries comprising approximately 95 per cent of the office's total expenses. As a result of the continuing high levels of committee activity, the full-time equivalent staffing level in 2016–17 rose to 68 (67 in 2015–16).

The remaining costs continued to be administrative (for example, transport and accommodation for secretariat staff attending hearings, advertising inquiries, printing and venue hire). These administrative costs continue to be high due to the high numbers of interstate committee hearings.

Committee secretariats provided administrative support to committees including processing submissions, publishing material to committee websites and arranging hearings around Australia, sometimes at very short notice. Staff also analysed the evidence committees received, drafted briefing material and reports, arranged for the tabling and publication of reports, and assisted witnesses and others to participate in inquiries. Finally, secretariats provided advice to chairs and committee members, including in relation to matters which raised complex procedural issues.

The high workload of committees had a number of consequences for the support provided to committees including that committees were at times required to prioritise inquiries and the consideration and publication of evidence; secretariats were not always able to provide assistance with the drafting of dissenting reports and additional comments and reports were drafted to increasingly tight time frames which limits the depth in which committees can pursue inquiries. The pressure this workload placed upon senators continues to be manifested in the rescheduling of hearings at short notice because of competing demands to attend multiple hearings and the number of requested extensions to reporting timeframes.

Again, comments made in the Senate when committee reports are tabled or debated provide one means of evaluating the performance of the office. Several senators highlighted the contribution of committee staff when tabling such reports. Similarly, senators continue to place reliance on committee inquiries to inform debate on bills. Informal feedback from senators and witnesses also continued to indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the advice and support provided by secretariats.

Figure 10 – Elements and responsibilities of the Committee Office

Executive

Brien Hallett, Clerk Assistant
Tim Bryant, Senior Clerk of Committees

Procedural advice and training
 Planning and coordination
 Secretariat staffing and resources
 Statistics and records

Legislative and general purpose standing committee secretariats

Joint committee secretariats

Senate select committee secretariats

Community Affairs
Jeanette Radcliffe

Economics
Mark Fitt

Education and Employment
Stephen Palethorpe

Environment and Communications
Christine McDonald

Finance and Public Administration
Lyn Beverley

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
David Sullivan

Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Toni Matulick

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
Jane Thomson

JOINT STATUTORY
 Corporations and Financial Services

Patrick Hodder

Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity

Sophie Dunstone

Law Enforcement

Sophie Dunstone

JOINT STANDING

National Broadband Network

Ann Palmer

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Gerry McInally

JOINT SELECT

Nil

Exposure Draft of the Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill

Gerry McInally

Funding for Research into Cancers with Low Survival Rates

Sophie Dunstone

Future of Public Interest Journalism

Tim Watling

Lending to Primary Production Customers

Stephen Palethorpe

National Integrity Commission

Sophie Dunstone

Red Tape

Gerry McInally

Resilience of Electricity Infrastructure in a Warming World

Patrick Hodder

Strengthening Multiculturalism

Gerry McInally

Activity levels and workload

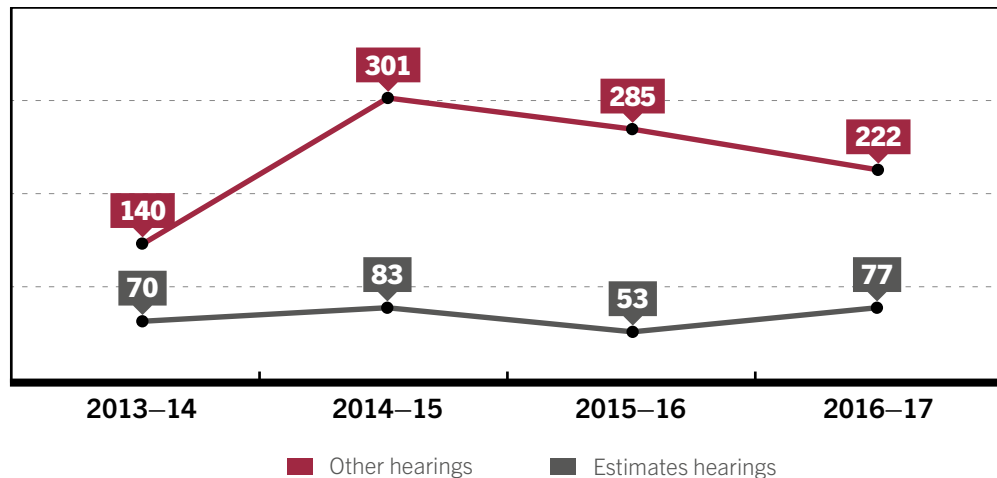
The simultaneous dissolution of both houses of Parliament in 2016 meant that the 45th Parliament did not commence until 30 August 2016. Committees in the new Parliament were not established until the first weeks of September. Despite this, committee workload remained high.

The workload of the committees supported by the Committee Office is determined by decisions of the Senate and of the committees themselves. During this financial year, the Committee Office again faced a heavy workload in terms of the number of committees and inquiries supported. The highest number of inquiries managed at one time (February and June 2017) was 71.

Submissions, public hearings and witnesses

The continuing heavy workload of committee secretariats during 2016–17 is evident in the administrative support provided to committees in relation to the processes committees use to collect evidence. This included processing 9,208 submissions (compared to 12,273 in 2015–16). This figure does not include the more than 20,000 emails and letters received by the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee as part of its inquiry into the Native Title Amendment (Indigenous Land Use Agreements) Bill 2017. In addition, secretariats arranged 299 public hearings (including 77 estimates hearings) at which 7,143 witnesses appeared (including 3,899 witnesses at estimates hearings). Secretariats also supported committees by arranging 593 private meetings and 18 site inspections.

Figure 11 – Number of committee hearings, 2013–14 to 2016–17



Again, to manage this volume of work the office continued to operate in a highly flexible manner with staff regularly working across committees in order to deal with peaks in workload. Assisting committees to make decisions in relation to the receipt and publication of evidence involves secretariats advising on sometimes complex procedural matters. Committees regularly adopted the advice of secretariats on those matters.

Estimates hearings

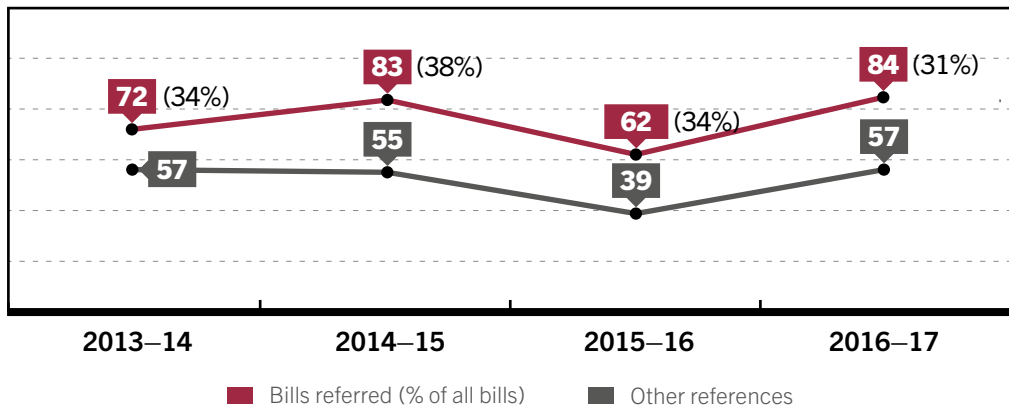
Estimates hearings proceeded as scheduled in 2016–17. The 77 hearings that were held in 2016–17 were higher than the previous year because of the compressed time frame due to the election break in the previous year.

References and reports

As usual, committees inquired into and reported on a diverse array of topics including the future of Australia’s aged care sector workforce, white collar crime, coal fired power stations, gender segregation in the workplace, the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, and airport and aviation security.

Despite the 2016 election, the total number of references returned to 2014–15 levels.

Figure 12 – Number of references to committees, 2013–14 to 2016–17¹



The office supported committees to table a total of 158 reports, which is high for an election year. The 2015–16 total of 200 reports was higher than usual as a result of the high number of interim reports that committees tabled in response to the simultaneous dissolution, unanticipated at the time the inquiries were originally referred.

¹ These figures refer to packages of bills referred to committees not to the number of individual bills referred.

Table 2 – Reports presented by legislative and general purpose standing committees, 2013–14 to 2016–17

Reports presented	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Bills	48	95	70	63
Interim reports (bills)	5	9	2	3
References	28	38	42	46
Interim reports (references)	27	15	38	7
Reports on annual reports	16	16	16	16
Estimates	16	16	9	16
Total	140	189	177	151

Table 3 – Reports presented by select and joint committees, 2013–14 to 2016–17

Reports presented	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Senate Select	6	8	15	4
Joint Select	0	4	0	0
Joint Statutory/Standing	3	9	8	3
Total	9	21	23	7

The quality of reports is inherently difficult to measure as each report, while initially drafted by Committee Office staff, is in the end a committee document which reflects the views of senators undertaking the inquiry. Nevertheless, informal feedback from senators and some participants in inquiries suggests that, despite the pressure created by the volume of reports, the high quality of committee reports continues to be maintained. This was largely achieved through the dedication and expertise of core secretariat staff, increased by recent extra funding, and, on occasion, staff from other areas of the department providing research and drafting assistance.

Public information

The provision of information to the public about the work of Senate committees is an area of ongoing focus for the Committee Office.

The office continued to work with SPIO on projects to improve systems for writing reports and managing the high volume of answers to questions on notice provided to committees during estimates.

International engagement

Committee Office staff acted as presenters for international delegations visiting Australia and one secretary, the secretary to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, supported a parliamentary delegation to Kiribati and Tonga. The Clerk Assistant (Committees) provided secretariat support to an Inter-Parliamentary Union delegation.

Management and leadership

Under standing order 25(10) a Chairs' Committee, comprising the chairs of standing committees and Senate select committees, may be convened by the Deputy President to discuss any matter relating to their operations. The Clerk Assistant (Committees) is the secretary. During 2016–17, this committee met to consider issues related to the operation of standing orders relating to the operation of estimates hearings and the use of technology to expedite committee work.

Committee secretaries also met regularly throughout the year to discuss administrative issues and procedural matters.

Performance outlook

The 2016–17 financial year again saw the Committee Office support a large number of inquiries despite the slight reduction in sitting days. This level of activity appears likely to continue for at least the next financial year.

Black Rod's Office

Outputs

Chamber, committee room and office support, ceremonial services, and security advice. Corporate services, including payroll services for senators and departmental staff, and support to the Clerk in meeting public governance, performance and accountability and recordkeeping requirements.

Support services, in conjunction with the Department of the House of Representatives, to the Former Members of Parliament Association (FMPA).

Financial management, human resource management and records management services to the Parliamentary Budget Office.

Performance information	Performance results
Services are provided to the satisfaction of the President, officeholders, Senate committees and senators so that they are able to fulfil their roles.	Services were delivered within timeframes and legislative requirements. Consistently positive feedback from senators, including office holders, and their staff was received throughout the reporting period.
Provision of corporate services facilitates the operations of the Senate and meets accountability obligations under the law and to the Senate.	Services were delivered within timeframes and legislative requirements. Services supported the Clerk as the accountable authority to meet all legislative obligations and the requirements of the Senate.
Services to the FMPA are of a high standard, are provided promptly and are accurate.	Support was provided to the FMPA as required and to a high standard.
Provisions of services to the Parliamentary Budget Office is of a high standard and is in accordance with the memorandum of understanding and service level agreement.	Services were delivered within the agreed timeframes and standards, to the satisfaction of the PBO.

Overview

The primary function of the Black Rod's Office is to provide support services to the Senate, to Senate committees and to senators at Parliament House, and to deliver corporate services to the department. The office is led by the Usher of the Black Rod and has three operational areas, as shown in figure 13.

The Usher of the Black Rod undertakes duties in the Senate chamber, including clerking and ceremonial roles, assisted by three senior staff and the Chamber Attendant team, among others. A major focus for the Black Rod's Office during this reporting period was organising the opening of the 45th Parliament on 30 August 2016.

The Usher of the Black Rod represented the department on a number of cross-parliamentary forums including the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group, the Security Management Board and the Joint Management Committee (which oversees the provision of ICT services to the parliamentary departments). The Usher of the Black Rod also administered the Presiding Officers' *Rules for Media Related Activity in Parliament House and its Precincts*, as the President's delegate.

The Black Rod's Office maintained its high level of service and support to the Senate, the President, senators and committees during this reporting period.

Figure 13 – Responsibilities of the Black Rod's Office

Executive

Rachel Callinan, Usher of the Black Rod

Procedural, protocol, ceremonial and security advice
 Advice on corporate and certain parliamentary administrative matters
 Membership of the Security Management Board
 Support to the House Committee

Senators' Services	Human Resource Management	Financial Management
<p>John Baczynski, Director, Senators' Services and Deputy Usher of the Black Rod</p> <p>Agency security advice and support Information technology security advice Accommodation Assets management Chamber and committee room support Comcar shuttle Delivery services Fleet management Office equipment Printing and desktop publishing Project board membership</p>	<p>Anthony Szell, Director, Human Resource Management</p> <p>Recruitment and staffing Pay and conditions Learning and development Work health and safety Rehabilitation coordination Industrial relations Performance management Records management Services to the Parliamentary Budget Office</p>	<p>Michelle Crowther, Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>Financial management and advice Financial reporting and systems management Accounts processing Strategic procurement advice Support for senior management decision making Services to the Parliamentary Budget Office</p>

The regular work of the office involves frequent and direct contact with Senate office holders, senators and their staff, and other stakeholders, all of whom provide regular informal feedback which is generally positive. The work of the Black Rod's Office is also subject to scrutiny by three Senate committees: the Senate House Committee; the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee; and the Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee undertaking estimates hearings.

The full-time equivalent staffing level for the Black Rod's Office for 2016–17 was 34.3 (35.5 in 2015–16) and the cost of running the Office was \$2.9m (\$2.6m in 2015–16).

Senators' services

The Usher of the Black Rod and the Senators' Services Section assist the President and Clerk on ceremonial and other occasions, and also provide chamber, committee room and message delivery services to support the ability of the Senate and its committees to meet in accordance with their requirements. The section also organised the opening of the 45th Parliament on 30 August 2016.

During the period the section continued the provision of office services to support senators, their staff and departmental staff. Printing and delivery services for the Senate and the department were also provided. Over the period, service turnaround times were met consistently, ensuring that documents, including committee reports were available when required. The section also provided a high standard of delivery services to senators, their staff and departmental staff. Scheduled run times were met for all deliveries.

The section also facilitated 59 suite moves for senators following the 2016 election.

Security advice

The Usher of the Black Rod and the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod provide security advice and support to the President, Senate committees, senators and the department. Security matters continued to have an increased profile in Parliament House during the period as a range of physical security upgrades continued.

The Usher of the Black Rod and Deputy Usher of the Black Rod worked with colleagues in the Department of Parliamentary Services' Security Branch, the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office and the Australian Federal Police, providing input into security matters from a Senate perspective.

Human resource management

The Human Resource Management Section delivers human resource management services for the department, including the administration of certain allowances paid to senators and payroll services to departmental staff. During the reporting period, the section also contributed to employment-related work with the other parliamentary departments concerning issues related to the wider parliamentary service.

Support was provided to bargaining representatives negotiating for a replacement enterprise agreement for non-Senior Executive Service employees, with four bargaining meetings held during the period.

Records management

The Human Resource Management Section, which is also responsible for the administration of certain records, completed the digitisation of all paper records.

Financial management

During the year the Financial Management Section delivered the department's financial management, accounting and budgeting services, supporting the Clerk in meeting governance and accountability obligations. The section administered the department's financial management information system, supported the secretary to the Audit Committee, and managed the internal audit contract and the fraud control framework.

The section continued to provide assurance to the Clerk and other senior officers that the department had complied with external reporting responsibilities, including audited annual financial statements and procurement requirements. It also supported the department's budget process, including the preparation of the portfolio budget statements and internal budgets. Work was undertaken to implement a more streamlined acquittal process for officers undertaking official travel and it is expected this will be implemented in the next reporting period.

Corporate services for the Parliamentary Budget Office

The department provided corporate services to the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), including financial management, human resource management and records management services, on a fee-for-service basis, in accordance with a memorandum of understanding and service level agreement.

Performance outlook

Key priorities for 2017–18 include: implementation of the department's Enterprise Agreement 2017–20; and streamlining governance programs and procedures to gain the most benefit from the PGPA Act requirements.





Management and Accountability

▶ Corporate governance _____ 65

Corporate governance

The department's operations for 2016–17 were governed by the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* and other legislation.

Corporate plan

The department's *Corporate Plan 2016–2020*, adopted in August 2016, outlines our objectives, role and structure, the environment in which we operate; and our approach to maintaining the capabilities of our key resource: our staff. Work reports provided to the Clerk throughout the reporting period showed continued progress in key areas and work tasks. Planned outcomes are explained in the department's portfolio budget statements and performance results, including our annual performance statement, are contained in this report.

Management and assurance

The department's corporate governance mechanisms include two senior committees, the Program Managers' Group, chaired by the Deputy Clerk and the Audit Committee, chaired by an independent member. These committees provide advice, support and assurance to the Clerk to ensure that effective governance and statutory responsibilities for the management of the department are met. The role, membership and activities of these groups are described in figure 14.

The department also participates in a range of interdepartmental committees through which the parliamentary departments coordinate common and joint activities. Chief among these were meetings of the heads of the four parliamentary departments; the Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board and a subsidiary steering group; the Security Management Board; the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group; and other boards managing joint projects.

Figure 14 – Management and assurance, 2016–17

Audit Committee

Role Provide independent assurance to the Clerk on the department’s financial and performance reporting responsibilities, risk oversight and management, and systems of internal controls.

Activities 4 meetings.
Based on the committee’s charter, the committee undertook a progressive annual work plan against its four main areas of focus:

- financial reporting
- performance reporting
- risk oversight and management; and
- systems of internal control.

Among other matters, the committee discussed the following internal control topics:

- compliance reporting
- risk management; and
- fraud.

Membership Three independent members (of which one is the Chair), the Deputy Clerk and one program manager.
Observers: Usher of the Black Rod, Chief Finance Officer, representatives from the Australian National Audit Office and the department’s internal audit service provider.

Program Managers’ Group

Role Coordinate corporate governance matters, including:

- human resource management
- risk management and planning
- performance reporting
- financial planning, and
- departmental service quality.

Activities 9 meetings.
Examined a range of issues in the following areas:

- budget
- staffing
- compliance, auditing and reporting requirements
- risk
- ‘red tape’ reduction
- administrative arrangements, and
- administration in common with other parliamentary departments.

Membership Deputy Clerk and program managers.
Chaired by the Deputy Clerk.

Fraud control and risk management

Consistent with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act, the Clerk's Instructions and associated financial management policies promote the proper use of the department's resources. The Clerk's Instructions are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure their applicability and coverage.

The department has in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting mechanisms that comply with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework.

During 2016–17, risk areas and associated controls and mitigation strategies were routinely considered by senior management and reported to the department's Audit Committee. The framework for managing risk is revised regularly and made available to staff on the department's intranet. The department has commenced a review of its risk management framework. Risk oversight and management is a standing agenda item for meetings of the Audit Committee.

External scrutiny

The Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee and the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations, Staffing and Security provide means by which senators and others may monitor the department's performance. Matters relating to the structure and functions of the parliamentary departments may also be examined by the Appropriations, Staffing and Security Committee.

Estimates hearings are an important accountability mechanism in which senators may test advice provided by departmental officers and evaluate the department's performance. The Clerk and officers of the department appeared before the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee on 17 October 2016, 27 February 2017 and 22 May 2017. Matters considered included committee workload and resourcing, office support to senators, and arrangements for security at Parliament House. The department also responded to 37 estimates questions on notice. These are published on the committee's web pages.

The department's activities were also scrutinised by both an internal audit service provider and the Australian National Audit Office, although that office did not conduct any performance audits covering the department's activities during the reporting period.

The department was not subject to any judicial or administrative tribunal decisions which had, or may have, a significant impact on the department's operations.

While not subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the department's policy is to comply with the intent of the Act in relation to its administrative records to the extent practicable, having regard to the legal issues which may arise in the absence of the protections afforded by the Act. In this reporting period the department did not receive any requests for information in relation to its administrative records.

Management of human resources

Staffing

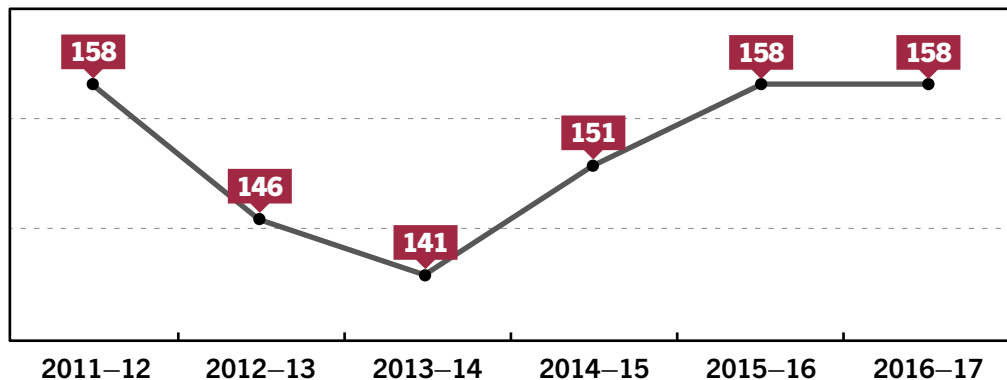
The Clerk of the Senate is appointed by the President of the Senate under subsection 58(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* after consulting senators. Staff are engaged under section 22 of that Act.

Additional support was provided to the department through secondment arrangements with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, through the Parliamentary Secondment Program and by graduates participating in the Parliament of Australia Graduate Program.

Figure 14 shows that the average full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing level for 2016–17 was 158, the same as for 2015–16, chiefly reflecting the continued high levels of committee activity described in this report.

Further staffing statistics are provided in Appendix 2.

Figure 15 – Full-time equivalent staff numbers, 2011–12 to 2016–17



The department’s effectiveness is supported by capable staff, all of whom achieved the rating of ‘effective or better’ in their performance assessments during the reporting period.

The department’s learning and development framework supports staff to develop and maintain relevant skills and knowledge. A focus on parliamentary skills and knowledge aligns with the objectives in the department’s Corporate Plan to ensure that staff continue to develop expertise in parliamentary practice and are capable of the highest standard of accurate and timely procedural advice. Financial assistance or paid leave (or both) is also available under the department’s Studybank scheme, to assist staff to undertake tertiary studies relevant to the department’s objectives.

Employment arrangements

The remuneration of the Clerk of the Senate, who is the holder of a statutory office, is determined by the President of the Senate after consultation with the Remuneration Tribunal.

The department's five Senior Executive Service (SES) employees are covered by a collective determination made under subsection 24(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

The department's non-SES employees are covered by the *Department of the Senate Enterprise Agreement 2012 – 2015*. One employee had an Individual Flexibility Arrangement with the Clerk in accordance with clause 9 of the enterprise agreement. Negotiations for a replacement enterprise agreement took place during the reporting period.

All employees work at Parliament House, Canberra. Two employees identified as Indigenous. In the previous reporting period, no employees identified as Indigenous.

In addition to salary, staff are entitled to a range of benefits including leave entitlements, study assistance, a Health and Wellbeing Subsidy, salary packaging, guaranteed minimum superannuation payments and a range of allowances. Employees can also use other services offered at Parliament House including the sporting facilities and the Parliamentary Library. The department's employment arrangements do not provide for performance pay.

Work health and safety

In accordance with Schedule 2, Part 4 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the department reports on certain work health and safety (WHS) matters.

In 2016–17 there were no incidents which required the giving of notice under section 38 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and no investigations or notices under sections 90, 191 and 195 of that Act. During the period, initiatives to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees included proactive support services. In addition, a parliamentary-departments' working group reported on matters related to work health and safety in the Parliamentary Precincts.

Management of financial resources

Procurement

The department applies the requirements of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act and the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. No issues were identified with the department's procurement practices during the reporting period. The department also supports small business participation in the procurement market. The department has adopted the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for low-risk procurements valued under \$200,000 and electronic systems and processes are used to facilitate on-time payment performance.

Consultants

The department engages consultants to provide specialist expertise when not available within the department, or where an independent assessment is desirable. The department uses various selection processes to engage consultants, including open tender, selective tender, direct sourcing, a panel of recognised or pre-eminent experts, or consultants who have previously undertaken work for the department or are known to have the requisite skills.

During 2016–17, four new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$59,085. In addition, three ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$92,200. This amount does not include \$161,886 for the provision of independent legal advice supporting the work of the two legislative scrutiny committees and the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights. This report contains information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website.

Advertising and market research

In accordance with section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the department reports expenditure on advertising and market research.

In 2016–17, the department paid a total of \$16,441 for advertising. Of the total, \$15,305 was in relation to Senate and joint committee activities, delivered through Dentsu Mitchell Advertising, the Commonwealth Government's central advertising system. The balance was for other minor advertising services, including public notices and recruitment. No market research, polling, direct mail or creative advertising organisations were engaged during the year. No advertising campaigns were conducted during the year.



Financial statements

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Independent Auditor's Report



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the President of the Senate

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Department of the Senate for the year ended 30 June 2017:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Department of the Senate as at 30 June 2017 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Department of the Senate, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2017 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of comprehensive income;
- Statement of financial position;
- Statement of changes in equity;
- Cash flow statement; and
- Notes to and forming part of the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Department of the Senate in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997* (the Code). I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Department of the Senate, the Clerk of the Senate is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the rules made under that Act. The Clerk of the Senate is also responsible for such internal control as the Clerk of the Senate determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Clerk of the Senate is responsible for assessing the Department of the Senate's ability to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Clerk of the Senate is also responsible for disclosing matters related to going concern as applicable

GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601
19 National Circuit BARTON ACT
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Clea Lewis
Executive Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General
Canberra
26 September 2017

Certification by the Clerk of the Senate and the Chief Finance Officer



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 comply with subsection 42(2) if the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the department will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Handwritten signature of Richard Pye.

(Richard Pye)
Clerk of the Senate

26 September 2017

Handwritten signature of Michelle Crowther.

(Michelle Crowther)
Chief Finance Officer

26 September 2017

Statement of comprehensive income

for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
EXPENSES				
Employee benefits	2A	20,065	20,369	20,287
Suppliers	2B	5,102	4,963	3,027
Depreciation and amortisation	4	705	582	538
Loss on disposal of assets		16	3	-
Total expenses		25,888	25,917	23,852
LESS:				
REVENUE				
Other revenue				
Sale of goods and rendering of services		483	487	450
Resources received free of charge ²		2,043	2,016	-
Total other revenue		2,526	2,503	450
NET COST OF SERVICES		23,362	23,414	23,402
Revenue from government		22,864	21,136	22,864
Surplus / (deficit)		(498)	(2,278)	(538)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation reserve		(12)	-	-
Total other comprehensive income / (loss)		(12)	-	-
Total comprehensive income / (loss)		(510)	(2,278)	(538)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

- 1 The department's original budgeted financial statement presented to the Parliament in the 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements. Refer to Note 7 for budget variance explanations.
- 2 Resources received free of charge are not included in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents		157	160	200
Trade and other receivables	3	10,131	9,985	9,471
Total financial assets		10,288	10,145	9,671
Non-financial assets				
Property, plant and equipment	4	2,064	1,619	3,194
Intangibles	4	2,190	2,787	2,667
Inventories		67	57	48
Prepayments		237	182	191
Total non-financial assets		4,558	4,644	6,100
Total assets		14,846	14,789	15,771
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers		78	258	185
Other payables		202	149	-
Total payables		280	407	185
Provisions				
Employee provisions		5,638	5,838	5,724
Total provisions		5,638	5,838	5,724
Total liabilities		5,918	6,245	5,909
Net assets		8,929	8,545	9,862
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		3,079	2,185	3,079
Reserve		11,376	11,388	11,388
Retained surplus / (accumulated deficit)		(5,526)	(5,028)	(4,605)
Total equity		8,929	8,545	9,862

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

- 1 The department's original budgeted financial statement presented to the Parliament in the 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements. Refer to Note 7 for budget variance explanations.

Statement of changes in equity

as at 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	2,185	1,818	2,185
Transactions with owners			
Equity injections – appropriation	894	367	894
Closing balance as at 30 June 2017	3,079	2,185	3,079
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	(5,028)	(2,750)	(4,067)
Comprehensive income			
Surplus / (deficit) for the period	(498)	(2,278)	(538)
Closing balance as at 30 June 2017	(5,526)	(5,028)	(4,605)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	11,388	11,388	11,388
Comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income / (loss)	(12)	-	-
Closing balance as at 30 June 2017	11,376	11,388	11,388
TOTAL EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	8,545	10,456	9,506
Comprehensive income			
Surplus / (deficit) for the period	(498)	(2,278)	(538)
Other comprehensive income / (loss)	(12)	-	-
Transactions with owners			
Equity injections – appropriation	894	367	894
Closing balance as at 30 June 2017	8,929	8,545	9,862

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

- 1 The department's original budgeted financial statement presented to the Parliament in the 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements. Refer to Note 7 for budget variance explanations.

Cash flow statement

for the period ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations	23,942	22,960	23,864
Sale of goods and rendering of services	527	499	450
Net GST received ²	230	264	-
Total cash received	24,699	23,723	24,314
Cash used			
Employees	20,205	20,115	20,287
Suppliers	3,572	3,069	3,027
Section 74 receipts transferred to OPA ³	708	820	-
Total cash used	24,485	24,004	23,314
Net cash from / (used by) operating activities	214	(281)	1,000
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	2	13	-
Total cash received	2	13	-
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	573	28	1,894
Purchase of intangibles	31	274	-
Total cash used	604	302	1,894
Net cash (used by) investing activities	(602)	(289)	(1,894)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Contributed equity	385	292	894
Total cash received	385	292	894
Net cash from financing activities	385	292	894
Net (decrease) in cash held	(3)	(278)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	160	438	200
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	157	160	200

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

1 The department's original budgeted financial statement presented to the Parliament in the 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements. Refer to Note 7 for budget variance explanations.

2,3 Net GST received and section 74 receipts are not separately identified in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

Note 1: Summary of significant accounting policies

Note 2: Expenses

Note 3: Financial assets

Note 4: Non-financial assets

Note 5: Key management personnel compensation and related parties

Note 6: Appropriations

Note 7: Budget variances

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

Note 1: Summary of significant accounting policies

The Department of the Senate is a not-for-profit entity. Its activities are classified as departmental. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses controlled or incurred by the department in its own right within its one outcome. Further details are contained in the statement of comprehensive income and the statement of financial position, and in the resource statement on page 95.

1.1 Basis of preparation of the financial report

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with:

- the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting Rule) 2015* (FRR) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2015, and
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

1.2 Significant accounting judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, the department has made the following judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements:

- leave provisions involve assumptions based on the expected tenure of existing staff, patterns of leave claims and payouts, future salary movements and future discount rates.

No accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next accounting period.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

1.3 New Australian accounting standards

Adoption of new Australian Accounting Standard requirements

All new or revised standards and interpretations issued prior to the signing of the Statement by the Clerk and Chief Finance Officer that were applicable to the current reporting period had no material financial impact on the department, and are not expected to have a future financial impact.

Future Australian Accounting Standard requirements

No new or revised pronouncements were issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board prior to the finalisation of the financial statements which are expected to have a material financial impact on the department in future reporting periods.

1.4 Revenue

The department receives revenue from appropriations and the rendering of services. Revenue from rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured, and
- the probable economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion that costs incurred to date bear to the estimated total costs of the transaction.

Revenue from government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriation for the financial year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as revenue from government when the department gains control of the appropriation. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income as revenue where the amounts can be reliably measured and the services would have been purchased if they had not been provided free of charge. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

The department's resources received free of charge relate to audit services from the Australian National Audit Office and accommodation at Parliament House from the Department of Parliamentary Services.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

1.5 Transactions with the government as owner

Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as equity injections for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCB) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

1.6 Employee benefits

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) and termination benefits due within twelve months of end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the department is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will apply at the time the leave is taken, plus the department's employer superannuation contribution rates, and applicable on-costs, to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to FRR 24.1(a) using the shorthand method. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Superannuation

Employees of the department are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) or other elected defined contribution schemes.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Commonwealth. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported by the Department of Finance as an administered item.

The department makes employer contributions to the relevant employee superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the government and accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June 2017 represents outstanding contributions for the final pay fortnight of the year.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

1.7 Leases

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight-line basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

The department has two operating leases; non-cancellable three year motor vehicle leases of \$38,749 (2016: \$22,000, one operating lease). There is no renewal or purchase option available.

1.8 Financial assets

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include:

- cash on hand, and
- demand deposits in bank accounts.

Receivables

Trade receivables are classified as 'loans and receivables' and recorded at face value less any impairment. Trade receivables are recognised where the department becomes party to a contract and has a legal right to receive cash. Loans and receivables are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable. Trade receivables are derecognised on payment.

1.9 Financial liabilities

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced). Supplier and other payables are derecognised on payment. Supplier payables are settled within 30 days.

1.10 Contingent liabilities and contingent assets

The department had no quantifiable or unquantifiable contingent assets or liabilities as at 30 June 2017 (2016: nil).

1.11 Acquisition of assets

Purchases of non-financial assets are initially recognised at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

1.12 Property, plant and equipment

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, plant and equipment are carried at fair value. Carrying amounts are reviewed every year to determine if an independent valuation is required. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reverses a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised through operating result. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class. Upon revaluation, any accumulated depreciation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset. A revaluation of the department's assets was last undertaken as at 30 June 2015.

Depreciation

Depreciable plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the department, using in all cases the straight-line method of depreciation. Heritage and cultural assets are not depreciated.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date.

Depreciation and amortisation rates applying to each category of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

Asset class	2017	2016
Plant and equipment	5 to 15 years	5 to 15 years
Furniture and fittings	5 to 100 years	5 to 100 years

Impairment

All assets, including software, were assessed for indications of impairment at 30 June 2017. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment loss recognised if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal. Gains or losses from disposal of plant and equipment are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

1.13 Fair value measurement

All property, plant and equipment is measured at fair value in the statement of financial position. When estimating fair value, market prices (with adjustments) were used where available. Where market prices were not available, depreciated replacement cost was used. A reconciliation of movements in property, plant and equipment has been included in Note 4.

1.14 Intangibles

The department's intangibles comprise of internally developed software and purchased software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful life of the department's software is 3 to 7 years (2016: 3 to 7 years).

1.15 Taxation

The department is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

1.16 Events occurring after the reporting period

No events have occurred after balance date that should be brought to account or noted in the 2016–17 financial statements.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000

Note 2: Expenses

Note 2A: Employee benefits

Wages and salaries	13,799	14,388
Superannuation		
Defined benefit plans	1,472	1,482
Defined contribution plans	1,278	1,152
Leave and other entitlements	3,516	3,347
Total employee benefits	20,065	20,369

Note 2B: Suppliers

Goods and services

Professional and financial fees	391	481
Facilities and infrastructure	666	285
Recruitment and staff development	89	71
Hire charges and hospitality	191	184
Travel	667	848
Media and communications	166	231
General office	446	425
Printing	260	236
Resources received free of charge	2,043	2,016
Total goods and services	4,919	4,777
Other supplier expenses		
Workers compensation	183	186
Total other supplier expenses	183	186
Total supplier expenses	5,102	4,963

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000

Note 3: Financial assets

Appropriation receivable	10,062	9,923
Trade and other receivables	16	48
GST receivable (from ATO)	53	14
Total trade and other receivables	10,131	9,985

Receivables have terms of 30 days (2016: 30 days) and are not overdue.

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000

Note 4: Non-financial assets

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles

	PP&E	Intangibles	Total
As at 1 July 2016			
Gross book value	1,688	4,497	6,185
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(69)	(1,710)	(1,779)
Total as at 1 July 2016	1,619	2,787	4,406
Additions by purchase	573	10	583
Depreciation/amortisation expense	(101)	(604)	(705)
Impairment	(12)	-	(12)
Disposals	(15)	(3)	(18)
Total as at 30 June 2017	2,064	2,190	4,254
Total as at 30 June 2017 represented by:			
Gross book value	2,224	4,495	6,719
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(160)	(2,305)	(2,465)
Total as at 30 June 2017	2,064	2,190	4,254

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

Note 5: Key management personnel compensation and related parties

Note 5A: Key management personnel compensation

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the department.

The department has determined the key management personnel to be the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Clerk Assistants and the Usher of the Black Rod. Key management personnel compensation is reported in the table below.

	2017 \$'000
Key management personnel compensation	
Short-term employee benefits	1,420
Post-employment benefits	688
Other long-term employee benefits	88
Total key management personnel compensation	2,196

Note 5B: Related party transactions

Related parties to this department are defined as key management personnel and close family members of key management personnel. A related party transaction is a transfer of resources, services or obligations between the department and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged.

During 2016–17, there were no related party transactions.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000

Note 6: Appropriations

Note 6A: Annual appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

Annual appropriation	22,864	21,136
PGPA Act – section 74 receipts	708	820
Departmental capital budget (DCB) ¹	894	367
Total appropriation	24,466	22,323
Appropriation applied (current and prior years)	25,265	23,252
Variance	(799)	(928)

1 The DCB is appropriated through the *Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1)*. It is not separately identified in the Appropriation Act.

Note 6B: Unspent annual appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

Departmental

<i>Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2015–16</i>	276	10,083
<i>Supply (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2016–17</i>	-	-
<i>Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2016–17</i>	9,944	-
Total	10,220	10,083

Note 6C: Special appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

Authority ²

Department of Finance – <i>Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990</i> (s. 11)	112	155
Department of Finance – <i>Parliamentary Superannuation Act 2004</i> (s. 18)	2,371	2,122
Department of Finance – Commonwealth of Australia Constitution (s. 66)	1,858	1,668
Australian Public Service Commission – <i>Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973</i> (s. 7)	19,672	18,998
Total	24,013	22,943

2 The legislation establishing these special appropriations is administered by the Department of Finance and the Australian Public Service Commission. Arrangements have been entered into with these entities to allow the department to draw upon these appropriations.

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2017

Note 7: Budget variances

The comparison of the unaudited original budget as presented in the 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements to the 2016–17 final outcome as presented in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements is included in the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of financial position, the statement of changes in equity and the cash flow statement. Explanations of major variances are those within the control of the department.

Major variances

An adjustment of \$0.5m was made to employee benefits and provisions reflecting a change to the calculation of long-service leave liabilities to ensure consistency with other Commonwealth agencies. This adjustment was offset by \$0.7m due to a number of long-serving employees retiring and bond rate movements.

The higher balance for property, plant and equipment reflects the commencement of the replacement of departmental office furniture.



Appendices

- ▶ 1—Resources_____97
- ▶ 2—Staffing_____99
- ▶ 3—Contact details_____101

Appendix 1—Resources

The section details the department's resources and expenses in 2016–17, as required by section 17AF(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

The following tables in this appendix correspond to tables in the department's portfolio budget statements for 2016–17:

- the resource statement, which provides information about the various funding sources that the department was able to draw on during the year
- the expenses and resources for outcome 1 table, which shows the detail of the resourcing for the department's outcome.

Resource statement, 2016–17

	Actual available appropriations for 2016–17 \$'000 (a)	Payments made in 2016–17 \$'000 (b)	Balance remaining \$'000 (a – b)
Appropriations ¹			
Departmental appropriation			
Prior year departmental appropriation	10,083		
Annual appropriation ²	23,758		
Section 74 receipts (net)	529		
Total	34,370	24,150	10,220
Total available annual appropriations and payments	34,370	24,150	10,220
Total net resourcing and payments	34,370	24,150	10,220

1 Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No.1) 2016–17 and Supply (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No.1) 2016–17.

2 Includes an amount of \$0.894m in 2016–17 for the departmental capital budget

Appendix 2—Staffing

The figures in these tables include staff on long-term paid leave, but exclude staff on leave without pay or on temporary movements out of the department at 30 June 2017, as well as non-ongoing staff employed on an irregular or intermittent basis who did not work on 30 June 2017.

Staff numbers, by classification, salary range and gender, 30 June 2017

Classification	Salary (\$)	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Clerk of the Senate	417,800*	1	-	1
Deputy Clerk of the Senate (SES Band 2)	212,868–224,071	-	1	1
Clerks Assistant and Usher of the Black Rod (SES Band 1)	175,642–184,468	2**	2	4
Parliamentary Executive Level 2 (PE 2)	132,963–142,170	13	12	25
Parliamentary Executive Level 1 (PE 1)	106,886–119,727	14	13	27
Parliamentary Service Level 6 (APS 6)	88,440–97,014	12	34	46
Parliamentary Service Level 5 (APS 5)	78,516–83,381	3	2	5
Parliamentary Service Level 4 (APS 4)	70,280–75,490	9	16	25
Parliamentary Service Level 3 (APS 3)	62,665–67,696	5	18	23
Parliamentary Service Level 1/2 (APS 1/2)	49,053–61,401	4	3	7
Total		63	101	164

SES = Senior Executive Service, PE = Parliamentary Executive, APS = Australian Parliamentary Service

* Indicates total remuneration package

** One commencing duties 3 July 2017, vice officer resigning 27 June 2017

Employees by classification

Classification	2016–2017		2015–2016	
	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Ongoing	Non-ongoing
Clerk of the Senate	-	1	-	1
SES2	1	-	1	-
SES1	4	-	4	-
PEL2	25	-	24	-
PEL1	25	2	26	1
APS6	36	10	33	9
APS5	5	-	6	-
APS4	23	2	26	3
APS3	14	9	17	7
APS2	5	1	6	1
APS1	1	-	-	2
Total	139	25	143	24

Full-time and part-time employees

Full-time or part-time	2016–2017		2015–2016	
	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Ongoing	Non-ongoing
Full-time	116	18	124	17
Part-time	23	7	19	7
Total	139	25	143	24

Employees by gender

Gender	2016–2017		2015–2016	
	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Ongoing	Non-ongoing
Female	83	18	83	14
Male	56	7	60	10
Total	139	25	143	24

Appendix 3—Contact details

This appendix lists contact details for all areas of the department.

Department of the Senate

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: 02 6277 7111

Website: www.aph.gov.au/senate/dept

Office-holders and senior officers of the Senate

President's Office

President of the Senate

Senator Stephen Parry

Email: senator.parry@aph.gov.au

Parliament House

Phone: 02 6277 3300

Electorate Office—Launceston, Tasmania

Phone: 03 6334 1755

Deputy President of the Senate

Senator Sue lines

Email: senator.lines@aph.gov.au

Parliament House

Phone: 02 6277 3804

Electorate Office—West Perth, Western Australia

Phone: 08 9481 4844

Clerk's Office

Clerk of the Senate

Richard Pye

Email: clerk.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3350

Deputy Clerk of the Senate

Maureen Weeks

Email: depclerk.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3360

Table Office

Clerk Assistant (Table)

Rachel Callinan

Email: ca.table.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3020

Procedure Office

Clerk Assistant (Procedure)

Jackie Morris

Email: ca.procedure.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3380

Committee Office

Clerk Assistant (Committees)

Tim Bryant

Email: ca.committees.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3371

Black Rod's Office

Usher of the Black Rod

Brien Hallett

Email: blackrod.sen@aph.gov.au

Phone: 02 6277 3398



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Glossary and abbreviations list

amendments and requests for amendments	Proposals to alter a bill, which may be moved by any senator or member. Any amendments made by one House must be agreed to by the other House before a bill can become law. The Senate may not amend bills imposing taxation or appropriating money for the Commonwealth's ordinary annual services; nor may it amend an appropriation bill so as to increase a charge or burden on the people. The Senate may 'request' the House of Representatives to make such amendments.
AusTender	Australian Government tender information system
bill	A proposal for a law that is introduced into parliament. Bills are considered consecutively by the two Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two Houses must agree to a bill in identical terms before it can be transmitted to the Governor-General for assent, which marks its passage into law.
clerks at the table	Clerks, including the Clerk (the head of the department), the Deputy Clerk and other senior officers of the department, who sit in the Senate and provide procedural advice while taking the minutes of Senate proceedings.
committee of the whole amendments	Amendments proposed to the text of bills dealt with by a committee consisting of all the members of the Senate formed to consider a bill in detail
DHR	Department of the House of Representatives
DPS	Department of Parliamentary Services
estimates committees	The term commonly used to describe the consideration of the annual and additional estimates of expenditure of government departments and agencies.
IPRO	International and Parliamentary Relations Office
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
motions	Proposals for the Senate to agree to something, which must be expressed in a way that conforms with the standing orders.
parliamentary privilege	Two significant aspects of the law relating to parliament: the privileges or immunities of the Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament; and the powers of the Houses to protect the integrity of their processes, particularly the power to punish contempts.
PEO	Parliamentary Education Office
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PICTAB	Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board
PPS	Parliamentary Papers Series

PSC	Parliamentary Skills Centre
Presiding Officers	The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives are the Presiding Officers. Each presides over the proceedings of his or her respective House. Administratively, each is responsible for his or her respective House department and together they are responsible for the Department of Parliamentary Services and the Parliamentary Budget Office.
procedural scripts	Scripts containing both routine and complex wording to be used by senators to ensure compliance with standing orders when taking part in proceedings in the Senate.
questions on notice	When referred to in the context of the Senate, these are written questions to ministers from other senators. Questions on notice in the context of estimates proceedings are written or oral questions from committee members to a minister and/or the minister's departmental officers, which require written answers from the minister or the minister's department.
second reading amendments	Proposed resolutions which comment on or affect the passage of bills, but do not propose specific changes to the text of bills.
SES	Senior Executive Service
SPIO	Senate Public Information Office
Standing Orders	Procedural rules that govern the conduct of proceedings in the Senate and its committees.
TOPS	Table Office Production System

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Contractual clauses not providing the Auditor General access to contractor’s premises	N/A
Exempt contracts	
Contracts or standing offers with a value greater than \$10 000 (inclusive of GST) which have been exempted from being published in AusTender	N/A
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