



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

# THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15



# CONTENTS

Parliamentary Librarian's review	1
Overview	7
Summary of financial performance	12
Achievements 2014–15	15
Performance results	47
Financial report	57

# PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIAN'S REVIEW

The Library's role is to provide high quality information, analysis and advice to senators and members in support of their parliamentary and representational roles, and to do so in a timely, impartial and confidential manner, while maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and integrity.

While the Library's goal has remained constant since its establishment 114 years ago, the nature and scale of its services has changed immeasurably. Today they are delivered in an environment which is ever more information rich and in which technology is both ubiquitous and rapidly changing. While we can't predict what the next great step will be, or what services the Library may offer in 10 years' time, we need to be nimble, remaining abreast both of policy and research and of emerging technologies, if we are to retain our position as our clients' preferred and trusted source of information and advice.

Evaluation and strategic planning have, therefore, been priorities throughout 2014–15.

## CLIENT EVALUATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE 44TH PARLIAMENT

The Library conducts a formal client evaluation of its services once in every Parliament. The evaluation for the 44th Parliament was conducted in the latter part of the 2014–15 financial year. Pleasingly, the overall result was very positive, particularly among senators, members and their staff. Our services were again both well used (by 100 per cent of senators and members) and well regarded. Satisfaction rates among senators, members and their staff remained high (93 per cent), with the Library seen to do well against all measures of service delivery. Interestingly, the use of Library services as a whole had increased, and we continued to be regarded very highly as a source of trusted information.

In previous annual reports, I have noted that the budgetary constraints within which the Library was operating would necessarily affect services to senators and members, notwithstanding our best endeavours to minimise the impact. Maintaining such high levels of satisfaction is, therefore, a significant achievement, and one for which Library staff are to be commended. However, the evaluator (Uncommon Knowledge) found that behind positive satisfaction ratings there were indications that the impacts of past budget cuts have been felt by all client groups. Ratings for proactivity, for quality and consistency of services had declined since the last evaluation (in 2012); and satisfaction rates among parliamentary staff were less positive than those of senators and members (78 per cent for committee staff and 86 per cent for other parliamentary staff). While

the very welcome additional funding provided in the 2014–15 Resource Agreement has enabled the Library to begin to address capacity gaps, this remained a work in progress throughout the reporting period. The benefits of this investment will be realised in 2015–16 and beyond.

Improving services to parliamentary staff, particularly committee secretariats, will be a focus of the coming year. This work has already commenced, with the Library engaging pro-actively with the committees of both Houses, both parliamentarians and secretariats, to discuss how we might better support their work. Recent feedback from committee secretaries in response to these initiatives has been positive.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Late last year the Library was set a challenge by the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library: to envision what library services would look like in 10 years' time. An early outcome of the project was the appointment of an Innovation Manager whose job it is to keep abreast of developments in library systems and data management and to work with colleagues to develop new or enhanced services. The benefits of this initiative are already being felt. Other ideas arising from this project, together with the findings of the client service evaluation, have been embodied in the Library's new strategic plan. The *Strategic Plan 2015–16 to 2019–20* continues the Library's focus on supporting Parliament's engagement with the community, on service quality and also on increasing digital access and service. However, it adds a new priority: strengthening the capacity of our staff, increasing our investment in their training and development and ensuring that they are supported effectively. Of immediate concern is addressing the consequences of the turnover caused by the Library's ageing workforce and past budget-driven downsizing.

## INFORMATION, ANALYSIS AND ADVICE

The Library's research output comprises both individualised and confidential client research and general distribution publications. Last financial year, the Library produced 328 research publications, including 134 Bills Digests. The 33rd edition of the Parliamentary Handbook was also published.

Over the past year, the Library has been exploring the potential for greater use of data visualization and geospatial applications to present information. This is itself a reflection of the increasing public availability of large data sets and location based information. In addition to purchasing new data sources (notably HILDA<sup>4</sup> and ABS microdata), the Library is beginning to review and restructure our existing data holdings to improve our ability to deliver information quickly and accurately. Appropriately, given 2015 is its centenary year, work on the Parliamentary Handbook dataset has been a focus, with work already well advanced.

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<sup>4</sup> The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey is run by the University of Melbourne.

In 2014–15, Library staff completed 12,656 individual client requests, slightly up from the 12,507 completed in the previous financial year. In last year’s annual report, I noted that, while the number of client requests responded to each financial year had declined significantly over the past 10 to 15 years, there had been a shift in the type and complexity of work that parliamentarians ask of the Library. With clients increasingly able to find the answers to simple queries online, the queries received by the Library seemed to be increasing in complexity, taking longer to compete and often requiring considerable work across disciplines and sections to answer. This trend continued in 2014–15, with the average time to complete a client request rising from 2.5 hours to 3.3 hours (with the associated price indicator also increasing). Since 2000–01, the average time spent on a client request per FTE has more than doubled.

## CREATING THE LIBRARY OF THE 21ST CENTURY

In 2014–15, the Library continued to focus on digital delivery of its services and products. The percentage of our collection available in digital form increased to over 38 per cent (as at 30 June 2015). In the reporting period there were 4.55 million uses of the Library’s online collections and databases. Significant progress was made in the Library’s preservation digitisation, with two million pages of our archive of information files plus 1,200 hours of electronic media archives digitised, including the files on Australian prime ministers.

The Library also began to make ‘Condolence packs’ available digitally (previously they were only available in hard copy and had to be collected or ordered from the Library).

However, perhaps our most notable improvements in online services were two initiatives in the delivery of news and media monitoring services, which are among our most frequently and heavily used services. This year the Library was able to address a long-standing gap in Library services and provide access to a much wider range of regional press, online news and regional radio and television news. And, through the ‘Web at Work’ browser, clients are now able to read the senators’ and members’ news clips of the day and the breaking news feed on their mobile devices without having to be connected to the Parliamentary Computing Network.

## WELCOMING NEW SENATORS

July 2015 saw 12 new senators take their seats for the first time following the 2013 election, with four other senators appointed to casual vacancies during the year. Assisting new senators to settle into their parliamentary roles was a priority for Library staff. The Library presented at orientation and information sessions co-ordinated by the Department of the Senate. Contact officers were also assigned to help guide the new senators and their staff through the range of Library products and services, and to demonstrate how we could support them in their day-to-day work.

## BUDGET

As the Parliament intended, the Resource Agreement helps maintain the Parliamentary Library's independence by providing annual budget surety. The 2014–15 Budget provided DPS additional funding to support its operations. As a result, the 2014–15 Resource Agreement began the process of returning the Library to a sustainable budget base, addressing a number of capacity gaps (particularly in Research Branch) and maintaining its annual subscriptions for information resources and news services for senators and members. Increases in capital funding in 2014–15 enabled the Library to initiate a program of digitisation of vulnerable paper and pre-digital media archives.

While recruitment in some cases took longer than anticipated, by 30 June 2015 the Library's FTE had increased to 129.6 from a low of 118.2 on 30 June 2014. This process will continue in 2015–16. The Resource Agreement for 2015–16 contains a funding projection across the forward estimates, which will greatly assist the Library's longer term business planning.

## OUTLOOK

2015–16 will see the Library continuing to focus on improving its capacity to deliver consistent and high quality services.

A priority for the year will be implementing the broader recommendations of the client service evaluation.

We will also continue to innovate to increase digital access and services. To underpin this work, we will develop and implement a digital preservation strategy.

Budgetary issues will continue to be closely managed to ensure we deploy our resources to greatest effect.

The Library will also develop a workforce plan and staff development plan to help us recruit and retain people with expertise and commitment to excellence in client service and to improve succession planning and knowledge transfer.

The Library will continue to report regularly to the Presiding Officers and to the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library on these matters.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Presiding Officers, and the members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library for their support and guidance through what has been a challenging year. My thanks go also to colleagues in DPS and in the other parliamentary departments. And, finally, my thanks to all the Library staff for their dedication to and enthusiasm for their work to support the Parliament and parliamentarians.

# THE LIBRARY ON A PAGE

## ROLE

To provide high quality, impartial, timely and confidential information, analysis and advice to senators and members of the House of Representatives in support of their parliamentary and representational roles

## CLIENTS

- senators, members of the House of Representatives and their staff
- parliamentary committees
- the Governor-General
- staff of parliamentary departments

## GOVERNANCE

Presiding Officers: jointly vested with responsibility for the administration of the Department of Parliamentary Services, including the Parliamentary Library

Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library: comprises senators and members of the House of Representatives, and provides advice to the President and Speaker on matters relating to the Library

Parliamentary Librarian: a statutory officer responsible for the control and management of the Library, reporting to the Presiding Officers and the Library Committee

## STRUCTURE

- Parliamentary Librarian
- Office of the Parliamentary Librarian
- Research Branch
- Library Collections and Databases Branch

## THE LIBRARY IN NUMBERS: 2014–15

- 12,656 individual client requests completed
- 328 research publications released, including 134 Bills Digests
- 418 clients attended training and seminars
- 6,530 new books and serial titles added to the catalogue
- 38.2 per cent of titles available on-line in full text
- 172,766 items added to Library databases

## BUDGET 2014–15 (RESOURCE AGREEMENT)

\$16.348m operational; \$1.240m capital, plus a further \$388,000 from DPS' capital works plan

## STAFFING

2014–15 123.7 FTE (average).

## SERVICES

- a comprehensive Library collection for reference and loan
- media monitoring—press, broadcast and social media
- confidential and tailored research and analysis
- maps of electorates and other geographic areas
- assistance with parliamentary delegation briefings
- a wide range of research publications to help inform parliamentary debate, scrutiny and policy development
- 24/7 access to online databases and services
- training
- lectures and seminars

# OVERVIEW

## GOVERNANCE

The Parliamentary Library is part of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) Program 1.

The Library's services are established under the statutory office of the Parliamentary Librarian whose primary function is 'to provide high quality information, analysis and advice to senators and members of the House of Representatives in support of their parliamentary and representational roles'.<sup>5</sup>

These services are to be delivered:

- in a timely, impartial and confidential manner
- maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and integrity
- on the basis of equality of access for all senators, members of the House of Representatives, parliamentary committees and staff acting on behalf of senators, members or parliamentary committees, and
- having regard to the independence of Parliament from the Executive Government of the Commonwealth.<sup>6</sup>

In respect of her statutory functions, the Parliamentary Librarian reports directly to the Presiding Officers and to the Parliament. She also reports to the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library (JSCPL).

The Library's primary clients are senators and members. Other client groups include parliamentarians' staff, staff of the parliamentary departments and the Governor-General. Service entitlements for all clients are outlined in the *Parliamentary Library Statement of Client Services* approved by the JSCPL.

### JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

Until 2005, senators and members provided advice to the Parliamentary Library through a Senate Committee on the Parliamentary Library and a House of Representatives Committee on the Parliamentary Library that met jointly. In December 2005, the first Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library was established by resolution of both chambers to:

- consider and report to the Presiding Officers on any matters relating to the Parliamentary Library referred to it by the President or the Speaker

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<sup>5</sup> *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* subsection 38B(1).

<sup>6</sup> *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* subsection 38B(2).

- provide advice to the President and the Speaker on matters relating to the Parliamentary Library
- provide advice to the President and the Speaker on an annual Resource Agreement between the Parliamentary Librarian and the Secretary of DPS, and
- receive advice and reports, including an annual report, directly from the Parliamentary Librarian on matters relating to the Parliamentary Library.

The JSCPL for the 44th Parliament was established by motion by the House of Representatives and Senate on 21 November and 2 December 2013 respectively. The Library Committee membership in 2014–15 was:

- Senator Zed Seselja (Joint Chair)
- Ms Gai Brodtmann MP (Joint Chair)
- Senator Chris Back
- Mr Russell Broadbent MP
- Hon Michael Danby MP
- Ms Jill Hall MP
- Mr Steve Irons MP
- Senator Sue Lines
- Senator James McGrath
- Senator Claire Moore (appointed 27 August 2014)
- Mr Angus Taylor MP, and
- Mr Rick Wilson MP.

### ***What our clients said***

‘I thank the Parliamentary Library for the work they do to make us better informed and sometimes even wiser than we might otherwise be.’

The Hon Tony Abbott, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 December 2014 p.14237

## Photo 1: The Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library



Standing (left to right): Mr Angus Taylor; Mr Rick Wilson; Senator Claire Moore; Mr Russell Broadbent. Seated: Dr Dianne Heriot (Parliamentary Librarian and Committee Secretary); Ms Gai Brodtmann (Joint Chair); Senator Zed Seselja (Joint Chair). Inset: Senator Chris Back; Senator Sue Lines; Senator James McGrath; the Hon Michael Danby; Mr Steve Irons; Ms Jill Hall.

The committee met privately on 25 September 2014, 27 November 2014, 19 March 2015 and 18 June 2015.

At its September 2014 meeting, the committee elected Senator Zed Seselja to join Ms Gai Brodtmann as Joint Chair. At its meetings the committee also discussed:

- Library resourcing and the Resource Agreement between the Parliamentary Librarian and Secretary of the DPS for 2015–16
- the client evaluation of Library services for the 44th Parliament and other client feedback
- the Parliamentary Library Summer Research Scholarship and the Parliamentary Fellowship
- the asset value and depreciation of the Library collection
- use of the senators' and members' Reading Room
- future directions in research and library services for parliaments, and
- a Library lecture series.

## STRUCTURE

The Parliamentary Library comprises the Parliamentary Librarian and the employees of DPS assisting the Parliamentary Librarian.<sup>7</sup>

The Parliamentary Library Executive is:

- Dr Dianne Heriot, Parliamentary Librarian
- Jonathan Curtis, Assistant Secretary, Research Branch, and
- Liz Luchetti, Assistant Secretary, Library Collections and Databases Branch.

The Library's structure comprises:

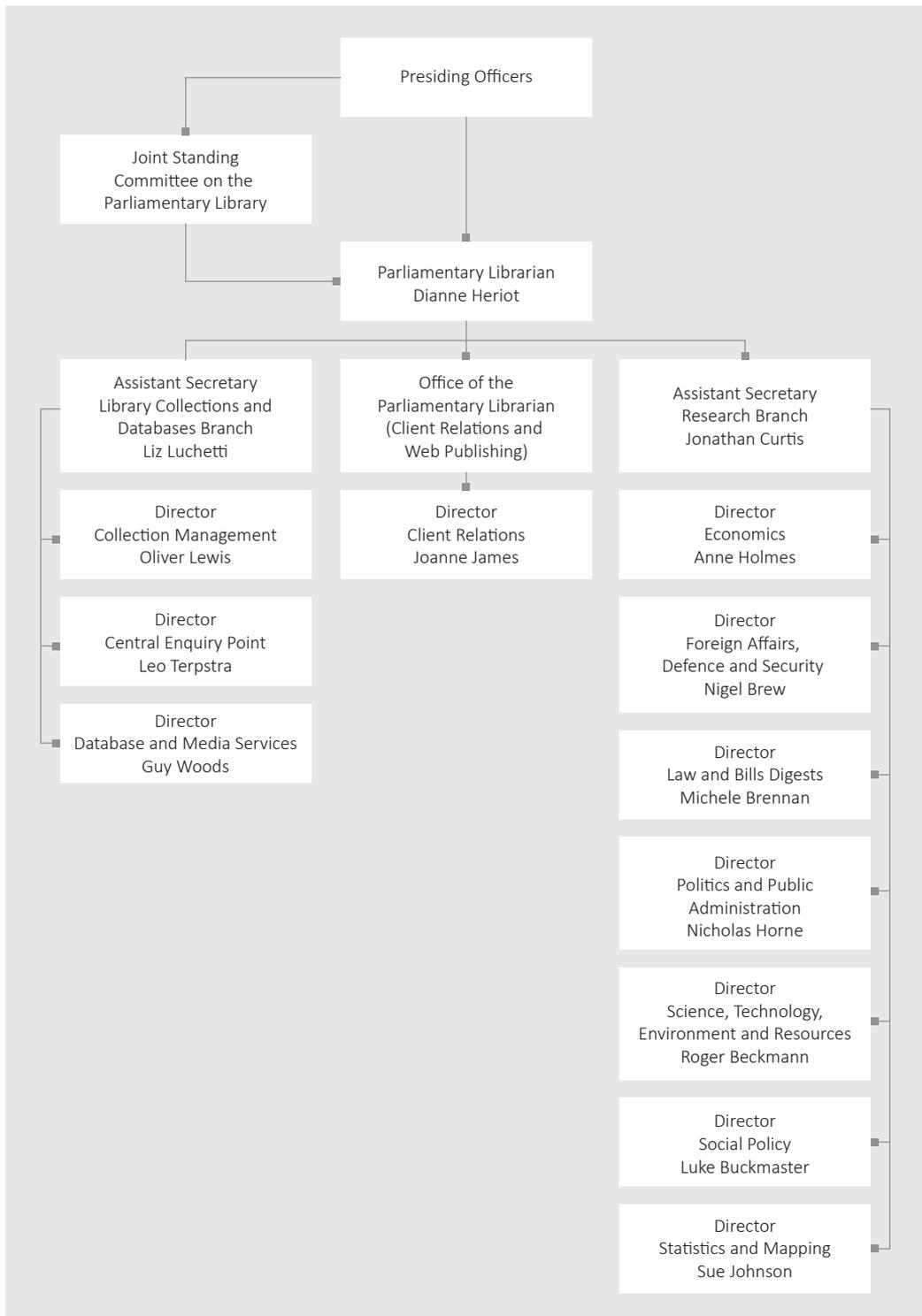
- the Office of the Parliamentary Librarian – a small unit comprising the Parliamentary Librarian, executive support officers, the Library Publishing Unit and the Director, Client Relations, who provides orientation and training services for senators, members, their staff and other parliamentary staff
- Research Branch – which provides information, research and analytical services including individually commissioned research, publications and statistical and mapping services, and
- Library Collections and Databases Branch<sup>8</sup> – which develops, and manages access to the Library's print and electronic resources. It also manages the main Library reference desk and the senators' and members' Reading Room.

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<sup>7</sup> *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* subsection 38A(2).

<sup>8</sup> Formerly Information Access Branch; the name was changed effective 1 July 2014 to better describe the nature of the services the branch provides.

Figure 6: Parliamentary Library Organisation Chart (as at 30 June 2015)



# SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## RESOURCE AGREEMENT 2014–15

To help to ensure the independence of the Library, the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* provides that the Librarian and the Secretary of DPS will make an annual Resource Agreement detailing the funds available for the Library for the ensuing year.<sup>9</sup> The Act provides that the agreement must be:

- made between the Secretary and the Parliamentary Librarian and
- approved by the Presiding Officers in writing after receiving advice about the contents of the agreement from the JSCPL.

The agreement identifies the resources provided to the Parliamentary Librarian by DPS to enable the provision of library services to clients. It also details the services provided by DPS to the Librarian. In addition, it describes the resources in terms of services provided by the Library to the rest of DPS. The agreement includes provision for a mid-term review of the Library's budget by the Librarian and the Secretary of DPS to establish whether any variation is required.

### What our clients said...



<sup>9</sup> *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* section 38G.

The 2014–15 agreement was developed in light of the DPS budget, the relationship between the Library and the rest of DPS in delivering services to clients and the *Department of Parliamentary Services Enterprise Agreement 2011–14*.

The JSCPL considered the *Resource Agreement 2014–15* at its meeting of 29 June 2014 and resolved that the Joint Chairs write to the Presiding Officers recommending the adoption of the agreement.

The Presiding Officers approved the *Resource Agreement 2014–15* on 25 June 2014.

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

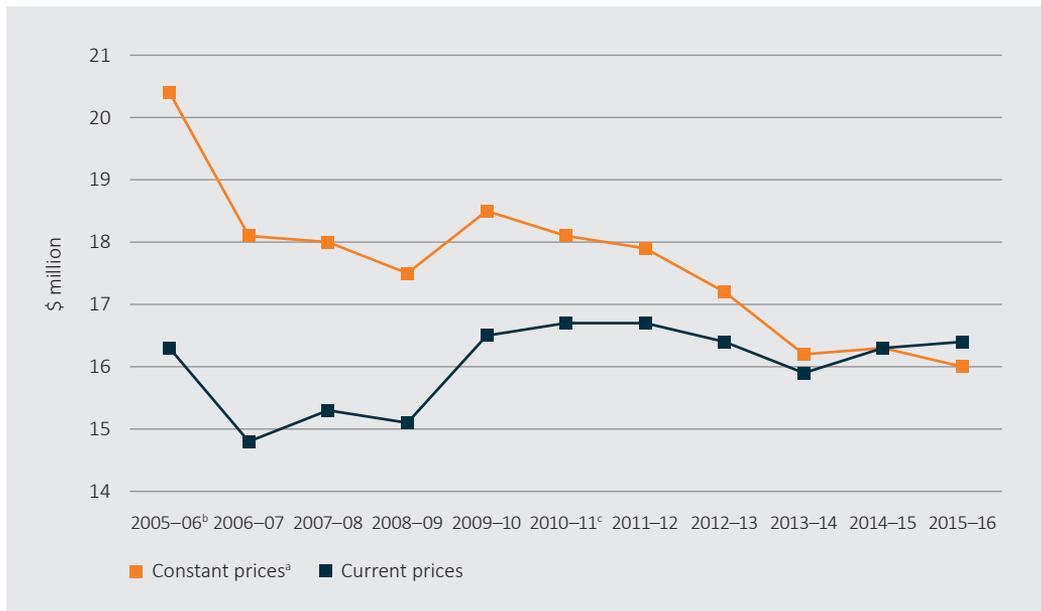
Staffing costs account for the majority of the Library's budget, with the remaining funding largely spent on the collection. The major pressures on the Library's budget in 2014–15 were increases in costs for Library collection resources (of between 7 and 10 per cent since the last financial year) and falls in the value of the Australian dollar, both of which decreased the Library's purchasing power.

The *Resource Agreement 2014–15* provided the Library an operating budget of \$16.348 million and a capital budget (used for the Library collection and minor capital projects) of \$1.240 million. A further \$0.388 million was subsequently allocated from DPS' capital works plan to enable the Library to increase the rate of digitisation of its paper and analogue tape archives.

Actual expenditure was \$15.729 million in operational funding (including capitalised salaries) and \$1.532 million in capital funding (see the detailed Financial Report at page 137).

The under-expenditure related primarily to employee costs. (The budget set out in the Resource Agreement is negotiated on the basis of an agreed staffing establishment for the Library.) After several years of budget-driven downsizing, the Library embarked upon a program of recruitment, primarily to address capacity gaps in Research Branch to enable it to better meet the need of clients, particularly in periods of peak demand. As a result, between 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015 the Library workforce increased its headcount from 132 to 139 employees and the FTE increased from 118.2 to 129.6. However, in some cases recruitment was slower than anticipated, and the nature of the job market made it difficult to fill these positions on a short term basis while recruitment processes were underway. The Library Collections and Databases Branch continued its process of rolling work reviews to improve productivity, with subsequent recruitment occurring either late in the financial year or early in 2015–16. Another factor leading to the under-spend was that the Parliamentary Librarian was acting as Secretary of DPS for the final quarter of the year.

Figure 7: Parliamentary Library appropriation for expenditure on goods and services



- a. Expressed in June 2015 prices using the Consumer Price Index. Index numbers for June 2015 and June 2016 based on Treasury forecasts.
- b. This income figure reflects the Library's budget bid, which if spent would have led to DPS making a loss in the reporting year.
- c. Does not include \$500,000 for the Pre-Election Policy Unit.

Operational funds not needed for employee costs were in large part redirected to the information resources budget. Total expenditure on the Library collection in 2014-15 was:

- information resources (including database subscriptions and news services) —\$1.970 million (operational funding)
- reference serials and monographs—\$0.611 million (capital funding), and
- digitisation \$0.800 (capital funding).

#### THE YEAR AHEAD

On 24 June 2015 the Presiding Officers approved the Parliamentary Library *Resource Agreement 2015-16*. It provides that the Parliamentary Librarian receive for 2015-16:

- operational funding of \$16.428 million, and
- capital funding of \$2 million.

It also contains a funding projection across the forward estimates to assist the Library's longer term business planning.

# ACHIEVEMENTS 2014–15

The Library’s vision is an informed Parliament supported by a Library that delivers services to meet client needs. Achievements are described against the Library’s strategic priorities.

## CREATING THE 21ST CENTURY PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY AND RESEARCH SERVICES

### THE EVALUATION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY’S SERVICES

The Library conducts a formal review of the needs of clients once in every Parliament to assist it to:

- measure satisfaction levels with library and research services
- gain insights into the use of services
- determine the direction of future information and service delivery.

#### *What our clients said...*

‘and I am grateful to the researchers of the Parliamentary Library—we are all grateful for the researchers of the Parliamentary Library—for their dispassionate, considered and objective approach to their research’

Senator Nick Xenophon, Senate, *Debates*, 22 June 2015, p.105

Following a Request for Quotation, the contract for the Library’s evaluation for the 44th Parliament was awarded to Uncommon Knowledge, a Canberra based consultancy.

Uncommon Knowledge conducted face-to-face interviews with 12 senators, 14 members, two staff of senators, the Clerk Assistants (Committees) of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and a focus group with six parliamentary department staff working with committees. This was followed by an online survey that was completed by 148 senators, members and their staff, and 67 parliamentary department staff.

In addition to the evaluation, the consultants developed a toolkit for the Library to use in the 2nd and 3rd years ahead of the next independent evaluation to enable it to gauge the ongoing satisfaction of clients.

Pleasingly, the overall response—both to Library staff and services—was very positive.

### What our clients said...

'I thank the Parliamentary Library as they are always a source of incredibly pertinent and succinct information.'

Senator Alex Gallacher, Senate, *Debates*, 4 December 2014, p.9528

The Library's success in meeting the diverse needs of senators, members and their staff is reflected in the fact that satisfaction rates remain high (93 per cent). Most considered Library staff to be hard-working, professional and friendly and our services to be of a high quality. The Library was seen to perform very well on all measures of service delivery. Importantly, 97 per cent said they would recommend the Library's services to a colleague.

This is consistent with the findings of the client evaluation of library services for the 43rd Parliament conducted in 2012. It is also consistent with the results of joint survey conducted in September 2014 by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and DPS to inform the ANAO's performance audit. (Although the number of respondents was small, that survey found that 93 per cent of respondents were very satisfied (70 per cent) or satisfied (23 per cent), with the rest neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.)<sup>10</sup>

### Signing the Parliament's Bible

In February 2015, Senator the Hon Stephen Parry, President of the Senate, participated in an important but little known piece of parliamentary tradition by signing the Parliament's Bible.

One of the most prized items in the Library's collection, the Bible was presented to the Federal Parliament in September 1919 by His Excellency the Governor-General the Rt Hon Sir Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson, GCMG. It was a gift of the British and Foreign Bible Society Victoria, as a memento of the signing of the peace 'on the termination of the World Wide War of 1914–1919'.



What makes the Bible a particular treasure is that it contains the signatures of all the Presidents and Speakers of the Parliament of Australia.

<sup>10</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Managing contracts and assets at Parliament House*, Canberra 2014, pp. 117–118. Thirty-three senators and members responded to the survey—a response rate of 15 per cent. However, only 30 responded to the questions on the Library.

Uncommon Knowledge found that satisfaction among parliamentary staff (Department of the House of Representatives, Department of the Senate and the Parliamentary Budget Office) was significantly lower (75 per cent). However, 93 per cent still indicated they would recommend the Library to a colleague.

The evaluation found that the Library was used regularly by most respondents. The research service in particular was seen as a key service; and the evaluators noted that its value-add would be difficult if not impossible to obtain from anywhere else.

News services continued to be highly used with 'sometimes, frequent and heavy' use having increased from 63 per cent in 2012 to 73 per cent. However, many senators and members interviewed did not realise that media monitoring was provided through the Library. The Library's use of new technology was commented on positively and much appreciated, particularly the extent of the online services.

The evaluation found that the great majority of clients used Google as one of their first information sources, followed by news services and Government websites. However, Library services were the most trusted source of information for senators, members and their staff and parliamentary department staff. Of these, research services were most trusted with a 'very reliable' score of 82 per cent, online resources at 63 per cent and the print collection at 57 per cent. These ranked ahead of government websites and ministerial/party resources at 35 per cent.

The Library performed well against all measures of service delivery. However, since 2012 ratings for confidentiality and impartiality had increased but ratings for quality and consistency decreased.

Use of Library publications (including Bills Digest) by senators, members and their staff was largely unchanged (89 per cent in 2015, 91 per cent in 2012). Slightly fewer parliamentary department staff used our publications (80 per cent). Most respondents spoke positively of Bills Digests and used them regularly; however, the timeliness of digests was consistently raised as an issue by committee staff (on behalf of themselves and the parliamentarians).

Three key issues emerged from the research and were raised in both the qualitative and quantitative responses.

The most significant issue was concern expressed about the variability in quality of research services.

The timeliness of the Bills Digests was raised as a concern by parliamentary department staff working for committees. When a Bills Digest was issued in time for committee discussions it was considered very valuable; when it arrived too late to inform these discussions, its value was perceived to be greatly reduced.

There was also a call for greater clarity in the way client requests were assigned and prioritised.

The evaluation report was discussed by the JSCPL at its meeting of 18 June 2015 and was also provided to the Presiding Officers. The findings were discussed at a whole of Library meeting in early July. The report will be published on the Australian Parliament House website to help ensure transparency in the Library's operations.

Responding to the recommendations arising from the evaluation is a priority in the Library's business plan for 2015–16.

## ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

The Library exists to serve the Parliament. Since its establishment in 1901, the Library has continued to evolve to meet the needs of senators and members: as their needs changed, so too did what they required of the Library. We provide 'traditional' library services such as books, journals and newspapers, as well as online media monitoring, specialist databases, ebooks and statistical and mapping services. However, many services we deliver to our clients today were not available 10 years' ago, and our suite of service offerings will continue to evolve at an increasing pace. Continued innovation is critical to the Library's future success and sustainability.

### *What our clients said...*

'I also must thank the Parliamentary Library for their fantastic research efforts'.

The Hon Jason Wood, House of Representatives, Debates, 9 February 2015, p.200

In September 2014, the JSCPL asked the Library to examine and report back on the question 'what will the Library look like in 10 years' time?' Following the meeting, the Library established a project to explore, predict and plan for the future parliamentary environment, including a group of Library staff representing the various work areas and levels of the Library.

The project examined major trends in the global, political, parliamentary and information environment and formulated a variety of strategies to ensure the Library remains relevant to Parliament, and that our clients continue to receive high quality information, analysis and advice.

The results of this project, set out in the '10-year Vision' report have fed into the Library's four-year strategic plan. As an early outcome of the project, the Library has engaged a Library Innovation Manager to liaise with other libraries, vendors, DPS ICT, and staff to identify and implement ways to better deliver our services and products.

## NEW FOUR-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2014–15 the Library developed a new multi-year strategic plan (2015–16 to 2019–20) and a business plan for 2015–16. The plans draw upon the input of Library staff (via a planning workshop), the findings of the 2015 client evaluation of Library services, and the report from the envisioning project discussed above.

### *What our clients said...*

‘Thank you and your staff for all your work’

Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Finance and Public Administration Committee, 23 February 2015 p.59

To ensure that the Library remains as relevant to the working lives of parliamentarians of today and tomorrow as it was to their predecessors, over the next four years the Library will focus on the following strategic priorities:

- retaining our position as our clients’ preferred and trusted source of high quality information, analysis and advice
- ensuring a high and consistent quality in services
- increasing digital access and service
- supporting the Parliament’s engagement with the community and the ongoing development of parliamentary democracy, and
- strengthening our staff’s capability.

The Strategic Plan also sets out the Library’s outcomes under each strategic priority and its key performance indicators (KPIs). The associated Business Plan sets out the Library’s major areas of work for 2015–16. The Strategic Plan and Business Plan were endorsed by the JSCPL at its meeting of 18 June 2014 and approved by the Presiding Officers on 24 June 2015 (as an annexure to the Resource Agreement).

The Librarian will report against these new strategic priorities and KPIs in her next annual report.

## SUMMER RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Established in 2013, the Parliamentary Library’s Summer Research Scholarship offers honours and post-graduate tertiary students the opportunity to undertake a research project at the Parliamentary Library.

### *What our clients said...*

'I do like to thank all those people in this building who make us look as good as we do and make the democracy work. The librarians—I still like to ring the library myself when I want something and I am not absolutely sure that my staff will necessarily be able to put it in the words I want it. It does sometimes surprise the librarians to hear my voice on the end of the phone, but my view is that we need to stay in touch with the people who make this place work.'

The Hon Christopher Pyne, House of Representatives, Debates, 4 December 2014, p. 14289

Scholars are able to research a subject that is relevant to the Parliament, and which is of mutual interest to both the scholars and the Parliamentary Library. Scholarship recipients undertake a six-week placement in the Library during the summer academic break. They receive access to the Library's collections and facilities, the opportunity to interact with expert librarians and researchers, mentoring for their research project, and a small honorarium. The objectives of the scholarships are to support research by a postgraduate student examining an aspect of policy, lawmaking, governance, democracy, politics or parliament, on a topic of direct relevance to the Australian Parliament to:

- further the student's research knowledge
- increase their research expertise
- contribute to scholarship on the Commonwealth Parliament and its work, and
- promote the work of the Parliamentary Library and its potential as a future employer.

Nineteen applications were received for the 2015 Summer Research Scholarship round. Following a merit-based selection process, the Parliamentary Librarian awarded scholarships to:

- Peter Burnett, a PhD candidate in the College of Law at the Australian National University, to compile a history of environmental policy objectives in Australia since 1970
- Christine Reghenzani, a PhD candidate in the School of Arts and Social Sciences at James Cook University, to examine six decades of policy change relating to women in the Australian Defence Force, and
- Scarlet Wilcock, a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales, to undertake research on welfare fraud and overpayment in Australia.

The three scholars presented work-in-progress seminars during their placements. They have also submitted research papers which are currently being reviewed with a view to publication on the Library's website later in the year.

In addition to completing research projects, the scholars participated in a series of joint events with summer scholars from Canberra cultural institutions, including visits to the National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the Australian War Memorial and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. As in previous years, the Library provided access to its collection to summer scholars from the Museum of Australian Democracy.

The Presiding Officers again graciously hosted a reception for the summer scholars from all participating institutions in the Speaker's courtyard at Parliament House.

Feedback from the 2015 scholars was highly positive, with all three commending the Library's resources and staff expertise.

The 2016 round was advertised in August 2015.

### What our clients said...

**Julie Owens**  [@JulieOwensMP](#) 

I love the [@ParLibrary](#): Career opportunity at the Parliamentary Library for a PSL6 Analyst Programmer... [fb.me/3f9dDA7E8"](#) [#auspol](#)

RETWEETS 3 FAVORITE 1

5:14 PM - 19 Nov 2014

**Julie Owens**  [@JulieOwensMP](#) · Apr 28

[@ParLibrary](#) (Fed Parliamentary Library) provides excellent balanced coverage of issues. Worth following. [#auspol](#)

**Parliament Library** [@ParLibrary](#)

Australia's anti-money laundering report card: Could do better: [bit.ly/1PQrGAs](#)

**Julie Owens**  [@JulieOwensMP](#) · 26 Aug 2014

I sound like an ad, but follow the **Parliamentary Library** for balanced updates on Parliament. IS GOOD. [ttps://twitter.com/Parllibrary](#) [#auspol](#)

## AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Library has, on behalf of the Parliament, managed the Australian Parliamentary Fellowship since 1970 to contribute to scholarship on the Parliament and its work and support to early career scholars. The Fellowship provides an opportunity for researchers to conduct research into areas of direct interest to the Parliament, including the way that Parliament and parliamentarians operate, or the way a broad issue in national politics is dealt with in Parliament. The Fellow is employed in the Research Branch of the Parliamentary Library for up to six months full-time, with provision for part-time or broken periods of employment.

In 2014–15 the Fellowship was offered for the first time in several years. Applications were open to individuals who had completed a PhD within the past three years. The Fellowship was advertised on the Australian Parliament website, as well as *Australian Policy Online* and *The Conversation*. In addition, the Parliamentary Librarian wrote to the heads of schools of politics at Australian universities. The Library received seven applications which were considered by a subcommittee of the JSCPL, comprising:

- Ms Gai Brodtmann MP
- Mr Angus Taylor MP, and
- Dr Dianne Heriot, Parliamentary Librarian.

The successful candidate was Dr Edward Scarr, whose research project is '*The 44th Parliament and the mental health of military personnel and veterans: attitudes, beliefs, intentions*'. The topic represents a broad issue in national politics that is of considerable significance and interest to parliamentarians and the community more broadly. Dr Scarr's placement continued until September 2015.

Photo 2: The 2015 Summer Scholars and the Australian Parliamentary Fellow with the Presiding Officers, February 2015



## PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

In 2011–12, the Parliamentary Librarian established an adjunct (unremunerated) position of Parliamentary Library Associate to help build and sustain relationships between the Library and individuals with demonstrated expertise in issues of interest to the Parliament. Associates sign an agreement with the Parliamentary Librarian granting access to the Library collection, in association with the preparation of research products and assistance to the Library’s research specialists.

Two Library Associates were appointed in 2014–15. One was a retired Library staff member, Ms Janet Vallee, formerly a senior researcher in the Politics and Public Administration Section. In June 2015, the Librarian appointed the first ‘external’ associate, Dr David Headon, a historian and Visiting Fellow at the Research School of Humanities and the Arts at ANU. Dr Headon will prepare a history of the private and public lives of Australia’s first seven Prime Ministers, Edmund Barton to Billy Hughes.

## PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY INTERN PROGRAMS

The Library this year trialled two intern programs—one in Research Branch and one in Library Collections and Databases Branch, with the objectives of:

- fostering relationships between the Parliamentary Library and Australian tertiary institutions
- providing interns with an opportunity to develop their skills, and
- promoting the work of the Parliamentary Library and its potential as a future employer of choice.

The Research Branch brought six legal interns into the Law and Bills Digest section, selected from the ANU and the University of Canberra law schools. Interns were required to write a research paper on an agreed topic in areas relevant to the parliamentary context.

The Library also has had three interns selected from students studying librarianship, who spent a four-week work experience placement in Library Collections and Databases. The placement offered students an opportunity to develop their skills in a well-regarded Library with highly professional and experienced staff. In turn, the Library benefited from an increase in work capacity and the next-generation skills brought by the students.

## PARTICIPATION IN THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATE PROGRAM

The Research Branch also this year hosted two officers who undertook secondments as part of the Australian Public Service Graduate Program.

One, from the Department of the Environment, had a three-month rotation in the Economics Section, while the second, from the Department of Social Services, had a

four-month placement with the Social Policy Section. The program was a success. The Library for its part benefited from the assistance of the graduates in work ranging across preparation of Bills Digests, client research and publications; and the graduates reported gaining new skills in complex research and writing as well as broadening their knowledge of Parliament. The Library looks forward to participating in the program in future years.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER TO PARLIAMENT

Parliamentarians have access to a myriad of information, far more than they have time to digest and much of it of variable quality or reliability.

The Library's role is to give senators and members easy and rapid access to information, analysis and advice by: finding the right sources; evaluating, integrating/synthesising the data; and presenting information and analysis that is timely, comprehensive and comprehensible.

## INDIVIDUAL CLIENT REQUESTS

The Library's primary clients are able to commission individualised research from the Library and to receive tailored and confidential responses by an agreed deadline. Answers may be provided in writing, as a verbal briefing, or in customised maps or graphics. The purpose of this service is to make it easier for our clients to deal effectively with the diverse range of tasks and issues which they encounter each day.

In 2014–15, Library staff responded to 12,656 such requests, providing confidential briefing papers on complex policy issues, face-to-face briefings, statistics and other research for chamber debates and speeches, and analysis and information in support of committee inquiries.

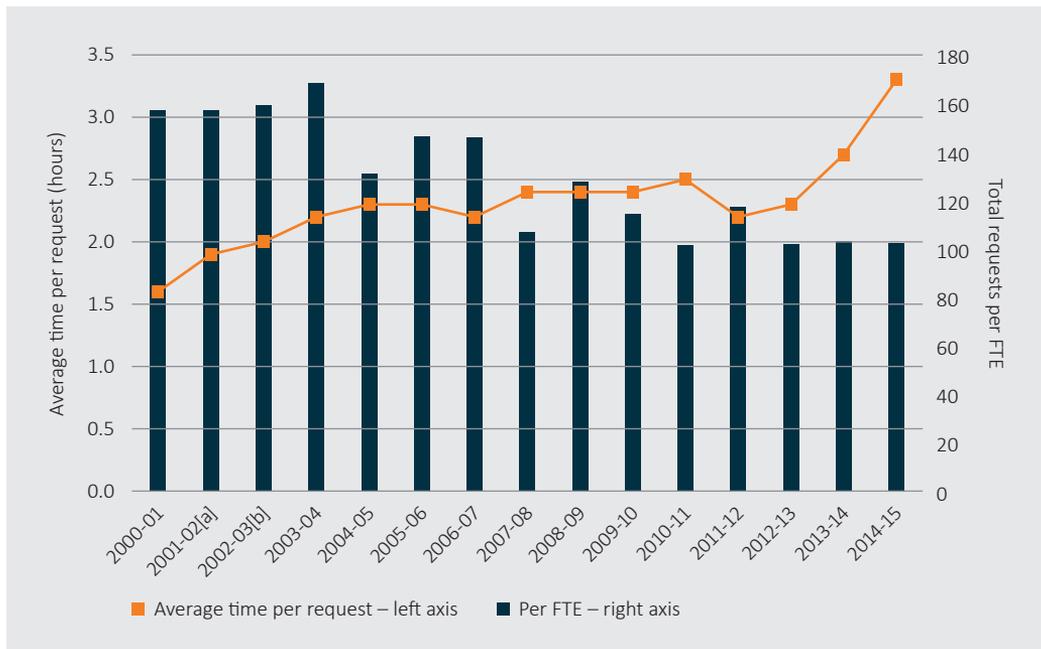
All senators and members used our services across the reporting period to a greater or lesser extent—even ministers, notwithstanding the access they enjoy to the resources of the public service.

Several trends were evident over the past financial year. Overall, there is a continuing shift towards larger and more complex research requests from clients, with an emphasis on analysis rather than simply finding information. This reflects clients' ability to use the internet for straightforward queries; as the findings of the client survey show, the Library's value to clients lies in the capacity to analyse information, assess its accuracy and contrast it critically with other sources.

A related trend is that clients increasingly seek analysis that covers both historical background to an issue, as well as international comparisons—a factor that has implications for the Library's skills profile. Perhaps more specific to this Parliament is the unusually long duration of debates associated with the 2014–15 Budget measures, which brought a long 'tail' of associated requests.



Figure 9: Client Requests – relative indicators



## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

In addition to individualised research services, each year the Library produces a range of publications for general distribution. These are not produced for academic purposes (though the Library endeavours always to maintain appropriate academic standards and rigour) but for the benefit of current parliamentarians. The publications range from short, topical blog posts to general research papers on topics judged to be of relevance and interest to clients, to Bills Digests that provide senators and members with an impartial and independent explanation and commentary on Bills as they come before the Parliament.

The Library issued 328 research publications in 2014–15 including 134 Bills Digests.

Although produced for the Library’s clients, these publications have a broader public benefit as they are published on the web and are therefore accessible to everyone.

Library publications are recognised by our clients and the community to be of high value. The 2015 client evaluation of Library services reported that 89 per cent of senators, members and their staff and 80 per cent of departmental staff make use of research publications, particularly Bills Digests. Web usage data also indicates that Library publications continue to be widely accessed (based on the number of page visits) as shown in the table below.

Table 26: Page views by publication type

Product type	Page views
Bills Digests	174,024
Other research publications	1,703,779
FlagPost blogs	1,666,610

The research papers most downloaded during the period were:

- *Chronology of same sex marriage bills introduced into the federal parliament: a quick guide*, Deirdre McKeown, 29 June 2015
- *Domestic violence in Australia: a quick guide to the issues*, Janet Phillips 26 March 2015
- *Boat arrivals in Australia since 1976*, Janet Phillips and Harriet Spinks 23 July 2013
- *Asylum seekers and refugees: what are the facts?*, Janet Phillips, 2 March 2015, and
- *The subclass 457 visa: a quick guide*, Gareth Larsen, 11 November 2013.

## WELCOMING NEW SENATORS

The 2014–15 financial year saw 12 new senators take their seats following the 2013 Federal election and the April 2014 re-run of the WA Senate election.

### What our clients said...

‘I have to say that, as a new senator coming in and having had dealings with different parts of DPS, I have certainly been very well looked after by Hansard, the library and staff in the building.’

Senator Katy Gallagher, Finance and Public Administration Committee, 25 May 2015 p.105

A further four senators were appointed to casual vacancies (including Senator O’Neil who was on 2 July appointed to the vacant position created by former Senator Bob Carr’s double resignation from the Senate, thereby having ceased to be a senator for a single day).<sup>11</sup>

Assisting new senators to settle into their parliamentary roles was a priority for Library staff. Each new senator was assigned a contact officer from within the Library to help them to become familiar with information resources we offer, and to help channel research enquiries correctly. Each new senator was also given a customised information pack which included maps and statistics relevant to their state, an example of a research paper relevant to their region or individual interests, and a guide to Library services.

<sup>11</sup> See Department of the Senate, *Procedural Information Bulletin* No. 284, 19 July 2014.

# PARLIAMENTARY HANDBOOK

The Parliamentary Library publishes a Handbook for each Parliament which has become a comprehensive reference work on the Commonwealth Parliament and the Australian political system.

The Handbook was originally developed following a request by the then Library Committee in a report to the Parliament in 1915 for:

*a Commonwealth Parliamentary Handbook, giving a short political biography of all Members of both Houses since the initiation of Federation, with portraits in most cases, particulars of every election in the same period, with other information likely to be useful.*<sup>12</sup>

The first edition of the Handbook, published later that year as the *Biographical Handbook and Record of Elections for the Parliament of the Commonwealth*, covered the period of the first six elections and Parliaments from March 1901 to September 1914. Since then a new edition has usually been published with each new Parliament and it has developed into a comprehensive reference work on many aspects of the Commonwealth Parliament, including summaries of the parliamentary service and political careers of senators and members, together with statistics and historical information on the Australian Parliament.

Since 1999, the full text of the Handbook has been available electronically, and updated regularly, on the Parliament's website and through ParlInfo Search. Online access enables the Australian community to obtain information on their local senators and members and the work of the Parliament.

The 33rd edition was launched by the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP, and the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon Stephen Parry, in November 2014. The event was hosted by the joint chairs of the JSCPL, Senator Zed Seselja and Ms Gai Brodtmann MP, in the presence of members of the JSCPL, Library staff, and a small number of invited guests. By tradition, the Presiding Officers received specially bound and embossed editions of the Handbook, which were presented at the launch.

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<sup>12</sup> Parliament of Australia, Report from the Joint Library Committee, 1915, p. 2.

Photo 3: Launch of the Parliamentary Handbook for the 44th Parliament



Left to right: Ms Gai Brotdmann MP (Joint Chair, JSCPL); the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP (Speaker of the House of Representatives); Martin Lumb, Handbook editor; Senator the Hon Stephen Parry (President of the Senate); Senator Zed Seselja (Joint Chair, JSCPL).

### What our clients said...

‘I would like to extend the delegation’s thanks to officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs and to staff of the Parliamentary Library for providing comprehensive and timely briefing materials prior to the departure of the delegation.’

The Hon Bronwyn Bishop, House of Representatives, Debates, 10 February 2015, p.303

## WHAT’S NEW AND EZINE ‘OFF THE SHELF’

The 2015 client evaluation found that the Library’s eNewsletter—*What’s New*—is clearly the preferred source of information about Library services, with around two thirds of senators, members and their staff as well as staff of parliamentary departments reporting it as their source. Responses in the qualitative phase of the research, however, suggest that while most people are aware of *What’s New*, they do not always read it or only skim the first few lines. The evaluators observed that *What’s New* would probably gain the best readership in a busy environment if it was produced often but kept brief, with contents and links to information quickly identifiable.

In December 2013, the Library commenced publishing a new 'ezine'—a magazine in electronic format—called 'Off the Shelf'. The ezine is published three times each year, corresponding to the three parliamentary sessions, and contains a range of short articles covering current issues of interest. Issue four was published in April 2015. While aiming to be interesting and relevant to our parliamentary clients, the ezine is also a response to the 2012 client satisfaction survey undertaken by Leapfrog Consultants, who found relatively low usage of research publications and recommended efforts to increase awareness of research and promote Library staff specialisations. The 2015 evaluation of Library services found low awareness of the publication among clients (3 per cent).

The Library will review both publications in 2015–16 as part of a new client communication strategy.

## BUDGET SEMINAR AND BUDGET REVIEWS

Providing information on the Budget and the budget process is one of the Library's highest priorities each year.

This year's Library seminar, Understanding the Budget, was again highly successful, with 124 pass-holders attending and latecomers finding only standing room remaining. Staff of the Economics Section spoke about the global financial outlook, the state of the Australian economy and the fiscal outlook, and issues which will affect the economy in the longer term, including the link between income inequality and social mobility and economic growth. The session also included information on budget strategy and outlook, and how to find information in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The Library produced a short tip sheet on the Commonwealth Budget papers to assist clients who were not able to attend the seminar.

### ***What our clients said...***

'I am pleased to be able to make a contribution to this debate. I want to thank the people in the Library for their Bills Digest which gives us all the information we need to be able to make a meaningful contribution.'

The Hon Warren Snowdon, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 16 July 2014, p.8244

The Parliamentary Library also produced its annual Budget Review to assist parliamentarians consider the key issues posed by the 2015–16 Budget. The Review included: a macroeconomic analysis and a summary of the headline numbers; the economic context; the Government's fiscal strategy and broader policy agenda; parliamentary scrutiny of payments to the states and territories; forecasting risks and uncertainties; and a discussion of previous measures, including those revised in the 2015–16 budget and those not yet proceeded with. The Budget briefs section

provided background information and analysis of some 60 measures proposed in this year's Budget and covered a wide range of areas across all portfolios.

As with previous Budget Reviews, this year's Review was prepared under time pressures with a view to making it available to parliamentarians as soon as possible, to help inform debates on the Budget Bills in the House of Representatives and discussions in the Senate's Budget Estimates committee hearings.

## CONNECT CLIENTS WITH INFORMATION

### GROWTH OF ONLINE RESOURCES

Parliamentarians require ready access to accurate and up-to-date information. Resources need to be as easily accessible to those in electorate offices or travelling as to those working in Parliament House. Because electronic material can be made available to clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Library's focus is on collecting material in digital format and, more recently, providing this in ways that are device-neutral.

The percentage of the Library's collection available in digital form, which allows clients to have easy access to material wherever they are located, increased from 36 per cent at the end of June 2014 to 38.2 per cent at the end of June 2015. Within the serials collection alone, the number of titles available in electronic form increased to 87.6 per cent with some 24.5 per cent of monographs being available in full text. Use of these electronic collections is highest when Parliament is sitting. This has been a consistent trend over several years.

The use of the digital collections continues to grow with a steady trend upwards during 2014–15.

## IMPROVING OUR MAPPING SERVICES

In 2014–15 the Library's mapping team printed and delivered over 700 large format maps for clients, and a similar number in Adobe PDF only format. Processes put in place in 2013–14 to create a full set of templates for individual electorate mapping paid dividends this year, vastly reducing the time taken to create the majority of individual map requests. In addition, the Library started to build a collection of pre-made national scale maps, some readily available, some original, which have proved popular with clients. We have also completed the process of digitising the complete history of electoral boundary redistributions since 1901; this resource will be incorporated into interactive mapping products during 2015–16.

Work is well underway to redevelop ParlMap, the Library's online self-service mapping system that allows users to create their own maps using census and election results. The updated version will provide access to a wider range of data, as well as an improved interface and functionality. We expect it to be available through the Library's portal in the second quarter of 2015–16.

## PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

The Library maintains a modest and carefully curated collection to meet the contemporary needs of the Parliament—such selectivity being enabled by the Parliament’s ready access to the National Library of Australia’s extensive holdings.

The Library aims to keep the collection at around 125,000 monograph titles. It has around 33,475 individual print and electronic journal titles, including those contained in the large aggregated subscription services. New material is acquired and outdated, damaged or redundant material is discarded regularly. Materials on Australian politics, legislation and constitutional matters are retained permanently.

The major part of the Library’s collection expenditure is therefore on current (and digital) sources of information: journals, reference materials and, particularly, news services. Seventy per cent of items added to the catalogue in 2014–15 were electronic resources.

During 2014–15, the Library spent \$1.97 million on information resources. Of this \$0.614 million was allocated to news services (including daily press clips, breaking news, social media monitoring, iSentia Mediaportal, Library Press Display, NewsBank, ProQuest ANZ Newstand and hard copy newspapers). In addition, capital funding of \$0.611 was spent to replace depreciating items in the collection, such as monographs and reference books. Approximately 65 per cent of the collection budget was spent on electronic resources.

The Library’s budget for information resources is intensively managed throughout the year to ensure that the collection remains relevant and focused and that Parliament gets the best value from the resources available. Library staff review usage of online databases, and consult with clients and research staff to help ascertain collection priorities and to avoid duplication. Given cost pressures on the collection budget, generally an existing resource (particularly subscriptions to online services and databases) will need to be cancelled or reduced prior to a new resource being procured.

The Library has, in recent years, increased the range of digital resources so that senators and members have access to this information regardless of time or location. This has meant reducing expenditure on print materials, especially news media, which continue to be preferred by some clients.

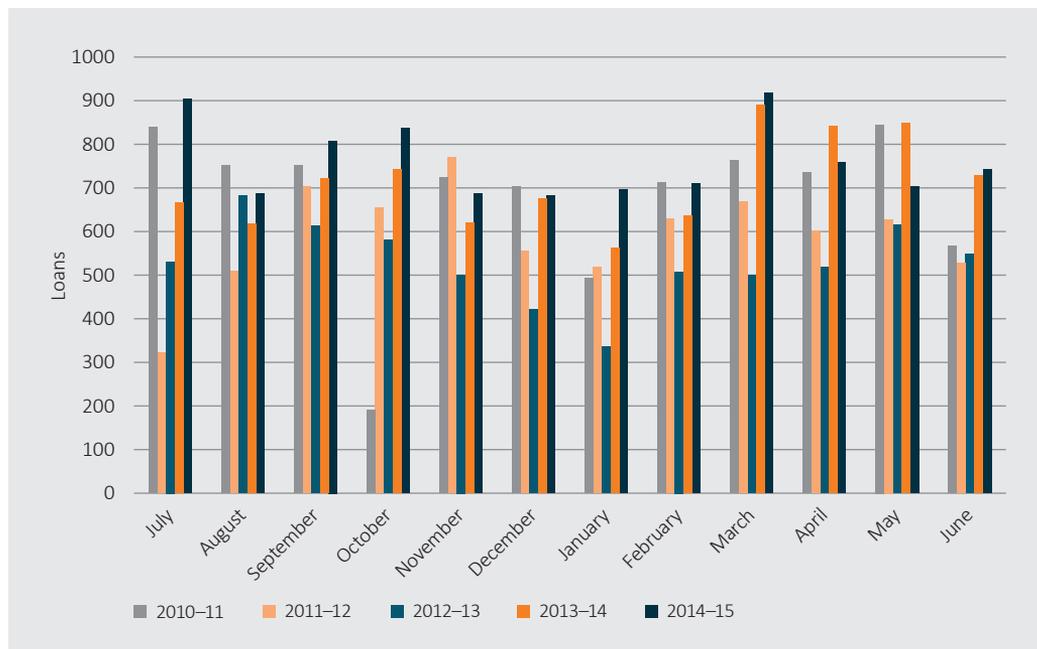
Use of the print collection also continues to increase and is at its highest level since 2010–11. (The 2015 client evaluation of Library services similarly found that use of the Library’s print collection had increased significantly—from 61 per cent in 2012 to 85 per cent in 2015.) Both point to the strengthening of the Collection Development Policy and the expertise of the Library Acquisitions team in selecting items to add to the collection. However, feedback from parliamentary staff in the 2015 evaluation of Library Services has pointed to a possible gap in collection coverage and a desire for ‘[e]xpansion of online journals and new books’. The Library will consult further on this issue in 2015–16 to identify potential gaps and how they might be able to be addressed within the collection budget.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Australian Parliamentary Library Client service evaluation 2015*, p. 25, see also p. 22.

As part of the Library’s on-going commitment to collection maintenance, an evaluation of the senators’ and members’ Reading Room was implemented in November 2014 in accordance with the Library’s Collection Development Policy (Governance Paper No. 5.3) and covered fiction and non-fiction monograph titles. Several hundred titles were weeded from the collection and several subject areas were refreshed.

Figure 10: Use of the print collection



### CONTINUITY OF SERVICE

During 2014–15 the Library began the development of a new business continuity plan (BCP) identifying the arrangements that the Parliamentary Library would put in place to maintain the continuity of its key services after a major, unexpected disruptive incident. It has been developed by drawing upon a range of better practice guides and the Australian National Audit Office’s *Business Continuity Management: building resilience in public sector entities*. The plan will be finalised early in the 2015–16 financial year.

The need for developing and maintaining this BCP arises from the DPS Risk Management Policy and Framework and the DPS Business Continuity Policy and Framework. The importance of such arrangements was highlighted during the reporting period when a major vendor system failure significantly affected the Library’s media monitoring services.

The Library also developed a disaster recovery plan for the collection, setting out policies and procedures to help prevent, prepare for and respond to disaster events.

The Library is committed to ensuring the continuity of Library services to support the operation of the Australian Parliament through business continuity management, risk management and good governance practices.

## DIGITISATION

Digitisation of material in the Library's collection, both contemporary and historic collections, remains a priority.

### NEWS ARCHIVES

The Parliamentary Library has been compiling information files from newspaper clippings, press releases and journal articles since the 1950s. These days this is done digitally with the aid of an automated system. The Library also has a digitisation team that processes press releases and journal articles for its databases.

However, the Library still has significant archives of paper and pre-digital audio-visual material that constitute a unique collection relating to Australia's political and public policy history dating from the 1940s and 1950s. The bulk of this material dates from 1969 when the Library established a Current Information Section to provide senators and members with ready access to current material on practically every matter of interest to the Parliament. Clippings from Australian and overseas newspapers and journals, press releases, bibliographies, parliamentary speeches and questions formed comprehensive subject files. Separate files were produced for each senator and member with their speeches and questions indexed chronologically, as well as a separate series of files for each ministry.

By the time this service was replaced by digital clipping and indexing systems in 1999, the Library had amassed some 2,100 linear metres of subject and member files—a unique national resource which is still used by clients and Library staff. There still remain some 10 million pages of hardcopy information files, stored within two kilometres of shelving.

In order to improve access and to ensure this resource is preserved for future generations of parliamentarians, the Library has begun digitising the contents of the print based information files. The Library digitised two million pages (at a cost of \$490,000 in capital funding) in 2014–15.

The Library aims to digitise a further two million pages in 2015–16.

In 1975, the Library also began to monitor, record and transcribe radio and television news and current affairs programs. The Library's collection of pre-2004 audio-cassette tapes and audio-visual tapes amounts to 55,000 hours of video footage and 38,000 hours of audio recordings. In many cases these are unique holdings as the television stations that originally produced them no longer archive them.

### What our clients said...

‘Members, I would just like to add a few words of thanks to all those who make this place run....We have the committee office and committee secretaries and their staff, the research services of members, the Library and the Parliamentary Budget Office—all indispensable to the work we do.’

The Hon Bronwyn Bishop, MP, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 December 2014, p.14242

During 2014–15, the Electronic Media Monitoring Service (EMMS) also commenced digitising ABC analogue content dating from 1990. This project was funded from the 2014–15 DPS capital program (that is, funding additional to that provided in the Resource Agreement). To date over 1,200 hours of content has been digitised. The Library plans to escalate this project next financial year with the aim of digitising a further 5,000 hours of analogue content.

### ‘CONDOLENCE PACKS’

For many years the Library has produced a biographical information pack upon the deaths of former senators and members. These packs contain resources such as a first speech, key articles and chronologies and are useful aid to senators and members preparing condolence speeches. The packs have been produced since the mid–1990s. Until recently they were only available in hardcopy and had to be picked up or ordered from the Library.

However, in 2014–15 the Library began to make these packs digitally available in ParlInfo Search (with access limited to parliamentary clients for reasons of copyright). The first digital pack was for the former Minister for Finance, Peter Walsh. In addition to making any new packs digitally available, during 2015–16 the Library will digitise its historical collection of condolence packs.

### SURFING THE INFORMATION WAVE—LIBRARY ‘DROP IN’ CENTRE IN THE SENATORS’ AND MEMBERS’ READING ROOM.

To bring its staff and its services closer to clients, the Library began conducting occasional morning and evening drop in centres in the senators’ and members’ Reading Room during sitting weeks. The sessions provided an opportunity for Library clients to drop in and learn about Library services and see products and services in action. Library research specialists also walked clients through some of the Parliamentary Library’s specialist publications, gave briefings on key issues and answered questions. The sessions also focussed on clients getting the most from their mobile devices as well as using the Library’s specialised media, mapping and statistics tools. The Library will continue to hold these sessions during 2015–16.

### *What our clients said...*

‘I have been trying to get some information from the Parliamentary Library about this, and they have been incredibly fantastic’.

Senator Sam Dastyari, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, 6 June 2015, p.52

## SUPPORT THE PARLIAMENT’S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY AND DEMOCRACY

### TROVE

During 2014–15, the Parliamentary Library worked with the National Library of Australia (NLA) to expand Australian political history coverage in Trove. ([Trove](#) is an online discovery service developed by the NLA that covers Australian content from the NLA, the National Archives of Australia, state and territory libraries, galleries and museums, and over 1,000 other libraries around Australia.)

### *What our clients said...*

‘I would like to acknowledge and thank all of those people who have helped inform this inquiry. In particular ... the Parliamentary Library and the Parliamentary Budget Office for their efficient professionalism’

Ms Kelly O’Dwyer, Standing Committee on Economics, 27 November 2014, p.13432

For many years the Parliamentary Library has been collecting and digitising press releases issued by federal politicians. To enhance public access to this collection, the Library has allowed [Trove](#) to harvest this information from its databases. The bulk of the collection comprises releases from the 1990s to the present day. However, there are a number of earlier documents, including Sir Henry Parkes’ famous [Tenterfield address](#) and [Robert Menzies’](#) 1945 speech on international affairs (featuring his analyses of responses to Hitler’s announcement that he would re-militarise Germany). Over 200,000 press releases and transcripts of more than 13,000 broadcast news and current affairs programs from the Library’s collections are now available via Trove, including a 1975 ABC AM interview with Gough Whitlam and Vincent Lingiari on the handover of part of [Wave Hill Cattle Station](#).

In May 2015, the Library also agreed to the NLA regularly harvesting senators’ and members’ biographies from its Parliamentary Handbook data base for inclusion in Trove.

While all of these documents were already available to the public through the Parliament’s own website, inclusion in Trove will make them much more readily accessible. (In 2013–14, Trove had more than 131,000 registered users and averaged

66,000 visitors each day.)<sup>14</sup> The records are updated in Trove three times per week so new releases are readily available.

## PARLIAMENT SHOP

Since July 2014, the Library has been responsible for selecting and recommending politically themed book titles within the Shop. The Library’s acquisitions team has recommended over 190 titles during this period, and the initiative has proved successful. By utilising the Library’s extensive acquisitions expertise, the Shop’s staff have been able to capture relevant titles in a timely and effective manner. The aim is for the Shop to be recognised as a primary source for politically themed books throughout Australia, and this initiative has greatly assisted them in achieving this goal.

## WORLD WAR I CENTENARY

Around the world, individuals, community organisations and institutions are commemorating the centenary of the First World War. As its contribution, the Parliamentary Library is featuring a program of publications and lectures which will appear over the next four years under the title *‘A deadly and often doubtful struggle’: Parliament, War and Empire*. The focus of the program is the profound influence that the war had in shaping the Australian nation and its institutions of government.



### What our clients said...

‘Thanks of course to the Department of Parliamentary Services, especially the Parliamentary Library’  
 Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy, Senate, Debates 4 December 2014, p.10376

In addition to the annual updating of the Anzac Day Kit (*Anzac Day 2015* by David Watt), four publications in this series were released in 2014–15:

<sup>14</sup> National Library of Australia, *Annual Report 2013–14* p63.

- *'To the last man—Australia's entry to war in 1914* (Jonathan Curtis)
- *Commonwealth Members of Parliament who have served in war: Colonial Wars and the First World War* (Nathan Church, Hannah Gobbett, Martin Lumb and Rob Lundie)
- *Commonwealth Parliament 1901 to World War I* (Rob Lundie and Joy McCann), and
- *Index of Victoria Cross recipients by electorate* (update, Nathan Church).

In August 2014 Dr David Stevens, Director Strategic and Historical Studies, Sea Power Centre, presented a Parliamentary Library lecture, 'A small navy in a Great War'. (The lecture may be viewed from the link on the [APH webpage](#)).

As a companion to its research paper, the Library has also developed an exhibition entitled *Members who Served*, commemorating the 199 members of the Australian Parliament identified as having served in the First World War. The exhibition features 16 of these men who were also members of Parliament during the war years, including nine who served in Parliament while at the same time being engaged in war service. The exhibition is expected to be launched in November 2015.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES IN AUSTRALIA AND BEYOND

The Library is committed to supporting parliamentary libraries in the region, particularly in Pacific countries and in emerging democracies.

### REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

#### *Pacific Parliamentary Scholars*

In 2014–15, the Parliamentary Library again participated in the Pacific Parliamentary Scholarships Scheme, which is part of the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships initiative funded under the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Initiative (2012–22).

The Scholarships are offered to staff of Pacific parliaments interested in developing their research skills, and working with women parliamentarians on a gender equality issue of relevance in their country. In November 2014, the Library was pleased to host three scholars:

- Sally Itaea from the Parliament of Kiribati whose research focused on the 'Economic empowerment of women in Kiribati to raise their economic and social status'
- Silivia 'Atiola from the Legislative Assembly of Tonga whose project was to look at 'Advancing domestic violence victims' access to justice in Tonga', and
- Deborah Kanu from Papua New Guinea who explored the 'Creation of a Gender Office at Parliament House' PNG.

Sally Itaea, whose project was carried out on behalf Kiribati MPs, Minister Maere Tekanene and the Hon Rerero Eria, also visited the ACT Legislative Assembly (twinned with Kiribati).

Silvia 'Atiola spent time in both the Australian Parliamentary Library and the South Australian Parliament (twinned with Tonga) to explore Australian federal and state responses to domestic violence. The Parliamentary Library appreciates the generous participation of the Attorney-General's Department, the Australian Institute of Family Studies, the Family Court of Australia, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, and Relationships Australia in Ms 'Atiola's study program.

In addition to her work with Parliamentary Library staff, Deborah Kanu met with academics at the Australian National University and met with the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP, and Senator Claire Moore to discuss her ideas.

All three presented their papers to an appreciative audience of parliamentary staff on their final day and said how much they enjoyed their time at Australia's Parliament House.

The Library anticipates hosting further Pacific Parliamentary scholars in 2015–16.

#### Photo 4: The 2014 Pacific Parliamentary Scholars



Left to Right: Deborah Kanu, Sally Itaea and Silvia 'Atiola in the Parliamentary Library

## GENDER EQUITY PROJECT

The Parliamentary Library also worked with the Pacific Women's Partnership Program (PWPP) secretariat to help develop a learning program to provide greater understanding of equity in Pacific parliaments. (The Pacific region has the lowest percentage of female parliamentarians globally, and some nations have consistently had no women members of parliament.)

In February 2015, Library researcher Dr Joy McCann participated in a workshop with Dame Carol Kidu from Papua New Guinea to draft booklets for five modules on: culture and leadership; politics and parliament; parliamentary procedure; making equality work; and a political survival kit. The kit was the subject of discussion and critique by participants at a plenary session on the last day of a PWPP forum hosted by the Fiji Parliament in May 2015. The forum, coordinated by the Australian Parliament, included 63 parliamentarians and participants from 15 Pacific jurisdictions. Recommendations arising from this session will be incorporated in the draft and the revised version will be further reviewed at a Parliamentary Educators' Conference to be held in New Zealand in October 2015. To assist the project, Dr McCann compiled a 'virtual library' of key reports and research papers relating to gender equality in Pacific parliaments. Such electronic resources are important as some of the Pacific parliamentary staff have limited or no access to the internet. Once the Learning Program is completed, the Library will provide a similar resource to each of the Clerks of the Pacific parliaments to assist them in implementing the Learning Program.

### OTHER REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

In August 2014, the Parliamentary Librarian participated in the General Assembly and Annual Congress of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and its Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section pre-conference in France. IFLA is the leading international body for library and information services and its 'Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section' brings together specialist legislative information services from around the world. As well as delivering a paper at the pre-conference, the Librarian helped deliver a training workshop for legislative libraries and research services. In May 2015, the Librarian was re-elected to the Standing Committee administering the Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section of IFLA. This will help ensure that IFLA activities remain relevant to parliamentary libraries in Australia and in the broader region.

The Parliamentary Librarian was elected as the President of the Association of Parliamentary Librarians of Asia and the Pacific (APLAP) at the Association's 2013 business meeting. In support of this role, the Library worked with APLAP's Executive to build an APLAP website to bring together for the first time all of the Association's resources and papers in one place. It, together with a closed Facebook page, serves as a communication hub for parliamentary libraries across the Asia-Pacific region. The website was launched in June 2014 and the Facebook group in September 2015.

The Library will host an APLAP meeting and training workshop in December 2015.

## OTHER

The Library continues to be an active member of the Australian Government Libraries Information Network (AGLIN) which represents and supports the interests of its members in the delivery of information services to Australian Government organisations. Guy Woods, Director Database Services, served on the AGLIN Executive for part of 2014–15.

The Library also remains active in the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Australasia (APLA), a collaborative network of federal and state parliamentary libraries in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Guy Woods presented two papers at APLA's annual conference in Brisbane in July 2014.

In October 2014, the Library hosted a delegation of staff from the NSW Parliamentary Library who were exploring options for implementing an automated press clipping service for the NSW Parliament.

During the year, Library staff presented to parliamentary delegations from: Bahrain, Bougainville, Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Kenya, Myanmar and Papua New Guinea. Library staff also met with a delegation from the Fudan University in China and the Korean Copyright Commission.

Recognising the importance of supporting the development of professional skills in the library community, the Library once again hosted a group of 32 library students from Charles Sturt University.

## USE TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT BETTER SERVICES

### THE NEW ONLINE PARLIAMENTARY HANDBOOK PROJECT

This year, the Library has been engaged on a body of work that will significantly improve our ability to rapidly deliver information about the Parliament, parliamentarians, and their service.

The first stage of this project involved taking a diverse range of information sources, including from printed papers and a diverse set of databases, and turning them into a consistent machine readable digital format. Interestingly, this exercise revealed a significant number of inconsistencies between published sources which led us to verify and cross check the information with other institutions including the Australian Electoral Commission, and the Senate and House of Representatives.

The second stage uses this information and ties it into a single searchable system that includes:

- Personal information—date of birth, place of birth, age, death, honorifics and postnominals, history of electoral service, party representation, electorates/states, events (election, by-election, casual vacancy) educational qualifications, occupations, military service and digital photographs

- Parliamentary service—ministerial and shadow positions, parliamentary positions (speaker, president etc.) and committee memberships, and
- Electorate profiles—electorate representation history, electorate boundaries 1901–1989 and associated elector counts, redistribution dates, electorate profile histories, election results and maps of electorates.

This work will bring benefits for both the Library and our clients.

For the Library, it means we have a ‘single point of truth’ for information. With an integrated system, when changes occur we only need to update the information once, rather than across numerous special-purpose databases.

For our clients, as the project unfolds and incorporates other data, it will be possible to link all the various types of information relating to the history and operations of the Parliament, enabling easier searches and analysis—work that until now often required time-consuming manual searches and counts.

Stages one and two are largely complete. The third and final aspect of the project will build on these information foundations and involve the release of a new digital version of the Parliamentary Handbook. The Handbook, as well as being published in book-form once every Parliament, is already available on the Parliament’s website. However, the new version will provide major improvements in functionality, including a version optimised for use on mobile devices, as well as the capacity for easy and customisable searches across the new range of information sources covering from 1901 to the present.

## NEWS SERVICES

The Parliamentary Library has been monitoring the content of the major national and metropolitan newspapers for over 60 years. In 2014 this service was expanded (via the iSentia Mediportal) to cover national, metropolitan and regional newspapers, online news, regional radio and TV news broadcasts. Using the Mediportal, senators and members can now search for content and set up alerts covering local and national media outlets. Access to such a comprehensive range of regional press was particularly important and addressed a long-standing gap in the Library’s services.

The Mediportal has proved to be extremely popular with senators and members. Almost 80 per cent of offices have at least one logon for the service, and these users have created over 720 alerts.

### *Improving digital access*

In May 2015, the Parliamentary Library announced the inclusion of several of our news services on the Web@Work browser. Clients can now access the senators’ news clips of the day, the members’ news clips of the day and the breaking news feed on their mobile devices, without the need to be connected to the Parliamentary Computing Network (PCN). The Library will continue to work with DPS ICT to deliver more Library services via the Web@Work browser.

The Library has been endeavouring throughout the year to negotiate agreements that enable clients to access paywall news content from the major Australian dailies. This has proved challenging given the immaturity of the market and the fact that vendors were slow to develop appropriate corporate licences. In 2014 News Limited introduced institutional licensing arrangements for libraries; and since July 2014 the Parliamentary Library has been able to offer each senator and member a corporate subscription which provides digital access to *The Australian* and *Business Spectator*.

### ***Broadcast news***

The Parliamentary Library's Electronic Media Monitoring Service (EMMS) has been monitoring radio and television broadcasts in Canberra for 25 years. For broadcasts outside of Canberra, the EMMS team previously relied on the assistance of their colleagues in the state parliamentary libraries.

This year the service has expanded its reach to cover radio broadcasts across the country. Through the VAST (Viewer Access Satellite Television) service, it now covers the main ABC FM radio stations in the state and territory capital cities. For coverage of radio broadcasts outside the capital cities, the Library has negotiated an agreement with the Fairfax Radio Monitoring service. With this agreement EMMS can monitor and archive radio programs from anywhere in Australia an hour after they have been broadcast.

The Library's suite of news services now includes:

- senators' news clips of the day, and the equivalent members' news clips of the day
- an Electronic Media Monitoring Service (EMMS)
- newspaper clippings in ParInfo Search
- newspaper clippings from national, metropolitan and regional newspapers through the iSentia MediaPortal
- regional radio and television news broadcasting through the iSentia MediaPortal
- a breaking news service
- a social media monitoring service, and
- digital access to *The Australian*, *Business Spectator*, *Crikey* and the *New York Times*.

The Library also subscribes to news service databases providing current and archival full text searchable articles from Australian and International sources, including:

- ProQuest ANZ Newstand
- Library Press Display (Press Reader), and
- NewsBank.

### USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY

Wherever possible, the Library employs the latest technological innovations to improve productivity and service delivery. An excellent example of this was the introduction of an automated selection and indexing system for the Library's newspaper clippings database in 2010.

The Library processes and indexes around 10,000 newspaper clippings a month and these clippings account for around 85 per cent of content added to the Library's databases and 95 per cent of the content that is indexed.

Since the introduction of the automated system in 2010, the Library has been able to provide access to the latest newspaper clippings by 7.30am seven days a week. Recent figures demonstrate that the introduction of LAST (Library Authoring System and Thesaurus) has resulted in almost a 50 per cent reduction in time spent selecting items for the database, and a 30 per cent reduction in the time spent indexing. Overall there has been almost a 40 per cent reduction in the time spent providing content for this database. We have also seen a significant increase in the selection and indexing rates. The selection rate has increased by 59 per cent, the indexing rate by 18 per cent and the overall rate by 32 per cent.

The newspaper clippings database remains one of the most frequently selected databases. In 2014–15 it was selected 286,770 times.

### *Thesaurus Review*

The Parliamentary Library indexes articles for its ParInfo Search databases using subject terms from the Parliamentary Library thesaurus. The thesaurus has been designed to provide a consistent and controlled language around subjects of interest to the Parliament. Using these subject terms users can retrieve articles on the subject they are interested in regardless of the different words used by the journalists and authors writing on that subject.

The thesaurus was created in 1989. In that time it has grown and the way it is used has changed. In 2010 the thesaurus was incorporated into an automatic indexing system which is used to assign subject terms for the newspaper clippings database as they are published into ParInfo Search. With 19,156 subject headings the system and users struggle to find the appropriate terms.

In February 2015 the Library commenced the first systematic review of the thesaurus in its 26-year history. The aim of the review is to reduce the number of subject terms and simplify the thesaurus structure. This will help the end user more easily identify appropriate terms for retrieval. It will also improve the effectiveness of the computer assisted indexing of newspaper clippings.

Of those areas of the thesaurus that have been reviewed to date the reduction of terms is between 37 to 75 per cent. For example, the Education hierarchy originally contained 407 terms, and with the advice of the subject researcher, was reduced to 256 subject headings, a 37 per cent reduction.

## WORKFORCE ISSUES

*Since 30 June 2014, the Library workforce:*

- increased in headcount from 132 to 139 employees and in FTE from 118.2 to 129.6
- reduced its permanent workforce from 90 per cent of total staff positions to 83 per cent, and
- decreased its average age from 47 years to 46 years.

At 30 June 2015, the Library had a head count of 139 employees (FTE 129.6):

- Office of the Parliamentary Librarian—9
- Collections and Databases Branch—42, and
- Research Branch—88.

### SEPARATIONS

Thirty-three staff left the Library in 2014–15, a separation rate of 24 per cent. Of these, 13 were ongoing employees (39 per cent); and the rest were non-ongoing staff, including those engaged on a casual basis to cover peak periods of client demand.

The reasons for separation during 2014–15 were:

- end of contract (16 staff)
- resignation (10 staff – 6 ongoing and 4 non-ongoing staff)
- voluntary retrenchment (3 staff)
- age retirement (2 staff), and
- permanent transfer and invalidity retirement (1 staff member in each category).

The 2014–15 separation rate for ongoing Library staff was 11 per cent, a slight increase compared with the previous financial year.

At 30 June 2015, the non-ongoing workforce made up 17 per cent of the total Library workforce, an increase from 10 per cent as at 30 June 2014.

Non-ongoing staff have been engaged for a variety of reasons.

Some are backfilling the positions of staff who took extended leave (including maternity and long- service leave and extended sick leave).

To the extent possible, the Library also engaged non-ongoing staff and sessional staff to bolster staff numbers in periods of peak demand and while recruitment processes were underway. This was again made difficult by the nature of the Canberra job market, with both individuals and agencies reluctant to pursue or enable short-term appointments. However, the availability of such a ‘surge capacity’ is important to enable us to meet client demand at peak periods. In 2015–16 the Library will be refreshing its temporary employment register regularly to facilitate this.

Finally, to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to redirect resources according to business needs as new areas of interest to the Parliament emerge, a small number of positions across the Library were filled on a fixed term basis (one or two years).

Table 27: Staff separation summary—1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015

Separation method	Section	Non-ongoing	Ongoing	Total
Age Retirement	Library Collections and Databases		2	2
End of contract/End of temporary transfer	Library Collections and Databases	2		2
	Research Branch	13		13
	Office of Parliamentary Librarian	1		1
Invalidity retirement	Office of the Parliamentary Librarian		1	1
Permanent transfer	Library Collections and Databases		1	1
Resignation	Library Collections and Databases		1	1
	Research Branch	4	5	9
Voluntary retrenchment (Vol Ret Excess EA279 (b))	Parliamentary Library		3	3
Total		20	13	33

## RECRUITMENT

In the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, there were 43 new external employees hired of whom eight were ongoing and 35 were non-ongoing.

- Research Branch employed 32 new employees: five ongoing employees (three PEL1, PEL2 and PSL 4/5) and 27 non-ongoing employees. These commencements were across the branch with Economics and Social Policy each recruiting six new employees, Laws & Bills Digests recruiting five new employees, and Statistics & Mapping and Foreign Affairs, Defence & Security each recruiting four new employees.
- Library Collections and Databases Branch employed eight new employees: three ongoing (PSL 6, PSL 5, and PSL 2) and five non-ongoing employees (PSL6, two PSL4 and two PSL2). Two of the five non-ongoing employees initially engaged on temporary employment contracts were later successful applicants in permanent positions.
- The Office of the Parliamentary Librarian employed three new non-ongoing employees (two PSL 5 to bolster our digital publishing capacity and one part time PSL 1 to assist with administration).

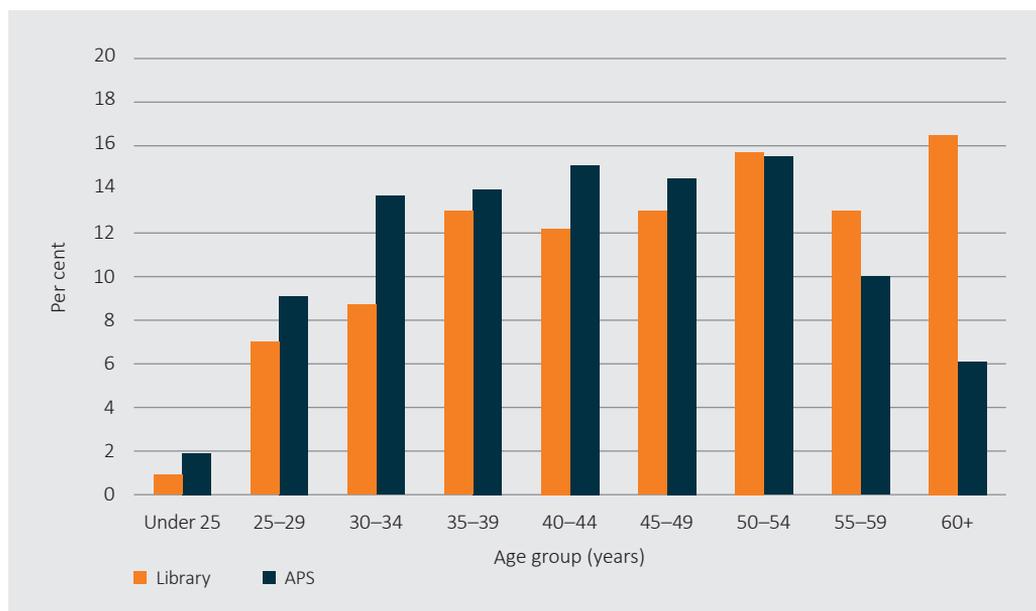
## AGE PROFILE

As at 30 June 2015, 30 per cent of the Library’s ongoing staff were eligible to retire (that is, aged 55 years and over). A further 29 per cent will become eligible for retirement over the next 10 years. This potentially exposes the Library to a significant loss of corporate knowledge and expertise within a short period of time. However, this is not a new issue. In fact the Library’s ageing workforce rate has slowed over recent years. The proportion of staff under the age of 45 has increased to 42 per cent as at 30 June 2015 from 36 per cent as at 30 June 2014. In 2007, staff aged 45 years and older accounted for 71 per cent of the Library’s workforce.<sup>15</sup> At June 2015, the total ongoing workforce who may retire in the next five years was 45 per cent—down from

<sup>15</sup> Department of Parliamentary Services Annual Report and Financial Statements 2008–09, p.41

50 per cent in 2014. However, as shown in the following graph, the Library's age profile remains much older than that for the Australian Public Service.

Figure 11: Age Profile for Parliamentary Library and APS



ABS data is at December 2014.

Source: <http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/parliamentary/aps-statistical-bulletin/snapshots-december-2014>

## PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Parliamentary Library aims to provide an effective knowledge centre for the Parliament through the provision of information, analysis and advice. These services are provided through two programs:

- research services—these services include responding to requests from individual parliamentary clients for information and research, and the production of print and electronic publications.
- library collections and databases—information services are provided to the Library's clients by acquiring and providing access to information resources, through the selection, processing and indexing of material for library and media databases in ParlInfo Search.

Staff from the Office of the Parliamentary Librarian contribute to the work of both programs.

Performance is assessed using indicators that cover quality, quantity and price. Indicators, performance results and relevant comments are shown against each of the Library programs.

The Library uses the RefTracker Information Request Management System to manage client requests and other client related work. This records, among other things, the number of requests/publications and the time spent on them. The time attributed reflects only the direct time spent on each. However, the ability to provide effective and timely delivery of publications or commissioned services is underpinned by the time Library staff spend in building and maintaining their professional expertise across a range of frequently changing subject domains. In addition, comparisons of the number of jobs and hours across financial years should be made with regard to associated changes in staffing levels from year to year.

## RESEARCH SERVICES

The services contributing to this program are as follows:

- Commissioned information, research and advisory services—these are tailored responses prepared following requests from individual senators, members and their staff, and other parliamentary clients.
- Research publications (publications)—these are prepared where strong client demand is anticipated for briefing on specific policy issues. Publications include the *Parliamentary Handbook*, *Briefing Book*, *Budget Review*, Bills Digests, Research Papers, Quick Guides and FlagPost blog posts. Publications are generally available to clients and the public, through the Internet.

Table 28: Research services—deliverables

Deliverable	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Individual client requests</b>	Percentage of primary clients using the service target: 100%	98.6%	97.41%	100%
	Number of individual client requests target: 13,000	12,957	12,507	12,656
<b>Self-service requests</b>	Number of online uses of the Parliamentary Library's publications, including the Parliamentary Handbook, through ParlInfo and the Internet target: 5,400,000	5.3m	8.04m <sup>1</sup>	9.14m
<b>Publications</b>	Number of publications produced target: 260	421	350	328
<b>Client training and seminars</b>	Attendance at training courses and events (e.g. Vital Issues Seminars) target: 500	601	641	418

1 In 2013–14 the self-service requests statistic was expanded to include ParlMap

The following table illustrates the costs associated with providing research services.

Table 29: Research services—Price indicators

Deliverable	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Cost of research services</b>	Average cost per individual client request	\$483	\$408.74	\$500.87
	Average direct cost per self-service client request (staff time only)	N/A	\$0.14	\$0.11

### CLIENT REQUESTS

During 2014–15, 100 per cent of the Library’s primary clients (senators’ and members’ offices, including ministers’ offices) used the client request service at least once.

The Library will continue to monitor usage closely in the 44th Parliament and consult with clients to ensure services are appropriately targeted.

The number of client requests increased slightly compared to the previous financial year.

### PUBLICATIONS

In 2014–15, the Library produced 328 publications. This included 98 FlagPost blog posts and 56 research papers.

Of all Library publications, the most heavily used, and eagerly awaited, are Bills Digests. These provide an independent perspective on, and analysis of, legislation which is before the Parliament. Every effort is made to produce a Digest for every Bill where it is considered a Digest would add value by providing:

- independent analysis, background information and additional perspectives not provided in the explanatory material associated with the Bill, and
- information that is important for parliamentarians to be able to contribute effectively to debate.

Bills Digests are primarily written for Government Bills but may also be written for Private senators’ and members’ Bills where there is a reasonable prospect of the Bill being debated. A Digest may not be produced where the Bill is non-controversial or not complex and where the explanatory memorandum and second reading speech give a balanced view of the Bill and any underlying policy issues. Where there is a suite of Bills introduced into Parliament, generally only one Bills Digest will be produced for the main Bill (where appropriate this Bills Digest will address relevant provisions of the companion Bills). Finally, production of Digests may be affected by internal resource constraints.

At times a Bills Digest cannot be produced in time for the deadline for debate in the second chamber. This may be due to the amount of time allowed between introduction and debate, a change in the legislative program, or the resources available to address the number and complexity of Bills in the legislative program. Where it is not possible to produce Digests in time for debates, every effort is made to support clients by providing draft Digests or other briefing material.

The Library published 134 Bills Digests in 2014–15. One of these related to a Private Members’ Bill (the Parliamentary Service Amendment Bill 2014).

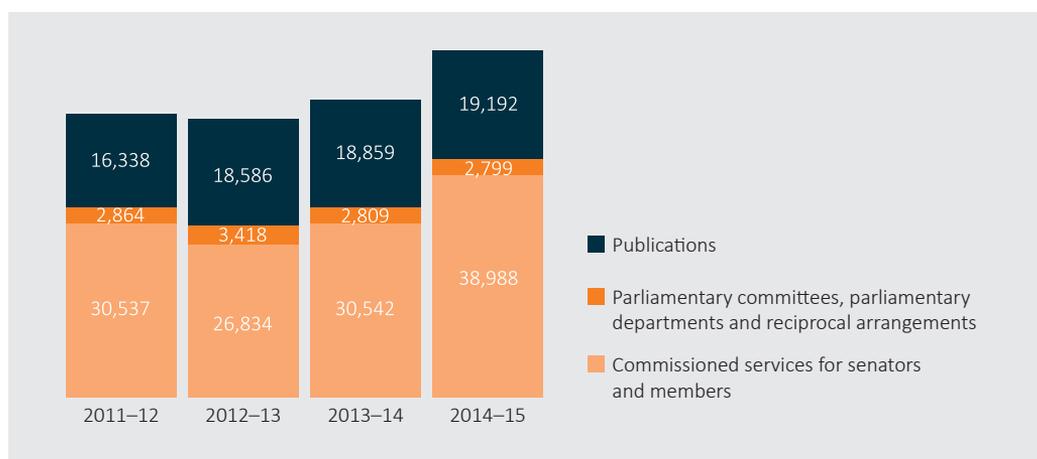
Digests were not produced for 26 Government Bills. Of these Bills, 17 were introduced in Parliament and passed both Houses in a week (five passed both Houses within a day of introduction). Digests had been written for earlier versions of nine of these Bills—when the Bills were reintroduced, they passed both Houses within three days of introduction.

Digests were not completed in time for debate for a further two Bills.

In 2014–15 Library staff hours spent on publications increased slightly (by 1.76 per cent) and hours spent responding to enquiries placed directly by senators and members increased by 27.6 per cent.

Hours on client services to parliamentary committees, parliamentary departments and reciprocal arrangements were largely stable (decreasing by 0.3 per cent).

**Figure 12: Distribution of client service hours by service type**



### *Client training and seminars*

During the year, Library induction and orientation services were held for 115 clients (down from the post-election high of 272 in 2013–14). These continued to be successful in providing, through individual and small group sessions, a timely and detailed introduction to Library services. This included targeted information sessions conducted in client’s offices.

Library staff were also appointed as contact officers for senators whose terms commenced on 1 July 2015 as well as those subsequently appointed to casual vacancies.

Since 1986, the Library has been running a program of lectures and seminars that bring notable speakers to the Parliament to give senators and members and their staff the opportunity to hear, first hand, expert opinion on a range of currently relevant topics.

Parliamentary Library Lectures attracted 303 attendees in 2014–15 (down from 369 in 2013–14), 124 of whom were attendees at the Library’s annual budget seminar. A decision was made to reduce slightly the number of Library lectures in 2014–15 in recognition of the program of events scheduled in association with the Magna Carta anniversary. Six lectures were held covering a diverse range of subjects: the Australian Navy in World War One; integrity, anti-corruption and the G20; security and privacy challenges associated with drones; should we trust science?; and, the Reconciliation Week Lecture entitled *Aboriginal advantage*. The lectures are available for download from the APH website.

Attendance at Library lectures has been decreasing over recent years; and responses to the 2015 client evaluation of Library services indicated that while the Library lectures were highly regarded, most people were too busy to attend.<sup>16</sup> The Library will review the program in the 2015–16 financial year to determine how best to proceed.

### *Client satisfaction with requests and publications*

Table 30: Research services—Key Performance Indicators

Key performance Indicator	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Client satisfaction with requests and publications</b>	High level of customer satisfaction target: 95%	93%	93%	93% <sup>1</sup>
	Client service delivered to timeliness service standard target: 90%	90%	90%	89.76%
	Number of complaints from clients	2	0	2

1 As measured in Uncommon Knowledge, *Australian Parliamentary Library Client service evaluation 2015*

The 2015 client service evaluation found the general response to the Library was very positive. Satisfaction among senators, members and their staff is high at 93 per cent, with 97 per cent of respondents indicating they would recommend the Library’s services to a colleague (both figures are consistent with results in the 2012 survey). Most respondents considered Library staff to be hard-working, professional and friendly and services to be of a high quality.

<sup>16</sup> *Australian Parliamentary Library Client service evaluation 2015*, p. 7.

However, satisfaction among parliamentary staff (Department of the House of Representatives, Department of the Senate and the Parliamentary Budget Office) was lower. The satisfaction rate among Committee staff was 78 per cent (n=27) and among non-Committee staff, 86 per cent (n=29). The consultants note that the overall satisfaction level was brought down by the Parliamentary Budget Office respondents (n=9) who showed overall less familiarity with Library services, but that with such small numbers it was not possible to draw firm conclusions.<sup>17</sup> However the likelihood of parliamentary staff recommending the Library to a colleague remains high (93 per cent).

In addition to the evaluation, Uncommon Knowledge have developed a toolkit for the Library to use in the 2nd and 3rd years ahead of the next independent evaluation to enable it to gauge the ongoing satisfaction of clients.

In September 2014 a joint survey of parliamentarians' satisfaction with DPS services was undertaken by DPS and the ANAO as part of the ANAO's audit of asset and contract management at Parliament House. While all senators and members were invited to participate in the survey, 33 responded to the survey and 30 answered questions regarding the Library's services. Of these, 93 per cent indicated they were very satisfied (70 per cent) or satisfied (23 per cent) with the Library's services. The remaining 7 per cent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.<sup>18</sup>

The Parliamentary Library is committed to the ongoing improvement of its service delivery across both programs. While the formal client evaluation of Library services is conducted only once each Parliament, the Library regularly receives direct and unsolicited feedback from clients by phone or email about aspects of its service.

The Library Executive also proactively seeks to meet with as many clients as possible each year to help broaden client awareness of the range of service offerings, and also to elicit forthright feedback (where appropriate, these meetings are followed up with targeted training or other client support initiatives). All such feedback from clients is highly valued, be it compliments, brickbats or complaints, suggestions or information requests about services. All are vital to enable the Library to:

- improve our services and products
- help prevent problems from occurring in the future
- ensure more consistent service delivery
- communicate more effectively with clients about Library services.

In 2014–15, as part of the Library's commitment to ongoing service improvement, the Librarian initiated a program of consultation with parliamentary committees. The Librarian initially wrote to the Clerks of the Senate and of the House of Representatives and met with senior representatives from both departments. In September 2014, the Librarian began a program of consultation with committee chairs to seek their views

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<sup>17</sup> *Australian Parliamentary Library Client service evaluation 2015*, p.4. The research suggests that the timeliness of the Bills Digests was the main area of concern for parliamentary staff and this was seen to be a consequence of reduced staffing levels.

<sup>18</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Managing Assets and Contracts at Parliament House: Department of Parliamentary Services*, 2015, p 118.

on the extent and quality of the Library's services to parliamentary committees and how these might be enhanced. The meetings also offered an opportunity to talk to the chairs and committee staff about recent additions/changes to Library services, particularly news services. The Librarian and senior staff met with 12 committee chairs/members of committees and seven others provided written feedback.

A number of common themes emerged from the discussions. Chairs tended to use Library services for their own purposes rather than in relation to their committee role, with committee requests generally channelled through the secretariat. Where the Library's input was sought, researchers have generally proven helpful in providing initial briefings and annotated bibliographies that enable the inquiry to get off to a quick start and approach the right stakeholder groups and experts. However, there is room for improvement in the consistency and quality of the Library's responses to such requests. Secretariats and committee members are not always aware that committees have the formal status of Library clients and can request briefings and research in support of committee work.

The results of this consultation process are consistent with the findings of the client evaluation of Library services; Uncommon Knowledge noted a perception among parliamentary staff that the Library does not see their work as important as that of senators, members and their staff, even when they were doing work on behalf of a committee. Improving services to and communication with committees will be a priority for the Library in 2015–16.

Research Branch received two complaints in 2014–15. One related to a research publication. The other related to the level of assistance provided by a researcher to a committee secretary.

## LIBRARY COLLECTIONS AND DATABASES

The services contributing to this program include:

- the Library collection—development of the collection to meet users' needs and provision of access through the catalogue and ParlInfo Search
- online full-text content such as news clippings
- media services—desktop access to television and radio news and current affairs programs broadcast in Canberra, provided to senators and members for their parliamentary duties
- commercial databases—including online full-text journal and newspaper services available through the Library client services' portal and the Senators' and Members' Services Portal, and
- client services including the Central Enquiry Point and self-help services.

As far as possible, usage rates of all of these services are monitored to ensure that they remain relevant and are of practical assistance to senators, members and their staff.

To help clients use these services effectively, the Library provides orientation and training courses as well as online assistance.

Table 31: Information access services—deliverables

Deliverable	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Material added to Library databases</b>	Number of items added to the Library’s Electronic Media Monitoring Service and to ParlInfo databases target: 150,000	181,578	158,556	172,766
	<b>Material added to Library collection</b>			
	Number of new titles (books and serials) added to the Library’s catalogue target: 4,000	4,168	3,915	6,530
	Percentage of titles (books and serials) in Library’s collection available to clients online in full target: 38%	34.3%	36%	38.2%
<b>Use of the Library collection and databases</b>	Use of the collections and databases, including loans from the collection, radio and television programs from the Electronic Media Monitoring Service, and from ParlInfo databases target: 4 million searches	3.20m	4.66m	4.55m

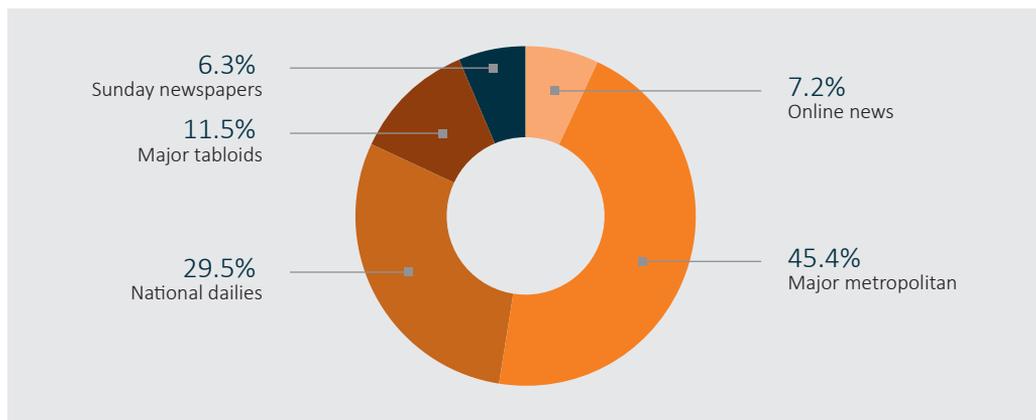
Table 32: Information access services—price indicators

Deliverable	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Cost of information access services</b>	Average cost per item added to the Library’s collection	\$366	\$264.30	\$162.85
	Average cost per item added to the Library’s databases	\$20.76	\$18.81	\$14.79
	Average cost per use of the Library’s databases and collection	\$2.28	\$1.37	\$1.42

*Material added to Library databases*

The target for the number of items added to the Library’s Electronic Media Monitoring Service and to Library databases in ParlInfo was decreased to 150,000 in 2013–14 from 190,000 the previous financial year due to tightening of the selection guidelines. This target was met with 172,766 items added.

Figure 13: Newspaper clips added to ParInfo by source



### *Material added to the Library collection*

The number of new titles (books and serials) added to the Library’s catalogue significantly exceeded the 4,000 target at 6,530. The improved performance is the result of the cataloguing team’s returning to its full complement of staff (the 2013–14 performance was affected by the absence of key staff due to illness).

The percentage of titles available online (full-text) increased from 36 per cent to 38.2 per cent.

The Library collection was revalued by Australian Valuation Solutions. As at 30 June 2015, the fair value of the collection was \$4.478 million and the replacement value was \$13,345,980.

### *Use of the Library’s collection and databases*

The target figure of four million uses of the Library’s collection and databases was met, with 4.55 million uses reported. The increased use of Library databases in ParInfo Search indicates that the services are valuable and relevant. Usage reflects the growing success of the Library’s efforts to introduce and promote self-help services at the desktop and on mobile devices.

The digitisation of the historic press release collection, condolence motions and the prime ministers’ information files will further increase use of the Library’s collection and databases.

Table 33: Subprogram 2—Information access services—Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicator	Measure	Performance		
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<b>Client satisfaction with information access services</b>	High level of client satisfaction target: 95%	93%	93%	93%
	New titles (books and serials) added to the Library's catalogue within timeliness service standard target: 100%	78%	96%	100%
	New items added to the Library's Electronic Media Monitoring Service and the ParlInfo newspaper clippings database within timeliness service standard target: 95%	96%	94%	96%
	Number of complaints from clients	0	4	1

*Client satisfaction with Library Collection and Databases*

See the discussion on client satisfaction indicators above and at page 131.

The key performance indicator for ‘new titles (books and serials) added to the Library’s catalogue within timeliness service standard’ was changed with effect from 2013–14. It now measures timeliness in relation to cataloguing direct client requests (with a turnaround deadline of 24 hours). These items are classed as urgent and are catalogued as a priority by Collection Management staff. This change was made in recognition of the impact of budget driven reductions in staff numbers in the cataloguing team at the end of 2012–13 and the emphasis of treating client driven requests as a priority. The cataloguing team met both its timeliness target for direct client requests and significantly exceeded the target (4,000) for the number of new titles (books and serials) added to the Library’s catalogue by processing 6,530 titles. As a result of the greatly increased number of titles processed, the 85 per cent target for adding routine items (those selected by acquisitions staff) to the catalogue within the service standard (two weeks) was not reached, with 57 per cent of material being added within this time frame.

For the Electronic Media Monitoring Service and the ParlInfo newspaper clippings database, the targets for timeliness in adding new items to the Library’s collections were met.

The Library Collections and Databases Branch received one complaint in 2014–15 relating to the Librarian’s decision in 2012–13 to discontinue the great majority of hard copy subscriptions to overseas newspapers previously available in the Newspaper Reading Room. The Library regrets the inconvenience caused to its clients. The decision was budget driven and resulted in savings of some \$50,000 per annum that were redirected to other, more business-critical subscriptions. The newspaper titles are available online.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

	2014–15	2014–15
	Budget (\$)¹	Actual (\$)²
<b>Income</b>		
Operating appropriation	16,347,833	15,728,671
Capital	1,240,000	1,531,632²
<b>Expenditure – Operating appropriation</b>		
<b>Employee (including entitlements)</b>		
Research Branch	9,396,068	9,128,617
Library Collections and Databases Branch	3,843,403	3,301,568
Office of the Parliamentary Librarian	993,892	908,264
<b>Total employee</b>	<b>14,233,363</b>	<b>13,338,449</b>
<b>Employee related expenses (includes staff training and other expenses)</b>	<b>214,346</b>	<b>108,113</b>
<b>Collection (information resources)</b>	<b>1,580,852</b>	<b>1,970,177</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>	<b>195,215</b>	<b>216,362</b>
<b>Asset maintenance (software licences/maintenance)</b>	<b>124,061</b>	<b>95,570</b>
<b>Total operational expenditure³</b>	<b>16,347,833</b>	<b>15,728,671</b>
<b>Expenditure – Capital⁴</b>	<b>1,240,000</b>	<b>1,531,632</b>
<b>Summary by organisational unit (includes capital)</b>		
<b>Parliamentary Librarian</b>	1,259,782	1,016,783
<b>Research Branch</b>	9,789,468	9,401,608
<b>Library Collections and Databases Branch</b>	6,538,583	6,841,912
<b>Total expenditure (including expenditure from capital funding)</b>	<b>17,587,833</b>	<b>17,260,303</b>

1 As set out in the *Resource Agreement 2014–15*.

2 Includes additional funding from DPS capital plan 2014–15.

3 Discrepancies in tables between totals and sums of components are due to rounding.

4 Includes digitisation project \$799,685, Library collection acquisitions \$611,116, Parliamentary Handbook \$101,155 and Small Library Systems \$19,677.

