

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – FEBRUARY 2014

RECENT TRENDS

The following data shows trends and comparisons in the activities of Senate standing committees:

- Based on a 3 monthly comparison of activity for standing committees which covers the beginning of the last three parliaments, at 4th February there has been a total of 40 references in the 44th parliament. At a similar period in the 43rd parliament there were 42 references and in the 42nd parliament there were 20 references. This is shown in **graph 1**.
- At 4th February in the 44th Parliament, a total of 22 reports have been tabled. In comparison, in the 43rd parliament there were 42 reports and in the 42nd parliament there were 28 reports tabled for the same period respectively. This is shown in **graph 3**.

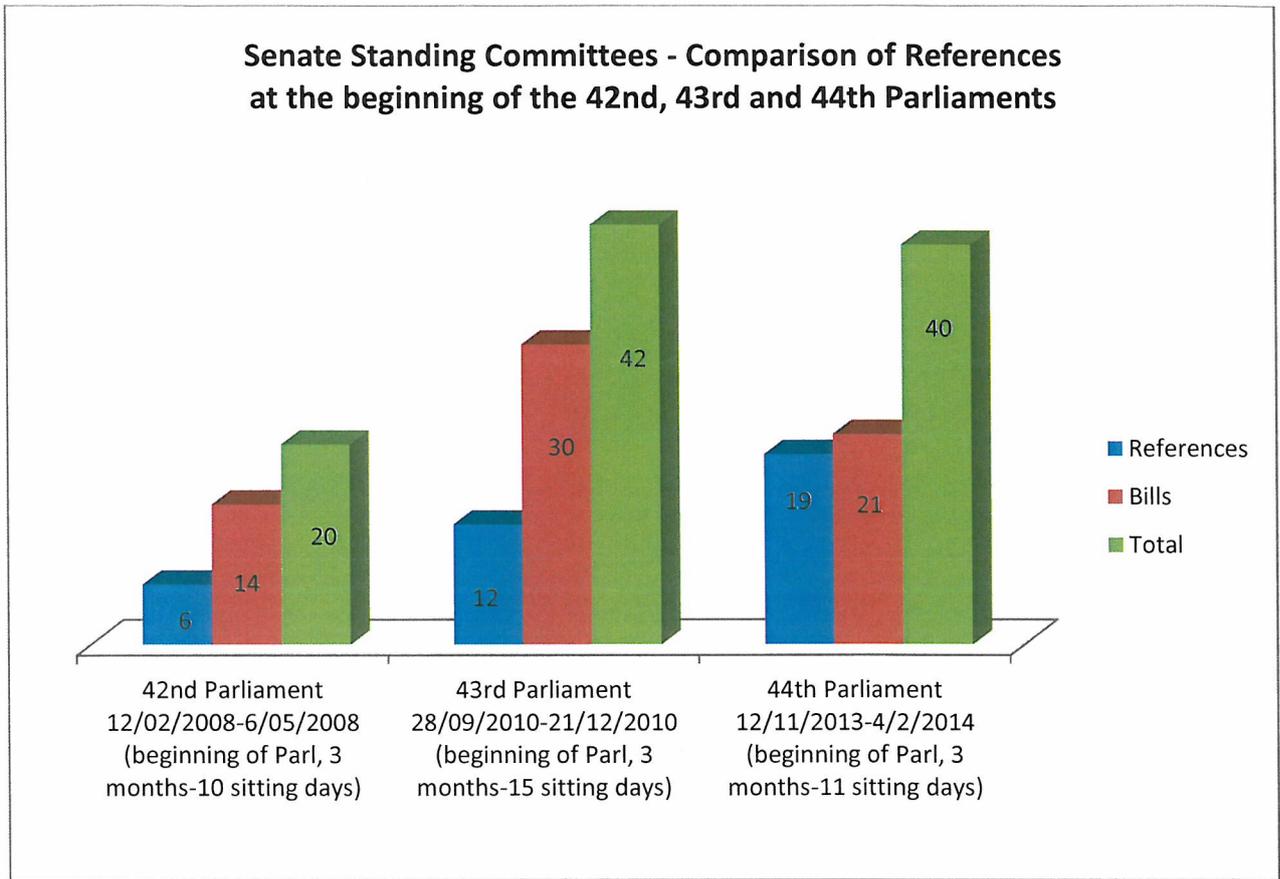
Background

- The 43rd parliament experienced an increase in the total number of matters referred to standing committees. There were a total of 321 references to standing committees in the 43rd parliament compared to 300 references in the 42nd and 234 in the 41st respectively.
- During the 43rd parliament, there was also an increase in the number of committee reports tabled. A total of 506 reports were tabled in the last parliament, an increase from 462 reports in the 42nd parliament and 388 in the 41st parliament.
- The number of public hearings (excluding estimates hearings) increased in 2012-13 to 183. 144 public hearings were held in 2011-12 and 118 in 2010-11 (**see graph 4**).
- The busiest committees at any one time during the 43rd parliament have been the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees, which have twice dealt with a maximum of 12 references at one time (in November 2010 and May 2011) and the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport committees, which managed 12 references simultaneously during March 2013.
- At present, the Senate Department is also supporting 3 Select committees, 1 Joint Select committee and 1 new Joint Standing committee (NDIS).

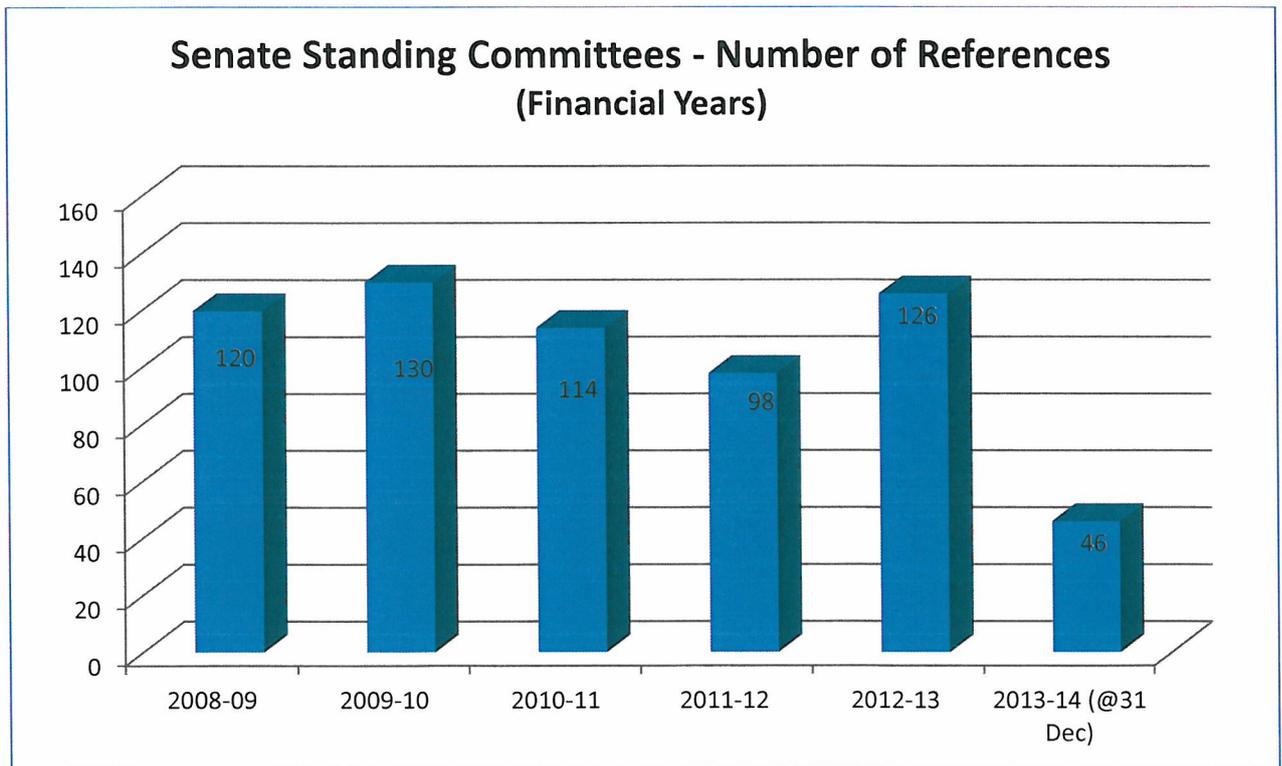
Staffing: at present, there are 53 Full Time Equivalent staff in the Committee Office (**see FTE graph**). A small amount of recruiting has been undertaken to ensure there is adequate support for Committees when the 43rd parliament resumes.

Cost of running Senate committee (budget 2013-14): operational costs for the Committee Office are expected to be \$7.4 million. This is an increase from the previous year's allocation of \$7 million, mainly due to the provision of funding to support the Joint Standing Committee on the Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The attached financial summary includes estimated costs incurred 'by category of committee' for the four years 2010-11 to 2013-14.

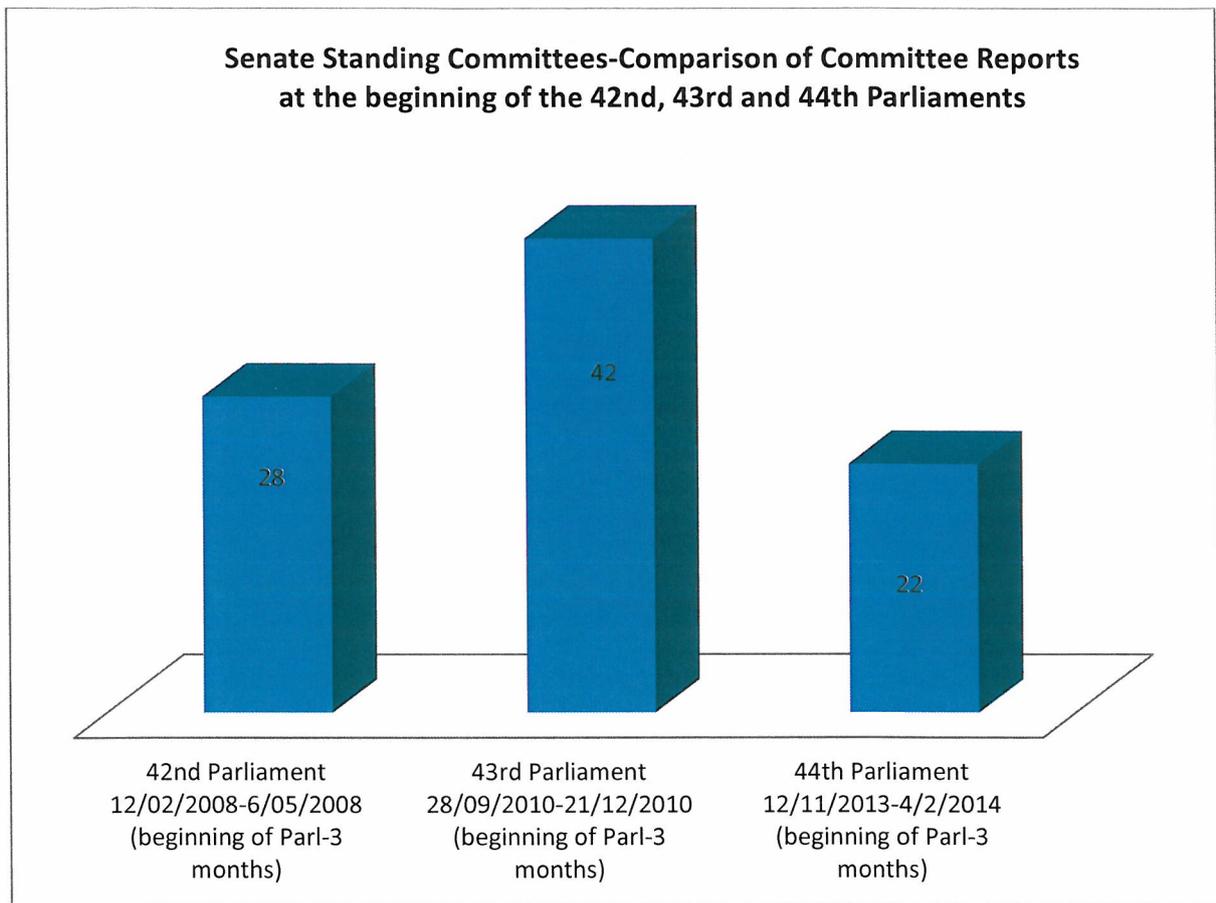
Graph 1



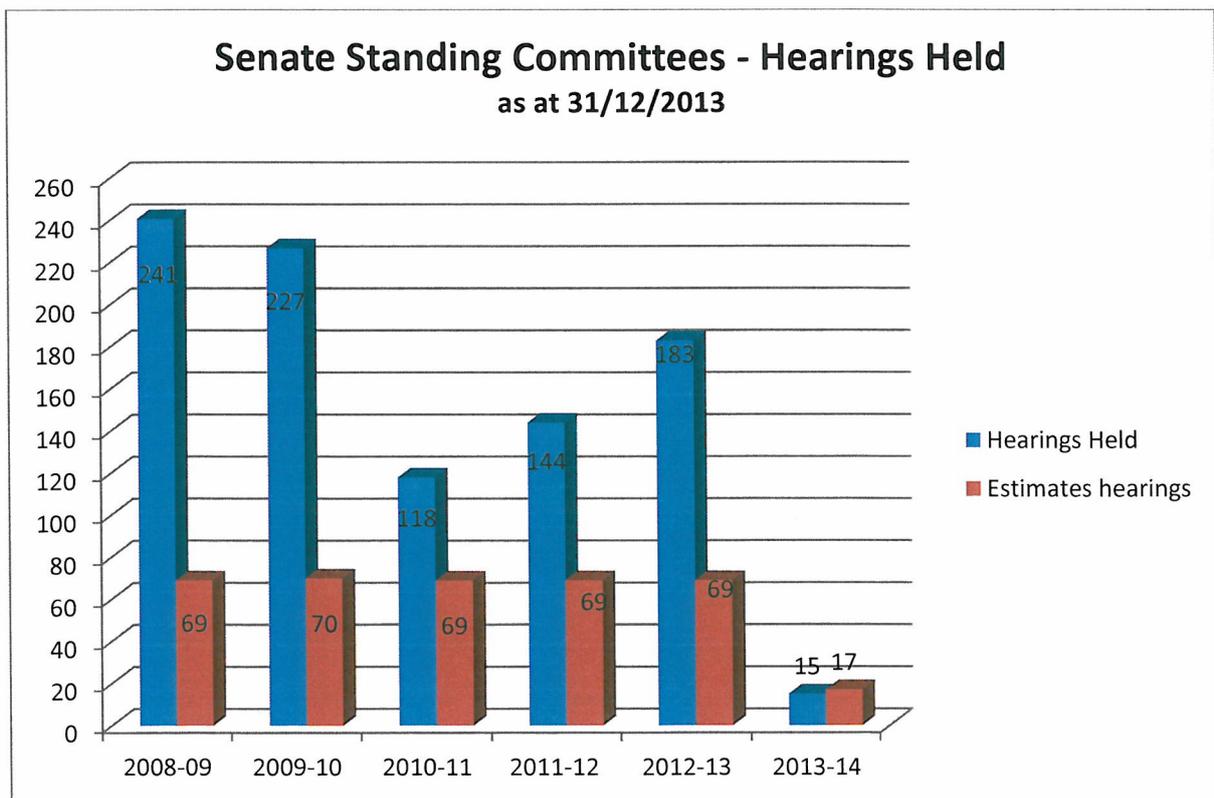
Graph 2



Graph 3



Graph 4



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE COSTS BY CATEGORY -
STANDING, SELECT AND JOINT COMMITTEES – 2010-11 TO 2013-14**

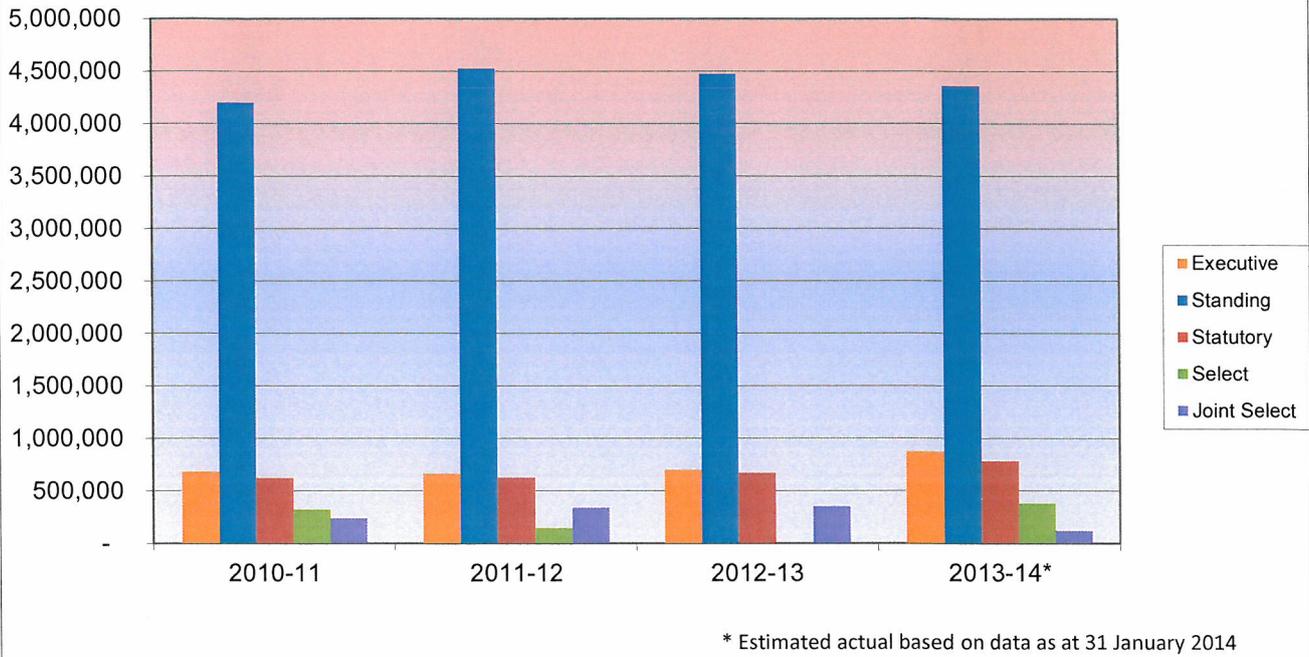
| Expenses | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14* |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Executive | | | | |
| Staff Costs | 680,982 | 662,744 | 699,960 | 872,475 |
| Administrative Costs | 22,767 | 18,944 | 21,876 | 65,084 |
| Total Expenses | 703,749 | 681,688 | 721,836 | 937,559 |
| Standing | | | | |
| Staff Costs | 4,202,414 | 4,528,798 | 4,478,539 | 4,360,232 |
| Administrative Costs | 390,730 | 501,025 | 395,213 | 244,494 |
| Total Expenses | 4,593,144 | 5,029,823 | 4,873,753 | 4,604,726 |
| Statutory | | | | |
| Staff Costs | 621,590 | 627,266 | 667,934 | 782,408 |
| Administrative Costs | 77,507 | 117,289 | 79,239 | 62,451 |
| Total Expenses | 699,097 | 744,555 | 747,173 | 844,859 |
| Select | | | | |
| Staff Costs | 321,079 | 144,071 | - | 379,673 |
| Administrative Costs | 64,469 | 44,869 | 11,578 | 95,654 |
| Total Expenses | 385,549 | 188,940 | 11,578 | 475,327 |
| Joint Select | | | | |
| Staff Costs | 238,050 | 339,533 | 350,391 | 118,947 |
| Administrative Costs | 49,769 | 110,244 | 30,300 | 184,221 |
| Total Expenses | 287,818 | 449,777 | 380,691 | 303,168 |
| Total Program Expense | <u>6,669,357</u> | <u>7,094,783</u> | <u>6,735,030</u> | <u>7,165,638</u> |

* Estimated actual based on data as at 31 January 2014

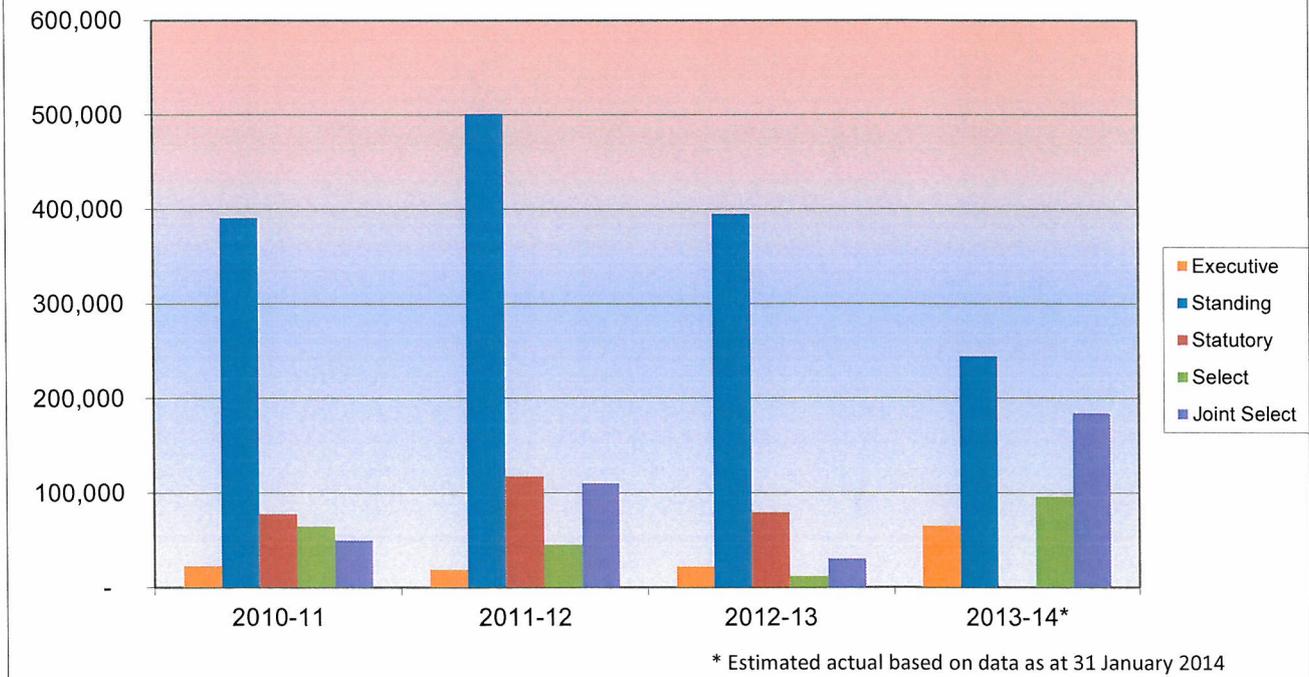
Staff costs - the salaries of Senate staff working within the secretariat.

Administrative costs – includes advertising inquiries, refreshments at hearings, hire of hearing venues, flights and aircraft charters to attend hearings, printing etc.

Committee Office - Staff Costs

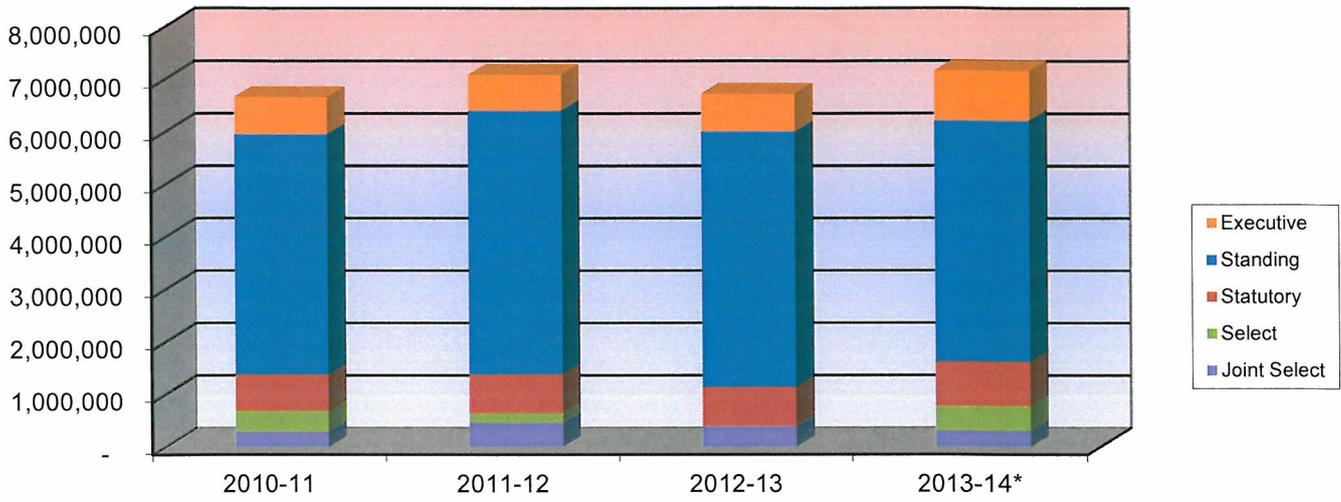


Committee Office - Administrative Costs



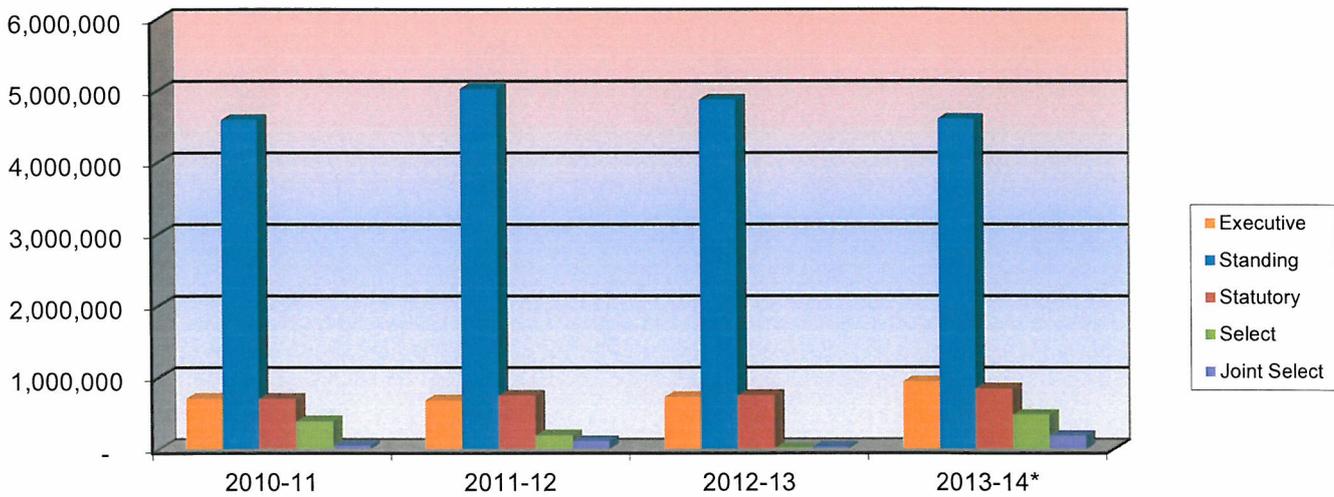
* Estimated actual based on data as at 31 January 2013

Committee Office - Total Expenditure



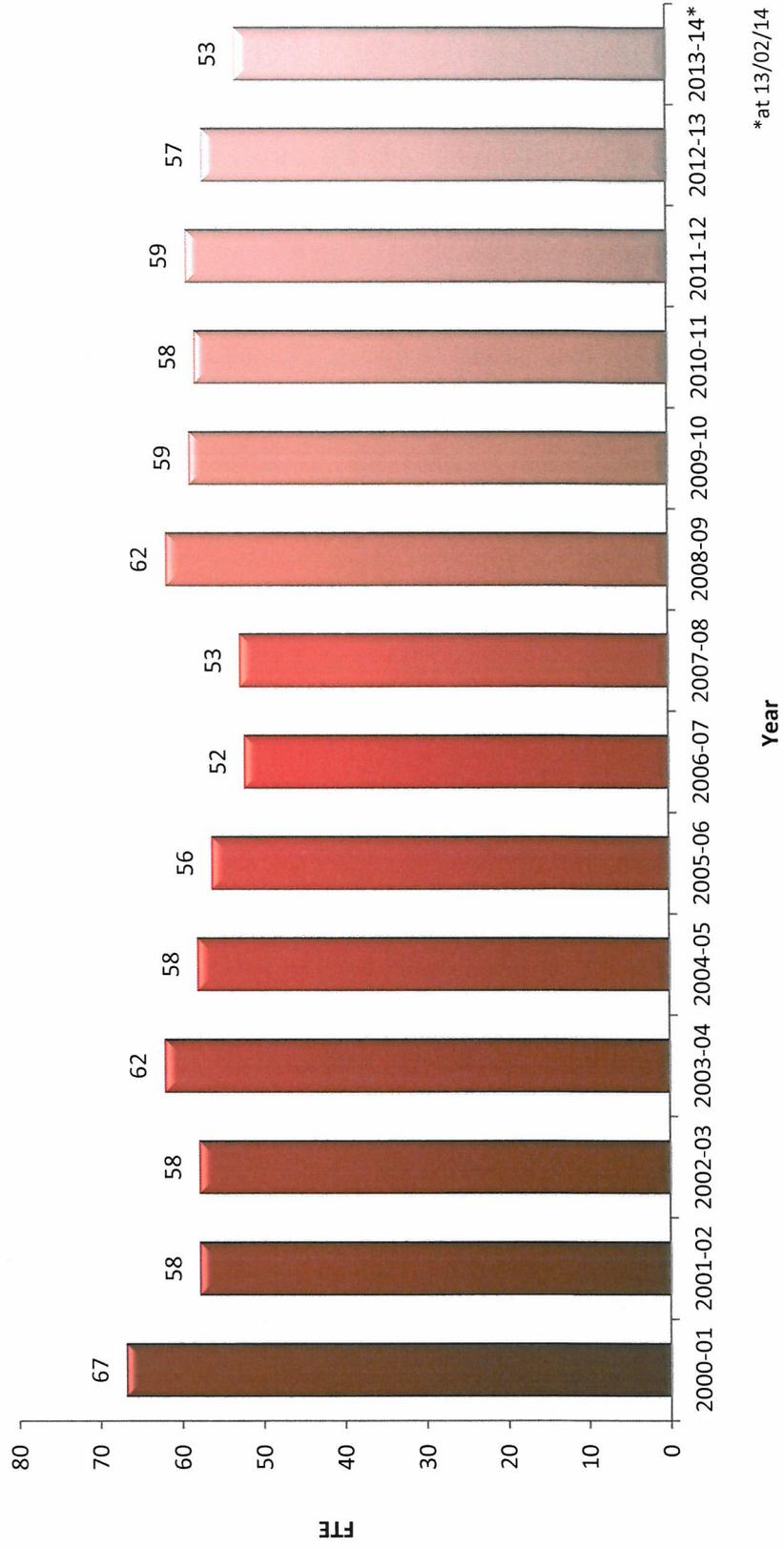
* Estimated actual based on data as at 31 January 2014

Committee Office - Total Expenditure



* Estimated actual based on data as at 31 January 2014

Committee Office FTE 2000/01 to 2013/14



*at 13/02/14