



Parliamentary Service Commissioner

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The Hon. Tony Smith MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives
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Dear Presiding Officers

I refer to your letter of 4 February 2016 regarding the review of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS).

I provided a copy of Mr Baxter's report to Mr Stefanic. Also, I have met Mr Stefanic on more than one occasion to discuss the report and the options for enhancing the systems, structures and staffing profile of the DPS.

Mr Stefanic wrote to me on 31 May 2016 conveying comments on the report in the context of his plans to ensure the DPS fulfils its role efficiently and effectively. Mr Stefanic affirmed that the consideration of the report informed future planning for the Department.

I consider the timing of the review and the commencement of Mr Stefanic's tenure to have been most opportune. It has allowed Mr Stefanic to consider a thorough external perspective on the operation of the DPS as he brought his considerable experience to discharging the Secretary role. I believe that the outcome will be a DPS that operates with improved governance and that delivers its services more efficiently and effectively.

A number of important changes are being implemented some of which were canvassed in Mr Baxter's report.

A number of initiatives have commenced to improve the governance of the DPS and its engagement with the other parliamentary departments. Regular meetings between Mr Stefanic and yourselves will continue to be critical to sustaining effective governance. Also, Mr Stefanic meets with the heads of the other departments monthly to embed a collaborative management of Parliament House. A whole of parliament strategic plan is being developed for the 45th Parliament.

A review of the DPS corporate plan is well advanced with a focus of greater clarity for staff so they understand their roles and the performance expectations of their organisation.

Sound financial management is fundamental to an agency being effective. The Chief Financial Officer has been elevated within DPS as recommended by Mr Baxter. In addition steps have been taken to improve financial monitoring and compliance with statutory obligations following a number of reviews initiated by Mr Stefanic.

All senior executive roles have been reviewed to realise improved role clarity and better performance measurement. Improvements in both service delivery and accessibility to services will be a continuing focus of the DPS. Some realignment of functional areas to achieve synergies and more integrated services will be implemented. Importantly, DPS will work towards becoming a learning and forward thinking organisation. Options are being explored to introduce a more strategic approach to the planning and delivery of information services.

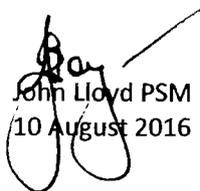
Mr Baxter addressed the challenges of ensuring Parliament House was managed and maintained commensurate with its role as a national asset. DPS has embarked on an unprecedented program of capital works and renewal. This is informed by a Strategic Asset Management Plan and an accommodation plan for the future will be completed in coming months.

Mr Stefanic has upgraded the avenues for staff to raise and resolve grievances. This is designed to give staff the confidence to raise concerns internally instead of approaching external sources to pressure or embarrass management.

It is most encouraging that these initiatives and others are being taken in a considered and integrated fashion. The Baxter report has been of considerable assistance and many of its recommendations have been instrumental in fashioning the direction of new approaches. Mr Stefanic is charting a well thought out path to evaluate the operation of the DPS and improve its contribution to the running of the Australian Parliament.

Mr Stefanic and I look forward to meeting you to discuss these outcomes. I have provided a copy of this letter to Mr Stefanic.

Yours sincerely



John Lloyd PSM
10 August 2016