



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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

CLERK OF THE SENATE

D15/23207

18 May 2015

Ms Lyn Beverley
Secretary
Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Beverley

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING 25 MAY 2015 – DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE

In accordance with the usual practice, I attach the latest information, statistics and graphs of recent committee activity.

Yours sincerely

(Rosemary Laing)

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MAY 2015

RECENT TRENDS

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

- At 1 May 2015 there have been a total of 219 references in the 44th parliament. At a similar period in the 43rd parliament there were 153 references and in the 42nd parliament there were 178 references. This is shown in **graph 1**.
- At 1 May 2015 in the 44th Parliament, a total of 239 reports have been tabled. In comparison, in the 43rd parliament there were 220 reports and in the 42nd parliament there were 232 reports tabled for the same period respectively. This is shown in **graph 3**.
- The busiest committees at any one time during the 44th parliament have been the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees, which have so far dealt with a maximum of 15 references at one time, in July 2014. In March 2015, the Economics committees managed 15 references at one time.
- At present, the Senate Department is also supporting 5 Select committees, 2 Joint Select committees and 1 Joint Standing committee (NDIS).

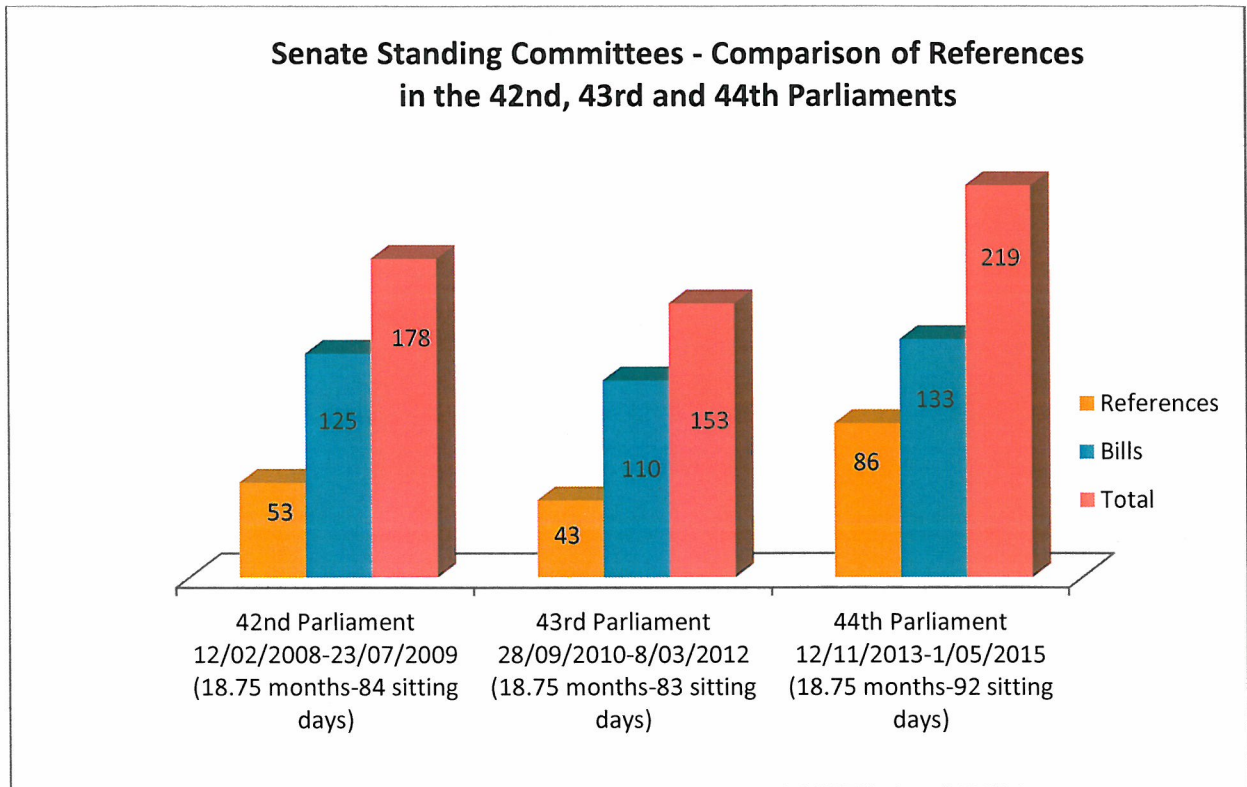
Background

- 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 were the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees, which 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.

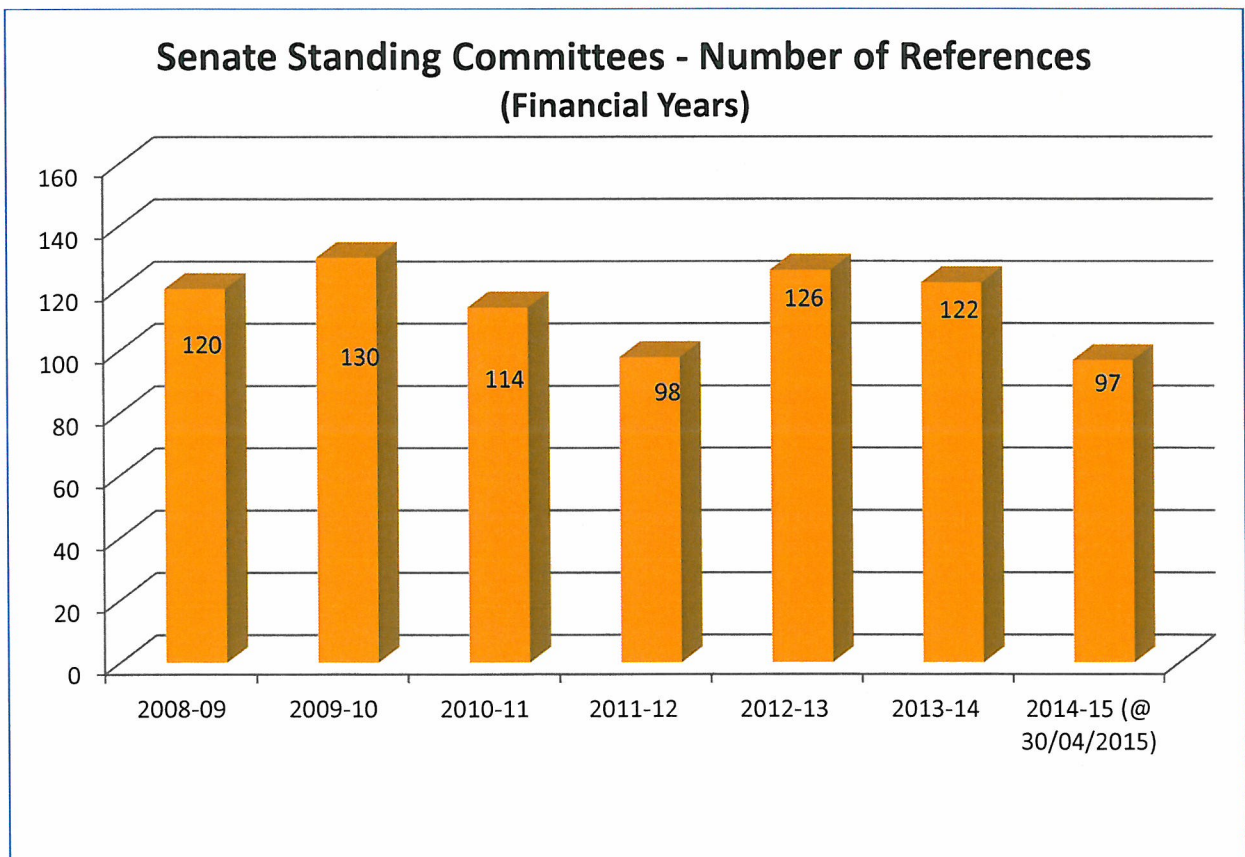
Average staffing for 2014-15: At the first pay in May 2015 there were 59 Full Time Equivalent staff in the Committee Office (**see FTE graph**). Recruitment has been undertaken to ensure there is adequate support for Committees as the Committee Office workload has increased.

Cost of running Senate committees: The current budget for the Committee Office is \$7.3 million. Operational costs for the Committee Office in 2013-14 were \$6.5 million. The attached financial summary includes estimated costs incurred 'by category of committee' for the four years 2011-12 to 2014-15. These staffing costs are based on an estimate of time allocated by departmental staff and are a guide only.

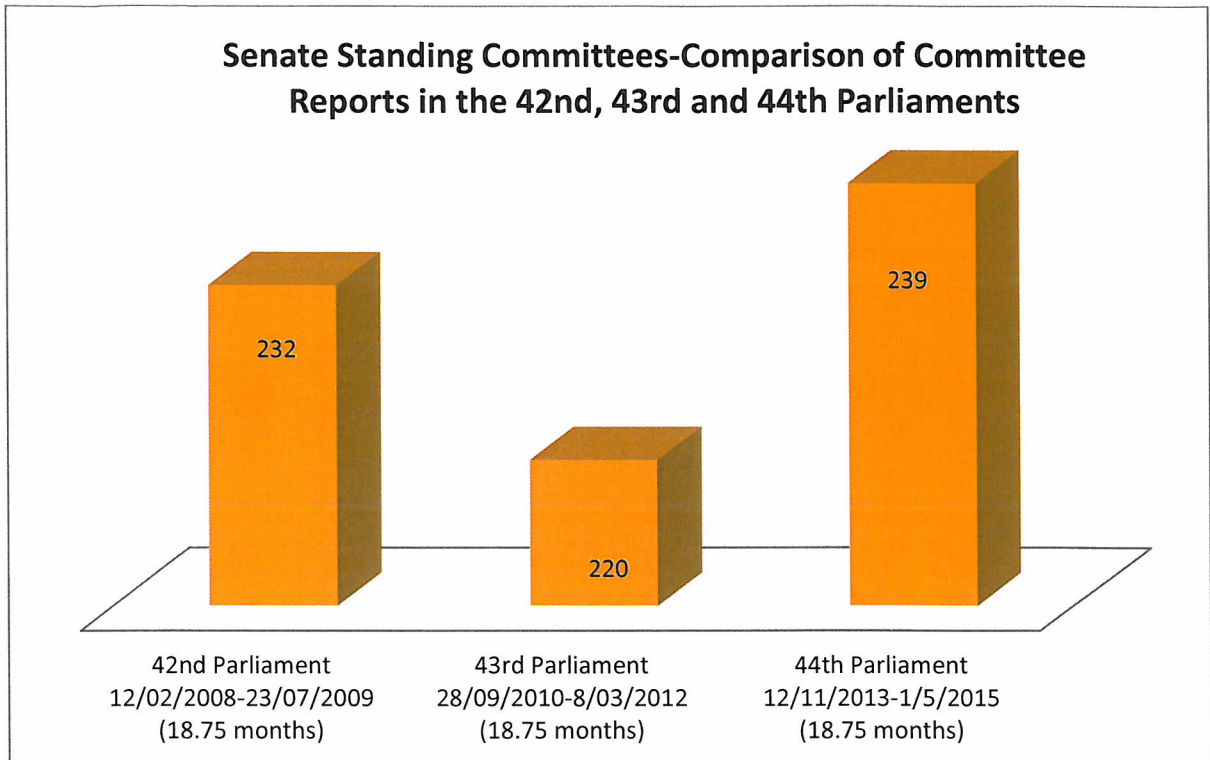
Graph 1



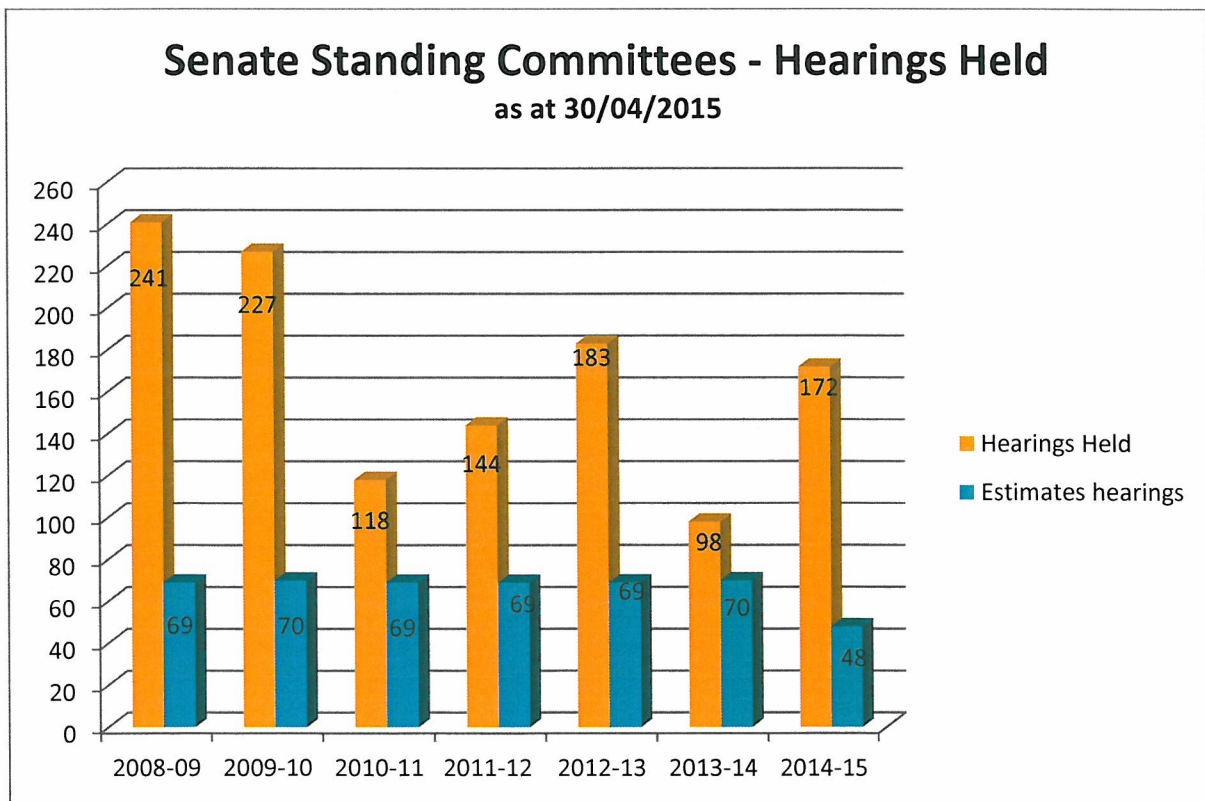
Graph 2



Graph 3



Graph 4



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE COSTS BY CATEGORY -
STANDING, SELECT AND JOINT COMMITTEES – 2011-12 TO 2014-15**

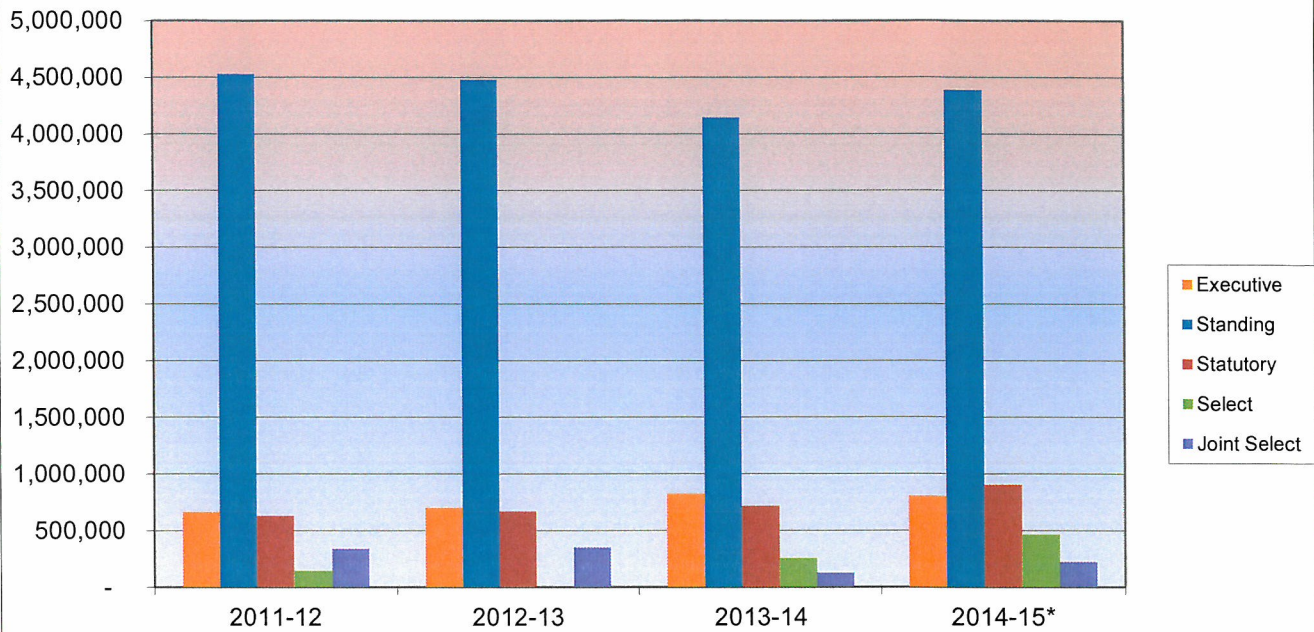
Expenses	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15*
Executive				
Staff Costs	662,744	699,960	822,952	802,981
Administrative Costs	18,944	21,876	41,541	19,033
Total Expenses	681,688	721,836	864,493	822,014
Standing				
Staff Costs	4,528,798	4,478,539	4,143,561	4,386,560
Administrative Costs	501,025	395,213	263,927	391,915
Total Expenses	5,029,823	4,873,753	4,407,487	4,778,476
Statutory				
Staff Costs	627,266	667,934	715,560	903,598
Administrative Costs	117,289	79,239	60,946	80,890
Total Expenses	744,555	747,173	776,506	984,488
Select				
Staff Costs	144,071	-	253,201	463,140
Administrative Costs	44,869	12,833	23,391	51,435
Total Expenses	188,940	12,833	276,592	514,576
Joint Select				
Staff Costs	339,533	350,391	125,875	223,954
Administrative Costs	110,244	29,045	20,201	47,690
Total Expenses	449,777	379,436	146,075	271,643
Total Program Expense	<u>7,094,783</u>	<u>6,735,030</u>	<u>6,471,154</u>	<u>7,371,197</u>

* Estimated actual - based on average monthly expenditure

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

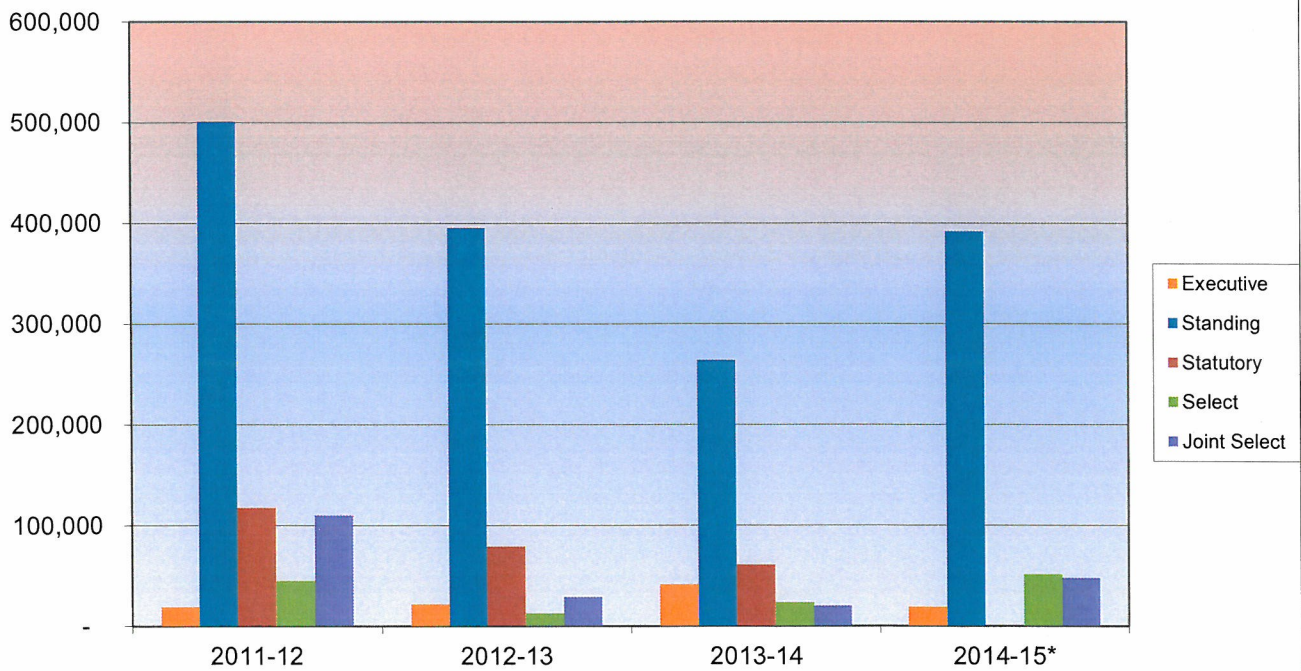
Administrative costs – includes advertising inquiries, refreshments at hearings, hire of hearing venues, flights and aircraft charters to attend hearings, printing etc.

Committee Office - Staff Costs



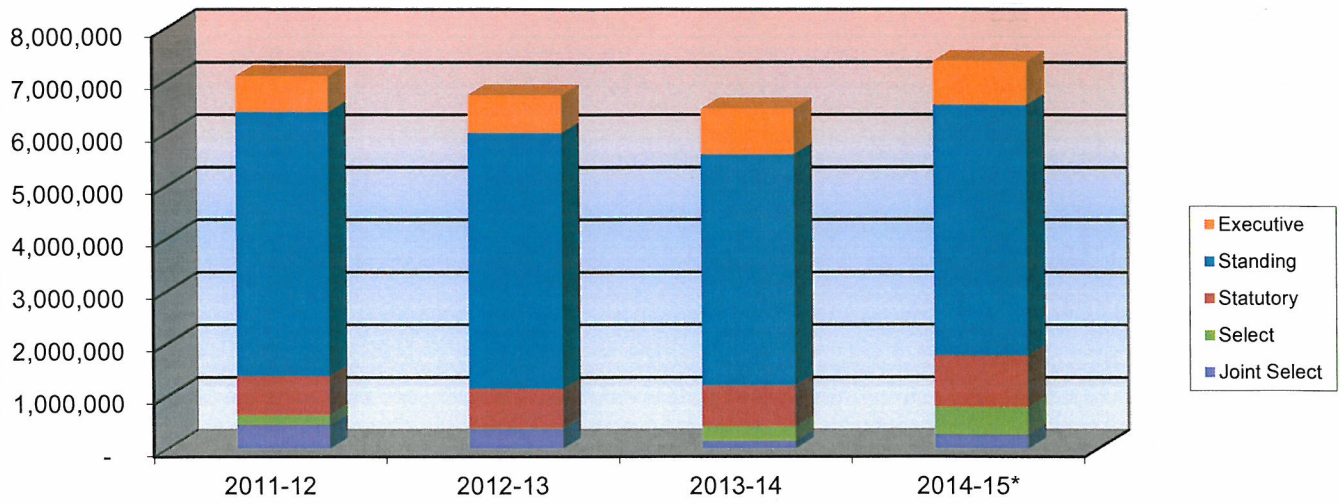
* Estimated actual based on data as at 30 April 2015

Committee Office - Administrative Costs



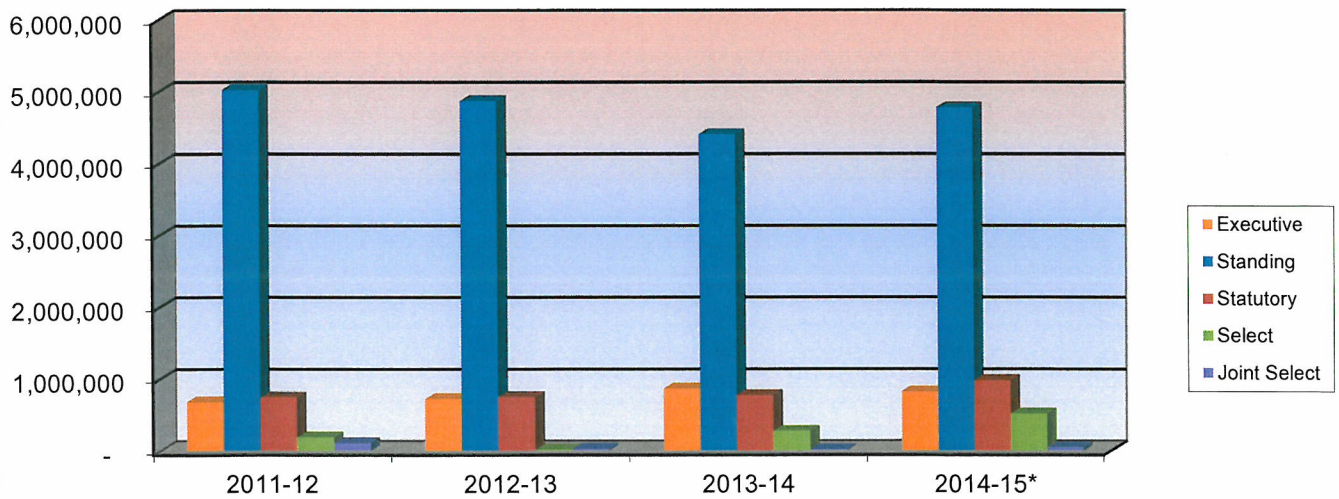
* Estimated actual based on data as at 30 April 2015

Committee Office - Total Expenditure



* Estimated actual based on data as at 30 April 2015

Committee Office - Total Expenditure



* Estimated actual based on data as at 30 April 2015

Committee Office FTE 2000/01 to 2014/15

