

The Senate

Appropriations and Staffing
Committee

Estimates for the Department of the Senate
2003-04

38th report

June 2003

The committee

The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing, appointed under standing order 19, determines the amounts for inclusion in the parliamentary appropriation bills and reports to the Senate on its determinations prior to the Senate's consideration of those bills.

The committee also examines matters affecting the staffing and administration of the Department of the Senate, including proposals to vary the staffing structure, and other matters referred to it by the Senate. It makes an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters (standing order 19(3)). Under a resolution of the Senate agreed to in 1987 the committee also examines proposed changes in the structure and responsibilities of the parliamentary departments.

The committee is chaired by the President and includes the Senate Leaders of the Government and the Opposition as *ex officio* members.

Members of the committee

The President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Paul Calvert (*Chairman*)

The Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Robert Hill

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator the Hon. John Faulkner

Senator Lyn Allison

Senator the Hon. Nick Bolkus

Senator the Hon. Ron Boswell

Senator Jeannie Ferris

Senator the Hon. Bill Heffernan

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Estimates 2003-04

The committee has considered the estimates for the Department of the Senate for 2003-04 and, in accordance with its resolution of appointment, has determined that the amount to be included in the Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill 2003-2004 is \$31.586 million.

Of this, \$30.288 million is for departmental expenses and \$1.298 million is for administered expenses.

These figures have been determined in accordance with current budgetary practices. Forward estimates figures reflect the loss of 1% efficiency dividend each year and, in the absence of funding for new policy proposals, only parameter adjustments (or partial cost of living supplementation) are normally possible. These parameter adjustments are determined in consultation with the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA).

The proposed estimates have been calculated as follows:

Part 1 – Departmental appropriation

The current year's budget for departmental expenses is \$28.246 million.

The Forward Estimate for 2003-04 is.....	\$28.586m
Add the DoFA agreed parameter adjustment	\$ 0.110m
Add adjustment for interest earnings	\$ 0.469m
Add supplementation for increased superannuation costs	\$ 0.312m
Add funding: new policy proposal (security)	\$ 3.358m
subtract the funding for the capital use charge	(\$ 2.421m)
subtract the reduction in estimated depreciation expense	(\$ 0.126m)
Total departmental appropriation.....	\$30.288m

Part 2 – Administered appropriations

The current year's budget appropriation for administered expenses (office-holders support and Citizenship Visits Program half share) is \$ 1.123 million.

The Forward Estimate for 2003-04 is.....	\$ 1.139m
Add supplementation for new policy proposal in relation to CVP	\$ 0.101m
Add the DoFA agreed adjustment for increased costs	\$ 0.058m
Total administered appropriations.....	\$1.298m

Part 3 – Special appropriations

The current year's special appropriation (salaries and allowance payments for senators) is \$10.672 million.

The Forward Estimate for 2003-04 is.....	\$10.777m
Add the DoFA agreed adjustment for increased costs	\$ 0.733m
Total special appropriations.....	\$11.510m

Explanatory notes

Capital use charge—A reduction of \$2.421 million is attributed to the capital use charge scheme. The scheme involves a payment to the department (calculated on 11% of opening net asset position) and a subsequent repayment (reflecting the closing net asset position). The scheme ceases operation this financial year. This change is essentially budget neutral.

Citizenship visits program—Additional funding under this program has been approved to provide an increased subsidy for increased travel costs on visiting students.

Funding for enhanced security measures—An amount of \$3.358m has been included for enhanced security at Parliament House. This represents partial funding of a new policy proposal approved by the Minister for Finance and Administration.

In 2002-03, unforeseen expenditure relating to enhanced security arrangements at Parliament House was absorbed into the existing budgets of the parliamentary departments.

In determining the appropriations for 2003-04, the committee had regard to the outcome of the joint new policy proposal for the enhancement of security at Parliament House. As has been noted, an amount of \$3.358 million was approved for each House Department to fund this measure for 2003-04. The Government has stipulated, however, that the parliamentary departments must find offsetting savings of \$18.8 million over the 3 subsequent financial years.¹

The Government has stated that these savings are to be achieved by implementing the recommendations of the *Review of Aspects of the Administration of the Parliament*, or by alternative means.²

(Paul Calvert)
Chairman
23 June 2003

¹ Department of the Senate, Portfolio Budget Statements 2003-04, p 16.

² *Budget Measures 2003-04*—Budget Paper No. 2, p 209.