

The Senate

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Appropriations and Staffing Committee

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Estimates for the Department of the Senate 2008-09

46th report

May 2008



## **Members of the Committee**

The President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Alan Ferguson (Chairman)

The Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Chris Evans

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator the Hon. Nick Minchin

Senator the Hon. John Faulkner

Senator Kate Lundy

Senator Andrew Murray

Senator Fiona Nash

Senator Stephen Parry

## **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 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. The committee makes an annual report to the Senate on the operations of the Senate's appropriations and staffing and related matters (standing order 19(3)).

The committee has the explicit capacity to scrutinise security funding and administration and to advise the President and the Senate as appropriate. 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.

## **Secretary**

Neil Bessell  
Senate Table Office



# 46th Report

## Introduction

Standing order 19 (2) and (3) requires that the committee determine the amount to be included in the parliamentary appropriation bill for the Department of the Senate.

## Proposed Appropriations for 2008-09

The committee notes that the Senate Department's 2008-09 appropriations have been calculated in accordance with current Commonwealth funding policy. Under this policy, the forward estimates reflect the annual loss of 1.25 per cent efficiency dividend and in the absence of funding for new policy proposals, only parameter adjustments (or partial cost of living supplementation) are possible. The proposed departmental appropriations also reflect the loss of a further 2 per cent efficiency dividend, which was applied on pro-rata basis for 2007-08 and is included in the forward year estimates up until the 2010-11 Budget.

For the 2007-08 budget year there were two separate appropriation reductions recommended by this committee on 11 March 2008 that were subsequently approved by the Minister for Finance on 21 April 2008. One reduction is from the 2007-08 budget appropriation (\$0.400m) due to low parliamentary activity caused by the election in late 2007. The other reduction of \$11.316m was from surplus accumulated prior year appropriations that are held for financial coverage of the department's balance sheet items. A comparison with the 2007-08 appropriation is shown below.

The committee also notes that an estimated increase in the cost of parliamentary superannuation reflects the commencement of new senators from 1 July 2008.

The proposed appropriations have been calculated as follows:

### *Part 1 - Departmental Annual Appropriation*

The current year's budget for departmental expenses (as disclosed in the 2007-08 PBS)	\$20.220m
Adjust for returned 2 per cent pro-rata efficiency dividend and agreed reduction for low parliamentary activity in 2007-08	-0.493m
Adjust for miscellaneous adjustments: parameter adjustments, and efficiency dividend	+0.527m
<b>Total departmental appropriation for 2008-09</b>	<b><u>\$20.254m</u></b>

### *Part 2 - Departmental Accumulated Prior Year Appropriation*

Balance of prior year appropriation for 2007-08 (as disclosed in the 2006-07 annual report)	\$21.487m
Adjust for reduced appropriation	-11.316m

**Expected balance of prior year appropriation for 2008-09** **\$10.171m**

***Part 3 - Special Appropriations (senators' remuneration)***

Made up of the following three components (for this and next year):

**2007-08:**

<i>Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990</i>	\$ 0.736m
<i>Parliamentary Superannuation Act 2004</i>	\$ 0.520m
<i>Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973</i>	<u>\$12.591m</u>
<b>Total Special Appropriations for 2007-08</b>	<b><u>\$13.847m</u></b>

**2008-09:**

<i>Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990</i>	\$ 0.736m
<i>Parliamentary Superannuation Act 2004</i>	\$ 0.640m
<i>Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973</i>	<u>\$13.083m</u>
<b>Total Special Appropriations for 2008-09</b>	<b><u>\$14.459m</u></b>

The total appropriation to be approved by the Parliament in the appropriation bill for 2008-09 will be \$20.254m (compared to \$20.220m in 2007-08).

Special appropriations of \$14.459m will also be drawn down during the year (compared to an adjusted estimate of \$13.847m in 2007-08).

**Determination**

The committee determines that the total appropriation to be approved by the Parliament in the appropriation bill for 2008-09 is \$20.254m and reports to the Senate accordingly.

(Alan Ferguson)  
Chairman

May 2008