

DEPARTMENT OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Annual Report

2019–20

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Acknowledgment

The Department of the House of Representatives acknowledges the Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continued connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders past, present and emerging.

Disclaimer

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication may contain names and images of deceased persons.

Use of the Coat of Arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed on the website of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet at www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/government/commonwealth-coat-arms-information-and-guidelines.

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Unless otherwise acknowledged, all photographs in this report were taken by staff of the Department of the House of Representatives.

Front cover: The marble foyer facing the entrance to the House of Representatives. Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

Back cover: View of Parliament House with snow-covered mountains behind. Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

The department welcomes your comments on this report. To make a comment, or to request more information, please contact:

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15 October 2020

The Hon. Tony Smith MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Speaker

Pursuant to section 65 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* and section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, I have pleasure in submitting to you, for presentation to the House, the annual report of the Department of the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2020.

As required by section 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, I certify that:

- the department has prepared fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans
- the department has in place appropriate mechanisms for fraud prevention, detection, investigation, recording and reporting mechanisms that meet the department's specific needs
- all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the department.

Yours sincerely

Claessa Surtees
Clerk of the House

About this report

The Department of the House of Representatives supports the House of Representatives, and the wider parliament, in the role of a representative and legislative body.

This annual report details our activities during the 2019–20 financial year.

Overviews

The overviews section includes a review by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, who is the department's chief executive and accountable authority. The departmental overview describes the department's purpose, role and functions, organisational structure, and outcome and program structure.

Performance

The performance section includes the annual performance statement, which assesses the department's performance against measures and targets set out in its corporate plan. This section also includes a summary of financial performance, including the entity resource statement, and reports on the main activities supported during the year for each program area.

Management and accountability

The management and accountability section describes the department's approach to corporate governance, details of external scrutiny of the department's operations, the management of its people and assets, its obligations under various laws, and the management of financial resources.

Financial statements

The financial statements section includes an independent auditor's report, a statement by the Clerk and Chief Finance Officer, and financial statements showing how the department spent the money allocated to it by the parliament.

Appendixes

The appendixes give detailed information about the department's work in supporting the House, the parliament, committees and visitors. The appendixes also include a contact directory, and a list of mandatory requirements for annual reports and where each component can be found throughout this report.

Abbreviations and acronyms, and index

Finally, to aid in navigating and interpreting the report, there is a list of abbreviations and acronyms, and an index.

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Our department—a snapshot

Our staff



Our community

 **8,588**
YouTube subscribers

 **2,266**
Newsletter subscribers

 **7,999**
Facebook followers

 **47,260**
Twitter followers

Our world—we supported



The House—we supported


 **548** hours of the House sitting over **62** sitting days

 **185** hours of meetings held in the **Federation Chamber**

 **372** divisions conducted in the House

 **248** bills introduced and **153** bills assented to

 **621** meetings of **29** committees, which presented **75** reports

 **498** petitions presented with **804,854** signatories



Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum
340 delegates from **29** countries



Part 1

Overviews

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Clerk's review

Overview

The year has comprised two quite distinct halves. The first half took the usual path for an election year. Following the general election on 18 May 2019, majority government returned. When the Forty-sixth Parliament opened on 2 July 2019, 151 members were sworn in, an increase of one, and the work of the Chamber, Federation Chamber and parliamentary committees resumed after that.



By contrast, the second half of the reporting year was a period of sustained disruption: bushfires, severe smoke haze from the fires, and COVID-19. In my view the department has performed well to deal with rapid and substantial change brought about by COVID-19. Of course, the department has not been alone in facing such significant effects on our work, the way we work, and our staff. But the very nature of the parliament—the central forum for debate and decisions on national issues—renders its operations particularly vulnerable to the dangers of COVID-19. It also makes our department's response critical.

The parliamentary environment

In some aspects there has been continuity and in many respects there has been cooperation. On 2 July 2019 the House re-elected the Hon Tony Smith as Speaker and Mr Kevin Hogan as Deputy Speaker. The work of parliamentary committees was resumed swiftly and the House then met on 35 days until the end of the year.

Some typical events which enable reflection on aspects of the parliament and its members over the years took place. One of these was the Speaker's lecture for 2019, delivered on a sitting day, 17 September, by Troy Bramston, an experienced political journalist. The topic of the lecture was, 'Sir Robert Menzies: the Art of Politics'. The lecture was well attended and a copy was made available on the department's website.

From the first sitting day in 2020, the House's business and operations began to demonstrate their capacity for flexibility. The bushfires were the major focus on 4 February and for much of that remaining week, following a motion of condolence moved by the Prime Minister and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. After Mr Hogan's move to the ministry in 2020, Mr Llew O'Brien was elected Deputy Speaker on 10 February. Also on 10 February, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, His Excellency Mr Joko Widodo, addressed a meeting of the House to which senators were invited.

Sittings later in February and early March were much as usual and the force of COVID-19 was manifest in the House for the first time on 23 March, with increased spacing in seating for members and a limit on the number of people present at any time in the Chamber. The public galleries were closed, the media had restricted gallery access and public access to Parliament House itself had been restricted.

Following the Prime Minister's ministerial statement on COVID-19 and the Leader of the Opposition's reply, most of the sitting was occupied with the coronavirus economic response package of bills, and supply bills. A revised program of sittings for the year was agreed to, with the next sitting scheduled for August. Before rising late on 23 March, the House made further preparations for an uncertain future by agreeing there could be departure from the standing orders in particular circumstances, provided that the Leader of the House and Manager of Opposition Business agreed in advance.

Despite the change to the sitting pattern, the House met again on 8 April and again from 12 to 14 May, with a focus on bills responding to the economic impact of the pandemic. A revised sitting pattern was agreed on 14 May, providing for sittings in mid-June and a more crowded sitting pattern for the second half of the year.



*The Clerk of the House, Ms Claressa Surtees, and Deputy Clerk, Ms Catherine Cornish, brief the Speaker, the Hon Tony Smith MP, and Deputy Speaker, Mr Llew O'Brien MP, ahead of sittings on 8 April 2020.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

Throughout the June sittings there was still a reduced number of members in the Chamber, and with a heavy reliance on informal 'pairs' for divisions, more members in total were able to attend during the sitting period. Accommodating the evolving changes in the Chamber and ensuring compliance with COVID-19 safety measures placed a significant extra workload on the department's chamber support staff. By the end of the reporting period, while the Chamber looked very different, its business and operations were much as usual. In all, the House lost 10 sitting days in the first half of 2020, yet if the revised pattern can be adhered to, there will be 65 sitting days for the calendar year, a typical number overall.

The Forty-fifth Parliament was notable for its volatility and it ended with minority government. The four by-elections relating to section 44(i) of the Constitution were another facet of the volatile environment in the last reporting period. The first year of the Forty-sixth

Parliament has been unremarkable in some ways. There has been one resignation by a member—on 30 April, the Member for Eden-Monaro resigned for personal reasons—and a by-election was held on 4 July. Majority government has made for a generally more routine chamber environment, at least in the first half of the period. While the restrictions and uncertainty caused by COVID-19 have made for constant innovations in the procedures underpinning the work of the House, those innovations have also been enabled in advance by cooperation at the political level.

Departmental capability

My appointment as seventeenth Clerk of the House began on 12 August 2019, following the retirement of the former Clerk, David Elder. Other changes to the Executive were the appointments of Catherine Cornish as Deputy Clerk and Jerome Brown as Clerk Assistant (Procedure). Since then the new Executive team has been consolidating as the Forty-sixth Parliament has progressed. Our collective capability continues to develop and extend in this sustained period of challenge.



*The Clerk of the House, Ms Claressa Surtees (centre), with Deputy Clerk Ms Catherine Cornish and Serjeant-at-Arms Mr James Catchpole at the presentation of the Address in Reply, 4 December 2019.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

For the department generally we have striven to maintain standards of service, while adjusting the ways we provide services to ensure we meet health and safety standards and minimise or mitigate risks. We are increasingly aware that the current level of uncertainty will extend and we will need to calibrate our efforts to achieve equilibrium.

Although the parliamentary institution and the department certainly change, such change has usually been incremental. The processes of the institution are based on precedent, which fosters authority and predictability, yet there is no precedent for the circumstances

of the last four months of the period. Nevertheless, I believe the institution and the department have responded quickly and effectively to date.

In preparation for successive sittings and changes, I have prepared procedural advice, often in collaboration with senior colleagues. Departmental staff have continued to support chamber operations for each sitting. As a precaution, attendants' services in the two chambers have been reduced and rostered individual shift times at the Chamber Table have been reduced as often as possible for the small roster of Clerks and Deputy Clerks. The Table Office maintained its secretariat role for the chambers—programming business and processing legislation—and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office continued to manage the changing physical arrangements.

In anticipation of future needs, since March our staff have been working collaboratively across the Parliamentary Service on measures to enable members, and senators, to make contributions remotely to proceedings in their respective chambers.

Staff in other work areas have been supported in working from home where possible, especially on sitting days. At times, more than half our staff have been able to work from home, following upgraded ICT support from the Department of Parliamentary Services and our department's advice about the home working environment.

Committee Office staff have been able to carry out much of their work remotely and are increasingly able to support committee meetings and hearings with members, staff and witnesses participating effectively from a number of locations. Several departmental staff have been seconded to the Australian Public Service to support the government's response to COVID-19.

Innovation

Never before have we had such a live and sustained exercise in business continuity. The constantly evolving arrangements have placed pressures on staff and systems, but there have been some advantages. There has been a dual aspect to our response to COVID-19. We have quickly learnt to work differently. While we can no longer meet as a whole department, we have maintained our regular management meetings with participation from within the building and remotely through teleconferencing. With the support of our Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office staff we have been able to resume whole-of-department meetings recently for general governance and training activities through webinars. We look forward to greater flexibility in the future for large-scale meetings through videoconferencing, and for this we will rely on ICT support colleagues in DPS.

While conscious that departmental staff must have access to the information and support they need, we have been equally aware of the need for effective business continuity. We moved rapidly so that the great majority of staff have adequate ICT and management support to be able to work away from Parliament House for long periods. At the end of the period we had begun a transition back to work in Parliament House but will maintain our responsiveness to changing needs.

Collaboration across the parliamentary service

The parliament continued to welcome visitors during the year and the department supported several major events, until visits were suspended. The 28th annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) was held at Parliament House in January 2020. As a regional grouping of national parliamentarians, the APPF is highly relevant to members and senators. Although the nearby bushfires and smoke haze restricted opportunities for outdoor activities, the Australian delegation and members from the 19 member parliaments and 10 observer parliaments enjoyed a full program of negotiation and debate. Several departmental staff formed a secretariat to support preparations and the conduct of the meeting. During the meeting the secretariat was assisted by staff from all areas of the department, as well as from colleagues across the parliamentary service.



*Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum opening ceremony in the Great Hall at Parliament House, 13 January 2020.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

The parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit hosted the 15th biennial conference of the Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees in November 2019, with the assistance of that committee's secretariat. Departmental staff attended the 40th Australasian Study of Parliament Group conference at Parliament House in October 2019. The conference was jointly hosted by our department, the Department of the Senate and the Office of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly, and its theme was prescient: 'Parliaments navigating disruption in 2019'.

Strong professional relationships continue to be important for the department. This year I have chaired regular meetings of the heads of the parliamentary service departments. The effectiveness of this group has been particularly important in providing a fully informed and integrated response to the issues we face as a parliamentary service. While we individually bear responsibilities for the governance of our respective departments, for some responsibilities and plans it is highly beneficial that we are able to provide a whole-of-parliamentary-service commitment—one important example is the *Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2022* adopted this year.



*The Clerk of the House, Ms Claressa Surtees, with Mr Rob Stefanic, Secretary of DPS, Mr Richard Pye, Clerk of the Senate and Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Parliamentary Budget Officer, with the Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2022.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

I have also maintained regular contact with counterparts in other parliaments in Australia and New Zealand as our working environments have dealt with the unexpected. In both groups we are conscious of the specialist nature of our parliamentary environments and that we cannot rely solely on advice or arrangements that are geared for the circumstances of executive administrations.

The year ahead

With the Executive, I am mindful that for the foreseeable future most actions and matters must be considered with COVID-19 in mind. Realistically, this means that we must be prepared for the possibility of events that might not have happened before and that we might need to act in ways that have not been anticipated. From a practical point of view, the department will continue to monitor our business continuity plans and arrangements and should expect to implement changes more frequently.

Our staff are central to our success and every care will be taken to ensure staff safety, wellbeing and continuity—our new ways of working will enliven this. So too will the continuing pursuit of existing strategic priorities.

The department's workforce planning process continues to mature. Risk management is embedded in all our processes but the recent disruption has focused attention in a more direct way, including on succession planning. Senior staff will be involved initially in implementing plans for critical roles, and succession planning will be implemented progressively through the department.

Much of our highly regarded staff training program has been suspended over the last four months of the period and, while staff have been able to engage in externally based online learning, I will be pleased when we can resume our own bespoke development activities.

We look forward to the introduction of Windows 10 and Office 365. Its availability to our department has been delayed, partly as a result of COVID-19. Its introduction will bring us into line with colleagues in other parts of the parliamentary service and enable productivity improvements. It will also allow us more robust videoconferencing and communication options.

In November the department's enterprise agreement will expire and staff have attended information sessions about the options ahead. A sentiment survey on support for a determination will be conducted early in the next reporting period.

I am proud of the department's performance over the year, especially its effective response to the succession of challenges we faced in the second half. We are well placed to harness the best of the outcomes from the year and to remediate the rest. Despite the continuing uncertainty, I am optimistic about the department's ability to continue to achieve in such circumstances and to generate and deliver a high level of support to the House and the parliament.

Departmental overview

The department's purpose as set out in its *Corporate Plan 2019–20* is:

to support the House of Representatives, and the wider parliament, in the role of a representative and legislative body primarily by providing advice and services, and through engaging with the community and other parliaments.

Role and functions

The *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* provides for a non-partisan parliamentary service to serve the Australian Parliament. The Department of the House of Representatives is established by and operates under the Act, together with three other parliamentary departments: the Department of the Senate, DPS, and the Parliamentary Budget Office.

During 2019–20, the department continued in its role as a service department for the parliament, supporting the work of the House of Representatives, its members and committees, and some joint committees (comprising members of the House and the Senate).

The department continued to provide services to increase public knowledge and awareness of the work of the House and the Australian Parliament, and to encourage interaction. The department also assisted the House and the parliament in maintaining institutional relationships with their state, territory and international counterparts.

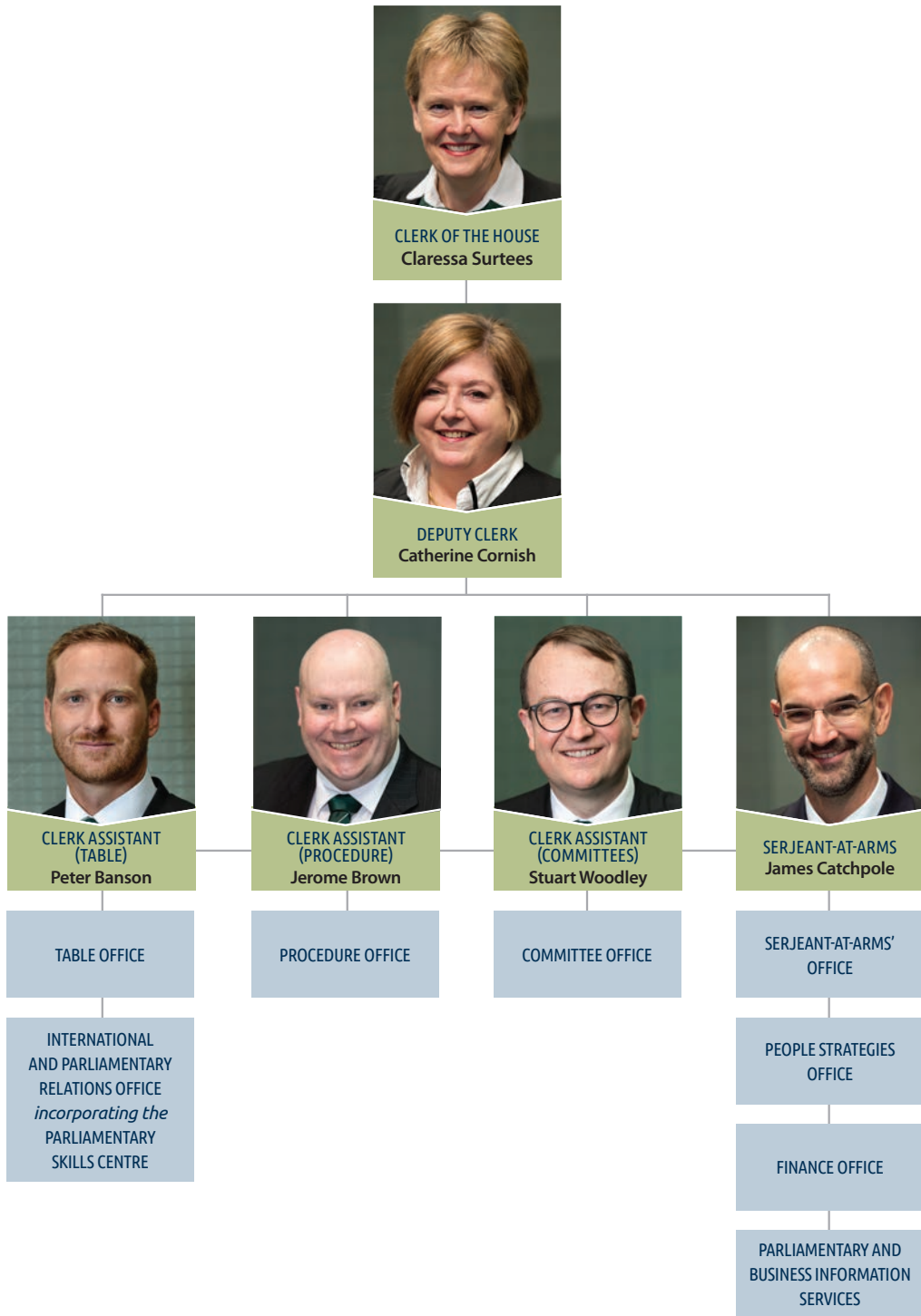
Departmental structure

The department is managed by its Executive: the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Clerk Assistant (Table), Clerk Assistant (Procedure), Clerk Assistant (Committees) and Serjeant-at-Arms.

While no changes were made to the department's structure during the year, a new Clerk, Deputy Clerk, and Clerk Assistant (Procedure) were appointed. Ms Claressa Surtees became Clerk of the House in August 2019. Ms Catherine Cornish was appointed Deputy Clerk in September 2019. Mr Jerome Brown became Clerk Assistant (Procedure) in November 2019.

Figure 1 shows the departmental structure at 30 June 2020.

Figure 1: Departmental structure at 30 June 2020



Roles and responsibilities of the Executive

Clerk

The Clerk is the most senior official of the department and a steward of the parliamentary institutions. The Clerk is the principal adviser to the Speaker, and is responsible for leading approximately 178 departmental staff members who provide administrative and procedural advice and services to the House and parliamentary committees, and support the parliament's international and domestic engagement. With the heads of the other three parliamentary departments, the Clerk provides leadership of the parliamentary service.

Deputy Clerk

The Deputy Clerk is the second most senior official of the department. The Deputy Clerk is responsible for advising and assisting members, their staff and departmental staff on matters of parliamentary practice and law, and for overseeing the drafting of private members' bills and amendments. The Deputy Clerk assists the Clerk in managing the department, and during the Clerk's absence performs the duties of Clerk.

Clerk Assistant (Table)

The Clerk Assistant (Table) is responsible for the areas of the department that provide programming, procedural and legislative support to the Chamber and Federation Chamber of the House. The Clerk Assistant (Table) is also responsible for the areas of the department that support the parliament's program of international delegations and parliamentary strengthening.

Clerk Assistant (Procedure)

The Clerk Assistant (Procedure) is responsible for the Procedure Office, which provides procedural research, publications and services explaining the work of the House and its institutional role. The Clerk Assistant (Procedure) also contributes to the House's parliamentary strengthening activities related to parliamentary procedure.

Clerk Assistant (Committees)

The Clerk Assistant (Committees) is responsible for the Committee Office, which provides a range of support services—including procedural, research, analytical, drafting and administrative support—to House committees and to some joint committees.

Serjeant-at-Arms

The Serjeant-at-Arms is responsible for the corporate areas of the department, which provide support and a range of services for members and for departmental staff. The Serjeant-at-Arms has a key role in managing ceremonial, access and security matters relating to the House.

Outcome and program structure

The department's outcome and program structure for the year is set out in the *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*.

The department has one outcome:

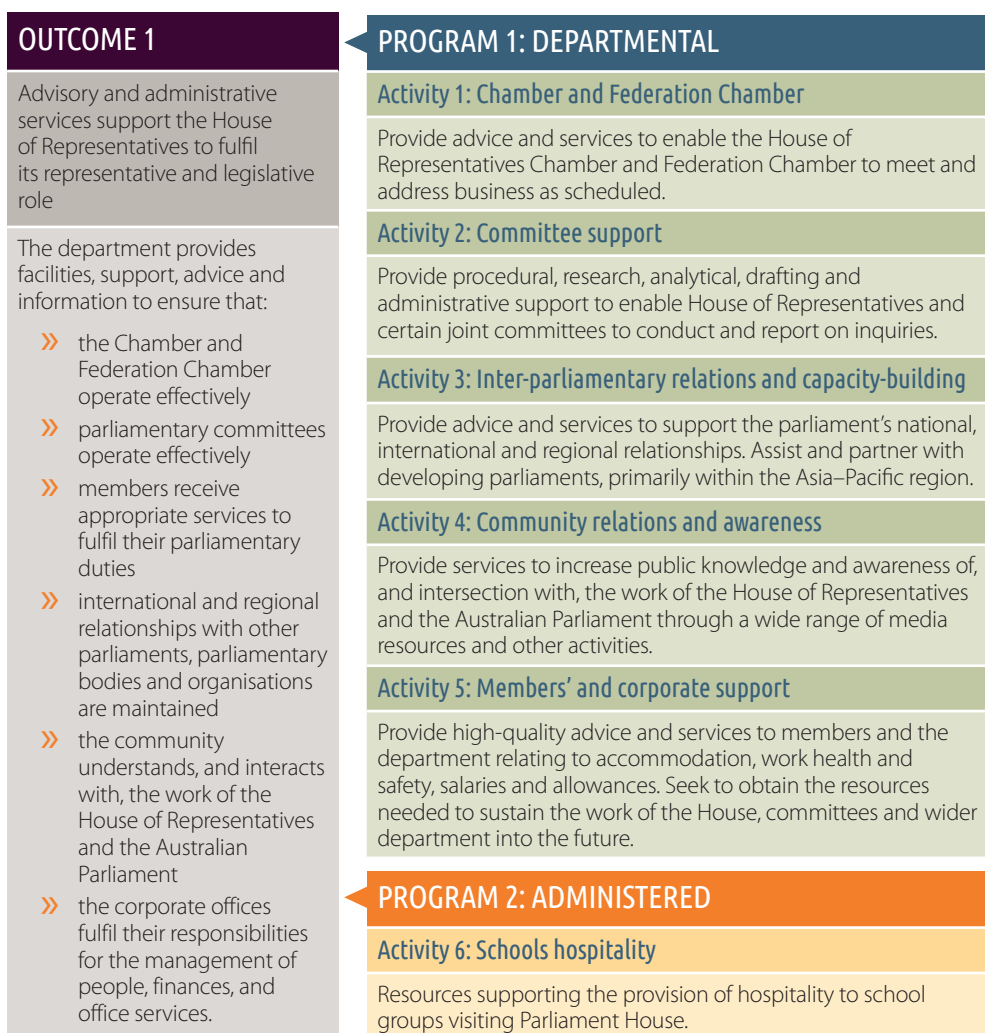
Advisory and administrative services support the House of Representatives to fulfil its representative and legislative role.

The department has two programs:

- » Program 1: Departmental—supports five activities
- » Program 2: Administered—supports one activity.

Figure 2 shows the department's outcome and program structure, and the activities under each program.

Figure 2: Outcome and program structure, 2019–20





Part 2

Performance

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Annual performance statement

Introductory statement

I, as the accountable authority of the Department of the House of Representatives, present the department's 2019–20 annual performance statement, as required under section 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). In my opinion, this annual performance statement accurately reflects the performance of the department and complies with section 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

Claressa Surtees, Clerk of the House

Purpose

The department's purpose, as set out in its *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, is:

to support the House of Representatives, and the wider parliament, in the role of a representative and legislative body primarily by providing advice and services, and through engaging with the community and other parliaments.

Data sources

The results and analysis presented in this annual performance statement are based on data from several sources. These include an annual survey of members of the House of Representatives, analytics relating to departmental social media and publications, evaluations from external stakeholders, an annual survey of departmental staff, and internal records and reporting.

Due to uncertainty around parliamentary sitting dates and the need to minimise face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department opted not to proceed with in-person interviews with members this year.

Members' survey

In June 2020 all members were invited to complete an online questionnaire, intended to gauge their views on, and satisfaction with, the services provided by the department. Members were advised that their responses would be anonymous.

The survey asked members to indicate whether they were satisfied with each of the following:

- » the quality and timeliness of chamber procedural support and advisory services
- » the standard of report drafting for parliamentary committees
- » support for participation in official international delegations
- » support for their House of Representatives office accommodation
- » support for their salary payments
- » support for transport coordination in Canberra during sitting weeks.

Members were also able to provide comments in response to each question. At the end of the survey, members were invited to comment on the effect of COVID-19 on services available to members, and on any aspect of the services provided by the department.

Twenty-eight members completed the questionnaire. This represents a response rate of 19 per cent of the 150 available members.

Staff survey

The departmental staff survey for 2019–20 was available online from 15 May to 12 June 2020. The purpose of the survey was to understand staff opinions of the department's working environment, performance, governance and leadership. Staff were advised that results of the survey would be distributed to staff of the department, addressing key trends, and that individual responses would not be identified. The results of the survey will be used to identify specific actions or improvements that can be made across the department.

A total of 124 staff responded to the survey, a participation rate of 71 per cent.

Other data sources

In addition to the members' survey, feedback on the services provided by the department is sought from the Speaker's Office through interviews with the Speaker's chief of staff and advisers. Formal feedback is also received through surveys completed by participants in parliamentary delegations, beneficiaries of the department's inter-parliamentary capacity-building activities and participants in the department's seminar programs. A further data source is analytics relating to contact with the department's social media and publications. Internal chamber support service standards, internal records and exception reporting are also drawn on for reporting on the department's performance.

Activity information

The department monitors its work output by collecting information on specific activities throughout the year. No targets are set for outputs, as most are dependent on factors outside the direct control of the department, particularly the parliamentary cycle.

Comparisons with data from previous years provide a longitudinal perspective and an indication of the extent to which various outputs are affected by the parliamentary cycle.

This year's activity was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sittings of the House, meetings of the Federation Chamber, and legislative and committee activity all decreased during the latter part of the year. The activity information is therefore atypical of the first year of the parliamentary cycle, which usually sees a steady increase throughout the year.

The parliament and the department responded well to the challenge presented by COVID-19, and activity levels increased towards expected levels in June 2020.

Commentary

The department's performance framework continues to mature. The department's revised purpose statement and performance measures are presented in summary in the department's *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, and in more detail in the department's *Corporate Plan 2019–20*.

The department is committed to considering its performance from the perspective of its key client groups. The department's purpose statement indicates that the department's support for the House of Representatives as a representative and legislative body is primarily delivered through the provision of advice and services. As recipients of the advice and services, members are the department's principal clients. Quantitative and qualitative data gathered from members via the members' survey provides crucial performance information. This year the data is supplemented by feedback provided by the Speaker's Office.

The feedback on performance normally gathered via interviews with a cohort of members is also important to assess the department's performance. The department is committed to reinstating formal interviews in the next reporting period.

Results and analysis

Activity 1: Chamber and Federation Chamber

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Level of satisfaction among surveyed members with the quality and timeliness of chamber support, procedural, statistical publications, analysis and advisory services.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 14; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

All respondents to the members' survey (100 per cent) indicated satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of chamber procedural support and advisory services, and all respondents indicated satisfaction with the quality and availability of procedural and statistical publications, and the support available to obtain these. Comments made about procedural support included, 'excellent at all times' and 'Chamber services are always very good'.

Criterion 2

Chamber support service standards met for sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber and processing of bills, votes, messages, and other chamber documents with a high degree of accuracy and within timeframes.

Target: 100 per cent.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 14; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

Chamber support service standards were met. Processing of proposed legislation and other business was completed within agreed timeframes and no significant errors were identified.

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 14; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of sittings of the House	64	60	42	62
Number of meetings of the Federation Chamber	59	59	41	54
Number of bills introduced	248	222	155	248

a. Election year.

Analysis

The *Corporate Plan 2019–20* details the performance measures for the House of Representatives Chamber and Federation Chamber support, and sets the target of 90 per cent of members satisfied with the quality and timeliness of chamber support, procedural and statistical publications, analysis and advisory services. Results from the members' survey and feedback from the Speaker indicate that the target was achieved.

All members surveyed were satisfied with the quality and timeliness of chamber support, procedural and statistical publications, analysis and advisory services, exceeding the 90 per cent target. During the reporting period, the department continued to invest heavily in procedural training and development opportunities for staff. This investment in procedural advice and capability will help ensure the department continues to be able to deliver high levels of service to support the functioning of the Chamber and Federation Chamber.

During the reporting period, all chamber support service standards were met for sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber. Despite the disruption to scheduled meetings of the House of Representatives caused by COVID-19, the number of sittings of the House, meetings of the Federation Chamber and bills introduced in the period was greater than in 2018–19 (an election year) and similar to 2017–18. This is significant given the level of uncertainty and unfamiliarity surrounding sittings of the House from March 2020. Each sitting period during the COVID-19 pandemic presented new and evolving challenges, including the need for unique logistical arrangements and procedural advice.

In recent years, the number of Federation Chamber meetings as a proportion of the number of House sittings has been relatively high, and this has continued during the current reporting period. In 2019–20, the Federation Chamber met for 55 more hours than it did in the previous year (an increase of 42 per cent).

While the uncertainty imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic will continue into next year, the department will continue to adapt to the changing circumstances and provide high-quality services and advice to meet the needs of the Speaker and members.

Activity 2: Committee support

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Level of satisfaction among surveyed committee members with the standard of support provided and committee reports.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 15; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

All but one response to these questions in the members' survey (95 per cent of responders) indicated satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of advice and services to their committees, and with the standard of report drafting for their committees. Most comments made by members reinforced their satisfaction with the quality of committee-related support, including 'Very professional—excellent advice and service consistently' and 'Very satisfied in this regard'. One respondent noted the performance of a particular secretariat was 'adequate' and that their research and papers were 'not satisfactory'.

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 15.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of committee meetings ^b	541	693	511	571
Hours of meetings ^{b,c}	845	1,285	988	728
Number of committee reports ^b	46	73	85	55

a. Election year.

b. Excludes internal committees.

c. To the nearest hour.

Analysis

Feedback gathered through the members' survey indicates that members continue to be highly satisfied with committee support services, including advice and report drafting, despite the challenges brought about by the bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic. The department prides itself on providing high-quality services to the House and joint committees supported by it, and committee support staff quickly transitioned to remote working arrangements, including the use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing platforms, to ensure the important work of committees could continue wherever possible.

The department continues to provide training and development opportunities to committee support staff, which will help to ensure that parliamentary committees continue to be well served by secretariats staffed by the department.

The department is reviewing the feedback received from one member indicating dissatisfaction with a particular committee secretariat, and continually monitors the level of service and advice provided to committees.

While activity information shows a slight increase in the number of committee meetings compared to 2018–19 (an election year), the decline in activity otherwise is attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on travel, which significantly impacted the work of committees.

Activity 3: Inter-parliamentary relations and capacity-building

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Level of satisfaction of Presiding Officers and delegates with arrangements for incoming and outgoing delegations.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 16; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

Positive feedback was received from the Presiding Officers and their staff on the department's support for inter-parliamentary relations and capacity-building during the year, including for the Presiding Officers' own travel. The department's high level of support for the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF28), hosted at Parliament House in January 2020, was emphasised by both offices.

The department's response to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the international work of the parliament also received positive feedback from the Presiding Officers and their staff.

Delegates' satisfaction with arrangements for delegations is gauged through an online survey available to all members of incoming and outgoing delegations supported by the International and Parliamentary Relations Office. While the delegation program was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, survey results from earlier in the reporting period indicate that 100 per cent of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the arrangements made by the International and Parliamentary Relations Office.

Similarly, all responses (100 per cent) to the question on official outgoing parliamentary delegations in the members' survey indicated members were satisfied with the level of support provided.

Criterion 2

Level of satisfaction among participants with capacity-building activities.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 16; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

Satisfaction levels for capacity-building activities supported by the Parliamentary Skills Centre are measured through an online survey of participants. Capacity-building programs were suspended early in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and formal feedback is not available for much of the reporting period. However, responses received against activities that were supported during the year indicate that 100 per cent of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the training and support provided by the Parliamentary Skills Centre.

These activities included a visit by Myanmar parliamentarians as part of a political mentoring program run by the International Women’s Development Agency, a visit by staff of the Indian Lok Sabha, as well as a staff attachment to the parliament of Vanuatu. Study programs for visiting members and staff from Fiji, Malaysia and Samoa were also supported in the period.

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 16.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of delegations managed	46	59	56	32
Number and nature of parliamentary capacity-building activities	19	24	28	14
» Occasions equipment supplied to Pacific parliaments	1	3	4	1
» Staff attachments and study visits	13	12	20	10
» Conferences, seminars and workshops	5	9	4	3

a. Election year.

Analysis

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant effect on the inter-parliamentary and capacity-building work of the parliament. The number of delegations managed declined significantly compared to previous years (32 delegations in 2019–20 compared to 56 in 2018–19 and 59 in 2017–18). The Forty-sixth Parliament was opened on 2 July 2019, and levels of parliamentary delegation travel peaked late in 2019. All delegation travel ceased in March 2020 and, as at 30 June 2020, the parliamentary delegation program remains suspended.

Parliamentary capacity-building activities also declined compared to previous years, for the same reason as parliamentary delegations. Fourteen activities were supported in 2019–20, compared to 28 in 2018–19 and 24 in 2017–18.

Despite the decline in activity, feedback from Presiding Officers and their staff, members of incoming and outgoing delegations, and participants in capacity-building activities all indicate that the department continues to perform strongly in supporting the parliament with its inter-parliamentary and capacity-building work.

The hosting of APPF28 in January 2020 was a significant undertaking for the department, supported by volunteers from across the parliamentary service. Hosting the forum reflected the Australian Parliament's strong commitment to regional and international parliamentary cooperation and, despite the logistical and planning challenges presented by the 2019–20 bushfires, the conference was a success.

The department always welcomes feedback provided by members of incoming and outgoing delegations, and seeks to continually refine its processes in response to the changing needs of its clients. Following the cessation of many formal inter-parliamentary activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic the International and Parliamentary Relations Office and Parliamentary Skills Centre conducted extensive reviews of policies and procedures and are considering suggestions made by members, senators and other stakeholders.

Activity 4: Community relations and awareness

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Community is aware of, and engages with, published information about legislative and other parliamentary processes.

Target: Interaction with the work of the House increasing over time (percentage change on prior year).

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 17; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

Using subscription data and publication circulation data as the data sources, the number of engagements on the department's social media platforms was found to be as follows:

- » **Facebook:** 7,999 followers (increase of 13 per cent)
- » **Twitter:** 47,260 followers (increase of 5 per cent)
- » **About the House newsletter:** 2,266 subscribers (increase of 8 per cent)
- » **YouTube:** 8,588 subscribers (increase of 29 per cent)
- » Posts to the department's Twitter page received a total of over 5 million impressions (increase of about 9 per cent), and videos published by the department were viewed over 592,000 times (increase of 196 per cent).

Criterion 2

Clients are satisfied with seminars.

Target: 90 per cent of seminar participants are satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 17; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

No seminars were held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, interest in the department's seminar program remains strong and preparations were made during the period to resume the program in 2020–21. From July to December 2019, the department held 11 seminars, which is the same number held in all of 2018–19, and one more than 2017–18.

Seminars during the period were attended by a total of 306 participants (down from 356 in 2018–19). Surveys were distributed to all attendees, with 120 responses received (a response rate of 39 per cent). Surveys gauged participants' satisfaction with five aspects of seminars: seminar content, level of detail, presenter, audio-visual information and handouts. Based on seminar feedback forms, over 96 per cent of responses indicated satisfaction (ratings of 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent') across the five areas assessed, and 97 per cent reported that the seminars met their objectives.

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 17.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Community contacts with the department's publications				
» @AboutTheHouse Twitter account impressions	No data available	Over 3.2 million	Over 4.6 million	Over 5 million
» Website hits ^b	No data available	331,870	482,804	884,238
Number of seminar programs conducted	9	10	11	11

a. Election year.

b. Defined as unique page views on the Chamber Documents page (including subpages) and the Powers, Practice and Procedure page (including subpages, with access to formal procedural publications including *House of Representatives Practice*, *Guide to Procedures*, *House of Representatives Standing Orders*, and *Infosheet* series, as well as *Live Minutes* providing draft minutes of House and Federation Chamber proceedings in real time).

Analysis

Ensuring that the wider community has access to information on the work of the House and committees is an important activity for the department.

Contacts with the department's publications can vary depending on public interest in the parliament in a given period, as well as sittings-dependent output produced by the department in a given period. This reporting period has seen steady growth across most

of the department's community outreach products with increased subscriptions across all digital platforms.

The largest increase is in views of videos produced by the department, which increased by 196 per cent compared to 2018–19. The next largest increase is in website hits, which increased by 83 per cent. The Chamber Documents and the Powers, Practice and Procedure pages on the website continue to be popular, and one infosheet on the Australian system of government received over 100,000 views in the period. Despite COVID-19, data also indicates continuing strong demand for seminars offered by the department, and high levels of satisfaction from seminar participants.

The department will continue to refine its publications and products for members of the public, and use all available feedback processes to continually improve its offerings.

Activity 5: Members' and corporate support

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Level of satisfaction of the Speaker with the overall quality of support services provided, including accommodation, office support, transport coordination, salary processing and other members' support services.

Target: Very satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 18; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

The data source is direct feedback from the Speaker's Office on the overall quality of non-chamber support services provided to the Speaker, the Speaker's Office and other members.

The Speaker's Office indicated that it continued to be very satisfied with the support services provided by the department to the Speaker, the Speaker's Office and members.

Criterion 2

Level of satisfaction among members with the overall quality of support services provided, including accommodation, office support, transport coordination, salary processing and other members' support services.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 18; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

Of the respondents to the members' survey, 100 per cent were satisfied with support and services for their Parliament House office accommodation, although one member noted in the comments that they were 'semi-satisfied only'.

All but one response (95 per cent) indicated satisfaction with salary payment services. One comment was received against salary payment support, stating that 'Guidance about which elements of salary are taxable and which are not was lacking in clarity early on, especially for a new MP'.

All respondents were satisfied with transport coordination support during sitting weeks in Canberra.

Criterion 3

Level of satisfaction among staff with the quality of corporate advice and services provided by the department.

Target: 90 per cent satisfied.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 18; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target not met.

The relevant data source is the annual staff survey. Staff were asked to respond either 'Yes' or 'No' to the following statement: 'Based on the last 12 months, I am satisfied with the quality of advice and services provided by the corporate areas of the department'. A total of 79 per cent of respondents to the survey answered 'Yes' to this question (a decrease from 92 per cent of respondents in 2018–19).

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 18.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of Parliament House accommodation and office support services ^b	617	718	473	1,139
Number of transport coordination services provided to members	14,892	13,086	12,449	16,630

a. Election year.

b. Before 2017–18 this figure was for accommodation services only. From 2017–18 office support is also included in the figure.

Analysis

All performance targets in this area related to the delivery of services to members have been met. Feedback from the Speaker's Office and results of the members' survey indicate very high levels of satisfaction with support services provided by this activity area, including accommodation, office support, transport coordination, salary processing and other members' support services.

Responses to the annual staff survey indicate that fewer departmental staff are satisfied with support and advice received from the corporate areas of the department than previously. While almost 80 per cent of staff indicated they are satisfied with the services and advice provided, the department will continue to improve its internal delivery of corporate services in 2020–21.

The department has forwarded feedback relating to the operations of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS), as the responsible agency, for its information and action. The department continues to work closely with members to assist them to have any matters promptly resolved.

As part of the members' survey this year, members were invited to provide additional feedback on the department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All comments received were highly positive of the department's response to the pandemic and the level of services and support that was provided.

Activity 6: Schools hospitality

Performance measures and targets

Criterion 1

Timely and accurate provision of advice to the Department of Parliamentary Services about hospitality required by visiting school groups, in accordance with bookings.

Target: 100 per cent.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 19; *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20*, page 16.

Result against the performance criterion: Target met.

The data source is the number of students booked, combined with exception reporting from DPS and school groups. A total of 86,315 students toured Parliament House during the reporting period. Of those students, 61,344 participated in a Parliamentary Education Office program and 64,155 requested and received hospitality. In 2019–20, there were no reports of hospitality not being provided to a school group that had requested it.

Activity information

Target: No target set.

Source: *Corporate Plan 2019–20*, page 19.

	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of visiting school students booked	117,654	119,088	124,831	86,315

a. Election year.

Analysis

The delivery of hospitality to schools at their request is a combined effort between the parliamentary departments. The department provides a booking service for school groups, and liaises with the Department of the Senate (which administers the Parliamentary Education Office) and with DPS (which provides tours for school groups as well as hospitality where this has been requested). Data about hospitality provision relies on exception reporting from DPS or school groups. In 2019–20 there were no reports of schools not receiving the hospitality they had requested.

The reduction in the number of bookings made in the period reflects the impact of COVID-19, including the closure of Parliament House to the public. Over 77,000 student bookings occurred from July to December 2019, compared with only 8,611 in the first half of 2020. This low level of bookings in 2020 does not reflect the level of activity for the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office in managing cancellations and re-bookings for schools following the closure of Parliament House.

Summary of performance against purpose

The department's purpose is to support the House of Representatives, and the wider parliament, in its role as a representative and legislative body primarily by providing advice and services, and through engaging with the community and other parliaments.

The department is committed to the delivery of high standards of advice, service and support to the Speaker, members, parliamentary committees, other parliaments, and the public. Based on feedback from the Presiding Officers and members, as well as performance information from a range of data sources, the department has met the vast majority of the targets outlined in its corporate plan.

The only target not met relates to the provision of corporate services and advice to staff in the department. All targets related to services provided to the Speaker, members, parliamentary committees, other parliaments, and the broader community were exceeded. The department will continue to review its internal corporate services in the coming year.

Activity information for 2019–20 highlights the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of the House of Representatives and the department. The statistics do not adequately reveal the intensity of the work undertaken by departmental staff, particularly during times of significant uncertainty. Staff have responded well to changes in the operational environment, and have demonstrated professionalism and considerable flexibility in continuing to deliver support services of a high calibre.

Strategic priorities for the department in 2020–21 include leadership development at all levels, a continued focus on developing knowledge of parliamentary practice and procedure, implementing several significant information and communications technology (ICT) projects, and improving the delivery of online seminars, training and information sessions. This will help ensure the department has the capability and capacity to undertake the range of activities required to achieve its purpose into the future.

The department acknowledges that a 19 per cent participation rate in the members' survey limits the qualitative basis on which to measure some aspects of the department's performance, and regrets that members' interviews were not able to be conducted this year. The department is committed to reinstating formal interviews in the next reporting period, and also expects an increased number of responses to the next members' survey.

Overall, the department assesses itself as having fulfilled its purpose to support the House of Representatives, and the wider parliament, in the role of a representative and legislative body.

Financial performance

The work of the department is mainly funded by government appropriation, with a small amount of revenue generated from the sale of publications and from the department's seminar program. The department ended the 2019–20 financial year reporting a surplus of \$1.487 million (before depreciation). The department incurred total employee benefits of \$20.633 million, \$0.285 million lower than the budget estimate reported in the 2019–20 Portfolio Budget Statements. Employee benefits were \$1.307 million higher than those incurred in 2018–19 (\$19.326 million). The year-on-year increase is as expected in the year after an election where staffing requirements increase to meet the demands of a new parliament. Despite the increase, the department is still well under the Average Staffing Level cap of 166 ending the year with an Average Staffing Level of 152.1. In March to June, staffing costs were affected due to the impact of COVID-19 on the sittings of the House. Reduced sittings over the period resulted in less casual staff hours and overtime than would normally occur in Chamber-facing offices.

Supplier expenses increased by \$0.021 million between 2018–19 (\$5.243 million) and 2019–20 (\$5.264 million). Expenditure in this area was \$1.051 million lower than was budgeted in the 2019–20 Portfolio Budget Statements budget estimate (\$6.315 million). Committee Office domestic travel in support of hearings, along with incoming and outgoing official international delegation programs, were affected by the travel restrictions due to COVID-19. In addition, all face-to-face training programs were ceased, only slightly offset by an increase in LinkedIn learning licences for all staff during March to June.

The department's financial position has remained strong, with appropriation receivable totalling \$17.779 million and cash and cash equivalents of \$2.855 million. Of this amount, \$2.546 million was funds matured from the term deposit which was not reinvested until early July 2020 while a better rate and appropriate authorities with bank institutions were established.

During the year, the department engaged a valuation specialist to perform a materiality assessment of its property, plant and equipment class. The independent valuer's report concluded that there was no material difference between fair value and the carrying value of the assets.

The department's overall financial position continued to remain sound in 2019–20:

- » total assets increased by \$2.602 million from the prior year to \$29.573 million
- » total liabilities increased by \$0.917 million to \$7.725 million.

The estimates for 2020–21 indicate that the department has sufficient resources to continue to support members, the House and committees.

Entity resource statement 2019–20

	Actual available appropriations 2019–20 \$'000	Payments made 2019–20 \$'000	Balance remaining 2019–20 \$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a) - (b)
Departmental¹			
Annual appropriation ²	47,947	23,366	24,581
Total	47,947	23,366	24,581
Administered expenses			
Outcome ¹	336	222	114
Total	336	222	114
Total resourcing	48,283	23,588	24,695
Total resourcing and payments for the Department of the House of Representatives	48,283	23,588	

1. Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No.1) 2019-2020, Supply (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2019-2020, prior year departmental appropriation and section 74 retained revenue receipts.

2. Includes an amount of \$0.635 million in 2019–20 for the departmental capital budget. For accounting purposes this amount has been designated as 'contributions by owners'.

Third Party Drawdowns from and on behalf of other entities

	\$'000
Payments made on behalf of the Department of Finance (disclosed in the respective entity's Resource Statement)	50,794

Chamber and Federation Chamber

The Clerk's Office, Table Office and Procedure Office work together to support the day-to-day operations of the Chamber and Federation Chamber, with other areas contributing as necessary.

During the reporting period we continued to:

- » advise the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives
- » advise on the programming of House business and provide procedural support
- » process and draft bills and amendments
- » prepare and publish the record of proceedings of the House
- » process, provide access to and manage the custody of the documents and records of the House
- » undertake procedural and parliamentary research
- » produce information and publications on House practice and procedure
- » maintain procedural and statistical records on the work of the House
- » provide secretariat support to several domestic committees
- » provide professional development resources and activities on parliamentary procedure.

In 2019–20 the budget allocation for this activity was \$3.056 million and expenditure was \$3.469 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 16); staff levels are shown in Table 12.

Performance summary

The offices focus on supporting the sittings of the House of Representatives Chamber and meetings of the Federation Chamber. Performance is usually measured in two ways: qualitatively, based on an annual survey of members; and quantitatively, based on information relating to the sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber.

Feedback from members on the range and standard of the services provided was positive. This result was largely consistent with comments received during the reporting period about the procedural resources available online and in hard copy, and the briefings on parliamentary topics of interest to members and their staff. The annual performance statement on page 16 provides more detailed analysis of formal feedback received.

Statistics on sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber in 2019–20 and the four preceding years are shown in Table 1.

There were 62 sitting days in 2019–20, 20 more than in 2018–19 (an election year). In 2019–20, the House sat for 177 more hours than in the previous year (48 per cent more time), and the Federation Chamber met for 55 more hours than it did in the previous year (42 per cent more time). Legislative activity continued at a high rate: 248 bills were introduced and 153 bills passed both Houses and received assent from the Governor-General.

Detailed information on the business of the Chamber and Federation Chamber is provided in Appendix 1 and in the department's publication *Work of the Session* (available on the Parliament of Australia website).

Table 1: Performance summary, Chamber and Federation Chamber, 2015–16 to 2019–20

Aspect of performance	2015–16	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of sittings/meetings					
Sittings of the House	60	64	60	42	62
Meetings of the Federation Chamber	41	59	59	41	54
Hours of sittings/meetings					
Sittings of the House ^b	592	570	548	371	548
Meetings of the Federation Chamber ^b	132	237	231	130	185

a. Election year.

b. Excludes suspensions and rounded to the nearest hour.

Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and the government's response to it have had implications for the provision of advice and the programming and processing of business conducted by the Chamber and Federation Chamber. The need for the House, as a legislative and representative body, to continue to carry out its essential work in the context of limitations on gatherings and travel posed logistical and procedural challenges. In the lead-up to and during sittings, regular advice was provided to the Speaker and other key stakeholders to support the effective operation of the Chamber and Federation Chamber in these unfamiliar circumstances.

The government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the fluidity of arrangements for unscheduled sittings of the House, added complexity to the programming of business. Supporting sittings of the House in these circumstances also required processing urgent legislation within limited timeframes—particularly the coronavirus economic response package and associated bills—and implementing an additional requirement to record members who were unable to attend divisions in the Chamber due to social distancing measures.

Advice on practice and procedure

During proceedings, the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and other staff members provided immediate support and advice on the practice and procedure of the House to the Speaker, the Leader of the House, ministers, shadow ministers, members and others. They also provided detailed written advice on subjects such as the application of the standing orders and the practice of the House; the content of questions without notice; procedures for private members' business; delegated legislation and the disallowance process; requirements of the Constitution and standing orders with respect to financial legislation; privilege matters; and requirements of the House for the registration of members' interests and in respect of members' qualifications relating to sections 44 and 45 of the Constitution.



The Clerk, Ms Claressa Surtees, advising the Speaker, the Hon Tony Smith MP, during Question Time, September 2019. Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

Programming and coordination of business

During the year, we provided advice and services to facilitate sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber by:

- » offering programming and procedural advice to ministers, shadow ministers, party whips, other members, their staff and others
- » preparing and publishing, each sitting day:
 - » the *Notice Paper*—a document listing all unresolved business before the House and providing information about committee memberships and other matters

- » the *Daily Program* (also known as 'the Blue')—an informal agenda for the day
- » procedural scripts for all items of business for use in the Chamber and Federation Chamber
- » providing staff from the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office to:
 - » support sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber
 - » oversee ceremonial and security arrangements
 - » ensure the availability of chamber papers
- » processing members' questions in writing to ministers, which involved:
 - » editing them for compliance with the standing orders
 - » publishing them in the *Notice Paper* for the next sitting day
 - » managing answers to questions
- » providing a captioning service for the televised and webcast proceedings of the Chamber and Federation Chamber that describes the current item of business
- » publishing *This Week in the House*, a weekly online forecast of expected business for the House.

Table 2 shows the number of questions in writing to ministers and answers that were processed by the House in the five years from 2015–16 to 2019–20.

Table 2: Questions in writing to ministers and answers to questions in writing, 2015–16 to 2019–20

	2015–16	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Questions in writing ^b	1,310	761	987	250	388
Questions answered ^c	1,235	247	945	206	346

a. Election year.

b. Excludes questions withdrawn.

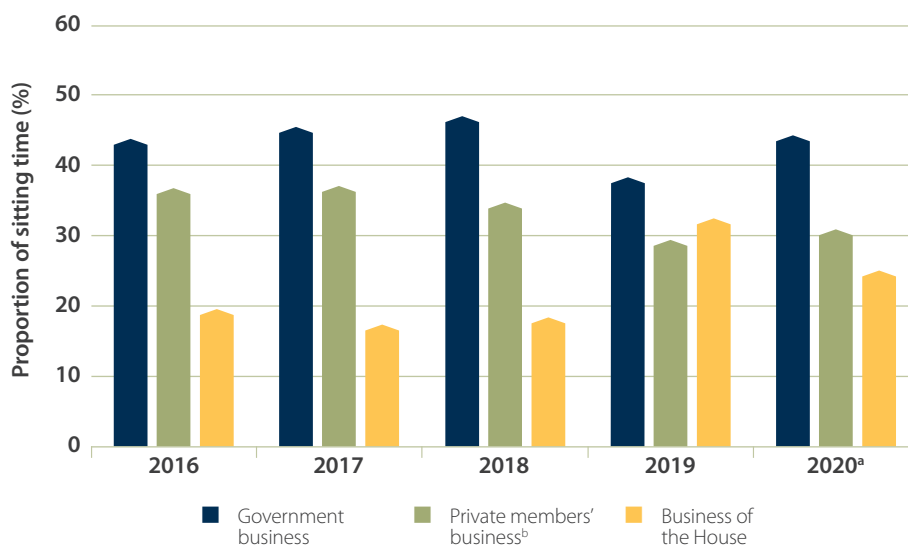
c. The responsibility for responding to questions in writing rests with the ministers to whom the questions are put.

All sittings required the coordination of people, documents and actions, and the programming of the following categories of business:

- » government business (for example, government legislation)
- » private members' business (motions and bills proposed by private members)
- » business of the House (matters potentially involving all members; for example, Question Time, debate on committee reports, and matters of privilege).

A longitudinal view of the proportion of sitting time the House (Chamber and Federation Chamber inclusive) devoted to each of these three types of business is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Government and private members' business and business of the House (Chamber and Federation Chamber), 2016 to 2020



a. 2020 data is for January to June 2020 only.

b. Private members' business includes consideration of private members' motions and bills and other opportunities for private members, such as adjournment debates and discussion of matters of public importance.

Processing and drafting of bills

Processing legislation

Support for the legislative process in 2019–20 included our traditional responsibilities of:

- » receiving bills from the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and keeping them in custody under embargo before their introduction in the House
- » providing bills to ministers for introduction, and to all members in the Chamber after introduction
- » uploading to the Parliament of Australia website bills, explanatory memorandums and proposed amendments, and providing an over-the-counter service for access to hard copies of bills and associated material
- » processing all bills and amendments to bills:
 - » initiated in the House—from introduction to assent
 - » initiated in the Senate—from introduction in the House until passage by the House
- » preparing and delivering formal messages to the Senate; during 2019–20, we delivered 190 messages relating to the passage of bills (128 in 2018–19) and 39 other messages (12 in 2018–19)
- » preparing and issuing a Daily Bills List for each sitting day; the list provides cumulative information on the status of all bills before the parliament, or assented to in the current calendar year.

Queries on the bills and legislation collection on the Parliament of Australia website totalled 1.57 million in 2019–20 (an increase from 1.49 million in 2018–19), representing 7.67 per cent of the 20.46 million queries made via searches through ParlInfo—the database that includes all library publications as well as Hansard, bills, chamber and committee documents, and the parliamentary handbook.

During the year, 248 bills were introduced (60 per cent more than the 155 introduced in 2018–19). Of these, 229 were initiated in the House of Representatives and 19 were received from the Senate (compared with 140 and 15, respectively, the previous year).

The House passed 177 bills in 2019–20 (111 in 2018–19), an average of 2.9 bills for each sitting (an average of 2.6 bills were passed per sitting in the previous year).

There was a marked reduction in the number of amendments moved during the consideration in detail stage: 139 in 2019–20 compared to 566 in 2018–19. Of the 35 such amendments that were passed, three were amendments proposed by the opposition.

The House amended eight (5 per cent) of the bills it passed, compared to 20 (18 per cent) in 2018–19. The department incorporated the amendments into the text of seven of the bills and reprinted them (as third reading prints) before transmittal to the Senate. In one case, in relation to the coronavirus economic response package of bills, a bill was required to be transmitted urgently to the Senate for its consideration and, by agreement with Senate counterparts, a schedule of amendments was instead prepared and transmitted with the copy of the bill as originally introduced.

The House agreed to Senate amendments, made amendments requested by the Senate, or did both, in relation to 19 House bills (28 in 2018–19). The House disagreed to Senate amendments to four bills. For two of these bills, the Senate did not insist on its amendments and agreement was reached by both Houses. In the remaining two cases, the Senate insisted on its amendments and the House insisted on disagreeing to the Senate amendments. In relation to the Treasury Laws Amendment (2019 Measures No. 3) Bill 2019, the Senate did not further insist on its amendments, and the bill was finally passed by both Houses in identical form. At the end of the reporting period, the Treasury Laws Amendment (2020 Measures No. 2) Bill 2020 was still before the Senate.

A total of 153 bills were finally passed by both Houses in identical form (148 in 2018–19), of which 138 were initiated in the House of Representatives and 15 were initiated in the Senate. After further processing by the Table Office, bills finally passed by both Houses in identical form were presented to the Governor-General for assent. Table 3 shows the number of bills introduced in the House and assented to in the five years from 2015–16 to 2019–20.

In total, during the reporting period the Table Office prepared seven third reading prints (18 in 2018–19) and 139 assent prints (134 in 2018–19). All documents accurately reflected the decisions of both Houses.

Table 3: Number of bills introduced in the House, and number of bills assented to, 2015–16 to 2019–20

	2015–16	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Bills introduced	162	248	222	155	248
Bills assented to ^b	118	126	128	148	153

a. Election year.

b. Includes bills that passed both Houses in the financial year but were assented to in the following financial year.

Legislative drafting

The department drafts bills, amendments and second reading (in-principle) amendments for private members, and ensures that those documents comply with the Constitution and the standing orders. We also prepare copies for circulation in the chambers.

In 2019–20, 35 private members' bills were introduced (including two private senators' bills). Of the 139 amendments moved during consideration in detail, 107 were private members' amendments, three of which were agreed to. Table 4 provides chamber statistics for private members' legislation for the past five years. These figures do not reflect all of the department's work in this area, because some material is drafted but is not introduced into the House.

Since 2010, the department has had an arrangement with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel for one of its senior drafters to be seconded to the department. That arrangement continues to be mutually beneficial. The seconded officer provides drafting advice to members, and supports the drafting of private members' bills and detailed amendments.

Table 4: Private members' bills introduced and amendments moved by private members (Chamber and Federation Chamber), 2015–16 to 2019–20

	2015–16	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Bills introduced	21	35	35	30	35
Second reading amendments moved	16	40	45	37	110
Consideration in detail amendments moved	59	115	86	95	107

a. Election year.

Record of proceedings and House documents

Votes and Proceedings

The *Votes and Proceedings*—the official record of the proceedings of the House—continued to provide an accurate, comprehensive and concise record of proceedings. The draft document for each sitting is published on the Parliament of Australia website, usually within an hour of the adjournment of the House.

The *Votes and Proceedings* is prepared alongside the *Live Minutes*, which is an electronic draft record of the proceedings of the Chamber and Federation Chamber. The *Live Minutes*

is more detailed than the *Votes and Proceedings*, and is compiled and published online progressively throughout a sitting. Because it is available in real time, it provides a practical means for members, staff and the public to follow House proceedings online. Internal and external users continued to rely on this service and provided positive feedback.

Documents

During the year, the Table Office processed all documents presented to the House and recorded their details in the *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Index to Papers Presented to Parliament*. Copies were made available on request to members and their staff and others, principally in Parliament House. The original documents were added to the records of the House, which are maintained by the Table Office. Tabling stock requirements continue to be reviewed in light of the online availability of documents and the declining demand for hard copies.

In 2019–20, a total of 3,290 documents were presented to the House, an increase from the 2,556 presented in the previous year.

Each sitting day, the Table Office prepares and issues a *Disallowable Instruments List* in both electronic and hard-copy form. The list provides details of all instruments presented to the House that are subject to disallowance, listed by the number of sitting days remaining in which a notice of disallowance can be lodged.



*The Deputy Speaker, Mr Llew O'Brien MP, chairing a meeting of the Federation Chamber.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

House Division Recording System

The House Division Recording System has been in use since the final sitting week of the Forty-fifth Parliament. It allows tellers to record members' votes electronically on an iPad. The division result is published immediately on announcement by the Speaker in the *Live Minutes* and on display screens located in the Chamber. A webpage publishes the results of divisions in real time and also provides a searchable and filterable repository of divisions recorded in the system. The House Division Recording System is now fully operational and used to record divisions on an ongoing basis. Since the start of the Forty-sixth Parliament, which commenced during the reporting period, the system has recorded 372 divisions.

Online Tabled Documents project

With colleagues from the Department of the Senate and DPS, Table Office staff continued to support the Online Tabled Documents project, which will establish a system for the electronic receipt and storage of documents for tabling in the parliament, and their subsequent publication via the Parliament of Australia website. The system will streamline administrative handling of documents and, following tabling, make documents available online through a searchable database, providing an enhanced service for members and other interested parties. The project is expected to be completed in the next reporting period.



*Tellers electronically recording the results of a division in the House of Representatives.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

Research

The Procedure Office maintained its focus on collecting, analysing and disseminating procedural and statistical information on the work of the House. In 2019–20 the office undertook the following activities within this purview:

- » maintaining comprehensive procedural and statistical records
- » preparing advice for the Speaker and members on House practice and the operation of the standing orders
- » responding to requests for procedural and statistical information from various stakeholders including members, parliamentary staff and members of the public
- » producing a range of publications on House statistics, practice and procedure.

The office also provided research and administrative support to the House Standing Committee on Procedure (see page 42).

The Parliamentary Procedural Records System, a key research tool maintained by the Procedure Office, was upgraded in 2019–20, resolving technical issues and adding a number of useful functions.

Sustained demand for House publications and high numbers of requests for procedural and statistical information over the year indicated positive engagement by stakeholders with House practice and procedure.

Publications

The Procedure Office continued to produce a range of publications on the work of the House, suited to the different needs and interests of readers. The following publications provided an overview of House business at the end of each sitting fortnight:

- » *Statistical Digest*, a statistical break-down of the business conducted by the House
- » *House Review*, a plain-English analysis of significant events in the House for a general audience
- » *Procedural Digest*, a technical record of the Speaker’s rulings, precedents and other procedurally interesting items.

In addition, the *Last Week in the House* webpage listed key events in the previous sitting week, with links to the Hansard transcript, and the *Work of the Session* provided a comprehensive periodic review of the work of the House and committees. Each of these publications is available on the Parliament of Australia website.

At the beginning of the Forty-sixth Parliament, the fully revised *New Members’ Handbook* provided new members with an introduction to their role and a guide to services, entitlements and facilities. The updated *Members’ Notes* series offered both new and returning members practical procedural guidance.

Work continued on updating the *Infosheet* series comprising short guides on the workings of the House and parliament in an easy-to-read format.

In addition to these more traditional publications, the Procedure Office collaborated with the Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office to create informative social media content related to House proceedings.

Progress continues on the *Dictionary of the House of Representatives*, in collaboration with the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* at the Australian National University. The dictionary will include biographies of all Speakers, Deputy Speakers and Clerks of the House since Federation and is expected to be completed in early 2021.

Collaboration

Collaboration with the Department of the Senate

The Procedure Office and colleagues in the Department of the Senate continued to work together effectively, including through involvement with the Australian National Internships Program and the Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program (see pages 60–61).

Collaboration with other parliaments

The department continued its tradition of knowledge-sharing with colleagues from other parliaments. This included participation in study programs, meeting with incoming delegations and capacity-building work. The value of sharing experiences and ideas with other parliaments has been highlighted as parliaments face common challenges in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Australasian Study of Parliament Group annual conference in the Main Committee Room of Parliament House, 4 October 2019. Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

Procedural training and resources

The provision of training and resources to build the procedural capacity of staff remained a priority. Following the success of the 'House main course' tutorial program on procedure in 2018–19, the course was again offered in 2019–20. The Procedure Office, in collaboration with the Table Office, developed the tutorial program to provide staff, particularly those working in chamber support, with high-level procedural training and targeted skills development. As COVID-19 prevented staff from gathering in early 2020, the program was postponed to later in the calendar year.

The CATTalogue, a video-based procedural training resource, provides a series of educational videos on key House principles and procedures and is intended for those preparing to work in Deputy Clerk-at-the-Table roles and other staff interested in House procedure. The CATTalogue was expanded in 2019–20 and is available to all staff through the department's intranet. Video content from the CATTalogue and accompanying material was also adapted for members and their staff, and for members of the Speaker's panel.

In addition to the newer procedural training initiatives, the department continued to support staff to develop expertise in parliamentary law, practice and procedure in the following ways:

- » debriefs following each sitting week or fortnight, focusing on matters of procedural interest (after the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, while regular debriefs continued to be delivered, the introduction of physical distancing requirements meant attendance was restricted to staff in chamber support roles)
- » regular parliamentary briefings and training provided by senior departmental staff and external experts
- » coaching for departmental staff who undertake duty as Clerks and Deputy Clerks in the Chamber and Federation Chamber
- » shadowing opportunities that enable staff to learn specialist skills such as preparing House procedures and the *Daily Program*, and processing bills and documents—once the trainee staff have sufficient experience, the use of shadowing allows chamber support staff to finish work earlier on some sitting nights, and provides a back-up in the event of staffing absences or turnover
- » participation in parliamentary conferences
- » participation in the Parliamentary Law, Practice, and Procedure course currently offered by the University of Tasmania under the auspices of the Australia and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT).

Parliamentary committees

The department continued to provide effective secretariat and advisory support to five House committees and one joint committee dealing with the powers and procedures of the House. Committees supported by the Chamber and Federation Chamber activity area in 2019–20 were as follows:

- » standing committees
 - » Selection Committee
 - » Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration
 - » Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests
 - » Standing Committee on Procedure
 - » Standing Committee on Publications
- » joint committee
 - » Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings.

In 2019–20, those committees held 50 meetings and produced 20 reports. Details of meetings and reports are set out in Appendixes 2 and 3.

Selection Committee

Table Office staff support the Selection Committee in fulfilling three important roles:

- » selecting and programming private members' business and committee and delegation business
- » selecting items of private members' business and committee and delegation business for referral to the Federation Chamber or return to the House
- » considering all bills introduced and determining whether to refer bills directly to House or joint committees for inquiry.

The committee has 11 members: the Speaker (as chair), the chief whips of the three largest parties, four government members and three non-government members. The committee met 18 times during the reporting period and presented 17 reports.

Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration

The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration considers, among other things, estimates of the funding required for the operation of the department each year. When conferring with its counterpart Senate committee—the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing—the House committee may consider estimates of the funding required for the operation of DPS each year.

The committee has nine members: the Speaker (as chair), four government members and four non-government members. It is supported by the Clerk, the Serjeant-at-Arms and other officers of the department. During the year the committee met five times and presented one report.

Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests

The Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests met eight times during the reporting period, and presented two reports to the House. One of the reports was presented under the resolution agreed to by the House to allow individual citizens to have published in Hansard a response to an adverse reference made to them in the House. The other report related to the registration and declaration of members' interests during 2019.

The committee presented one set of alterations of members' interests and four volumes of statements of registrable interests during the period. The department facilitated the transition to online lodgement of registrable interests and notifications of alterations, which has resulted in a more efficient service.

Standing Committee on Procedure

The Standing Committee on Procedure inquires into and reports on the practices and procedures of the House and its committees. It usually meets once each sitting week. In 2019–20, the committee commenced inquiries into the practices and procedures relating to Question Time, the practices and procedures put in place by the House in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the maintenance of the standing orders. The committee undertook a range of inquiry-related activities during this period, especially for the Question Time inquiry.

Standing Committee on Publications

The House Publications Committee considers documents presented to the House that are not covered by the resolutions of the House (of 28 March 2018) and Senate (of 8 February 2018)—or for which the House and Senate have not already made a determination—and recommends to the House whether they should be included in the Parliamentary Papers Series. The committee may confer with the Senate Publications Committee, forming the Joint Committee on Publications. The House Publications Committee met twice during the reporting period, and the Joint Committee on Publications also met twice.

Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings

The *Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946* requires Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) radio and, in some circumstances, ABC television to broadcast the proceedings of parliament. It is the statutory role of the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings to advise parliament on general principles for the allocation of radio broadcasting time between the House and the Senate chambers, and to determine a more detailed schedule of broadcasting allocations. The committee is supported by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

Under the Act, the committee has nine members, including the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. By tradition, the Speaker is chair and the President is vice-chair. The committee meets when required and did not meet during the reporting period.

Improving performance

As discussed earlier, the chamber support areas provided tailored, responsive support to the Speaker, members and other stakeholders in the uncertain and volatile circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Technology continues to facilitate the department's improved performance in supporting the Chamber and Federation Chamber, including through the House Division Recording System and the Online Tabled Documents project.

The department remains committed to developing the procedural capacity of its staff through a range of methods, both formal and informal. The response to new initiatives in this area has been positive, with briefings consistently well attended and with many staff seeking to participate in the tutorial program on procedure.

Outlook

Following the commencement of the Forty-sixth Parliament on 2 July 2019, the focus of the chamber support areas has been on continuing to deliver high-quality services to meet the needs of the Speaker, members and others, to assist the House in fulfilling its representative and legislative roles. The demand for procedural advice remained high, and additional support was provided to members in the unfamiliar circumstances imposed by COVID-19. Demand for advice and support is expected to be sustained in the next year, as the practices of the House continue to respond to the ongoing situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Procedure Office will continue to respond to the changing needs and expectations of stakeholders with regard to the publication of procedural and statistical information. In particular, the office looks forward to increasing its use of social media platforms to deliver engaging and informative content on the role and operations of the House to a wider audience. Background work underway throughout 2019–20 will support the creation of a new edition of *House of Representatives Practice* in due course.

Committee support

The Committee Office supports parliamentary committees in their work of examining policy and legislation, and of scrutinising the executive government. In 2019–20, the Committee Office comprised 10 secretariats that supported 13 House committees and 11 joint committees (see Table 5).

In 2019–20, the budget allocation for this activity was \$9.879 million and expenditure was \$8.433 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 18); staff levels are shown in Table 12.

Table 5: Committees of the Forty-sixth Parliament supported by the Committee Office

House committees	Joint committees
Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources	Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit ^a
Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts	Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Standing Committee on Economics	Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy	Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training	Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport	Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia
Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs	Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth
Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources	Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security ^a
Standing Committee on Petitions	Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works ^a
Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs	Joint Select Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme (established 11 September 2019)
Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue	
Select Committee on Regional Australia (established 25 July 2019)	

a. Joint statutory committee.

Note: Five House internal committees (Appropriations and Administration, Procedure, Publications, Selection, and Privileges and Members' Interests) and the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings are supported by other areas of the department, and are discussed in Parliamentary committees (see pages 41–42).

Committee Office activity

In 2019–20, the Committee Office's support for the diverse work of committees involved:

- » facilitating committees' private meetings, public hearings and site inspections
- » providing procedural and inquiry-related advice to committees and stakeholders
- » fielding inquiries from interested stakeholders about the purpose and progress of inquiries
- » promoting committee inquiries and reports
- » conducting research and analysing evidence received by committees
- » drafting chairs' reports
- » facilitating the adoption and tabling of committee reports.

Overview

During the year, the Committee Office experienced the immense challenges brought by the bushfires of the 2019–20 summer and the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, and resulting restrictions on movement and activity, severely curtailed the ability of committees to undertake their scheduled program of work and travel. In March, the Presiding Officers recommended that committees transition to a virtual setting for all public hearings. Public hearings held in Parliament House operated where essential, and were closed to members of the public. These measures continued throughout the financial year.

Public hearings continued to be broadcast on the Parliament of Australia website, as is the usual practice.

Some committees suspended inquiries during this time, some took steps such as extending submission closing deadlines, and some continued to take evidence and operate in a near-normal fashion.

Despite the year's logistical challenges, the Committee Office was able to successfully support all committees within its remit, and it supported a number of teleconference and videoconference public hearings, and the presentation of a number of committee reports. Tabling speeches of members reflected the professionalism of Committee Office staff, and informal positive feedback received from members throughout the year expressed their satisfaction with the level of support provided.

Committees conducted inquiries on a diverse range of topics, including the following:

- » Public works: the Public Works Committee scrutinised and recommended parliamentary approval of more than \$4.8 billion in expenditure on major public works. This is one of the largest amounts that the committee has scrutinised in a 12-month period and included the pandemic period where the committee continued its work without interruption.
- » Life in regional Australia: the Regional Australia Select Committee had commenced an extensive program of travel to gather views on life in regional communities and towns when travel restrictions were announced. The committee pivoted to holding

virtual hearings to continue to take evidence on changing priorities and new challenges faced by those living in the regions, and held 14 virtual hearings.

- » Nuclear energy: the Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy conducted an inquiry into the conditions in which nuclear energy could be introduced in future.
- » COVID-19: the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade is undertaking an inquiry on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia's foreign affairs, defence and trade. The inquiry is ongoing at the end of the period.
- » Waste and recycling: travel restrictions prevented the Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources Committee from travelling for hearings and site visits for its inquiry into innovative solutions for Australia's waste and recycling industries. Before the restrictions came in, the committee was able to conduct a site visit to the Woodlawn Bioreactor near Tarago in New South Wales. The Woodlawn Bioreactor receives approximate 20 per cent of Sydney's putrescible waste and from that produces enough power to supply over 30,000 homes.
- » Other topics: these include the Australian timber industry, 5G mobile technology, feral and domestic cats, allergies and anaphylaxis, and migration into regional Australia.



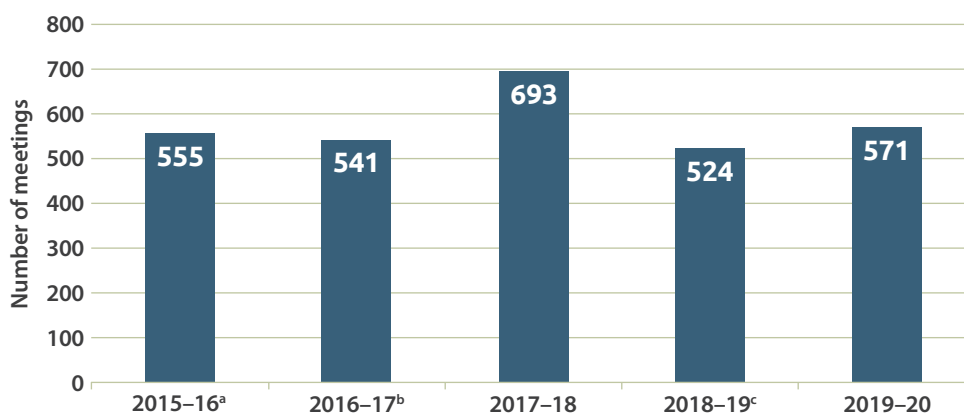
*Members of the Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources alongside representatives of Veolia and the National Waste and Recycling Industry Council at the Woodlawn Bioreactor near Tarago in New South Wales.
Image: Department of the House of Representatives.*

Appendix 3 lists all reports tabled over 2019–20, and current inquiries.

The sustained workload of committees can be seen in Figures 4 and 5, which highlight the number of committee meetings and reports tabled in the year.

Committees within the remit of the Committee Office held 571 meetings, listed in Appendix 2. Figure 4 shows the number of meetings held by committees supported by the Committee Office over the past five years.

Figure 4: Number of committee meetings supported by the Committee Office, 2015–16 to 2019–20

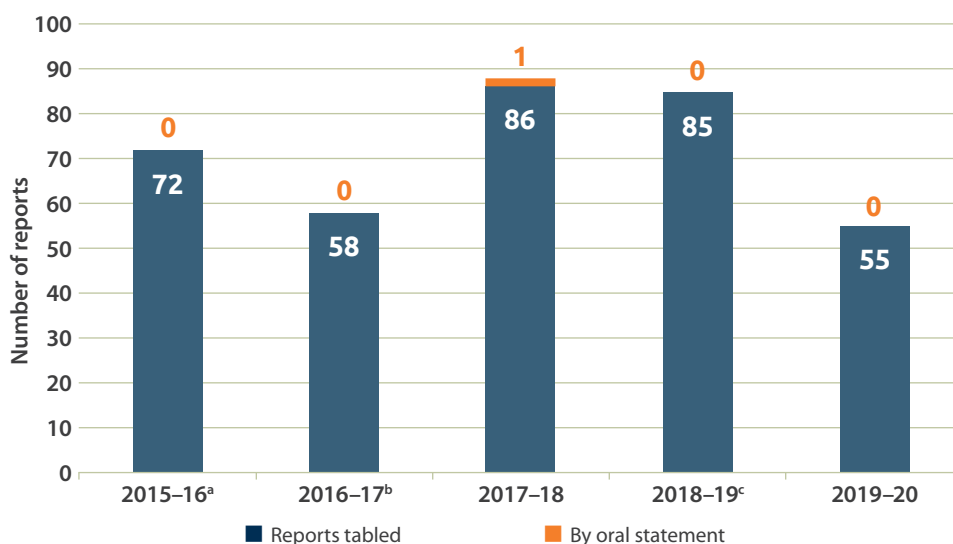


a. The Forty-fourth Parliament ended with the dissolution of both Houses on 9 May 2016.

b. The Forty-fifth Parliament opened on 30 August 2016.

c. The Forty-fifth Parliament ended with the dissolution of the House on 11 April 2019.

Figure 5: Number of reports tabled by committees supported by the Committee Office, 2015–16 to 2019–20



a. The Forty-fourth Parliament ended with the dissolution of both Houses on 9 May 2016.

b. The Forty-fifth Parliament opened on 30 August 2016.

c. The Forty-fifth Parliament ended with the dissolution of the House on 11 April 2019.

Petitions Committee

The Standing Committee on Petitions facilitates the receipt and progression of petitions through the House. The committee can also conduct inquiries and undertake activities on any matter relating to petitions and the petitions system. During this reporting period the committee commenced a project to enhance the information available on the House's petitions webpages to make the process more accessible and easier to understand.

The committee also experienced a marked increase in the number of petitions received. Table 6 shows the number of in-order petitions presented to the House, and the number of signatories, for the past five years. In 2019–20, a total of 498 petitions were presented, compared with 190 in the previous year. The number of signatures increased from 199,084 in the previous year to 804,854 in 2019–20. The committee also presented 13 reports summarising the petitions and ministerial responses being presented.

During 2019–20, the Petitions Committee received an e-petition concerning climate change that collected 404,538 signatures. This e-petition has the largest number of signatures collected since the introduction of e-petitioning in 2016.

Table 6: Petitions and signatories to petitions, 2015–16 to 2019–20

	2015–16	2016–17 ^a	2017–18	2018–19 ^a	2019–20
Number of petitions presented	87	185	424	190	498
Number of signatories	118,846	235,751	371,491	199,084	804,854

a. Election year.

Government responses to committee reports

The government is required by resolution of the House to respond to recommendations contained in a report by a House or joint committee within six months of the report's tabling. This resolution was adopted by the House on 29 September 2010.

During 2019–20, 16 reports presented by committees supported by the Committee Office contained recommendations that required a government response. Of these 16 reports:

- » government responses to three reports were received within the six-month timeframe
- » three reports have not received a response within the six-month timeframe
- » the six-month timeframe has not elapsed for the 10 remaining reports awaiting a response.

A total of 17 responses to reports presented in previous financial years were also received.

Information and communications technology

During 2019–20, the Committee Office worked with DPS on preparations for a transition to Office 365 and Windows 10. To support and understand the implications of this transition, the Committee Office Future Systems Working Group was established, and has focused on a refresh of committee information and communications technology (ICT) systems.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, secretariats transitioned to working remotely, and parliamentary committees adapted to the use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing facilities when conducting proceedings. Over the next reporting period, the Committee Office will continue to work closely with DPS on the expected deployment of Office 365 and Windows 10 for committee secretariats.

15th Biennial Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees Conference

From 6 to 8 November 2019, the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit hosted the thirtieth anniversary conference of the Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees (ACPAC)—‘Changes and challenges over the last 30 years’. The conference brought together 75 delegates from across Australia, the Asia–Pacific and Africa to discuss emerging issues in public scrutiny and the changing role of parliamentary and public institutions.

Delegates included representatives and staff from parliamentary public accounts committees, other similar parliamentary scrutiny bodies, Auditors-General, Parliamentary Budget Officers and associated private sector organisations.

The conference presented the opportunity to welcome new parliamentary dialogue as well as sustain and strengthen existing inter-parliamentary dialogue about the challenges and work of respective parliaments and legislatures, with a focus on the work and workings of public accounts committees and their counterpart committees.



Delegates attending the Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees Conference at Parliament House. Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

Facilitating international visits

Before COVID-19-related international and domestic travel restrictions, committees undertook international visits as part of inquiries.

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters visited Dublin, Ireland, from 5 to 8 November 2019, to participate in a meeting of the International Grand Committee on Disinformation and 'Fake News' as part of its inquiry into all aspects of the conduct of the 2019 federal election. Attendance was at the invitation of Ireland's Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment of the Houses of the Oireachtas, who invited Australia and several other international parliaments to participate in the third meeting of the International Grand Committee as *ex officio* members.

The meeting examined the theme 'How to advance international collaboration in the regulation of harmful content, hate speech and electoral interference online', and took into account evidence of interference, hate and harmful content, the structural problems involved, and evolving regulatory structures. While in Dublin, the delegation also met with members of the Houses of the Oireachtas, representatives from government departments, the Irish Australian Chamber of Commerce, representatives from the media and academics.

Four members of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy travelled to India from 3 to 7 November 2019. Having commenced an inquiry into the prerequisites for nuclear energy in Australia, the committee used the visit to gather background information on India's energy profile and future energy needs, and peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Two members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories travelled to the United Kingdom to attend the Antarctic Parliamentarians Assembly conference and related events in London from 1 to 4 December 2019. During the Forty-fifth Parliament, the committee had inquired into Antarctica, and its representation at the conference built upon the committee's work in relation to the Australian Antarctic Territory.



Participants at the third International Grand Committee meeting in Dublin, Ireland.
Image: Houses of the Oireachtas, Ireland.

Improving performance

The Committee Office will continue to seek to find ways to improve the services provided to committees. This includes adapting more effectively to changes in secretariat workload through mobility between secretariats and increased recruitment activity.

Informal training programs for new staff will continue, with an emphasis on developing knowledge of committee procedure. The Committee Office will seek to explore videoconferencing and teleconferencing facilities in the event that remote meetings continue.

Outlook

The Committee Office continues to support the many ongoing inquiries currently being undertaken by committees, and expects that committee activity will resume to its previously high levels as restrictions on movement are eased.

A key priority for the Committee Office continues to be investing in the professional development of its staff—including in important areas such as procedural knowledge and leadership skills—to ensure members of parliament continue to be well supported.



*Members of the Standing Committee on Economics hearing from the Reserve Bank of Australia.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

Inter-parliamentary relations and capacity-building

The Australian Parliament's international program focuses on strengthening engagement and cooperation with parliaments internationally, with an emphasis on parliamentary relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The program's activities and projects in 2019–20 were coordinated by the International and Parliamentary Relations Office, which incorporates the Parliamentary Skills Centre, with input from all four parliamentary departments. The International and Parliamentary Relations Office is administered by the department, and receives some funding from the Department of the Senate.

The International and Parliamentary Relations Office manages incoming and outgoing delegation programs, membership of international parliamentary organisations, and the international interests and travel of members and senators. Within the office, the Parliamentary Skills Centre is responsible for all parliamentary strengthening and capacity-building programs of the Australian Parliament, including study programs for visiting parliamentarians and staff of other parliaments.

The International and Parliamentary Relations Office administers parliamentary regional networks and parliamentary country groups, as established under the auspices of the Australian National Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It also administers the parliament's non-country friendship groups.

In 2019–20 the budget allocation for this activity was \$2.426 million and expenditure was \$1.767 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 19); staff levels are shown in Table 12.

Performance summary

The majority of parliamentary delegation travel occurred during the latter half of 2019. From early March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on international travel, with outgoing and incoming delegations ceasing. As at the end of the financial year, Australia's international borders remain closed and the parliamentary delegation program remains suspended. Engagement with parliamentary regional networks and parliamentary capacity-building activities has transferred to virtual platforms, where possible, pending lifting of travel restrictions.

Parliamentary engagement

During 2019–20, the International and Parliamentary Relations Office coordinated 15 official overseas delegation programs, involving visits by 40 delegates to 19 countries; this included attendance at nine assemblies, conferences, workshops and seminars, and other visits, including Presiding Officer visits (see Appendix 7). There were also 17 visits to Australia from other countries: three hosted visits by parliamentary delegations (see Appendix 5)

and 14 other visits (see Appendix 6), as well as 14 parliamentary capacity-building activities completed (see Appendix 8).

The delegation program had a Europe–Asia focus through the first half of 2019–20. Of the visits to Australia, 13 were from parliaments representing Europe or Asia, including a visit by a delegation from the European Union. Of the 15 overseas visits from Australia, 10 were to countries in Europe or Asia, including a visit by the Presiding Officers to attend the G20 Speakers’ Summit in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2019.

During the reporting period, the Australian Parliament welcomed visits by a number of Presiding Officers, including His Excellency Mr Demetris Syllouris, President of the House of Representatives of Cyprus and Mr Wolfgang Kubicki, Vice President of the German Bundestag. Other parliamentary visits included members of the Japan–Australia Parliamentary Friendship Association and the France–Australia Senate Friendship Group.

The work of outgoing and incoming parliamentary delegations continued to be reported on the Parliament of Australia website.

Outgoing and incoming delegations and diplomatic representatives gave positive feedback on the quality of the programs, both at debrief meetings and through correspondence. For example, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany thanked International and Parliamentary Relations Office staff for their ‘efforts and the insightful program’, with the program of meetings and discussions planned for a delegation from the German Bundestag ‘an excellent reflection of the broad Australian–German relationship’.

Use of an online survey emailed to delegates continued to provide opportunities to obtain feedback from members of outgoing delegations. All survey respondents for outgoing delegations indicated that they were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘highly satisfied’ with the arrangements made by the International and Parliamentary Relations Office.

Parliamentary cooperation



*The final plenary session of the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum, 15 January 2020.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

The Australian Parliament maintained its strong commitment to regional and international parliamentary cooperation in 2019–20. Delegations attended the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly, the United Nations General Assembly, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference (for more detail, see Appendix 7).

From March 2020, a number of international inter-parliamentary meetings were delivered virtually. International and Parliamentary Relations Office staff participated in webinars and facilitated the participation of Australian delegates.

Hosting of the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum

The Australian Parliament hosted the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF28) in January 2020, welcoming over 340 delegates from 19 APPF Member Countries and 10 observer countries. A founding member of the APPF, the Australian Parliament last hosted this annual meeting in 2000. Providing organisational support for hosting APPF28 was a major undertaking, led by a dedicated secretariat within the department and drawing on the assistance of volunteers from across the four parliamentary departments.

Following the death of the Honorary President, Hon Yasuhiro Nakasone, the forum expressed its condolences to Japan and the family of Mr Nakasone, and elected the Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives as President of the APPF until the next meeting scheduled to be hosted by the Republic of Korea in 2021. International and Parliamentary

Relations Office staff have been providing ongoing secretariat support to the Speaker in his capacity as President of the APPF, including support for the Speaker's engagement with his regional counterparts on organisational matters and in promoting the APPF as an international parliamentary forum.

Parliamentary strengthening

The Parliamentary Skills Centre has responsibility for coordinating the parliament's capacity-building activities. With the generous support of members, senators, former members and colleagues from throughout the parliamentary service, as well as state and territory parliaments, the centre facilitates the Australian Parliament's capacity-building and parliamentary strengthening activities with the parliaments of Pacific island nations and other countries.

The Parliamentary Skills Centre continued to coordinate activities under the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Fund with applications for equipment and other support approved for Nauru, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The COVID-19 pandemic and closure of international borders impacted on the ability to deliver some items to the Pacific, with laptops and Hansard equipment procured for Nauru and Tuvalu being stored in Canberra until delivery corridors are re-established into these countries.

Support was provided to the parliament of Vanuatu through the United Nations Development Programme. A research officer from the Department of the House of Representatives joined a group of researchers to work with the local secretariat to support the drafting of budget materials for parliamentarians.

Two staff from the department travelled to Myanmar in July and October 2019 to assist with training at the Myanmar parliament in a program coordinated and funded by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Development Programme, and Myanmar parliamentarians visited the Australian Parliament as part of a political mentoring program run by the International Women's Development Agency.



The Speaker, the Hon Tony Smith MP, and Senator the Hon Scott Ryan, President of the Senate, with delegates from the Legislative Assembly of Samoa.

Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

Departmental staff and colleagues from all parliamentary departments, with coordination by the Parliamentary Skills Centre, contributed to study programs for visiting members and staff of numerous overseas parliaments including Fiji, Malaysia and Samoa. Feedback from participants in study visit programs was consistently positive.

Following successful study visits by senior officers from the Lok Sabha (lower house of the parliament of India) to the Australian Parliament in 2017 and 2018, staff from the Lok Sabha again participated in a study program on parliamentary procedure and administration in October 2019.

In the first half of 2020, parliamentary capacity-building activities were increasingly restricted by the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. The annual Inter-Parliamentary Study Program for parliamentary staff had been scheduled for March 2020, with participants from 14 international parliaments including Botswana, Brazil, Malaysia, Nauru and Uganda. The program was indefinitely postponed in response to the rapidly evolving situation and increasing travel restrictions.

Between March and June 2020, the Parliamentary Skills Centre worked with regional counterparts and the United Nations Development Programme to consider remote delivery options for parliamentary capacity-building work.

Improving performance

The temporary ceasing of delegation travel in 2019–20 provided an opportunity for the International and Parliamentary Relations Office to review operational policies and standard procedures. A number of efficiencies were identified, and new manuals and procedural guides were developed to standardise planning and support knowledge-sharing.

Development work commenced on the International and Parliamentary Relations Office Virtual Office in collaboration with the department's Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office and DPS. Once complete, the Virtual Office will streamline work processes and provide the International and Parliamentary Relations Office with a central project management capability for all delegation-related activity.



*Bilateral meeting between the Australian and Japanese delegations at the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

Outlook

The year ahead presents continuing challenges for parliamentary engagement, with many annual inter-parliamentary activities cancelled or postponed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and parliamentary capacity-building opportunities similarly restricted. Resumption of incoming and outgoing delegations will be subject to the lifting of travel restrictions.

International and Parliamentary Relations Office staff will continue to provide secretariat support to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Australia Region, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (Australia Region) and the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum.

The Parliamentary Skills Centre will continue to respond to invitations to the Australian Parliament to collaborate on parliamentary strengthening, giving due consideration to the limited resources available for such work. The Australian Parliament largely relies on funding from government or other sources, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to support much of its parliamentary strengthening work with other parliaments.

Community relations and awareness

The department promotes the work of the House through a range of activities aimed at different sectors of the community. In 2019–20 the budget allocation for this activity was \$0.903 million and expenditure was \$0.702 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 21).

Performance summary

During 2019–20 the department continued to utilise its communication channels to increase community engagement and improve public knowledge of the work of the House and committees. The seminar program was once again well attended and received positive feedback, with the demand for customised seminars continuing to grow.

The department continued its work to support the school visits program and providing support to the Parliamentary Education Office. The seventh My First Speech competition was held, with 86 entries received from school students across Australia keen to imagine themselves making their first speech as a parliamentarian. The parliamentary internship program continued in 2019–20, with 74 students placed with a member or senator during the period (noting that the format for Semester 1, 2020 was impacted by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic).

Media and publications

The department uses its electronic media distribution channels to expand the reach of parliamentary business and educational information. Its Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn accounts provide valuable information to the general public, and through these platforms the department receives consistently positive feedback. During the reporting period, the department's Facebook subscriber base increased by 12 per cent (from 7,105 to 7,999 subscribers) and its Twitter following increased by almost 3 per cent, surpassing 47,000 followers. The House's YouTube account, used for publishing replays of Question Time and an 'About the House' series of short videos, grew by 29 per cent in the reporting period, and now has over 8,500 subscribers.

The department also produces the *About the House* newsletter. This publication aims to promote committee activity, and provide information about the House and its procedures. Launched at the beginning of the Forty-fifth Parliament, the newsletter has over 2,200 subscribers, an increase of 7 per cent over the previous reporting period.



The Department of the House of Representatives' YouTube account, which grew by 29 per cent this year.
Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

The department has continued to issue a large volume of media releases on behalf of committees, the Speaker and the Clerk of the House. In total, the department issued 222 media releases during the reporting period. In August 2019, an updated 'About the House News' page on aph.gov.au was launched, providing members of the public and other interested stakeholders a more convenient way to access media content published by the House of Representatives. During the reporting period, the 'About the House News' page received over 73,000 unique page views.

Seminars

The department's seminar program is designed to raise awareness of the work of the House, particularly among employees of government agencies. The program includes a series of seminars covering the parliament, the budget, and the processes relating to legislation and committees, as well as custom seminars for individual departments.

During the second half of 2019, seven seminars were held with a total of 173 participants. Across the whole reporting period, this is a 51 per cent decrease in participation from 2018–19; however, no seminars were conducted during the first half of 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Feedback on the seminars held was positive, with 94 per cent of surveyed attendees saying that their objectives were met, and over 98 per cent giving a positive score for the content, detail and presenters.

Towards the end of the reporting period, responsibility for the administration of the department's seminar program was transferred from Parliamentary and Business Information Services to the Procedure Office.

My First Speech competition

In October 2019, the department held the seventh annual My First Speech competition. The competition is open to Australian secondary students in Years 10 to 12. Entrants are asked to imagine themselves as a newly elected member of the House of Representatives, and to write a three-minute speech on issues they are passionate about and record themselves presenting it.

Submissions were reviewed by a panel of members, including the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Finalists were flown to Canberra to receive their awards at a ceremony on 15 October 2019, and were also given a personalised tour of the Australian Parliament.

Parliamentary assistants program

In 2019–20, the parliamentary assistants program, managed by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, entered its twentieth year. The program offers university students part-time employment in the House of Representatives to promote understanding of, and engagement with, the work of the parliament (see page 71 for further details).



Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, with the finalists of the My First Speech competition.
Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

Parliamentary internship program

The Australian National Internships Program has operated since 1993 under an agreement between the Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University and, under the Commonwealth Parliamentary Internships component of the program, the Australian Parliament's Presiding Officers. Australian and international students enrolled at the university under the program undertake an internship placement as part of their formal course of undergraduate study.

In the second semester of 2019, 39 students were placed with a member or senator. In the first semester of 2020, 35 students were placed with a member or senator. During their placement, each student completes a research project on a subject agreed to by their host. The report is assessed by the university and counts towards the student's degree.

Semester 1, 2020 placements at Parliament House and electorate offices were impacted by restrictions put in place in response to COVID-19, and the Australian National University supported interns to work on their research projects remotely. The department continued to have a representative on the Australian National Internships Program's advisory board and parliamentary steering committee.

Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program

Each year, a small number of Australian Defence Force representatives spend a week at Parliament House, hosted by a member or senator. Arrangements for participation by members and senators are made through the Assistant Minister for Defence in conjunction with the Department of Defence. In October 2019, 27 Defence Force representatives were hosted by senators and members through the program. The departments of the House of Representatives and the Senate collaborate to support the program and provide orientation seminars on the work of the chambers and committees.

Parliamentary Education Office

Jointly funded by the departments of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Parliamentary Education Office delivers parliamentary education services to teachers, students and others across Australia. To date, over two million students have expanded their knowledge of the Australian Parliament through participating in a Parliamentary Education Office program.

In addition to operational management from both departments, the Parliamentary Education Office is guided by an advisory committee, comprising interested members and senators, which meets twice a year and reports to the Presiding Officers.

The full-time equivalent staffing level for the Parliamentary Education Office in 2019–20 was 11.4 (compared to 10.6 in 2018–19). The cost of providing the service of the Parliamentary Education Office in 2019–20 was \$1.6 million.



Students from Guildford Grammar School participating in a Parliamentary Education Office session.
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

Education programs: on site, outreach and digital

The Parliamentary Education Office delivers education programs on site at Parliament House, in classrooms across Australia and digitally through videoconferencing, and is recognised as a leader in civics and citizenship education in Australia. School visitation to Parliament House has been majorly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic: 61,344 students from 72 schools across Australia participated in 2019–20, a 34 per cent decrease on 2018–19 student participation rates.

In 2019–20, the Parliamentary Education Office delivered outreach to 967 participants in two states: Queensland and Tasmania. Additional outreach planned for the 2020 calendar year was cancelled due to restrictions put in place in response to COVID-19.

The number of students and teachers who take part in the Parliamentary Education Office videoconferencing program continues to increase, with 3,036 participants in 2019–20, an increase of over 200 per cent on 2018–19 participation rates. In response to COVID-19-related restrictions, the Parliamentary Education Office scaled up its delivery of programs via videoconference, and in the last four months of the financial year delivered 72 sessions to 1,893 students.

Content: online and print

The Parliamentary Education Office websites provide information about parliament and curriculum-aligned teaching resources for all Australian teachers and students. In October 2019 the redeveloped main website was launched, and user testing indicates accessibility, navigation and search functionality all work particularly well for the intended audiences. In 2019–20 a total of 916,318 users (representing 2.29 million unique page views) were recorded.

The office also produced and distributed a range of publications during the reporting period, including the redeveloped *Parliament in Pictures*, and *Australia's Constitution* pocket edition produced in partnership with the Australian Government Solicitor.

Services for members and senators

The Parliamentary Education Office provides dedicated support to encourage and assist senators and members to engage with schools and students. Senators and members are offered a complimentary annual allocation of education and information materials for students, teachers and others in their communities. Senators and members can also request a tailored brochure, *Representing You*, to assist them when explaining their work as an elected representative. In 2019–20, 150 parliamentarians requested their allocation.

Parliamentary Education Office outlook

The Parliamentary Education Office is working towards safely resuming face-to-face programming and preparing for the resumption of school visits to Parliament House from July 2020. It will also continue to promote videoconferencing programs as a method to engage students and teachers who are unable to visit Canberra.

Through the ongoing provision of high-calibre digital and print content for parliamentarians, teachers and students, the Parliamentary Education Office will continue to provide quality parliamentary education services for citizens across the country.

Outlook

The department will continue to adapt its community relations and awareness activities to reflect the continuing restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As can be seen in the increased growth in the department's website and video offerings, members of the public remain interested in the work of the House of Representatives and committees.

In the forward period, the department aims to continue to grow its communication channels to best meet our stakeholders' expectations, and will work with the other parliamentary departments to enhance the Parliament of Australia website to improve accessibility and navigation. A continued focus on analytics across the department's websites and social media channels will also assist the department to improve the delivery of parliamentary information to the public.

Following the cancellation of several seminars in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in the year ahead the department will improve its capability to deliver seminars online. This will include providing additional tools and training to staff, as well as the development of tailored materials. It is expected that this online capability will complement in-person seminars at Parliament House when they resume.

Members' and corporate support

Members' and corporate support is provided by the Finance Office, the Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office, the People Strategies Office and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, all of which report to the Serjeant-at-Arms. The offices liaise with the Department of Finance and DPS to provide comprehensive services to departmental staff as well as to members and their staff, including:

- » facilitating committees' private meetings, public hearings and site inspections
- » providing advice and support on financial and human resource management, as well as records management, publishing and office services
- » paying members' salaries and allowances
- » organising members' office accommodation, furniture and fittings
- » providing mail and courier services, and a booking service for committee rooms and chamber gallery seating
- » maintaining and publishing key information about members and former members.

In 2019–20 the budget allocation for this activity was \$8.750 million and expenditure was \$9.470 million. There were expenses of \$2.557 million that did not require an appropriation; the budget allocation for these was \$2.526 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 23).

Performance summary

A high priority for the program area is to provide advice and support to the Speaker and the Speaker's Office on the control and management of the precincts, chambers and gallery security, and ceremonial and other events at Parliament House. Staff work closely with colleagues in the Department of the Senate, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Australian Federal Police and DPS.

Arrangements to support the safe operation of the House and committees during the COVID-19 pandemic were a significant area of focus. Seating in the Chamber, Federation Chamber and committee rooms was adjusted to meet social distancing requirements. Revised seating plans were produced for the Chamber, typically on a daily basis, with microphones installed for use by those members not allocated seats on any given day. These measures enabled nearly all members to progressively take part in sittings while still maintaining safe numbers in the Chamber, particularly during divisions, quorums and Question Time. Hand sanitiser was placed at entrances and other locations in the Chamber, Federation Chamber and committee rooms, and chamber support staff engaged in frequent cleaning of surfaces during sittings.



*Revised seating arrangements to comply with COVID-19 social distancing requirements, 11 June 2020.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

Several services for members were also suspended or reduced, including some mail runs, delivery of water and documents to members in the Chamber and Federation Chamber, placement of stationery and water in committee rooms, and provision of shared hard-copy newspapers in the chamber lobbies. Special arrangements were put in place for the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery, including use of enclosed chamber galleries normally reserved for visiting school groups, to enable the media to cover proceedings while maintaining safe numbers in the Chamber and surrounds.

Similar arrangements were made for departmental operations more generally, with signage placed in common areas to signify occupancy limits, an audit undertaken of departmental accommodation to ensure that social distancing requirements can be met as staff return to work, and supply to all offices of hand sanitiser, soap dispensers and travel packs for relevant staff.

The ongoing program of building works to improve security at Parliament House also remained a priority. Staff welcomed the opening in August 2019 of a redeveloped House of Representatives entrance and carpark lift, following the use through the previous year of a temporary entrance to the House of Representatives wing.

Opening of the Forty-sixth Parliament



*The Serjeant-at-Arms leads the procession of members of the House of Representatives to the Senate Chamber to hear the address of the Governor-General, the Hon David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).
Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.*

A major activity for the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office during the reporting period was the opening of the Forty-sixth Parliament. This involved ceremonial duties, gallery attendance and security, and logistics associated with members' accommodation at Parliament House. The opening was marked by ceremonies and traditional practices derived from those of the United Kingdom parliament and included a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony to pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land.

Address in Reply

The Address in Reply for the Forty-sixth Parliament was presented to the Governor-General at Government House on 4 December 2019. The Address in Reply is the formal acknowledgement by the House to the Governor-General for their speech given at an opening of parliament. The address is printed on goatskin parchment and signed by the Speaker and the Clerk.



The Speaker, the Hon Tony Smith MP, presents the Address in Reply to the Governor-General, the Hon David Hurley AC DSC (Retd). Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

Media services

The Serjeant-at-Arms and staff continued to work with the various media bureaus and the governing committee of the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery to ensure compliance with the rules for media-related activity in Parliament House and its precincts.

During the year, the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod and their delegates liaised closely with the press gallery to balance media access, security and parliamentary requirements on a daily basis and at major events, including the opening of the Forty-sixth Parliament and the swearing-in of His Excellency General the Hon David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) as Governor-General.

On a day-to-day level, the Serjeant-at-Arms and delegates work with members' and ministers' offices, representatives of the press gallery, the Australian Federal Police and the Parliamentary Security Service to ensure that media events in the precincts are conducted in compliance with the media rules and with minimum inconvenience to all.

During the year, the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office responded to around 150 requests to film or photograph in the private areas of the building.

Information for members

As part of the department's commitment to keep members and their staff informed about developments in the House, five editions of the members' bulletin *House Update* were published, and five procedural briefing sessions were held during the year. Two planned procedural briefings were not held in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Videos on aspects of parliamentary procedure were also made available to members, their staff, and members of the Speaker's panel, on the House Connect members' intranet site.

Accommodation services

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office provides a concierge service for members. As part of that, it coordinates accommodation, capital works and routine maintenance services in the House of Representatives wing.

During the year, the office arranged 40 office relocations as a result of changes to the ministry and office-holder positions. That number is significantly lower than the 102 relocations in 2018–19, which included the swearing-in of the first and second Morrison ministries and several relocations arising from the 2019 federal election. The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office worked closely with the government and opposition whips to ensure that the relocations were completed quickly. The office also coordinated 615 requests to supply and move furniture (compared with 473 requests in 2018–19). All tasks were performed within agreed timeframes, to agreed standards, and to the satisfaction of senior office holders and individual members.

Maintenance, access and transport services

Requests for maintenance work in members' suites are coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, and include both emergency and routine work. During the year, the office coordinated 348 emergency requests, all of which were attended to promptly. In addition, the office coordinated 174 routine requests for repairs or alterations to suites or common areas. The office takes a proactive approach by performing office shutdowns and inspections over the autumn and winter recesses, so that issues can be identified, reported and addressed while parliament is not sitting.

The office coordinated 584 requests for assistance with telephone faults, relocations and allocations of telephone numbers (compared with 1,048 requests in 2018–19). Faults reported were referred to telephone support in DPS within five minutes of receipt, and appropriate timeframes for resolution were agreed with the affected areas.

As the area responsible for access to members' suites, the office approved 1,011 requests by DPS and contractors working on behalf of DPS for access to suites and general circulation areas for works related to general maintenance, services and projects. This is a small increase on the previous year (998 requests).

Since September 2019 access by DPS and its contractors to suites in the House of Representatives wing has been managed through an online Authority to Work approval system. The online system has significantly reduced manual handling of paper forms for all parties, and has improved visibility for Serjeant-at-Arms' Office staff over the schedule of works in the House of Representatives wing.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office operates a Transport Office that delivers a parliamentary shuttle service during sitting periods. The shuttle provides a readily available, secure car-with-driver service in Canberra for members. In 2019–20, the Transport Office managed some 7,720 bookings from members, compared with 6,630 bookings in 2018–19 (figures exclude unbooked shuttle trips from the House of Representatives entrance). This represents a 16 per cent increase in bookings on the previous year, reflecting a busy sitting period in the second half of 2019. A decrease in bookings was noted in 2020, reflecting the reduced sittings due to COVID-19.

Parliament House security

The Serjeant-at-Arms represents the department on the Security Management Board. The board is established pursuant to section 65A of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, to advise the Presiding Officers on security policy and the management of security measures for Parliament House. The board met four times during the reporting period.

The department is also represented on three other security-related consultative groups, all chaired by the Australian Federal Police. The Incident Planning and Response Committee is attended by representatives of the parliamentary departments and several external agencies. It meets before meetings of the Security Management Board in order to provide specialist advice to the board. The Joint Management Group is attended by representatives of the parliamentary departments, the Department of Finance and the Australian Federal Police. This group meets weekly to consider security-related matters and coordinate responses at the operational level. The third group, the Emergency Management Working Group, is also attended by representatives of the parliamentary departments, the Department of Finance and the Australian Federal Police. The primary role of the Emergency Management Working Group is to develop, coordinate and facilitate security exercises at Parliament House, as determined and scheduled by the Incident Planning and Response Committee.

The department has a business continuity network to coordinate contingency plans for work areas in the event of business disruptions, with a particular focus this year on responding to COVID-19. The department also ran a desktop scenario exercise in November 2019 for staff of the Procedure Office, to test their responses in the event of emergencies disrupting sittings. Further exercises are planned for other areas of the department.

Security screening

Certain guests are exempt from security screening on entry to Parliament House. Approvals for any other exemptions are made jointly by the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod. During the year, exemptions were approved for 10 groups and individuals (compared with 19 in 2018–19).

Information and communications technology

Under the parliamentary ICT service-delivery framework, most of the department's ICT functions are provided by DPS. The framework is underpinned by a memorandum of understanding and service-level agreement between the parliamentary departments.

In support of this arrangement, the department continued to participate in a range of ICT advisory and management committees.

The Strategic ICT Group, which comprises senior parliamentary staff, provides strategic advice on ICT strategy, policy and risk. It considers the priorities for DPS capital expenditure on replacing or upgrading parliamentary business systems and closely monitors the service-level agreement. It met four times in the reporting period. The Serjeant-at-Arms is the department's representative on the committee.

Information services

During the year, the department continued to work with DPS and the other parliamentary departments to develop new ICT systems and enhance existing applications. These systems support the work of the House, parliamentary committees and members, and include the:

- » Content Manager 9.3 (an upgrade from HPE Records Manager 8.3)
- » Online Tabled Documents project (to enable the electronic receipt and publishing of documents tabled in the House and Senate)
- » Common Data Access Platform (a new centralised data source based on a revised information architecture)
- » Parliamentarian Information Portal (a replacement for the Members Information Database)
- » International and Parliamentary Relations Office Virtual Office (a replacement for the Parliamentary Relations Office Database)
- » venue management system (enhancements to the existing system)
- » Shared Committee Information Database and Report Builder (enhancements to existing systems)
- » Parliamentary Procedural Records System (used to record and retrieve information on procedural events and precedents)
- » Authority to Work (a new online process for the request of works within the House of Representatives)
- » department's intranet
- » e-petitions system
- » Technology One Finance (migration from an on-premise to a cloud-based solution)
- » Technology One eRecruitment
- » House Division Recording System
- » Australian Parliament's delegation portal for outgoing delegations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department worked closely with DPS to ensure staff could access departmental ICT systems to work remotely in support of the parliament.

The department continues to use its electronic document and records management system to file and manage records electronically. During the reporting period a formal project was initiated in conjunction with the other parliamentary departments to upgrade this system to the latest version. This project is due for completion in 2020–21. Other significant information management activities undertaken during the year include the Records Authority review project, due for completion in early 2020–21, and ongoing digitisation of significant paper collections to improve accessibility. The department is also participating in a working group comprising representatives from all parliamentary departments and collecting areas to develop a Digital Preservation Framework for the records of the parliament and the parliamentary departments.

The department continued to support House of Representatives pages on the Parliament of Australia website, the consolidated intranet portal for senators and members, the portal for outgoing parliamentary delegations and the departmental intranet site. There is an ongoing focus on updating content and improving user experience of intranet and Parliament of Australia webpages.

Digital strategy

The vision and direction for the future delivery of digital services for the parliamentary departments is outlined in the Australian Parliament Digital Strategy 2019–2022. The strategy is a statement of intent which is intended to:

- » provide an overarching reference to guide all digital decision-making, particularly investment and architectural design
- » set enterprise ICT direction and priorities for the parliament that align with business needs
- » establish an agreed understanding of digital direction and priorities in support of the parliament's business.

The department is continuing to work with DPS and the other parliamentary departments to implement initiatives and improvements under the digital strategy.

Parliamentary assistants program

The parliamentary assistants program is managed by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office. Parliamentary assistants are university students who perform the roles of messengerial attendants for an average of 10 hours per week with rosters planned around student commitments and the requirements of the House.

Six students took part in the program in 2019–20: three were existing assistants, and three were new appointments. The new assistants are all studying at universities in Canberra.



Parliamentary assistants Ms Brianna Woodhead, Mr Arthur Treloar and Ms Ella Gillespie.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

Members' salaries

All processing of members' salaries and entitlements by the People Strategies Office was in accordance with legislation and administrative decisions. In the 2020 members' survey, 95 per cent of members said that they were satisfied with support for salary payments.

Corporate support

The department was in compliance with internal and external governance and reporting requirements throughout the year. However, based on the results of the internal staff survey, operational performance indicators for finance, human resources and other corporate support services were not met in 2019–20.

Outlook

In 2020–21, the department will continue to provide advice and services of a high standard to support the Speaker, members in Parliament House and the department. Priorities for the members' and corporate support program during the year include:

- » in response to COVID-19, ongoing support for special arrangements for sittings of the House and Federation Chamber, meetings of parliamentary committees and general departmental operations
- » planning for the resumption of school visits to Parliament House from July 2020, and contingency planning for any re-opening of the chamber galleries to the public

- » arrangements for the October 2020 presentation of the federal budget and the opposition leader's speech in reply, including logistical support for the budget lock-up, seating arrangements in the chamber galleries and coverage of events by the press gallery.



*His Excellency Mr Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, addresses the Australian Parliament, 10 February 2020.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

Schools hospitality

The department receives a special appropriation to provide modest hospitality to school groups visiting Parliament House. School visits are coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, working in partnership with the Parliamentary Education Office and the Visitor Experience Office of DPS.

In 2019–20 expenditure for the schools hospitality program activity was \$0.216 million. Results against performance criteria are summarised in the annual performance statement (page 25).

Performance summary

In 2019–20, 86,315 school students participated in educational tours of Parliament House, down from 124,831 in the previous year (see Table 7). The reduction was due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the closure of Parliament House to the public. The uncertainty caused by COVID-19 led to significant activity for the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office in managing cancellations and re-booking of school visits.

Table 7: Students visiting Parliament House, by location and year, 2015–16 to 2019–20

Year	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Other	Total
2015–16	3,004	64,438	654	16,056	5,849	1,621	18,950	5,159	13	115,744
2016–17	2,783	65,653	686	15,828	5,610	1,683	19,971	5,440	–	117,654
2017–18	3,030	64,366	788	17,131	5,896	1,942	20,810	5,125	–	119,088
2018–19	2,904	69,333	715	17,766	6,340	1,784	21,054	4,935	–	124,831
2019–20	1,230	46,660	444	14,883	4,565	1,730	12,695	4,108	–	86,315

All visiting students participated in a guided tour and visited both the House and Senate chambers; 74 per cent (64,155) received hospitality and 71 per cent (61,344) participated in the Parliamentary Education Office program (see pages 61–62 for more information on the activities of the Parliamentary Education Office).

Outlook

In partnership with colleagues from DPS and the Parliamentary Education Office, staff are preparing for the resumption of school visits to Parliament House from July 2020. At 30 June 2020, 112,041 students from 1,597 schools had been booked for the following 12 months, noting that these figures remain subject to change due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Last year at the same time 125,263 students from 3,432 schools had been booked.



Part 3

Management and accountability

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Ms Claessa Surtees, Clerk of the House of Representatives, with Australia Day Achievement Medallion recipients Mr Glenn Worthington (left) and Mr Richard Selth (right).

Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

Corporate governance

The department is responsible for the provision of procedural, information and administrative services to members, the House, and the broader parliament. As Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives, the Speaker's role is in some ways analogous to that of a minister of state in relation to an executive government department. The *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* restates the principles that the legislative arm of government is separate from the executive arm, and that its staff are responsible to the Australian Parliament rather than to the government of the day. The Speaker oversees administration of the department and is accountable to the House in respect of that role. The Clerk, who is responsible under the *Parliamentary Service Act* for leading the department and its day-to-day management, reports to and advises the Speaker on departmental matters.

The department's corporate functions and staff provide critical support that enables the department to deliver programs and services. The department's corporate area is focused on providing quality, timely services, and on being responsive to the changing policy and operational needs of the department. This section discusses the department's governance structure and support services, which provide a framework to ensure accountability and the overall effectiveness of the department.

Governance structure

Legislation

The Australian parliamentary service, established by the *Parliamentary Service Act*, includes the Department of the House of Representatives as one of the four parliamentary departments. The Act also provides for the independence of the Clerk in that person's advisory functions; it establishes an office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives; and it confers responsibility for managing the department on the Clerk, under the Speaker.

The department's operations are governed by the *Parliamentary Service Act* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). Other legislation, including the *Fair Work Act 2009*, also applies to the operations of the department. Together, these Acts set out the Clerk's formal responsibilities for managing the department.

Executive and senior management

As at 30 June 2020, the department's Executive comprised the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and four Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 staff: the Clerk Assistant (Table), Clerk Assistant (Procedure), Clerk Assistant (Committees) and the Serjeant-at-Arms. Each SES Band 1 officer is responsible for one or more of the department's offices (see Figure 1 on page 10). The roles and responsibilities of the Executive are described on page 11.

The senior management of the department comprises the Executive and managers at the Executive Band 2 level.

Departmental management committees

Executive

In 2019–20, the department's Executive held 11 formal meetings to consider and take decisions on a range of departmental management and administrative matters. As well as standing items relating to finance and people strategies, during the year the Executive discussed:

- » matters arising out of the departmental and Executive planning sessions
- » corporate planning, risk management and information management
- » arrangements for the 28th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum
- » COVID-19 responses and planning
- » areas of cooperation with the other parliamentary departments
- » information and communications technology (ICT) projects and security
- » workforce and succession planning initiatives
- » various departmental policies and strategies.

Audit Committee

The department's Audit Committee provides independent assurance to the Clerk on the department's risk, control and compliance framework, and its external accountability responsibilities, with specific reference to the Clerk's position of accountable authority under the PGPA Act. Guided by the Audit Committee's charter (available at www.aph.gov.au/dhr/AuditCharter), the members of the Audit Committee play an essential role in ensuring the integrity and transparency of the department's reporting.

Chair

Mr Paul Groenewegen joined as chair of the department's Audit Committee in early 2018. Mr Groenewegen is an experienced executive and consultant with a background in fiscal management; governance practice; strategy development and implementation; compliance and risk activities; and government operations involving regulation and policy.

Mr Groenewegen's current and previous roles include governance and review work with government and industry organisations, executive roles with Defence Housing Australia, the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) and the Private Health Insurance Administration Council (PHIAC), and several financial management roles involving a range of functions from the oversight of whole-of-government payments through to the financial management of complex multi-program organisations. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance and is a certified practising accountant and graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Independent members

Mr Tim Courtney joined the committee as an independent member in 2015. Mr Courtney is a First Assistant Commissioner at the Australian Electoral Commission, a position he has held since 2014.

As head of the Capability Division he oversees the information technology, finance and business services, legal services and funding and disclosure functions within the Australian Electoral Commission. In the lead-up to the 2016 federal election, Mr Courtney led the Senate Reform Program to implement the most comprehensive Senate voting reforms in 30 years, one of a number of major projects he has led. From 2010 to 2013, Mr Courtney was the Chief Information Officer for the Australian Electoral Commission and oversaw key advances in the use of technology by the agency, including the development of online enrolment services, electronic certified lists at polling places and the use of cloud services for the election results system.

Mr Courtney has held membership on a number of Commonwealth agency audit committees, and is a full member of the British Computer Society and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Mr Dermot Walsh joined the committee as an independent member in 2015. At 30 June 2020, Mr Walsh was Senior Assistant Ombudsman at the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman. He is an experienced executive and has had roles in both the Commonwealth and Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Public Service, in a diverse range of organisations including the ACT Land Development Agency, ACT Economic Development Directorate, Comcare, the National Gallery of Australia, the Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Mr Walsh has significant experience in government financial management, governance and risk management, human resource management, project management, ICT and program delivery. He has a Bachelor of Commerce degree, and is a certified practising accountant and member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Members

Mr Peter Banson has been a member of the committee since 2017 and is the Clerk Assistant (Table) in the Department of the House of Representatives. He is responsible for the areas of the department that provide programming, procedural and legislative support to the Chamber and Federation Chamber of the House, as well as the parliament's international program. He acts as Clerk-at-the-Table of the House of Representatives.

Mr Banson has worked in the Department of the House of Representatives for 19 years in various roles including in the Procedure Office, Table Office and Speaker's Office and as a committee secretary and Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms. He has a Bachelor of Science from the Australian National University and an Executive Master of Public Administration through the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

Ms Catherine Cornish has worked in the Department of the House of Representatives since 1994. Her roles have included Clerk Assistant (Procedure); Clerk Assistant (Table); Director, Chamber Research Office; and Director, Clerk's Office. Ms Cornish was also a committee secretary for many years. She has degrees in law and public administration from the Australian National University.

Ms Cornish was appointed Deputy Clerk of the House of Representatives in September 2019, and subsequently resigned from the committee.

Mr Stuart Woodley joined the committee in September 2019 and is the Clerk Assistant (Committees) in the Department of the House of Representatives. He is responsible for the committee support area of the department which provides a range of support services to House of Representatives committees and some joint committees.

Mr Woodley has worked in the department for seven years in various roles in the Committee Office, Clerk's and Speaker's offices, and Procedure Office. Prior to this he worked for the Attorney-General's Department, and as a solicitor in general practice. He has degrees in law and political science from the University of New England and an Executive Master of Public Administration through the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

Observers

The Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr James Catchpole—who manages the department's corporate functions—attends committee meetings as an adviser, together with representatives of the Australian National Audit Office, the department's internal audit team, and the Chief Finance Officer.

Audit Committee meeting attendance

Table 8: Audit Committee meeting attendance, 2019–20

Member	Sep 2019	Dec 2019	Mar 2020	Jun 2020
Peter Banson	x	x	✓	✓
Tim Courtney	✓	✓	✓	✓
Catherine Cornish	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Paul Groenewegen	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dermot Walsh	✓	✓	✓	x
Stuart Woodley	✓	✓	✓	✓

Audit Committee remuneration

In 2019–20, the chair of the Audit Committee, Mr Paul Groenewegen, was paid \$12,156 for his services. No other committee members received remuneration for their work on the committee.

Other departmental committees

Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee is an important mechanism for communicating and consulting with staff on workplace issues. Chaired by the Deputy Clerk, the committee's membership includes three other representatives from the department's Executive, two elected staff representatives, and two union-nominated representatives. The committee met six times during 2019–20.

Standing agenda items for the meetings are:

- » implementation and monitoring of the enterprise agreement
- » proposals for change and developments affecting staff
- » reviews of implemented changes
- » reports on departmental activities.

Other matters discussed in the reporting period included:

- » the department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- » the new enterprise agreement bargaining process
- » appointment of workplace equity and harassment contact officers, and work health and safety representatives
- » various policies and guidelines, including the managing underperformance policy and the bullying and harassment policy
- » the establishment on an SMS alert service for business continuity events
- » progress of the Department of Parliamentary Services' (DPS's) proposed Corporate Business Operations Centre
- » the proposed structure and results of the annual staff survey.

Knowledge Management Steering Committee

The Knowledge Management Steering Committee is a forum to discuss issues in information and knowledge management, and advocate for the sharing of departmental knowledge and skills. The committee has an advisory and monitoring role, and it may also make recommendations to the Executive for decision and undertake roles as requested by the Executive. The committee serves as the department's Information Governance Committee under the National Archives' Digital Continuity 2020 Policy.

The committee is chaired by the Clerk Assistant (Table), and includes representatives from all areas of the department. The committee met twice in the period and discussed the:

- » results of the department's assessment of information systems against ISO 16175
- » department's review of its Digital Operating Model
- » Australian Parliament Digital Strategy 2019–2022
- » planned migration to Windows 10 and Office 365, including potential use cases for Microsoft Teams
- » review of the department's Records Authority
- » development of a policy for access requests made for committee records.

Collaboration across parliamentary departments

Meetings of heads of parliamentary departments

In 2019–20, the Clerk, the Clerk of the Senate, the secretary of DPS and the Parliamentary Budget Officer held four formal meetings. Matters discussed included:

- » business continuity arrangements for the summer bushfire smoke and COVID-19 pandemic response and planning
- » ICT governance arrangements and the structure of ICT service delivery areas
- » security-related capital works
- » the parliamentary reconciliation action plan.

The parliamentary departments continued to work together under the Australian Parliament's *Strategic plan for parliamentary administration*, which brought together key priorities across the whole of the parliamentary administration, identifying shared goals and formalising a collaborative approach to achieving optimal outcomes in providing support and services to the parliament. The development of a replacement document—the *Strategic framework for the parliamentary service*—was a focus for the year. The Clerk took over responsibility for chairing the group in 2020.

Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group

In 2019–20, the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group met five times to discuss matters of common interest across the parliamentary departments. Membership comprises the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod, an assistant secretary of DPS, and the Assistant Parliamentary Budget Officer from the Parliamentary Budget Office. The Serjeant-at-Arms became chair of the group in 2020.

Matters discussed over the reporting period included:

- » work health and safety policies across the four parliamentary departments
- » progress on possible shared services arrangements for the parliamentary departments
- » proposed amendments to the Parliamentary Service Classification Rules
- » the strategic framework for the parliamentary service
- » registers of gifts and benefits.

Other inter-parliamentary department forums

In 2019–20, the department was active in a number of other inter-parliamentary department forums that considered matters of common interest, particularly ICT and security. During the period, ICT governance arrangements changed substantially, and the department now participates in a number of new forums. Departmental representatives participated in meetings of the following groups:

- » Joint Management Group—this group considers security-related matters. It is chaired by a senior representative from the Australian Federal Police, and the department is represented by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.

- » Incident Planning and Response Committee—this committee manages security and emergency incident planning and response operations. The committee is chaired by a senior representative from the Australian Federal Police, and the department is represented by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group—this group is the governing body responsible for the parliamentary service's *Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2022*. The department is represented by its Reconciliation Action Plan Champion Mr Stuart Woodley, the Clerk Assistant (Committees).
- » Emergency Management Working Group—this group develops, coordinates and facilitates security exercises at Parliament House. The group is chaired by a representative from the Australian Federal Police, and the department is represented by an Assistant Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » ICT Portfolio Board—this board makes the key decisions to ensure the effective delivery of prioritised and funded ICT projects. It is chaired by the DPS Chief Information Officer and the department is represented by the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » Product Family Boards—these boards prioritise, approve and oversee ICT projects related to their areas of focus. The department is represented on the following boards: Parliamentary Business Systems; Corporate Systems; Research, Modelling and Policy; Internal User Experience; Public User Experience; and Platforms and Cyber Security.
- » Strategic ICT Group—this group is the strategic ICT committee for the parliamentary departments. It provides strategic advice on priorities for ICT projects and initiatives, and considers issues relating to ICT strategy, policy and risk. It is chaired by the DPS Chief Information Officer and the department is represented by the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » Service Delivery Working Group—this group is responsible for operational oversight of the *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between parliamentary departments in relation to the provision of Information and Communication Technology Services*. It provides advice to the Strategic ICT Group, and the department is represented by the Director, Parliamentary and Business Information Services.
- » Information Security Working Group—this group is a forum to progress information security initiatives which require input from all parliamentary departments. The group is responsible for providing feedback and advice to the DPS Director of Cyber Security, to ensure a consistent and effective approach to information security across the parliamentary service. The department is represented by the Director, Parliamentary and Business Information Services.
- » Continuity Coordination Group—this group was established by DPS to coordinate that department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Serjeant-at-Arms was invited to attend meetings of the group to ensure consistency in coordination and communication.

Departmental planning

The department recognises the importance of continuing to strengthen its corporate planning and performance reporting, to both comply with its statutory obligations and improve performance, transparency and accountability.

The corporate plan is the department's primary planning document. As required under the PGPA Act, the department's *Corporate Plan 2019–20* was published in August 2019.

It covered 2019–20 and three forward years to 2022–23. The corporate plan sets out the department's purpose, the activities undertaken to achieve that purpose, and the measures for assessing the department's performance. It also describes the environment in which the department operates, planned capability initiatives, and the department's risk management and oversight systems.

The department fosters a collegiate approach to preparing the corporate plan, and some program areas and individual offices in the department develop their own business plans with a more operational focus, to complement the corporate plan.

The department seeks to embed the corporate plan through its comprehensive work performance management framework that applies to all staff, as well as through regular reporting sessions to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and the broader department.

Departmental accountability and reporting

The department's main formal external accountability mechanisms are the Portfolio Budget Statements and the annual report, prepared pursuant to section 65 of the Parliamentary Service Act. The annual report for 2018–19 provided an assessment of the department's performance against the targets set in the 2018–19 Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plan, and presented the department's financial statements.

The department's annual report and Portfolio Budget Statements were made available to all members and published on the department's website. The department's annual report was also published on the Commonwealth Transparency Portal.

Managing risk

Risk assessment and management

The department's approach to risk and management of risk is underpinned by its *Risk management policy and framework 2019–21* and *Risk management plan 2019–21*.

The risk management policy and framework details the department's commitment to embedding systematic risk management into governance, management and planning processes. It outlines the department's risk appetite and tolerance, and allocates responsibility for aspects of planning, mitigation, oversight and reporting to identified staff at various levels. The risk management plan identifies the key strategic risks for the department and the treatments to be applied, and is accompanied by separate operational risk management plans for specific business areas or subject matter.

The policy and plan are available to all staff via the departmental intranet. The department has a monitoring and reporting framework that requires regular reporting on risk and risk treatment to the Executive and to the Audit Committee.

During the year, much of the department's risk management focus was on the 2019–20 bushfire season and the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the development and implementation of specific risk assessments and management plans.

Comcover benchmarking

The Comcover risk management benchmarking program survey is now conducted biennially, with the next survey planned for 2021. The most recent survey in 2019 assessed the maturity of the department's risk management capability against the nine elements of the Commonwealth risk management policy. Based on the results of the 2019 survey, the department achieved a risk maturity level of 'advanced', which is higher than the previous year's assessed level of 'systematic' and higher than the average maturity state of all survey participants ('integrated').

Business continuity

A departmental business continuity plan was in force throughout the reporting year, complemented by office-level business resumption plans. The plan is managed by the Serjeant-at-Arms and endorsed by the Clerk. The business continuity network, with representation from across the department, is responsible for business continuity governance and oversight.

The plan requires scenario-based exercises designed to test aspects of the department's business continuity capability, with a new exercise developed each year. During 2019–20, the department's scenario-based exercise involved the Procedure Office. The exercise was facilitated and reviewed by the department's internal auditors, who concluded the Procedure Office demonstrated an ability to effectively respond to a range of sudden disruptions, and made several recommendations that were accepted by the department.

In 2020, the business continuity network met to discuss responses to the bushfire season and COVID-19 pandemic. The department established an opt-in SMS alert service to quickly advise staff in the event of a business continuity disruption. The service is intended to complement existing communication plans for each office and enable staff to be notified of any changes.

In response to COVID-19, the department established a secure, external website to enable staff working from home without access to the parliamentary computing network to stay informed of developments.

Internal audit

Internal audit services are provided to the department by BellchambersBarrett. A strategic internal audit plan is prepared for the department every three years, and an annual audit plan prepared in consultation with senior management. The strategic internal audit plan 2018–21 addresses strategic, fraud and security risks identified in the department's various risk management plans, as well as emerging strategic and operational priorities identified by management.

During the reporting period, BellchambersBarrett conducted the following reviews:

- » ICT security arrangements
- » recruitment and onboarding processes
- » procurement and contract management
- » arrangements of international delegations and capacity-building activities.

Preventing fraud

The department is committed to compliance with the provisions of section 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) relating to preventing, detecting and dealing with fraud.

The department's *Fraud Control Plan 2019–21* outlines strategies and processes for preventing and detecting fraud, and for investigating and reporting instances of fraud should they occur. All new staff are required to complete online training on financial management responsibilities and fraud control. The department's monitoring and reporting framework requires regular reporting to the Executive and the Audit Committee. No significant instances of fraud were identified or reported to the Speaker during the year.

The internal auditors prepared the department's *Fraud risk assessment 2019–21*. It provides details of the approach and methodology used in assessing fraud risks within the department. It also details a range of processes and activities in terms of their potential fraud risks, and the controls in place that prevent, detect or deter the risks. This assessment was updated during the previous reporting period, through a process of consultation with the departmental Executive and senior management, in which fraud risks were identified and assessed.

Ethical standards and behaviour

The Parliamentary Service Values and Code of Conduct, which are set out in the Parliamentary Service Act, provide staff with a framework for ethical conduct. The department promotes sound ethical behaviour.

During induction, all new staff are advised about what it means to work in a values-based environment, and how ethical standards apply to their day-to-day work.

Statement of significant non-compliance with the finance law

The department did not identify any instances of significant non-compliance with the finance law during 2019–20. The finance law incorporates the PGPA Act, any rules and instruments created under the PGPA Act, and appropriation and supply Acts.

Public interest disclosure

The Clerk, as the principal officer of the department for the purposes of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*, has established procedures and appointed authorised officers for facilitating and dealing with public interest disclosures relating to the department, in accordance with that Act.

During 2019–20, the department continued to ensure that information on public interest disclosure procedures was available to all staff. During the year, four authorised officers were approved to handle public interest disclosures.

Privacy

Although not an entity to which the *Privacy Act 1988* applies, the department abides by the principles of the legislation in its dealings with employees and the handling of their records. It has adopted a departmental privacy policy that is consistent with the Act.

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental reporting

DPS is responsible for managing Parliament House and the parliamentary precincts. That department reports in accordance with section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* in its annual report, which is available from the Parliament of Australia website and Commonwealth Transparency Portal.

External scrutiny

The department's operations are primarily administrative and are therefore not usually subject to formal external scrutiny.

Judicial and administrative decisions

During 2019–20, no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals or the Australian Information Commissioner had, or are anticipated to have, a significant effect on the operations of the department.

Reports on the operations of the department

In 2019–20, the Auditor-General did not table any reports directly relating to the administration of the department or its operations. The Australian National Audit Office provided an unqualified audit report on the department's 2019–20 financial statements.

In 2019–20, the Commonwealth Ombudsman did not issue any reports on the operations of the department. There were no capability reviews of the department released during the period.

The department continued to support the Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration's consideration of the department's funding requirements and budget position. During 2019–20, the committee met five times and tabled one report: *Report No. 18: Annual report 2018–19*.

The committee focused on a number of areas over the year, including physical security, ICT security and building upgrade works at Parliament House. Due to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the budget cycle, the committee did not table a report on the department's budget estimates during the period.

Disability reporting mechanisms

Disability reporting now sits within the framework of the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, which sets out a 10-year national policy to improve the lives of people with disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. A high-level two-yearly report will track progress against each of the six outcome areas of the strategy, and present a picture of how people with disability are faring. Progress reports, as well as an independent review report, can be found at www.dss.gov.au.

Freedom of information

The department is excluded from the application of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, under section 68A of the Parliamentary Service Act.

Management of people

Workforce profile

At 30 June 2020, the department had 178 employees—130 ongoing, 15 non-ongoing and 33 casual.

The department's workforce is 61.2 per cent female, 38.2 per cent are aged over 50 years and 0.6 per cent identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Employee statistics

Tables 9 to 13 show the department's employee statistics for 2019–20, including whether staff are in ongoing, non-ongoing or casual positions. The tables provide information on the substantive classification of staff, as well as their gender and geographical location.

Table 9: Employment type by classification and gender, at 30 June 2020

Classification	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
SES 2	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
SES 1	4	–	–	–	–	–	4	–	4
EB 2	8	12	–	–	–	–	8	12	20
EB 1	17	23	1	3	–	–	18	26	44
PSL 6	6	22	–	3	–	–	6	25	31
PSL 5	1	4	–	1	–	–	1	5	6
PSL 4	6	20	2	4	1	–	9	24	33
PSL 3	3	2	–	–	–	2	3	4	7
PSL 2	1	–	–	1	19	11	20	12	32
PSL 1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	46	84	3	12	20	13	69	109	178

The department had no staff recorded in the human resource management information system as indeterminate, intersex or unspecified. Figures for this table exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 10: Employment type by classification and gender, at 30 June 2019

Classification	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
SES 2	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
SES 1	3	1	–	–	–	–	3	1	4
EB 2	9	11	–	–	–	–	9	11	20
EB 1	16	24	–	1	–	–	16	25	41
PSL 6	7	18	–	3	–	–	7	21	28
PSL 5	1	4	–	–	–	–	1	4	5
PSL 4	1	21	1	3	1	–	3	24	27
PSL 3	3	2	–	–	–	1	3	3	6
PSL 2	1	–	–	–	19	11	20	11	31
PSL 1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	41	82	1	7	20	12	62	101	163

The department had no staff recorded in the human resource management information system as indeterminate, intersex or unspecified. Figures for this table exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 11: Employment type by employment status, at 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020

Employment type	Full-time		Part-time		Casual		Total	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Ongoing	109	113	15	17	–	–	124	130
Non-ongoing	7	14	1	1	–	–	8	15
Casual	–	–	–	–	32	33	32	33
Total	116	127	16	18	32	33	164	178

Table 12: Employment type by office and location, at 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020

	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Office								
Executive	9	9	1	–	–	–	10	9
Executive support / project staff	2	2	–	–	–	–	2	2
Table Office	9	12	1	–	1	1	11	13
Procedure Office	7	10	1	–	–	–	8	10
Committee Office	60	62	–	6	–	–	60	68
International and Parliamentary Relations Office	7	8	–	2	–	–	7	10
Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office	10	10	4	3	1	1	15	14
Finance Office	6	5	1	1	–	–	7	6
People Strategies Office	7	6	–	3	–	–	7	9
Serjeant-at-Arms' Office	7	7	–	–	30	31	37	38
State or territory								
Australian Capital Territory	124	131	8	15	32	33	164	179
Total	124	131	8	15	32	33	164	179

Table 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, at 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020

Employment type	Staff numbers	
	2019	2020
Ongoing	–	1
Non-ongoing	2	–
Casual	–	–
Total	2	1

Employee engagement

Investors in People standard

Investors in People is an international quality framework that benchmarks the effectiveness of leadership and management practices. The standard defines what is required to lead, support and manage people well with sustainable results. The department has held accreditation against the Investors in People standard since 2002, and was awarded 'Investors in People Silver' in 2018 against Investors in People's improved framework.

The achievement of the standard recognises the strong commitment of departmental employees to ensure the highest possible standards of service. One of the requirements for retaining accreditation is to be reassessed against the standard every three years by an independent assessor. As recommended in the accreditation report, the department has established a working group to identify and carry forward areas of future improvement.

Staff survey

In May 2020, the department conducted its annual staff survey to measure employee sentiment, views about leadership and observations about the broader working environment.

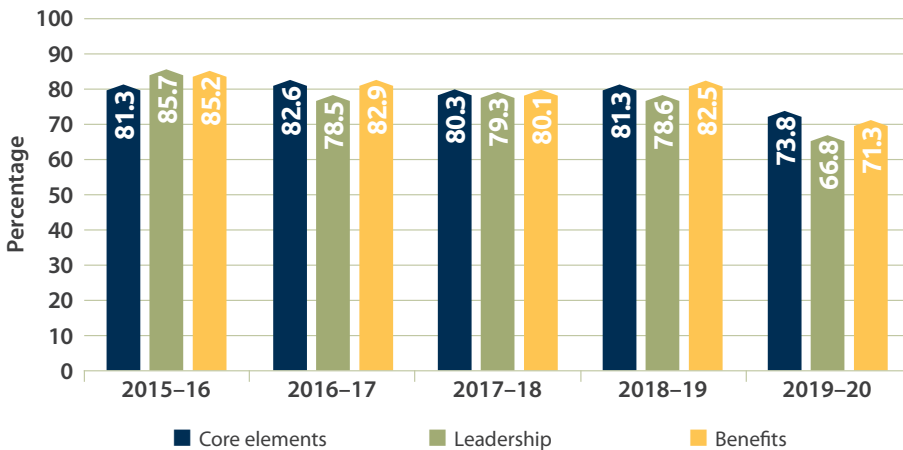
The results of the survey are used to inform improvement initiatives and to further develop the culture of the department. Ideas and feedback from employees are an essential element when seeking to deliver sustainable change across the department and to sustain a high-performance culture.

The department has established three internal benchmarks based on the results of the survey. These benchmarks, or index scores, correspond to the total percentage of staff selecting 'strongly agree' and 'agree' in response to specific sets of questions. The three benchmarks are as follows:

- » The 'core elements' satisfaction index measures the extent to which the department provided the core elements needed to attract, focus and keep the most talented staff (satisfaction rate of 73.8 per cent in 2020 and an average of 80.9 per cent over the past five years).
- » The 'leadership' satisfaction index measures the level of satisfaction of staff with their managers against the department's leadership statement (satisfaction rate of 66.8 per cent in 2020 and an average of 80.6 per cent over the past five years).
- » The 'benefits' satisfaction index measures the level of staff satisfaction with pay and working conditions (satisfaction rate of 71.3 per cent in 2020 and an average of 82 per cent over the past five years).

Figure 6 shows the performance of the satisfaction elements over the past five years.

Figure 6: Staff survey satisfaction elements, 2015–16 to 2019–20



People strategies: planning and delivery

Recruitment

The department advertised to fill 14 ongoing vacancies during 2019–20 (compared with 21 in 2018–19), of which nine were filled by external applicants.

Retention

Sixteen ongoing and eight non-ongoing staff left the department in 2019–20. The turnover rate was 9 per cent for ongoing staff (compared with 13 per cent in 2018–19).

Exit interviews with staff leaving the department continued to be conducted by SES managers. Four such interviews were conducted during the year.

Alumni

The department formed an alumni association of former staff in 2008. On 30 June 2020, it had 257 members. The association issued one newsletter during the year, and its board met once. On 10 December 2019, the association held its annual general meeting and a reception for alumni members was held on 21 February 2020.

Social Club

Throughout the financial year, the Department of the House of Representatives Social Club coordinated a number of activities for Father's Day, Melbourne Cup and Christmas to bring staff together. Unfortunately, the annual Easter egg hunt was unable to proceed due to COVID-19. The club also conducted two activities to support charities including a bake sale to raise money for the Salvation Army Bushfire Appeal, and participation in the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal where the department donated a number of food baskets for those in need in the local community.

Graduate placement program

Together with the Department of the Senate and the Parliamentary Budget Office the department participates in, and administers, the Parliament of Australia Graduate Program. The purpose of the program is to expose graduates working in Australian Public Service departments and agencies to how their home department or agency interacts with the parliamentary departments in their support of the parliament.

The program involves three-month placements of people from the graduate programs of Australian Government agencies and the staff of those agencies. Graduates develop the necessary knowledge and skills to make a significant contribution to the department and broader parliamentary service. The program continued to draw a high level of interest from graduates from a range of agencies. Five graduates undertook placements in the department in 2019–20.

Feedback from graduates confirmed that the program is highly successful and that the objectives of the placements were met.

Learning and development

In 2019–20 the department delivered 48 face-to-face training and development sessions to employees, based around the core themes of critical thinking, writing skills, management capability and fostering high performance. The department shifted its focus to online learning during the latter half of the year and 91 LinkedIn learning courses were completed in full. Priority skills training focused on leadership development and supporting staff working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 14 compares the average attendance of staff at training courses in 2018–19 and 2019–20. It also shows the staffing level and total number of training days attended in 2019–20 for each classification.

Table 14: Staff attendance at training courses

Classification	Headcount	Training days attended	Average training days attended per person	
			2018–19	2019–20
Senior Executive Service	6	14.3	4.7	2.9
Executive Band 2	20	54.9	5.2	2.7
Executive Band 1	41	101.9	5.3	2.3
Parliamentary Service Level 6	28	60.0	6.5	1.9
Parliamentary Service Level 5	5	7.0	5.2	1.2
Parliamentary Service Level 4	27	46.9	5.7	1.4
Parliamentary Service Level 3	6	8.2	3.2	1.2
Parliamentary Service Level 2	31	51.6	0.9	1.6
Total	164	344.7	5.2	1.9

The Clerk of the House is included with the Senior Executive Service for the purposes of this table.

Studies assistance

The department's study assistance scheme allows employees to complete relevant tertiary study to improve their professional skills and knowledge. Six employees accessed studies assistance during the year (the same number as in 2018–19). Collectively, financial assistance of \$6,097 was administered (compared with \$7,874 in 2018–19), along with a total of 44 days of study leave on full pay.

Performance assessment

All eligible staff participated in the annual work performance assessment cycle, which was completed on 31 October 2019. The cycle consists of setting individual work objectives, conducting performance assessments, preparing individual development plans and providing feedback to supervisors. Information from the individual development plans is used to formulate the training program for the next calendar year.

Diversity and inclusion

The department's workplace diversity program aligns the department's workplace diversity strategies and actions with the Parliamentary Service Values. It outlines the department's commitment to increasing workforce participation rates in different diversity groups.

Training continued to be provided to new staff in the prevention of discrimination, bullying and harassment and all staff were required to attend a training update in relation to these important aspects of workplace behaviour. The department is committed to actively building a diverse and inclusive workplace that promotes gender equality and harnesses the skills and experiences of people from all backgrounds. The department's diversity and inclusion program has a significant focus on increasing workforce participation rates across all diversity groups.

The department's Reconciliation Action Plan Champion Stuart Woodley contributed to the development of the *Australian Parliamentary Service Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2022*.



Committee Office researcher Mr Ben Ve'a Ve'a (centre), with Mr Rob Stefanic, secretary of DPS (left) and Ms Cara Kirkwood, DPS Indigenous Engagement and Strategy Manager (right) at the launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2022 on 11 March 2020. Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.



Parliamentary service Reconciliation Action Plan champions Mr Stuart Woodley, Mr David Tellis, Mr Rob Brigden and Mr John Begley.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

During 2019–20, the department continued to build its commitment to diversity and inclusion through a number of initiatives and developments. Most significantly, the department developed and implemented its Indigenous Engagement Strategy 2020–2022. The department also continued to be involved with the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program, which offers graduates an opportunity to participate in the department’s Indigenous Secondment Program, consisting of three-month placements. This is the fourth year of the Indigenous Secondment Program and it is a significant part of the department’s commitment to provide opportunities for the career progression and professional development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. At the completion of the program, participants return to their home departments with valuable experiences of parliamentary operations.

In 2019–20, there were two graduates placed with the department through the Indigenous Secondment Program.

The department piloted the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) Inclusion Program, a suite of online training courses developed by Australia’s multicultural and multilingual broadcaster. These online courses covered a number of topics, including gender, LGBTIQ+, core inclusion, disability and culture.

Employment arrangements

The *Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020* came into effect on 6 December 2017 with a nominal expiry date of 29 November 2020. The agreement provides non-SES staff with competitive remuneration and employment

conditions. There is no provision in the agreement to remunerate staff based on performance. The Clerk did not make a determination under section 24(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* in 2019–20 to pay staff a monetary bonus.

Employment conditions for SES staff are set out in individual determinations made under subsection 24(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act*. Many of these conditions are aligned with the department's enterprise agreement. Table 15 provides a breakdown of staff under the department's employment instruments.

Table 15: Employment arrangements for SES and non-SES staff, at 30 June 2020

Employment arrangement	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise agreement	–	178	178
Individual flexibility arrangement	–	–	–
Common law contract	–	–	–
Determination under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Parliamentary Service Act 1999</i>	5	–	5

Remuneration

Salary ranges under the 2017–20 enterprise agreement, as at the end of the reporting period, are summarised in Table 16.

Table 16: Salary ranges of staff covered by the 2017–20 enterprise agreement, as at 30 June 2020

Classification	Salary range	
	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Executive Band 2	140,711	149,094
Executive Band 1	108,718	121,266
Parliamentary Service Level 6	87,615	99,434
Parliamentary Service Level 5	80,984	85,693
Parliamentary Service Level 4	71,597	77,462
Parliamentary Service Level 3	64,773	69,583
Parliamentary Service Level 2	57,565	62,854
Parliamentary Service Level 1	50,886	55,679

In 2019–20, departmental salaries and allowances totalled \$20.633 million (compared with \$19.326 million in 2018–19).

Non-salary benefits

The department offers staff a number of additional non-remuneration benefits including:

- » annual influenza vaccination
- » mental health and wellbeing support
- » mentoring and coaching programs
- » in-house capability development programs
- » access to a serious illness leave bank
- » study assistance to eligible employees
- » access to flexible working arrangements
- » contributions to relevant professional memberships.

Executive remuneration

The PGPA Rule requires the reporting of executive remuneration information for specified officials of Commonwealth entities on an accrual basis. Table 18 summarises the remuneration of key management personnel and senior executives. There are no other highly paid staff for whom remuneration details are required to be provided. During short absences of SES staff, parliamentary officers may be provided with an opportunity to act in the position of the absent SES staff member. These short acting opportunities are not included in Tables 17 or 18.

Table 17: Key management personnel, 2019–20

Name	Position	Term as key management personnel
David Elder	Clerk	Part year—ceased 9 August 2019
Claressa Surtees	Deputy Clerk/ Clerk	Full year—appointed Clerk on 12 August 2019
Catherine Cornish	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)/ Deputy Clerk	Full year—appointed Deputy Clerk on 18 September 2019
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table)	Full year
Jerome Brown	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	Part year—appointed on 2 December 2019
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Full year
James Catchpole	Serjeant-at-Arms	Full year

In accordance with the PGPA Rule, information about the remuneration and benefits of key management personnel is set out in Table 18.

Table 18: Remuneration and benefits of key management personnel, 2019–20

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary (\$)	Bonuses (\$)	Other benefits and allowances (\$)		Long-service leave (\$)	Other long-term benefits (\$)		
David Elder	Clerk	48,673.01	–	7,961.51	5,963.94	18,567.53	–	–	81,165.99
Claressa Surtees	Deputy Clerk/ Clerk	400,401.21	–	16,012.15	46,290.25	143,922.00	–	–	606,625.61
Catherine Cornish	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)/ Deputy Clerk	256,720.19	–	26,839.54	36,669.81	39,160.00	–	–	359,389.54
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table)	198,423.26	–	26,839.54	36,642.34	5,470.00	–	–	267,375.15
Jerome Brown	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	118,420.43	–	15,571.03	19,585.55	2,403.00	–	–	155,980.02
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	190,345.26	–	26,839.54	35,336.17	7,787.45	–	–	260,308.43
James Catchpole	Serjeant-at-Arms	186,990.03	–	26,839.54	35,127.23	8,130.00	–	–	257,086.81
Total		1,399,973.39	–	146,902.87	215,615.30	225,439.98	–	–	1,987,931.54

Other senior executives

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2020, the department did not have any senior executives who did not meet the definition of key management personnel. All key management personnel are included in Tables 17 and 18.

Other highly paid staff

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2020, the department did not have any highly paid staff who did not meet the definitions of key management personnel or senior executives; therefore, Tables 17 and 18 do not report on other highly paid staff.

Work health and safety

The department is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*. During the reporting period, all reasonably practicable measures were taken to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees while at work, in line with the department's work health and safety policies.

The department aims to achieve high standards of work health and safety in its operations and to fulfil its duty of care by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. There are a number of shared work health and safety risks across Parliament House that are the responsibility of all parliamentary departments. In 2019–20, to continue to meet its obligations under the WHS Act, the department:

- » continued strengthening the work health and safety management system, by implementing activities identified in the 2018–19 work health and safety audit corrective action plan
- » provided work health and safety training and information to all staff, with a continued focus on mental health awareness training through the self-care workshop delivered by Lifeline for all staff
- » continued to promote flexibility by default working arrangements, including part-time, working from home, and flexible start and end times
- » developed and activated work health and safety plans specific to the effect of bushfire smoke on staff working at Parliament House and delegates attending APPF28, including regular monitoring of air quality
- » composed a COVID-19 taskforce to address and advise the Executive and staff on government health advice during the pandemic
- » developed a suite of resources for managers and staff in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support staff's transition to working from home
- » conducted hazard inspections and implemented a corrective action plan to ensure compliance with pandemic-related restrictions and measures imposed on workplaces, including office layouts and safe social distancing
- » enhanced positive early intervention outcomes that have supported injured or ill workers to achieve an early, safe and sustainable return to work
- » conducted workstation assessments with a strengthened approach to reasonable adjustment
- » provided a confidential counselling service through the employee assistance program
- » continued to promote a healthy lifestyle including influenza vaccinations and healthy living reimbursements.

No workers' compensation claims were lodged during the reporting period.

During the year, there were no dangerous occurrences requiring notification under section 37 of the WHS Act, no investigations were carried out, and no directions or notices were received by the department under section 191 of the Act.

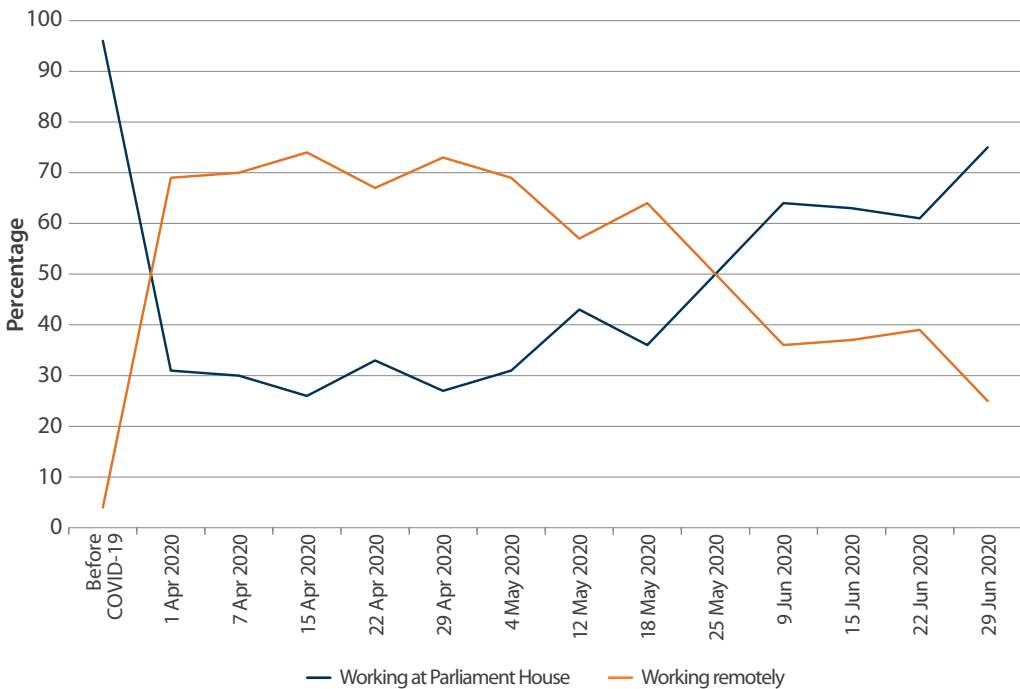
Response to COVID-19

The department moved quickly to ensure the wellbeing of staff following the outbreak of COVID-19. Updates, based on advice from various government agencies and decisions of the Presiding Officers and the Clerk, were regularly communicated to staff. The Business Continuity Network quickly met to review continuity arrangements, and a standalone external website was created to ensure staff without remote access to the parliamentary computing network could access the latest updates while away from Parliament House.

In March 2020, all staff were advised by the Clerk to work from home if they were not required to be in the building to directly support sittings of the House of Representatives. Following the introduction of a new remote access solution by DPS, all staff in the department could log on to the network from home. The Clerk also advised the department in April that a range of flexible work arrangements were available to address work and personal commitments, including caring for children and home schooling.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of staff working at Parliament House and working remotely from April to June 2020.

Figure 7: Percentage of staff working at Parliament House and working remotely, April to June 2020



Following the unique sittings of the House of Representatives on 23 March and 8 April 2020, the Clerk wrote to the department in May to advise that for safety, staff should continue to work from home where practicable, and only come to Parliament House if strictly necessary. This advice applied to the May and June sittings of the House of Representatives. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the department followed the National COVID-19 safe workplace principles as well as Safe Work Australia and the Australian Public Service Commission's practical guidance.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office conducted an audit of office spaces in the House of Representatives wing to ensure appropriate space was available between desks, and appropriate hygiene products, signage and tip-sheets were available to all staff working in the building. The department worked closely with the other parliamentary departments and the Department of Health to continually review COVID-19 arrangements and ensure all necessary measures were in place for the safety of all those working at Parliament House.



*Mr Lupco Jonceski placing hand sanitiser in the House of Representatives Chamber, March 2020.
Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.*

Management of financial resources

Asset management

The department's asset management strategy focuses on efficient asset utilisation and allows the department to identify underperforming assets. The department operates within a controlled environment at Parliament House and the risk of loss for the majority of assets is minimal.

The department adopts a 'break-fix' replacement policy for office machines and equipment. During the year asset purchases included TVs, fridges, tables, trolleys, and printing and binding equipment.

A review of the intangible assets category was conducted to verify assets in use. All software items were found to be in use. There was no indication that any departmental assets were impaired to any extent approaching materiality.

Purchasing

The department has in place policies and procedures it considers appropriate to assist staff to comply with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. The department encourages use of established panels and continues to access whole-of-Australian-Government contracts for the provision of travel and related services. Purchases of stationery and office supplies were made through the whole-of-Australian-Government contract with Winc.

During the reporting period the department entered into 35 contracts above the reporting threshold, 32 of which were reported on AusTender within the prescribed period. No other identified instances of non-compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules have been identified.

Consultants

Consultants are engaged where the department lacks specialist expertise or when independent research, review or assessment is required. Consultants are typically engaged to investigate or diagnose a defined issue or problem; carry out defined reviews or evaluations; or provide independent advice, information or specialist solutions to assist in the department's decision-making.

Before engaging consultants, the department takes into account the skills and resources required for the task, the skills available internally, and the cost-effectiveness of engaging external expertise. The decision to engage a consultant is made in accordance with the PGPA Act and PGPA Rules, including the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant internal policies.

During 2019–20, five new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total expenditure of \$0.054 million. In addition, two ongoing consultancy contracts were active in 2019–20, involving total expenditure of \$0.125 million.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website at www.tenders.gov.au.

Competitive tendering and contracting

There were no instances during 2019–20 where contracts were let that did not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises, or where the accountable authority exempted a contract from being published on the AusTender website.

Procurement initiatives to support small business

The department supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) and small enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website at www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts.

Consistent with paragraph 5.4 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the department's procurement practices support SMEs by utilising the following practices:

- » the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for low-risk procurements valued under \$200,000
- » on-time payments made to SMEs by electronic funds transfer or by the use of payment cards.

Advertising and market research

During 2019–20, the department did not conduct any advertising campaigns.

Legal services expenditure

Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 11.1(ba) of the Legal Services Directions 2017 requires the department to publicly disclose its legal services expenditure. During 2019–20, external legal expenditure was \$17,947 (\$182,872 in 2018–19). The department did not incur any internal legal expenses during 2019–20 (also nil in 2018–19).



Part 4

Financial statements

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Independent Auditor's Report



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Speaker of the House

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Department of the House of Representatives ('the Entity') for the year ended 30 June 2020:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2020 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2020 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Clerk of the House and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of comprehensive income;
- Statement of financial position;
- Statement of changes in equity;
- Cash flow statement;
- Administered schedule of comprehensive income;
- Administered schedule of assets and liabilities;
- Administered reconciliation schedule;
- Administered cash flow statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's *APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Clerk of the House is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the rules made under the Act. The Clerk of the House is also responsible for such internal control as the Clerk of the House determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Clerk of the House is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an

Independent Auditor's Report

administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Clerk of the House is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Mark Vial
Senior Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
28 September 2020

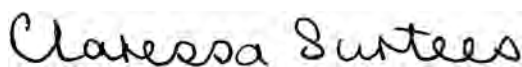
Certification

DEPARTMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENT BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020 comply with subsection 42(2) of *the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

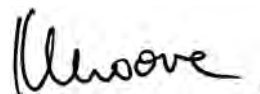
In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Department of the House of Representatives will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.



C SURTEES

Clerk of the House

28 September 2020



K MOORE

Chief Finance Officer

28 September 2020

Statement of comprehensive income

for the period ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	1A	20,633	19,326	20,918
Suppliers	1B	5,264	5,243	6,315
Depreciation and amortisation	4A	517	584	541
Write-down and impairment of assets		-	1	-
Losses from asset sales		1	3	-
Other expenses		1	-	-
Total expenses		26,416	25,157	27,774
Own-source income				
Own-source revenue				
Sale of goods and rendering of services	2A	90	64	54
Interest	2B	52	70	75
Other revenue	2C	187	123	105
Total own-source revenue		329	257	234
Gains				
Resources received free of charge	2D	2,043	2,003	1,985
Total gains		2,043	2,003	1,985
Total own-source income		2,372	2,260	2,219
Net cost of services		24,044	22,897	25,555
Revenue from government	2E, 10	25,014	24,113	25,014
Surplus/(deficit) on continuing operations		970	1,216	(541)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	(429)	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	(429)	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)		970	787	(541)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	3A	2,855	617	410
Trade and other receivables	3B	21,255	18,044	19,156
Other investments	3C	-	2,546	2,546
Total financial assets		24,110	21,207	22,112
Non-financial assets¹				
Heritage and cultural	4A	454	454	469
Property, plant and equipment	4A	4,569	4,819	4,941
Computer software	4A	219	259	683
Inventories	4B	5	7	21
Other non-financial assets	4C	216	225	197
Total non-financial assets		5,463	5,764	6,311
Total assets		29,573	26,971	28,423
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	5A	418	389	340
Other payables	5B	346	256	468
Total payables		764	645	808
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	6	27	-	-
Total interest bearing liabilities		27	-	-
Provisions				
Employee provisions	7	6,934	6,163	6,270
Total provisions		6,934	6,163	6,270
Total liabilities		7,725	6,808	7,078
Net assets		21,848	20,163	21,345
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		(12,165)	(12,800)	(9,646)
Reserves		13,763	13,763	14,241
Retained earnings		20,250	19,200	16,750
Total equity		21,848	20,163	21,345

1. Right-of-use assets are included in property, plant and equipment.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

for the period ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019	Original Budget
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	(12,800)	(10,918)	(10,281)
Transactions with owners			
Contributions by owners			
Departmental capital budget	635	637	635
Transfer of assets to DPS	-	(2,519)	-
Total transactions with owners	635	(1,882)	635
Closing balance as at 30 June	(12,165)	(12,800)	(9,646)
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	19,200	17,984	17,291
Adjustment on initial application of AASB 15/AASB 1058	80	-	-
Adjusted opening balance	19,280	17,984	17,291
Comprehensive income			
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	970	1,216	(541)
Total comprehensive income	970	1,216	(541)
Closing balance as at 30 June	20,250	19,200	16,750
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	13,763	14,192	14,241
Comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income	-	(429)	-
Total comprehensive income	-	(429)	-
Closing balance as at 30 June	13,763	13,763	14,241
TOTAL EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	20,163	21,258	21,251
Adjustment on initial application of AASB 15/AASB 1058	80	-	-
Adjusted opening balance	20,243	21,258	21,251
Comprehensive income			
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	970	1,216	(541)
Other comprehensive income	-	(429)	-
Total comprehensive income	970	787	(541)
Transactions with owners			
Contributions by owners			
Departmental capital budget	635	637	635
Transfer of assets to DPS	-	(2,519)	-
Total transactions with owners	635	(1,882)	635
Closing balance as at 30 June	21,848	20,163	21,345

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cash flow statement

for the period ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019	Original Budget
Notes	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations	21,679	22,641	24,910
Sale of goods and rendering of services	221	49	54
Interest	52	4	75
Revenue from external sources	172	42	-
Net GST received	221	224	5
Other	3	-	105
Total cash received	22,348	22,960	25,149
Cash used			
Employees	19,676	19,325	20,804
Suppliers	3,413	3,440	4,340
Net GST paid	-	-	5
Total cash used	23,089	22,765	25,149
Net cash from/(used by) operating activities	(741)	195	-
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment	-	12	-
Investments	2,546	-	-
Total cash received	2,546	12	-
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	134	98	635
Purchase of intangibles	35	136	-
Total cash used	169	234	635
Net cash from/(used by) investing activities	2,377	(222)	(635)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Contributed equity-departmental capital budget	635	234	635
Total cash received	635	234	635
Cash used			
Principal payments of lease liabilities	33	-	-
Total cash used	33	-	-
Net cash from/(used by) financing activities	602	234	635
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	2,238	207	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	617	410	410
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	2,855	617	410

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Administered schedule of comprehensive income

for the period ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019	Original Budget
Notes	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
Expenses			
Provision of hospitality services	216	310	319
Total expenses	216	310	319
Net (cost of)/contribution by services	(216)	(310)	(319)
Surplus/(deficit)	(216)	(310)	(319)
Total comprehensive income/(loss)	(216)	(310)	(319)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Administered schedule of assets and liabilities

as at 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Trade and other receivables		-	5	2
Total financial assets		-	5	2
Total assets administered on behalf of Government		-	5	2
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers		1	7	27
Other payables		-	5	2
Total payables		1	12	29
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government		1	12	29
Net assets/(liabilities)		(1)	(7)	(27)

Administered assets and liabilities consist of trade creditors and/or accrued expenses and amounts owed to/from the Australian Taxation Office. All assets and liabilities are considered current and are expected to be recovered /settled within 12 months.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Administered reconciliation schedule

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July	(7)	(27)
Adjustment for errors	-	-
Adjusted opening assets less liabilities	(7)	(27)
Net (cost of)/contribution by services		
Expenses		
Payments to entities other than corporate Commonwealth entities	(216)	(310)
Transfers (to)/from the Australian Government		
Appropriation transfers from official public account	222	330
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June	(1)	(7)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Accounting policy

Administered cash transfers to and from the official public account (OPA)

The department does not collect administered revenues. Cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under parliamentary appropriation on behalf of the government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the department on behalf of government and reported as such in the administered cash flow statement.

Administered cash flow statement

for the period ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Net GST received		21	22
Total cash received		<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>
Cash used			
Suppliers		238	355
Total cash used		<u>238</u>	<u>355</u>
Net cash from/(used by) operating activities		<u>(217)</u>	<u>(333)</u>
Cash from official public account			
Appropriations		222	330
GST appropriations		16	25
Total cash from official public account		<u>238</u>	<u>355</u>
Cash to official public account			
GST appropriations		(21)	(22)
Total cash to official public account		<u>217</u>	<u>333</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Overview

Objectives of the Department of the House of Representatives

The department is one of four parliamentary departments supporting the Australian Parliament. It is a not-for-profit entity. The department provides services to support the efficient conduct of the House of Representatives, its committees and certain joint committees as well as a range of services for members in Parliament House. The department also supports the parliament by providing advice and services to support the parliament's national, international and regional relationships and by assisting other parliaments, primarily within the Indo-Pacific region, by partnering in capacity-building activities.

The department is structured to meet one outcome:

Advisory and administrative services support the House of Representatives to fulfil its representative and legislative role.

The continued existence of the department in its present form is dependent on continuing appropriations by parliament for the department's administration and programs.

The department's activities contributing to this outcome are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses controlled or incurred by the department in its own right. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by the department, on behalf of the parliament, of items controlled or incurred by the government.

Administered objectives

The department receives administered funding in order to support the parliament by:

- » providing a booking service for school groups visiting Parliament House
- » coordinating provision of hospitality for these groups.

Basis of preparation of the financial report

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR); and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars.

New accounting standards

All new/revised/amending standards and/or interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off date and are applicable to the current reporting period did not have a material effect on the entity's financial statements.

AASB 16 Leases

This new standard replaces the previous standard AASB 117 and applies to reporting periods commencing on or after 1 July 2019. The department has recognised the costs of use of leased assets and the associated benefits on its 2019–20 statement of financial position and recognised an interest charge on the lease liability through the statement of comprehensive income. The department currently has leases which will be recorded in accordance with the new standard therefore the implementation of AASB 16 Leases will have ongoing financial impacts on the department's financial statements from the 2019–20 financial year onwards.

The department has adopted AASB 16 using the modified retrospective approach, under which the cumulative effect of initial application is recognised in retained earnings at 1 July 2019. Accordingly, the comparative information presented for 2019 is not restated, that is, it is presented as previously reported under AASB 117 and related interpretations.

Impact on transition

On transition to AASB 16, the entity recognised additional right-of-use assets and additional lease liabilities, recognising the difference in retained earnings. The impact on transition is summarised below:

Departmental	1 July 2019	
Debit: Right-of-use assets - property, plant and equipment		67,514
Credit: Lease liabilities		67,514
Credit: Retained earnings		Nil

AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers and AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

Commonwealth not-for-profit entities with a 30 June financial year-end are required to apply AASB 1058 and AASB 15 from the 2019–20 annual reporting period. AASB 1058 replaces most of the not-for-profit provisions of AASB 1004 by clarifying and simplifying income recognition requirements for these entities. AASB 15 replaces AASB 118 Revenue and outlines the principles that a for-profit entity must apply to recognise and measure revenue. The department adopted AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the modified retrospective approach, under which the cumulative effect of initial application is recognised in retained earnings at 1 July 2019. Accordingly, the comparative information presented for 2019 is not restated, that is, it is presented as previously reported under the various applicable AASBs and related interpretations.

The department has determined that the agreements with Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) are not enforceable and the promises are not 'sufficiently specific', the department has applied the general AASB 1058 principles for revenue recognition.

Impact on transition

The impact on transition is summarised below:

Departmental	1 July 2019	
Debit: Unearned revenue		80,000
Credit: Retained earnings		80,000

Total adjustment recognised in retained earnings 80,000

Taxation

The department is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax (FBT) and the goods and services tax (GST).

Reporting of administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated below, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Events after the reporting period

Departmental

There have been no significant events after balance date that may have an impact on the department's operations.

Administered

There have been no significant events after balance date that may have an impact on the department's operations.

Financial performance

This section analyses the financial performance of the Department of the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Note 1 Expenses

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
1A: Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries	15,227	14,265
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	1,165	1,052
Defined benefit plans	1,670	1,733
Leave and other entitlements	2,571	2,225
Separation and redundancies	-	51
Total employee benefits	20,633	19,326
1B: Suppliers		
Goods and services supplied or rendered		
Staff-related services	605	606
Travel	628	683
Office services	3,555	3,511
Communication	169	90
Corporate expenses	264	259
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	5,221	5,149
Goods supplied	131	268
Services rendered	5,090	4,881
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	5,221	5,149
Other suppliers		
Operating lease rentals	1	41
Workers' compensation expenses	42	53
Total other suppliers	43	94
Total suppliers	5,264	5,243

Accounting policy

Short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

The department has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (less than \$10,000). The department recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Note 2 Own-source revenue and gains

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
2A: Revenue from contracts with customers		
Sale of goods	11	16
Rendering of services	79	48
Total revenue from contracts with customers	90	64
Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Major product / service line:		
Services - seminars/conference	79	48
Goods - publications/gift shop	11	16
	90	64
Type of customer:		
Australian Government entities (related parties)	39	54
State and Territory Governments	25	2
Non-government entities	26	8
	90	64
Timing of transfer of goods and services:		
Over time	-	-
Point in time	90	64
	90	64
2B: Interest		
Deposits	52	70
Total interest	52	70
2C: Other revenue		
Royalties	36	12
Funding from external sources	126	111
Memberships	25	-
Total other revenue	187	123
2D: Other gains		
Resources received free of charge		
Remuneration of auditors	87	83
Rent of premises	1,953	1,920
Other gain—other financial income	3	-
Total other gains	2,043	2,003
2E: Revenue from government		
Appropriations		
Departmental appropriations	25,014	24,113
Total revenue from government	25,014	24,113

Accounting policy

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when control has been transferred to the buyer.

The department recognises revenue to depict the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods or services.

The department has assessed its revenues from seminars, conferences and gift shop and considers they are within the scope of AASB 15 as the performance obligations required by an enforceable contract are sufficiently specific.

The department has assessed its funding agreements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and considers they are not sufficiently specific to determine when the obligation is satisfied. AASB 1058 applies.

The department has disclosed its main product/service lines, type of customers and the timing of transfer of the goods/services.

Receivables for goods and services, which generally have pay up-front payment terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance amount.

Collectability of debts is reviewed as at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Interest

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method.

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as gains when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal consideration are recognised as gains at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition.

Revenue from government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as revenue from government when the department gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Financial position

This section analyses the Department of the House of Representatives' assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result.

Employee-related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

Note 3 Financial assets

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
3A: Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand or on deposit ¹	2,855	617
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,855	617
3B: Trade and other receivables		
Goods and services receivables		
Goods and services	72	214
Total goods and services receivables	72	214
Appropriations receivables		
Appropriation receivable—existing programs	21,114	17,779
Total appropriations receivables	21,114	17,779
Other receivables		
Cash held by salary packaging providers	30	28
GST input credits receivable	39	23
Total other receivables	69	51
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	21,255	18,044
Less impairment allowance	-	-
Total trade and other receivables (net)	21,255	18,044
3C: Other investments		
Deposits ²	-	2,546
Total other investments	-	2,546

1. The closing balance of cash on hand or on deposit includes the amount matured from the term deposit investment of \$2,546,108 on 29/06/2020. Refer to Note 3C for more information.

2. The department's term deposit of \$2,546,108 matured on 29 June 2020. The department reinvested the funds in a new term deposit on 10 July 2020. The source of the deposit was the former Inter-parliamentary Relations Special Account which was subject to a sun-setting provision. The balance of the account was initially invested after the release of a new delegation from the Finance Minister in July 2017. Refer to Note 12A for further details.

Accounting policy

Financial assets

Trade receivables are recognised where the department becomes party to a contract and has a legal right to receive cash. Loans and receivables are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable. Trade receivables are derecognised on payment.

Appropriations receivable are appropriations controlled by the department but held in the Official Public Account. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Note 4 Non-financial assets

4A: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of heritage and cultural, property, plant and equipment, and computer software

	Heritage and cultural ¹	Property, plant and equipment	Computer software ²	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July 2019				
Gross book value	454	4,819	909	6,182
Work in progress	-	-	122	122
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	-	-	(772)	(772)
Total as at 1 July 2019	454	4,819	259	5,532
Recognition of right-of-use assets on initial application of AASB 16	-	68	-	68
Adjusted total as at 1 July 2019	454	4,887	259	5,600
Additions				
Purchase	-	134	-	134
Internally developed	-	-	142	142
Work in progress ³	-	-	(108)	(108)
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(410)	(74)	(484)
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	-	(33)	-	(33)
Disposals				
Write-off (cost)	-	(1)	(279)	(280)
Right-of-use assets (cost)	-	(16)	-	(16)
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	-	8	279	287
Total as at 30 June 2020	454	4,569	219	5,242
Total as at 30 June 2020 represented by				
Gross book value	454	5,004	772	6,230
Work in progress	-	-	14	14
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	-	(435)	(567)	(1,002)
Total as at 30 June 2020	454	4,569	219	5,242
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets⁴	-	27	-	-

1. Other property, plant and equipment that met the definition of a heritage and cultural item were disclosed in the heritage and cultural asset class.

2. The carrying value of computer software includes purchased software of \$29,131, internally generated software of \$76,820 and \$13,422 of work in progress towards purchased software.

3. \$108,724 of work in progress assets were completed and capitalised during the 2019-20 financial year.

4. The carrying amount of right-of-use assets is disclosed individually, however it is included in the property, plant & equipment total as at 30 June 2020.

Revaluations of non-financial assets

All revaluations were conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated at Note 15. On 30 June 2020 an independent valuer conducted a materiality assessment.

Note 4 Non-financial assets (continued)***Accounting policy***

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of an item of property, plant and equipment shall be recognised as an asset if, and only if it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the entity; and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The cost of acquisition includes the initial costs to acquire or construct an item as well as subsequent costs. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset recognition threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items that are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

Lease Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise of the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received (if applicable). These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright, but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

On initial adoption of AASB 16 the Department has adjusted the ROU assets at the date of initial application by the amount of any provision for onerous leases recognised immediately before the date of initial application. Lease ROU assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition in Commonwealth agency, GGS and Whole of Government financial statements.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Note 4 Non-financial assets (continued)

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the entity using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future, reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2020	2019
Property, plant and equipment	1 to 50 years	1 to 50 years

The entity has items of property, plant and equipment that are heritage and cultural assets that are not depreciated.

Impairment

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the entity were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Accounting policy

Heritage and cultural assets

The department has the following heritage and cultural assets with an aggregated fair value of \$454,000 (2019: \$454,000):

- » Mace—Garrard engraved silver
- » Dispatch Boxes (2), Rosewood with silver and enamel embossing
- » Yirrkala bark petition 14 Aug 1963, bark 59.1cm x 33.2cm
- » Yirrkala bark Petition 28 Aug 1963, wood bark 49.1cm x 30cm
- » Yirrkala bark petition 8 Oct 1968, wood bark 59.1cm x 34cm
- » Rituals—Yirrkala people 1976, wood feathers 47.1cm x 24.2cm.

The department has classified these items as heritage and cultural assets as they are primarily used for purposes that relate to their heritage value and cultural significance.

Heritage and cultural assets have an indefinite useful life which is maintained through the department's adoption of appropriate curatorial and preservation activities. Where required, advice on preservation and restoration activities is sought from the Parliament's Design Integrity and Archives Unit which is operated by the Department of Parliamentary Services.

Intangibles

The entity's intangibles comprise internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of the entity's software are 3 to 20 years (2019: 3 to 20 years).

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2020.

Note 4 Non-financial assets (continued)

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
4B: Inventories		
Inventories held for sale		
Finished goods	5	7
Total inventories held for sale	5	7
Total inventories	5	7

During 2019-20, \$2,054 worth of inventory held for sale was recognised as an expense (2019: \$2,246).

\$28 of inventory was written off due to damage during 2019-20.

All inventories are expected to be sold or distributed in the next 12 months.

4C: Other non-financial assets		
Prepayments	216	225
Total other non-financial assets	216	225

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets.

Accounting policy

Inventories held for sale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Inventories held for distribution are valued at cost, adjusted for any loss of service potential. Inventories acquired at no cost or nominal consideration are initially measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

Note 5 Payables

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
5A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	418	389
Total suppliers	418	389

Settlement was usually made within 20 days.

5A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	418	389
Total suppliers	418	389

Settlement was usually made within 20 days.

5B: Other payables		
Salaries and wages	234	109
Superannuation	44	22
Salary sacrifice payable	30	28
Unearned income	-	95
Input tax credit (GST) payment to the Australian Taxation Office	-	1
Other payables	38	1
Total other payables	346	256

Note 6 Interest bearing liabilities

	2020	2019
6: Leases		
Lease liabilities	27	-
Total leases	27	-

1 The Department has applied AASB 16 using the modified retrospective approach and therefore the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 117.

Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2020 was \$32,546.

People and relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post-employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

Note 7 Employee provisions

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Leave	6,934	6,163
Total employee provisions	6,934	6,163
Employee provisions expected to be settled		
No more than 12 months	1,843	1,627
More than 12 months	5,091	4,536
Total employee provisions	6,934	6,163

Accounting policy

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits and termination benefits expected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long-service leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the entity's employer superannuation contribution rates and additional oncosts (annual leave and long-service leave) to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination. The liability for long-service leave has been determined by the short-hand method as at 30 June 2020. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates, increments within level and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Superannuation

The department's staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) or other superannuation funds held outside the Australian Government.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme. The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes.

The department makes employer contributions to the employee's defined benefit superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the government. The entity accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans. The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions.

Note 8 Key management personnel remuneration

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Short-term employee benefits		
Base salary	1,400	1,359
Other benefits and allowances	147	143
Total short-term employee benefits	1,547	1,502
Post-employment benefits		
Superannuation contribution	216	237
Total post-employment benefits	216	237
Other long-term employee benefits		
Long-service leave	225	62
Total other long-term employee benefits	225	62
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	1,988	1,801

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table is 7. (2019: 7)

Accounting policy

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the department. The department has determined the key management personnel to be the Clerk of the House, Deputy Clerk of the House, the three Clerk's Assistants and the Serjeant-at-Arms.

Note 9 Related party disclosures

Transactions with related parties

Given the breadth of government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions are not considered to be related party transactions.

The department transacts with other Australian Government controlled entities consistent with normal day-to-day business operations provided under normal terms and conditions, including the payment of workers' compensation and insurance premiums, transactions between the other parliamentary departments and the Department of Finance. These are not considered individually significant to warrant separate disclosure as related party transactions. Refer to Note 1A Employee benefits for details on superannuation arrangements with the Commonwealth.

Giving consideration to relationships with related entities, and transactions entered into during the reporting period by the department, it has been determined that there are no related party transactions to be separately disclosed.

Funding

This section identifies the Department of the House of Representatives funding structure.

Note 10 Appropriations

Annual appropriations for 2020

	Appropriation Act		PGPA Act		Total appropriation ² \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2020 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ² \$'000
	Annual appropriation ¹ \$'000	Section 74 receipts \$'000					
Departmental							
Operating budget	25,014	3,902			28,916	(23,193)	5,723
Capital budget	635	-			635	(173)	462
Total departmental	25,649	3,902			29,551	(23,366)	6,185
Administered							
Operating budget	319	-			319	(222)	97
Total administered	319	-			319	(222)	97

1. In 2019–20, there were no appropriations subject to quarantine and no reductions. The departmental and administered appropriation are automatically repealed three years after they are passed by parliament.

2. The departmental variance primarily relates to:

- a) operating budget:
 - lower catering and incidental expenses, travel and office services from March to June 2020 due to the pandemic.
 - the department's term deposit of \$2,546,108.00 matured on 29 June 2020 and was not reinvested until July. This amount was held in the department's bank account and not applied until reinvestment in July 2020.
- b) capital budget—a number of procurements of new equipment for the print room were delayed and not completed or delivered by 30 June 2020, it is anticipated these will be completed in the first half of 2020–21. In addition, the department had budgeted to pay for replacement of the Parliamentary Relations Office database, but this was subsequently identified to be funded through the Department of Parliamentary Services capital works plan.

The administered variance relates to reduced school visits because of the pandemic shutdown from March to June 2020.

Note 10 Appropriations (continued)

	Appropriation Act		PGPA Act		Total appropriation ² \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2020 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ² \$'000
	Annual appropriation ¹ \$'000	Section 74 receipts \$'000					
Departmental							
Operating budget	24,113	314		24,427	(22,955)	1,472	
Capital budget	637	-		637	(234)	403	
Total departmental	24,750	314		25,064	(23,189)	1,875	
Administered							
Operating budget	313	-		313	(330)	(17)	
Total administered	313	-		313	(330)	(17)	

1. In 2018–19, there were no appropriations subject to quarantine and no reductions. The departmental and administered appropriation are automatically repealed three years after they are passed by parliament.

2. The departmental variance primarily relates to:

- a) operating budget—lower employee benefits expense due to a number of positions remaining vacant throughout the reporting period
- b) capital budget—a number of bespoke software projects remained incomplete at balance date.

The administered variance relates to accrued expenses in 2017–18 which were drawn and paid in 2018–19.

Note 11 Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Departmental		
Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2018-19	235	17,779
Appropriation - Operating Supply (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2019-20	15,455	-
Appropriation - Operating (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2019-20	5,423	-
Cash at bank	2,855	617
Total departmental	23,968	18,396
Administered		
Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2018-19	-	17
Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Act (No. 1) 2019-20	114	-
Total administered	114	17

Note 12A Special appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	2020	2019
Authority	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013—section 58</i>	-	5,092
Total special appropriations applied	-	<u>5,092</u>

The *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Finance Minister to Accountable Authorities of Non-Corporate Commonwealth Entities) Delegation 2014* provides the department the delegation to invest relevant money in any authorised investment on behalf of the Commonwealth or to authorise the reinvestment upon maturity of the proceeds of an authorised investment. The delegation is made under section 58 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Investments made in accordance with this delegation throughout the year were as follows:

2019–20 amount applied	Date	\$'000
Term deposit matured	29 June 2020	-
Total applied		<u>-</u>

2018–19 amount applied	Date	\$'000
Term deposit matured and principal reinvested	20 July 2018	2,546
Term deposit matured and principal reinvested	28 June 2019	2,546
Total applied		<u>5,092</u>

The department's term deposit of \$2,546,108 matured on 29 June 2020. This amount was held in cash at bank as at 30 June 2020. The department reinvested the funds to a new term deposit with a different financial institution on 10 July 2020 for a period of 12 months at 1.5% interest payable on maturity. The source of the initial deposit was the former Inter-parliamentary Relations Special Account which was subject to a sun-setting provision. The balance of the account was initially invested after the release of a new delegation from the Finance Minister in July 2017. The balance of this account is disclosed in Note 3C and interest earned is recorded on an accrual basis in Note 2B.

Note 12B Disclosures by agent in relation to special appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	Department of Finance (third party access)	
	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
Total receipts	50,794	48,534
Total payments	50,794	48,534

Throughout the financial year, the department made payments via special appropriations in accordance with third party access agreements with the Department of Finance. The agreement facilitates payments under the following Acts for the purposes described:

Parliamentary Superannuation Act 2004—For the purposes necessary to administer the special appropriation in section 18 of the Act.

Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act—For the purposes necessary to administer the special appropriation in section 66 of the Act.

Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017—For the appropriation in section 59 of the Act.

Note 12 Net cash appropriation arrangements

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
Total comprehensive income/(loss) less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations	1,487	1,371
Plus: depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriation	(517)	(584)
Plus: depreciation right-of-use assets	33	-
Less: principal repayments - leased assets	(33)	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)—as per the statement of comprehensive income	970	787

Managing uncertainties

This section analyses how the Department of the House of Representatives manages financial risks within its operating environment.

Note 14 Financial instruments

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Categories of financial instruments		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Term deposit	-	2,546
Cash and cash equivalents	2,855	617
Trade and other receivables	102	242
Total financial assets at amortised cost	2,957	3,405
Total financial assets	2,957	3,405
Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Suppliers	418	389
Other payables	-	95
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	418	484
Total financial liabilities	418	484

Note 14 Financial instruments (continued)***Accounting policy*****Financial assets**

With the implementation of AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, for the first time in 2019 the department classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- a) financial assets at fair value through profit or loss
- b) financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income and
- c) financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both the department's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Comparatives have not been restated on initial application.

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

1. the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows and
2. the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest method.

Effective interest method

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis for financial assets that are recognised at amortised cost.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on expected credit losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to lifetime expected credit losses where risk has significantly increased, or an amount equal to 12-month expected credit losses if risk has not increased.

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost and consist of trade creditors, accruals and unearned income. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

Note 15 Fair value

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Non-financial assets¹		
Property, plant and equipment ²	4,542	4,819
Heritage and cultural ²	454	454

1. The department's assets are held for operational purposes and not held for the purposes of deriving profit. The current use of all non-financial assets is considered their highest and best use.

2. The department did not measure any non-financial assets at fair value on a non-recurring basis as at 30 June 2020.

Accounting policy

The department tests the procedures of the valuation model as an asset materiality review at least once every 12 months (with a formal revaluation undertaken once every three years). If a particular asset class experiences significant and volatile changes in fair value (i.e. where indicators suggest that the value of the class has changed materially since the previous reporting period), that class is subject to specific valuation in the reporting period, where practicable, regardless of the timing of the last specific valuation.

Other information

Note 16 Aggregate assets and liabilities

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months	24,331	21,439
More than 12 months	5,242	5,532
Total assets	29,573	26,971
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months	2,634	2,273
More than 12 months	5,091	4,535
Total liabilities	7,725	6,808

Major budget variances

This section provides explanations for major budget variances between the department's budget and actual results for the year ended 30 June 2019.

Note 17 Departmental budget variances commentary

Explanations of major variances	Affected statements and line items
COVID-19 pandemic	
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the department's financial statements in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » International delegations, both incoming and outgoing, ceased from March and as at reporting date had not recommenced. This resulted in reductions in travel costs for staff supporting the delegations, along with catering, printing and overtime to support delegations outside of normal working hours. » All committee office travel to support parliamentary inquiries ceased from March. Associated costs relating to catering, venue hire, meals and incidentals were significantly reduced during the period. » Due to reduced sittings of the House, normal costs associated with supporting the chamber, were reduced, this includes overtime for staff who would ordinarily support the chamber outside of hours, casual staff wages for attendants who are primarily employed during sitting weeks, and printing to support bills and papers. » Sourcing of equipment was difficult during March – June. This resulted in delays in procuring a number of assets including print room equipment. 	<p>Statement of comprehensive income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » suppliers expenses » employee benefits » depreciation and amortisation <p>Statement of financial position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » employee provisions » trade and other receivables (in respect of undrawn appropriation) » non-financial assets <p>Cash flow statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » operating cash used—suppliers » operating cash used—employees » operating cash received—appropriations » investing cash used – purchase of property, plant and equipment

Note 17 Departmental budget variances commentary (continued)

Affected statements and line items	
Term Deposit Maturity	
<p>The department's term deposit held with Westpac of \$2,546,108 matured on 29 June 2020. In order to obtain a better rate of return the amount was not immediately reinvested while paperwork to setup new authorities with ME Bank was completed and accepted. The amount was held in cash at bank as at 30 June 2020.</p>	<p>Statement of financial position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » cash and cash equivalents » other investments <p>Statement of comprehensive income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » depreciation and amortisation » changes in asset revaluation surplus <p>Cash flow statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » investing cash used—investments
Parliamentary conferences	
<p>The department sought and received funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support the participation of a number of Pacific nations at the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum in January 2020. This amount was fully offset by expenditure incurred to complete the activity. The net amount of funding after returning unspent funds was \$126,000 This funding and expenditure was not known at the time of budgeting.</p>	<p>Statement of comprehensive income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » other revenue » suppliers expenses <p>Cash flow statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » operating cash used—investments » operating cash received—revenue from external sources

Note 18 Administered budget variances commentary

Explanations of major variances	Affected statements and line items
COVID-19 pandemic	
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the administered financial statements in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » School visits to Parliament House ceased from March 2020 through June 2020. This meant no hospitality costs were incurred. Costs attributable to the departmental staff member working on the bookings continued as large volumes of cancellations, inquiries and future bookings continued during the period. 	<p>Statement of comprehensive income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » suppliers expenses <p>Cash flow statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » cash used—suppliers



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1. Chamber and Federation Chamber

This appendix contains summary information on the business of the Chamber and Federation Chamber in 2019–20.

Meetings of the House of Representatives, 2019–20

Events	Winter–Spring 2019	Autumn–Winter 2020	Total
Sitting weeks	9	9	18
Sitting days	35	27	62
Hours of sitting: ^a			
» including suspensions	321	249	570
» excluding suspensions	312	237	548
Sittings after midnight	0	0	0
Government bills introduced	141	72	213
Private members' bills introduced ^b	23	12	35
Private members' motions moved	16	9	25
Committee reports presented	41	52	93
Days on which:			
» the adjournment motion was debated	30	24	54
» matters of public importance were discussed	25	20	45
» private members' business occurred	8	4	12
Divisions	206	166	372
Closure of question agreed to	28	22	50
Closure of member agreed to	43	42	85
Bills subject to debate management motions	3	15	18

a. Hours are rounded to the nearest hour. Discrepancies in totals are due to rounding.

b. Includes two private senators' bills.

Meetings of the Federation Chamber, 2019–20

Events	Winter–Spring 2019	Autumn–Winter 2020	Total
Number of meetings	32	22	54
Hours of meeting (excluding suspensions) ^a	116	68	185
Bills referred	3	0	3
Private members' bills debated	0	0	0
Private members' motions moved	60	25	85
Committee reports presented	0	0	0
Committee and delegation reports referred	4	11	15
Days on which:			
» the adjournment motion was debated	8	6	14
» grievance debate occurred	8	5	13
» private members' business occurred	8	5	13

a. Hours are rounded to the nearest hour. Discrepancies in totals are due to rounding.

Bills and amendments dealt with by the House of Representatives (Chamber and Federation Chamber), 2015–16 to 2019–20

Events	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Government bills introduced:					
» initiated in the House	136	206	172	112	196
» initiated in the Senate	5	7	15	13	17
» total	141	213	187	125	213
Private members' bills introduced ^a	21	35	35	30	35
Second reading amendments moved	16	40	45	37	110
Consideration in detail amendments moved:					
» government	60	58	453	471	32
» opposition	38	44	44	63	89
» non-aligned	21	71	9	32	18
» amendments to private members' bills	0	0	93	0	0
Consideration in detail amendments passed:					
» government	60	58	453	471	32
» opposition	2	0	3	2	3
» non-aligned	0	1	0	10	0
» amendments to private members' bills	0	0	0	0	0

a. Includes private senators' bills.

2. Committee activity

This appendix tallies the activities of the House of Representatives and joint committees of the Forty-sixth Parliament, 2019–20. Only House and joint committees supported by the Department of the House of Representatives are listed.

Committee	Meetings	Inquiries active at 30 June 2020	Reports presented ^a
Scrutiny committees			
Agriculture and Water Resources	23	2	0
Communications and the Arts	25	0	1
Economics	27	4	6
Electoral Matters	17	3	3
Employment, Education and Training	12	1	1
Environment and Energy	26	2	2
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade	92	7	1
Health, Aged Care and Sport	15	0	1
Indigenous Affairs	15	2	0
Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources	19	1	0
Infrastructure, Transport and Cities	12	1	0
Intelligence and Security	67	9	7
Migration	23	1	1
National Capital and External Territories	9	1	0
National Redress Scheme	17	1	1
Northern Australia	17	2	0
Public Accounts and Audit	22	4	2
Public Works	29	4	10
Regional Australia	28	1	1
Social Policy and Legal Affairs	17	3	1
Tax and Revenue	12	3	0
Trade and Investment Growth	16	1	1
Treaties	15	5	3

Committee	Meetings	Inquiries active at 30 June 2020	Reports presented ^a
Internal committees			
Appropriations and Administration	5	0	1
Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings	0	0	0
Petitions	16	0	13
Privileges and Members' Interests	8	0	2
Procedure	17	3	0
Publications (House)	2	0	0
Selection	18	0	17

a. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties often present reports that incorporate multiple completed inquiries. Statistics detailed here tally the number of reports presented only and not the number of completed inquiries.

3. Committee reports and inquiries

This appendix provides details of inquiries conducted and reports presented by the parliamentary committees supported by the Department of the House of Representatives in 2019–20.

Scrutiny committees—inquiries active at 30 June 2020

Inquiries active at 30 June 2020
Agriculture and Water Resources, Standing Committee on
Inquiry into the timber supply chain constraints in the Australian plantation sector
Inquiry into growing Australian agriculture to \$100 billion by 2030
Communications and the Arts, Standing Committee on
There were no active inquiries at 30 June 2020.
Economics, Standing Committee on
Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2019
Review of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority annual report 2019
Review of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission annual report 2019
Review of the four major banks and other financial institutions
Electoral Matters, Joint Standing Committee on
Inquiry into and report on all aspects of the conduct of the 2019 federal election and matters related thereto
Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Ensuring Fair Representation of the Northern Territory) Bill 2020
Electoral Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill 2020
Employment, Education and Training, Standing Committee on
Education in remote and complex environments
Environment and Energy, Standing Committee on the
National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Amendment (Transparency in Carbon Emissions Accounting) Bill 2020
Inquiry into the problem of feral and domestic cats in Australia
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Joint Standing Committee on
Remediation of PFAS-related impacts ongoing scrutiny and review
Inquiry into Australia activating greater trade and investment with Pacific island countries
Inquiry into the human rights of women and girls in the Pacific
Inquiry into targeted sanctions to address human rights abuses
Inquiry into Australia's defence relationships with Pacific island nations

Inquiries active at 30 June 2020
Inquiry into strengthening Australia's relationships with countries in the Pacific region
Inquiry into the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia's foreign affairs, defence and trade
Health, Aged Care and Sport, Standing Committee on
There were no active inquiries at 30 June 2020.
Implementation of the National Redress Scheme, Joint Select Committee on
Second interim report on implementation of the National Redress Scheme
Indigenous Affairs, Standing Committee on
Pathways and participation opportunities for Indigenous Australians in employment and business
Inquiry into food pricing and food security in remote Indigenous communities
Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources, Standing Committee on
Inquiry into Australia's waste management and recycling industries
Infrastructure, Transport and Cities, Standing Committee on
Inquiry into options for financing faster rail
Intelligence and Security, Parliamentary Joint Committee on
Review of administration and expenditure No. 18 (2018–19): Australian intelligence agencies
Review of Australian Federal Police powers
Review of 'declared areas' provisions
Review of the amendments made by the <i>Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment (Assistance and Access) Act 2018</i>
Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Cessation) Bill 2019
Review of the mandatory data retention regime
Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (International Production Orders) Bill 2020
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Amendment Bill 2020
Inquiry into the impact of the exercise of law enforcement and intelligence powers on the freedom of the press
Migration, Joint Standing Committee on
Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker program
National Capital and External Territories, Joint Standing Committee on the
Review of the National Capital Authority: Biannual public briefings
Northern Australia, Joint Standing Committee on
Inquiry into the opportunities and challenges of the engagement of traditional owners in the economic development of Northern Australia
Inquiry into the destruction of 46,000-year-old caves at the Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara region of Western Australia

Inquiries active at 30 June 2020
Public Accounts and Audit, Joint Committee of
The administration of government grants: Inquiry into Auditor-General's reports 5, 12 and 23 (2019–20)
Review of the operations of the Parliamentary Budget Office 2019–20
Inquiry into the 2018–19 Defence major projects report and the future submarine project—Transition to design (Auditor-General's reports 19 and 22 (2019–20))
Cyber resilience: Inquiry into Auditor-General's reports 1 and 13 (2019–20)
Public Works, Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Proposed fit-out and security hardening of new leased Australian Federal Police premises at West Perth
Australian War Memorial development project
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment proposed fitout of new leased premises, Canberra
AIR 555 phase 1 airborne intelligence surveillance reconnaissance electronic warfare capability facilities works
Regional Australia, House Select Committee on
Inquiry into matters affecting Regional Australia
Social Policy and Legal Affairs, Standing Committee on
Inquiry into family, domestic and sexual violence
Inquiry into homelessness in Australia
Tax and Revenue, Standing Committee on
Inquiry into the tax treatment of employee share schemes
Inquiry into the development of the Australian corporate bond market
Inquiry into the Commissioner of Taxation annual report 2018–19
Trade and Investment Growth, Joint Standing Committee on
Inquiry into diversifying Australia's trade and investment profile
Treaties, Joint Standing Committee on
Amendments CMS—Amendments to appendices I and II to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
Capital increase—World Bank Group, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Capital increase—World Bank Group, International Finance Corporation
Certain aspects of the treaty-making process in Australia
Termination investment promotion and protection agreement—Indonesia

Scrutiny committees—reports presented during 2019–20

Reports presented	Date presented and parliamentary paper (PP) number
Agriculture and Water Resources, Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Communications and the Arts, Standing Committee on	
<i>The next gen future: Inquiry into the deployment, adoption and application of 5G in Australia</i>	12 May 2020; PP: 117/2020
Economics, Standing Committee on	
<i>Review of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission annual report 2018</i>	25 November 2019; PP: 540/2019
<i>Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2018 (second report)</i>	12 December 2019; PP: 22/2020
<i>Review of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission annual report 2018</i>	10 February 2020; PP: 24/2020
<i>Review of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority annual report 2019</i>	2 March 2020; PP: 58/2020
<i>Advisory report on the Banking Amendment (Rural Finance Reform) Bill 2019</i>	5 March 2020; PP: 63/2020
<i>Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2019 (first report)</i>	5 March 2020; PP: 64/2020
Electoral Matters, Joint Standing Committee on	
<i>Advisory report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations) Bill 2019</i>	17 December 2019; PP: 550/2020
<i>Interim report on all aspects of the conduct of the 2019 federal election and matters related thereto: delegation to the International Grand Committee, Dublin, Ireland</i>	15 May 2020; PP: 124/2020
<i>Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering the Donation Disclosure Threshold) Bill 2019</i>	28 May 2020; PP: 131/2020
Employment, Education and Training, Standing Committee on	
<i>Status of the teaching profession</i>	28 November 2019; PP: 543/2019
Environment and Energy, Standing Committee on the	
<i>Not without your approval: a way forward for nuclear technology in Australia. Report of the inquiry into the prerequisites for nuclear energy in Australia</i>	13 December 2019; PP: 23/2020
<i>Report of the inquiry into vegetation and land management policy relating to bushfires</i>	5 March 2020; PP: 62/2020
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Joint Standing Committee on	
<i>Inquiry into PFAS remediation in and around Defence bases (first report)</i>	20 December 2019; PP: 551/2019

Reports presented	Date presented and parliamentary paper (PP) number
Health, Aged Care and Sport, Standing Committee on	
<i>Walking the allergy tightrope: Addressing the rise of allergies and anaphylaxis in Australia</i>	15 June 2020; PP: 145/2020
Implementation of the National Redress Scheme, Joint Select Committee on	
<i>First interim report of the Joint Select Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme April 2020</i>	1 May 2020; PP: 120/2020
Indigenous Affairs, Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources, Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Infrastructure, Transport and Cities, Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Intelligence and Security, Parliamentary Joint Committee on	
<i>Review of the listing and re-listing of six organisations as terrorist organisations under the Criminal Code: Islamic State-Somalia, Abu Sayyaf Group, al-Qa'ida, al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb, Jabhat Fatah al-Sham and Jemaah Islamiyah</i>	10 September 2019; PP: 252/2019
<i>Advisory report on the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (2019 Measures No. 1) Bill 2019</i>	14 October 2019; PP: 289/2019
<i>Advisory report on the Identity-matching Services Bill 2019 and the Australian Passports Amendment (Identity-matching Services) Bill 2019</i>	24 October 2019; PP: 458/2019
<i>Review of the renunciation by conduct and cessation provisions in the Australian Citizenship Act 2007</i>	4 December 2019; PP: 534/2019
<i>Annual report of committee activities 2018–2019</i>	4 December 2019; PP: 535/2019
<i>Review of the re-listing of four terrorist organisations as terrorist organisations under the Criminal Cod</i>	5 February 2020; PP: 21/2020
<i>Review of administration and expenditure No. 17 (2017–2018): Australian intelligence agencies</i>	5 February 2020; PP: 20/2020
Migration, Joint Standing Committee on	
<i>Migration in regional Australia</i>	18 June 2020; PP: 144/2020
National Capital and External Territories, Joint Standing Committee on the	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Northern Australia, Joint Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	

Reports presented	Date presented and parliamentary paper (PP) number
Public Accounts and Audit, Joint Committee of	
<i>Report 480: Annual report (2018–19)</i>	4 December 2019; PP: 536/2019
<i>Report 481: Efficiency and effectiveness: Inquiry into Auditor-General's reports 25, 29, 38, 42, 44, 45 and 51 (2018–19)</i>	15 June 2020; PP: 120/2020
Public Works, Parliamentary Standing Committee on	
<i>Eighty-second annual report (2018)</i>	30 July 2019; PP: 225/2019
<i>2/2019: Referrals made 31 July 2019</i>	9 September 2019; PP: 246/2019
<i>3/2019: Referrals made July 2019</i>	16 September 2019; PP: 259/2019
<i>4/2019: Referrals made September 2019</i>	14 October 2019; PP: 290/2019
<i>5/2019: Referrals made July 2019</i>	16 October 2019; PP: 386/2019
<i>6/2019: Referrals made September 2019</i>	2 December 2019; PP: 528/2019
<i>Eighty-third annual report (2019)</i>	2 March 2020; PP: 60/2020
<i>1/2020: Referral made November 2019</i>	23 March 2020; PP: 77/2020
<i>2/2020: Referrals made November 2019 and February 2020</i>	6 May 2020; PP: 116/2020
<i>3/2020: Referral made November 2019 and February 2020</i>	10 June 2020; PP: 136/2020
Regional Australia, House Select Committee on	
<i>Interim report on the inquiry into regional Australia</i>	27 March 2020; PP: 136/2020
Social Policy and Legal Affairs, Standing Committee on	
<i>Protecting the age of innocence: Report of the inquiry into age verification for online wagering and online pornography</i>	5 March 2020; PP: 61/2020
Tax and Revenue, Standing Committee on	
No reports were presented during 2019–20.	
Trade and Investment Growth, Joint Standing Committee on	
<i>Trade transformation: Supporting Australia's export and investment opportunities</i>	10 June 2020; PP: 136/2020
Treaties, Joint Standing Committee on	
<i>Report 186: IA-CEPA and A-HKFTA</i>	16 October 2019; PP: 269/2019
<i>Report 187: Oil stock contracts—Hungary; MRA UK; Trade in wine UK; MH17 Netherlands; Air Services: Thailand, Timor-Leste, PNG; Work diplomatic families—Italy; Double taxation—Israel</i>	17 October 2019; PP: 403/2019
<i>Report 188: Investments Uruguay, ISDS UN Convention and Convention SKAO</i>	3 December 2019; PP: 523/2019

Internal committees—their purpose and inquiries conducted and reports presented by them during 2019–20

Committee purpose, inquiries conducted and reports presented

Appropriations and Administration, Standing Committee on

The committee considers estimates of the funding required for the operation of the department and may confer with the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing.

Report presented:

- » *Report No. 18: Annual report 2018–19*—presented on 28 November 2019; PP: 524/2019

Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings, Joint Committee on the

The committee meets when required to consider the general principles applying to the radio broadcasting and, in certain circumstances, the televising of proceedings of parliament by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

No reports were presented during 2019–20.

Petitions, Standing Committee on

The committee receives and processes petitions, and inquires into and reports to the House on any matter relating to petitions and the petitions system. Information on how to go about petitioning the House of Representatives is available at the petitions page on the Parliament of Australia website.

No inquiry reports were presented during 2019–20.

Reports presented:

- » *Report 1: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 29 July 2019
- » *Report 2: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 9 September 2019
- » *Report 3: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 16 September 2019
- » *Report 4: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 14 October 2019
- » *Report 5: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 21 October 2019
- » *Report 6: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 25 November 2019
- » *Report 7: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 2 December 2019
- » *Report 8: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 10 February 2020
- » *Report 9: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 24 February 2020
- » *Report 10: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 2 March 2020
- » *Report 11: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 8 April 2020
- » *Report 12: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 13 May 2020
- » *Report 13: Petitions and ministerial responses*—presented on 15 June 2020

Committee purpose, inquiries conducted and reports presented

Privileges and Members' Interests, Standing Committee on

The committee is appointed at the commencement of each parliament to inquire into and report on complaints of breach of privilege referred to it by the House, oversee arrangements for the maintenance of the register of members' interests and the register of members' qualifications, and consider any specific complaints about the registering of interests.

Reports presented:

- » *Report concerning an application from Mr Leo Zussino for the publication of a response to a reference made in the House of Representatives*—presented on 19 September 2019
- » *Report concerning the registration and declaration of Members' interests during 2019*—presented on 13 February 2020; PP: 25/2020

Procedure, Standing Committee on

The committee's role is to inquire into and report on the practices and procedures of the House and its committees.

No reports were presented during 2019–20.

Publications, Standing Committee on

The committee presents reports making recommendations relating to the inclusion in the Parliamentary Papers Series of documents presented to parliament.

No reports were presented during 2019–20.

Selection Committee

The committee was established to determine the program of committee and delegation business and private members' business for each sitting Monday and to select bills for referral to committees.

Reports presented:

- » 22 July 2019
- » 24 July 2019
- » 25 July 2019
- » 31 July 2019
- » 11 September 2019
- » 18 September 2019
- » 19 September 2019
- » 16 October 2019
- » 23 October 2019
- » 27 November 2019
- » 5 February 2020
- » 12 February 2020
- » 26 February 2020
- » 27 February 2020
- » 4 March 2020
- » 10 June 2020
- » 11 June 2020

4. Publications

This appendix contains summary information on Department of the House of Representatives publications.

Parliament of Australia website: www.aph.gov.au

The Parliament of Australia website includes members' home pages and home pages for House of Representatives committees and joint committees administered by the Department of the House of Representatives.

The House of Representatives pages of the website include many of the publications listed below as well as general information about the House and its work.

Publications directly related to the work of the House and its committees

About the House newsletter

E-newsletter containing articles on the work of the House and its committees

Committee Office brochures

- » *Appearing as a witness at a committee public hearing*
- » *Committee support standards*
- » *Dealing with parliamentary committees*
- » *Making a submission: Notes to help those intending to make a submission to a parliamentary committee inquiry*

House of Representatives facts and figures: Forty-sixth Parliament, first edition

A document produced primarily for use by Parliament House visitor guides

House of Representatives Infosheet series

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Questions</i> | 13. <i>Making decisions—debate and division</i> |
| 2. <i>A typical sitting day</i> | 14. <i>The work of a Member of Parliament</i> |
| 3. <i>The Speaker</i> | 15. <i>The Federation Chamber</i> |
| 4. <i>Committees</i> | 16. <i>Citizen's right of reply</i> |
| 5. <i>Parliamentary privilege</i> | 17. <i>Double dissolution</i> |
| 6. <i>Opportunities for private Members</i> | 18. <i>The House, government and opposition</i> |
| 7. <i>Making laws</i> | 19. <i>The Australian system of government</i> |
| 8. <i>Elections for the House of Representatives</i> | 20. <i>The Clerk and other officials</i> |
| 9. <i>A new Parliament</i> | 21. <i>Political parties in the House of Representatives</i> |
| 10. <i>The budget and financial legislation</i> | 22. <i>Basic legal expressions</i> |
| 11. <i>Petitions</i> | 23. <i>Glossary of procedural terms</i> |
| 12. <i>Finding out about the House</i> | |

Publications directly related to the work of the House and its committees

Guide to Procedures, sixth edition

A concise introduction to House procedures, 2017 (reprinted 2019 with minor amendments)

Publications directly related to the work of the House and its committees

House of Representatives Practice, seventh edition

The official authority for issues of practice and procedure, 2018

House Review

Discussion and analysis of selected features of House business, published each sitting week or fortnight

Last Week in the House

An overview of the work of the House each sitting week, including links to selected events in the official transcript of proceedings (Hansard)

Members' Notes

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>First speeches</i> | 8. <i>Raising a matter in the House</i> |
| 2. <i>Registration of Members' interests</i> | 9. <i>Private Members' motions</i> |
| 3. <i>Introduction to the Chamber environment</i> | 10. <i>Private Members' bills and amendments</i> |
| 4. <i>Etiquette in the Chamber</i> | 11. <i>Procedural motions</i> |
| 5. <i>House business documents and guidance</i> | 12. <i>Parliamentary privilege</i> |
| 6. <i>Motions, debate and voting</i> | 13. <i>Presenting a petition</i> |
| 7. <i>Bills</i> | 14. <i>Register of Members' qualifications relating to sections 44 and 45 of the Constitution</i> |

New Members' Handbook

A guide to services and facilities for new members of the House, 2019

House of Representatives Procedural Digest

A record of procedural events in the House, published each sitting week or fortnight

The Speaker of the House of Representatives

An illustrated history of the office, role and duties of the Speaker, 2016

House of Representatives Standing Orders

The permanent rules of procedure, as of 19 September 2019

House of Representatives Statistical Digest

A statistical record of the work of the House, published each sitting week or fortnight

Work of the Session

A periodic summary of the business of the House and its committees

Working with parliamentary committees

- » *A guide for committee chairs*
- » *A guide for Members*
- » *A guide for Members' staff*

Publications of an administrative nature

Department of the House of Representatives annual reports

Department of the House of Representatives corporate plans

Department of the House of Representatives Portfolio Budget Statements

Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020

Department of the House of Representatives service charter: service standards, January 2014

5. Official incoming parliamentary delegations

This appendix contains summary information on the official incoming parliamentary delegations in 2019–20.

Date	Delegation	Country represented
20–27 November 2019	Visit to Australia by an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) parliamentary delegation	Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam
8–14 February 2020	Visit to Australia by His Excellency Mr Demetris Syllouris, President of the House of Representatives of Cyprus	Cyprus
26–28 February 2020	Visit to Australia by the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Australia and New Zealand	European Union

6. Other incoming parliamentary delegations

This appendix contains summary information on other incoming parliamentary delegations in 2019–20.

Date	Delegation	Country (or body) represented
13 August 2019	Visit to the parliament by a United States congressional delegation, led by Representative Joe Courtney	United States
27 August 2019	Visit to the parliament by a United States congressional delegation, led by Senator Jerry Moran	United States
11 September 2019	Visit to the parliament by the Australian Political Exchange Council, 7th delegation from the Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea
12 September 2019	Visit to the parliament by a Brazilian parliamentary delegation	Brazil
18 September 2019	Visit to the parliament by members of the France–Australia Senate Friendship Group	France
18–19 September 2019	Visit to the parliament by members of the Japan–Australia Parliamentary Friendship Association	Japan
19 September 2019	Visit to the parliament by the Australian Political Exchange Council, 18th delegation from Japan	Japan
14 October 2019	Visit to the parliament by a delegation of locally based diplomatic representatives from the European Union	European Union
16 October 2019	Visit to the parliament by the Australian Political Exchange Council, 23rd delegation from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
21 October 2019	Visit to the parliament by a Hungarian parliamentary delegation	Hungary
25 November 2019	Visit to the parliament by the Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the parliament of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic
28 November 2019	Visit to the parliament by the Australian Political Exchange Council, 13th delegation from New Zealand	New Zealand
24 February 2020	Visit to the parliament by the Swedish Riksdag Committee on the Labour Market	Sweden
25 February 2020	Visit to the parliament by the German Bundestag Pacific Friendship Group	Germany
26 February 2020	Visit to the parliament by the Vice President of the German Bundestag	Germany

7. Outgoing parliamentary delegations

This appendix contains summary information on the outgoing parliamentary delegations in 2019–20.

Date	Visit	Delegation members
24 August– 4 September 2019	Parliamentary delegation to Thailand to attend the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and bilateral visits to the Philippines and Malaysia	Mr Kevin Hogan MP <i>Delegation leader</i> Hon Dr John McVeigh MP Senator Alex Gallacher
19 September– 19 December 2019	Parliamentary delegation to attend the United Nations General Assembly, New York, United States	Mr Ross Vasta MP Mr Nicholas Champion MP
22 September– 1 October 2019	Parliamentary delegation to attend the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference, Uganda, and a bilateral visit to Qatar	Senator the Hon Scott Ryan <i>President of the Senate and Delegation leader</i> Senator Catryna Bilyk Ms Sharon Claydon MP Senator Samantha McMahon
29 September– 5 October 2019	Parliamentary delegation to the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium, and Athens, Greece	Hon Kevin Andrews MP <i>Delegation leader</i> Hon Damian Drum MP Ms Joanne Ryan MP Senator Pauline Hanson Senator the Hon James McGrath
10–16 October 2019	Parliamentary observer delegation to attend the 65th Annual Session of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly, United Kingdom	Senator the Hon David Fawcett <i>Delegation leader</i> Senator the Hon Kim Carr
13–17 October 2019	Parliamentary delegation to attend the 141st Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly, Belgrade, Serbia	Mrs Lucy Wicks MP <i>Delegation leader</i> Mr Andrew Wallace MP Senator Deborah O'Neill Mr Julian Hill MP
2–8 November 2019	Parliamentary delegation to New Delhi and Mumbai, India, by members of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy	Mr Ted O'Brien MP <i>Delegation leader</i> Mr Joshua Wilson MP Hon Dr David Gillespie MP Ms Zali Steggall MP

Date	Visit	Delegation members
2–8 November 2019	Parliamentary delegation to the People's Republic of China by members of the Senate Standing Committees for Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport	Senator Susan McDonald <i>Delegation leader</i> Senator Glenn Sterle
3–5 November 2019	Visit to Tokyo, Japan, for the G20 Speaker's Summit	Hon Tony Smith MP <i>Speaker of the House of Representatives</i> Senator the Hon Scott Ryan <i>President of the Senate</i>
4–11 November 2019	Parliamentary delegation to Dublin, Ireland, by members of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	Senator Carol Brown Mr Milton Dick MP
5–8 November 2019	Visit to Mexico to attend the 2019 Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia (MIKTA) Speakers' Consultation	Senator the Hon Scott Ryan <i>President of the Senate and Delegation leader</i>
30 November–5 December 2019	Parliamentary delegation to attend the Antarctic Parliamentarians Assembly, United Kingdom	Hon Keith Pitt MP <i>Delegation leader</i> Hon Warren Snowdon MP
8–12 December 2019	Parliamentary delegation to New Zealand and Vanuatu by members of the Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity	Senator Catryna Bilyk <i>Delegation leader</i> Mr Pat Conaghan MP Dr Andrew Laming MP Mr Tony Zappia MP
6–10 January 2020	Visit to Ottawa, Canada, to attend the 25th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth	Hon Tony Smith MP <i>Speaker of the House of Representatives</i> Senator the Hon Scott Ryan <i>President of the Senate</i>
24–28 January 2020	Visit to Poland for the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau	Senator the Hon Scott Ryan <i>President of the Senate</i>

8. Parliamentary capacity-building

This appendix contains summary information on parliamentary capacity-building activities supported by the Department of the House of Representatives in 2019–20.

Date	Program and activity	Country or legislature represented
8–19 July 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>The Clerk Assistant (Table) and an officer from the Table Office assisted with executive and mid-level management training at the Myanmar parliament in a program funded by the Inter-Parliamentary Union</p>	Myanmar
12 July 2019	<p>Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Fund</p> <p>An executive committee meeting was supported at the Queensland parliament</p>	–
26 August 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>Visit to the parliament by two Senators from the Malaysian Dewan Negara to discuss parliamentary reform</p>	Malaysia
16–18 September 2019	<p>Study Visit Program</p> <p>Samoa Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs visited the parliament for a study program on committee procedure and administration</p>	Samoa
14–18 October 2019	<p>Study Visit Program</p> <p>Staff of the lower house (Lok Sabha) of the Indian parliament visited the parliament for a study program on parliamentary procedure and administration</p>	India
21–22 October 2019	<p>Study Visit Program</p> <p>Myanmar parliamentarians visited the parliament as part of the political mentoring program for parliamentarians run by the International Women's Development Agency and funded by the Australian Government</p>	Myanmar
22 October 2019	<p>Study Visit Program</p> <p>Officials from the Pacific visited the parliament as part of the Legal Policy Development course run by the Attorney-General's Department</p>	Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu
28 October–2 November 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>The Clerk Assistant (Table) and an officer from the Table Office assisted with executive and mid-level management training at the Myanmar parliament in a program funded by the Inter-Parliamentary Union</p>	Myanmar

Date	Program and activity	Country or legislature represented
31 October 2019	<p>Study Visit Program</p> <p>Officials from the Legislative Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress Standing Committee participated in a program on the Australian Parliament's legislative process</p>	China
31 October 2019	<p>Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Fund</p> <p>Windows 10 Pro software licence, four laptops, two Surface Pros and six LED monitors were supplied</p>	Vanuatu
19–20 November 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>One member of parliament and two parliamentary senior executive officers were supported to participate in the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Conference on Parliamentary Oversight</p>	New Zealand
21–22 November 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>The Serjeant-at-Arms was supported to participate in the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Workshop on Public Financial Management Oversight</p>	New Zealand
2–4 December 2019	<p>Fiji Parliamentary Support Program</p> <p>The Fijian Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee visited the parliament for a study program to meet with Australian counterparts and observe the work of the parliament</p>	Fiji
2–13 December 2019	<p>Parliamentary strengthening</p> <p>A finance officer was supported to assist with a Floating Budget Office mission at the Vanuatu parliament funded by the United Nations Development Programme</p>	Vanuatu

9. Contact directory

This appendix contains the contact details of House of Representatives office holders and the department's senior executive officers as at 30 September 2020.

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Tony Smith MP	Parliament House	Phone (02) 6277 4000
	Electorate office	Phone (03) 9727 0799
	Email	tony.smith.mp@aph.gov.au
Deputy Speaker, Mr Llew O'Brien MP	Parliament House	Phone (02) 6277 2301
	Electorate office	Phone (07) 4121 2936
	Email	llew.obrien.mp@aph.gov.au
Second Deputy Speaker, Mr Rob Mitchell MP	Parliament House	Phone (02) 6277 4117
	Electorate office	Phone (03) 5716 3000
	Email	rob.mitchell.mp@aph.gov.au
Clerk of the House, Ms Claressa Surtees	Phone	(02) 6277 4111
	Email	clerk.reps@aph.gov.au
Deputy Clerk, Ms Catherine Cornish	Phone	(02) 6277 4222
	Email	depclerk.reps@aph.gov.au
Clerk Assistant (Table), Mr Peter Banson	Phone	(02) 6277 4777
	Email	peter.banson.reps@aph.gov.au
Clerk Assistant (Procedure), Mr Jerome Brown	Phone	(02) 6277 4396
	Email	jerome.brown.reps@aph.gov.au
Clerk Assistant (Committees), Mr Stuart Woodley	Phone	(02) 6277 4399
	Email	stuart.woodley.reps@aph.gov.au
Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr James Catchpole	Phone	(02) 6277 4444
	Email	james.catchpole.reps@aph.gov.au
Departmental addresses	Post	Department of the House of Representatives PO Box 6021 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600
	Internet	www.aph.gov.au/dhr

10. List of requirements

Section 17AJ(d) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 requires the table below to be included in annual reports as an aid of access.

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal		
17AI	p. iii	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.	Mandatory
17AD(h)	Aids to access		
17AJ(a)	p. v	Table of contents.	Mandatory
17AJ(b)	pp. 178–186	Alphabetical index.	Mandatory
17AJ(c)	p. 177	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.	Mandatory
17AJ(d)	pp. 170–176	List of requirements.	Mandatory
17AJ(e)	p. ii	Details of contact officer.	Mandatory
17AJ(f)	p. ii	Entity's website address.	Mandatory
17AJ(g)	p. ii	Electronic address of report.	Mandatory
17AD(a)	Review by accountable authority		
17AD(a)	pp. 2–8	A review by the accountable authority of the entity.	Mandatory
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity		
17AE(1)(a)(i)	p. 9	A description of the role and functions of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	pp. 9–11	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	p. 12	A description of the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	p. 9	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	p. 14	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	p. 14	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	p. 97	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(b)	Not applicable	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Portfolio departments — mandatory
17AE(2)	Not applicable	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, mandatory
17AD(c)	Report on the performance of the entity		
Annual performance statements			
17AD(c)(i); 16F	pp. 14–26	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on financial performance		
17AF(1)(a)	p. 27	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory
17AF(1)(b)	p. 28	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory
17AF(2)	Not applicable	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, mandatory
17AD(d)	Management and accountability		
Corporate governance			
17AG(2)(a)	p. 85	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems).	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(i)	p. iii	A certification by accountable authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	p. iii	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	p. iii	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(c)	pp. 76–86	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	p. 85	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance.	If applicable, mandatory
Audit Committee			
17AG(2A)(a)	p. 77	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(b)	p. 77–79	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(c)	p. 77–79	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(d)	p. 79	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(e)	p. 79	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
External scrutiny			
17AG(3)	p. 87	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory
17AG(3)(a)	p. 87	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(3)(b)	p. 87	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor-General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(3)(c)	Not applicable	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
Management of human resources			
17AG(4)(a)	pp. 88–101	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(aa)	pp. 88–90	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » statistics on full-time employees » statistics on part-time employees » statistics on gender » statistics on staff location. 	Mandatory
17AG(4)(b)	pp. 88–90	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis; including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » statistics on staffing classification level » statistics on full-time employees » statistics on part-time employees » statistics on gender » statistics on staff location » statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous. 	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)	pp. 95–96	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(i)	p. 96	Information on the number of SES and non-SES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	p. 96	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	pp. 93–97	A description of non-salary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(i)	Not applicable — see p. 96	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	Not applicable — see p. 96	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	Not applicable — see p. 96	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	Not applicable — see p. 96	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
Assets management			
17AG(5)	p. 102	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities	If applicable, mandatory
Purchasing			
17AG(6)	p. 102	An assessment of entity performance against the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.	Mandatory
Consultants			
17AG(7)(a)	pp. 102–103	A summary statement detailing the number of new contracts engaging consultants entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all new consultancy contracts entered into during the period (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory
17AG(7)(b)	p. 102	A statement that “During [reporting period], [specified number] new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]”.	Mandatory
17AG(7)(c)	pp. 102–103	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.	Mandatory
17AG(7)(d)	p. 103	A statement that ‘Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website.’	Mandatory
Australian National Audit Office access clauses			
17AG(8)	Not applicable	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100,000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor's premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
Exempt contracts			
17AG(9)	Not applicable	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10,000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.	If applicable, mandatory
Small business			
17AG(10)(a)	p. 103	A statement that '[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.'	Mandatory
17AG(10)(b)	p. 103	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory
17AG(10)(c)	Not applicable	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature — a statement that '[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury's website.'	If applicable, mandatory
Financial statements			
17AD(e)	pp. 106–145	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.	Mandatory
Executive remuneration			
17AD(da)	pp. 97–98	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 2-3 of the Rule.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report (print version)	Description	Requirement
17AD(f)	Other mandatory information		
17AH(1)(a)(i)	Not applicable	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that 'During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity's website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website.'	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	p. 103	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(b)	Not applicable	A statement that 'Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website].'	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(c)	p. 87	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(d)	Not applicable — see p. 87	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(e)	Not applicable	Correction of material errors in previous annual report.	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(2)	pp. 76, 86, 103	Information required by other legislation.	Mandatory

Abbreviations and acronyms

APPF	Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DPS	Department of Parliamentary Services
EB	Executive Band
GST	goods and services tax
ICT	information and communications technology
ISDS	Investor–State Dispute Settlement
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MRA	mutual recognition agreement
PFAS	poly-fluoroalkyl substances
PGPA	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PP	parliamentary paper
PSL	Parliamentary Service Level
SKAO	Square Kilometre Array Observatory
SES	Senior Executive Service
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
WHS Act	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>

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