



Part 3

Management and accountability

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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 staff employed under the Act 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 and 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; establishes an office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives; and 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 2021, 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 Serjeant-at-Arms. Each SES Band 1 officer is responsible for one or more of the department's offices (see Figure 1 on page 7). The roles and responsibilities of the Executive are described on page 8.

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

Departmental management committees

Executive

In 2020–21, the department's Executive held 11 formal meetings to consider and take decisions on a range of departmental management and administrative matters. Standing agenda items include finance, people strategies, work health and safety, and risk management. During the year the Executive also discussed:

- » COVID-19 responses and planning
- » arrangements to support staff working remotely, and plans to assist their transition back to working at Parliament House
- » the work health and safety management system
- » corporate planning, risk management and information management
- » the composition of the department's Audit and Risk Committee from 1 July 2021
- » information and communications technology (ICT) services rendered, projects and security
- » workforce action plans
- » planning for the introduction and implementation of e-invoicing
- » various departmental policies and strategies.

Audit and Risk Committee

In recognition of its increased role in oversight of the department's risk management arrangements, in July 2020 the department's audit committee was formally renamed the Audit and Risk Committee. The 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.

The committee's charter (available at www.aph.gov.au/dhr/AuditCharter) was also updated during the year. Guided by this charter, the members of the Audit and Risk Committee play an essential role in ensuring the integrity and transparency of the department's reporting.

During the year the department recruited three new independent members to meet the requirements of Resource Management Guide 202. From 1 July 2021, a majority of members must not be officials of any Commonwealth entity. From that time, no officers of the department will be members of the committee. Mr Tim Courtney, who has served as an independent member since 2015, will also step down from his role.

Chair

Mr Paul Groenewegen joined as chair of the department's Audit and Risk 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. He is the Chief Financial Officer/Company Secretary at Aboriginal Hostels Limited. Before this, 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 services, in a diverse range of entities including the ACT Land Development Agency, the 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 was a member of the committee from 2017 up until his appointment as Deputy Clerk of the House of Representatives in February 2021.

Mr Banson has worked in the Department of the House of Representatives for 20 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.

Mr Russell Chafer was appointed to the committee in March 2021. As the Clerk Assistant (Committees) in the Department of the House of Representatives, he is responsible for the committee support program of the department which provides a range of support services to House of Representatives committees and some joint committees.

Mr Chafer has worked for the department since 1993, in that time serving as secretary to several parliamentary committees as well as Director of the Clerk's Office, Director of the International and Parliamentary Relations Office and Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms. He also serves as the Reconciliation Action Plan Champion for the department.

Mr Stuart Woodley was a member of the committee from September 2019 until his resignation from the department in January 2021.

Mr Woodley worked in the department for eight years in various roles in the Committee Office, Clerk's and Speaker's offices, and Procedure Office. Before 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.

Mr Glenn Worthington was appointed to the committee in March 2021 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 Worthington has worked in the Department of the House of Representatives since 2002 in many positions including as a director in the Table Office, committee secretary and Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms. He has degrees in political science from the University of Western Australia and Australian National University.

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 and Risk Committee meeting attendance

Table 8: Audit and Risk Committee meeting attendance, 2020–21

Member	Sep 2020	Dec 2020	Mar 2021	Jun 2021
Paul Groenewegen (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peter Banson (to February 2021)	✓	✓	N/A	N/A
Russell Chafer (from March 2021)	N/A	N/A	✓	✓
Tim Courtney	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dermot Walsh	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stuart Woodley (to January 2021)	✓	✓	N/A	N/A
Glenn Worthington (from March 2021)	N/A	N/A	✓	✓

Audit Committee remuneration

In 2020–21, the chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr Paul Groenewegen, was paid \$13,078 for his services. No other committee members received remuneration for their work on the committee during the period.

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 five times during 2020–21.

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
- » work health and safety
- » reports on departmental activities.

Other matters discussed in the reporting period included:

- » the department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including arrangements for staff working from home
- » the revised work health and safety management system
- » the Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy and Guidelines, the Workplace Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy, and the Guidelines for Workplace Equity and Harassment Contact Officers, which had all been revised
- » other policies and guidelines, including the flexible work arrangements policy and guidelines, and the studies assistance policy
- » the establishment of co-design working groups to review staff engagement, culture and leadership, capability and staff wellbeing
- » support available for staff following the allegations raised in relation to the Parliament House workplace.

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.

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

- » migration to Windows 10 and Office 365
- » access to and use of Microsoft Teams
- » planned migration of on-premise network shares to the cloud
- » remote access arrangements for staff working away from Parliament House
- » provision of laptops to all staff
- » procurement of Microsoft Surface Hubs for increased videoconferencing and collaboration capability
- » policy for access requests to records of parliamentary committees.

Collaboration across parliamentary departments

Meetings of heads of parliamentary departments

In 2020–21, the Clerk, the Clerk of the Senate, the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) and the Parliamentary Budget Officer held four formal meetings. The Clerk was chair of the group in the 2020 calendar year. Matters discussed during the period included:

- » business continuity and the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- » ICT governance arrangements and the delivery of ICT services by DPS
- » the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces
- » actions undertaken to implement the parliamentary reconciliation action plan.

The parliamentary departments continued to work together under the new *Strategic framework for the parliamentary service*, which was formally approved during the year. The framework emphasises the common goals of the parliamentary departments in serving, supporting and upholding the institutions of the parliament.

Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group

In 2020–21, the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group met four 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 chaired the group for the year 2020.

Matters discussed over the reporting period included:

- » shared and individual responses to the COVID-19 pandemic
- » arrangements to support members and senators participating in parliamentary proceedings from remote locations
- » general work health and safety matters
- » possible shared services arrangements for the parliamentary departments
- » proposed amendments to the Parliamentary Service Classification Rules
- » parliamentary precincts regulations.

Other inter-parliamentary department forums

In 2020–21, the department was active in a number of other inter-parliamentary department forums that considered matters of common interest, particularly ICT and security. 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 Russell Chafer, 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 all product family boards.
- » 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 communications technology services*. It provides advice to the Strategic ICT Group, and the department is represented by the Director of Parliamentary and Business Information Services.
- » Information Security Working Group – this group is a forum to progress information security initiatives that 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 of 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. Meeting the relevant requirement under the PGPA Act, the department's *Corporate Plan 2020–21* was published in August 2020.

It covered 2020–21 and three forward years to 2023–24. 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.

The Deputy Clerk, Serjeant-at-Arms and Clerks Assistant met formally with executive level staff several times during the period and led conversations about corporate and strategic issues. The outcomes of these conversations were included at two formal strategic planning meetings of the Executive. The strategic priorities derived were then shared with the department at the annual departmental conversations meeting, and with the Audit and Risk Committee at the annual briefing from the Clerk.



A physically distanced departmental conversations meeting in the Great Hall at Parliament House, 3 November 2020. Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

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 2019–20 provided an assessment of the department's performance against the targets set in the 2019–20 Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plan, and presented the department's financial statements.

The department's Portfolio Budget Statements and annual report were made available to all members and published on the department's website. They were 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 treatments to the Executive and to the Audit and Risk Committee. In April 2021, staff responsible for managing strategic risks met to review the key risk management documents, and updated versions of the risk management policy and framework and risk management plan were approved early in the 2021–22 reporting period.

The revised *Risk management policy and framework 2021–23* includes improvement suggestions from the Comcover risk management benchmarking program survey. The updated *Risk management plan 2021–23* incorporates lessons learnt from the department's experiences with the 2019–20 bushfires and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, including a greater focus on work health and safety risk.

Comcover benchmarking

The Comcover risk management benchmarking program survey is now conducted biennially. The most recent survey was conducted in February and March 2021. It built on the results of the 2019 survey and assessed the maturity of the department's risk management, with five areas of focus:

- » risk governance
- » risk culture
- » risk capability

- » risk management framework and practices
- » organisational resilience and agility.

The department's maturity was assessed as 'embedded', which is the second highest maturity level, and is higher than the average maturity state of all survey participants and the department's peer group ('defined'). While this recognises the good work the department has done to further enhance its risk management practices, the survey results identified several areas for potential improvement, including risk culture and risk capability.

Business continuity

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the department faced multiple challenges to its normal operations, and business continuity continued to be a high priority during the year.

Physical distancing requirements, room capacity restrictions and travel restrictions required the department to create new capabilities, including supporting staff to work from home for extended periods and allowing members to participate in parliamentary proceedings from remote locations. The department's success in dealing with these challenges demonstrates its ability to adapt its operations to meet unexpected demands, a foundational capability of business continuity.

A departmental business continuity plan was in force throughout the reporting year, complemented by office-level business resumption plans. The business continuity 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.



Departmental staff participating in an evacuation exercise at Parliament House. Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

During 2020–21, the business continuity plan was complemented by the establishment of an internal COVID-19 Coordination Group. The purpose of the group is to facilitate a coordinated response to COVID-19 matters. It is an advisory and consultative forum with all offices across the department represented, and it meets as required in response to evolving COVID-19 advice and circumstances.

The business continuity plan requires scenario-based exercises designed to test aspects of the department's business continuity capability, with a new exercise developed each year. During 2020–21, the department held two scenario-based exercises. The first involved the Table Office and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office. The second focused on the Finance Office, People Strategies Office, and Parliamentary and Business Information Services teams. The exercises were facilitated and reviewed by the department's internal auditors, who concluded that all teams demonstrated their ability to effectively respond to a range of sudden disruptions, and made several recommendations that were accepted by the department.

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 is 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 reviews of the following:

- » payroll services and processing
- » annual performance statement
- » strategic risk management plan and risk management policy and framework
- » fraud control plan and fraud risk assessment.

A review of the department's business continuity planning commenced in the reporting period, and will be completed in 2021–22. In partnership with the Department of the Senate, the department also began a joint review of the management of ICT capability, projects and risks.

During the year, the department also began planning to procure future internal audit services under the Department of Finance's new Management Advisory Services Panel.

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 and Risk 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.

In May 2021, senior officers responsible for managing the department's fraud risks met to review the key fraud management documents. The revised *Fraud Control Plan 2021–23* and *Fraud risk assessment 2021–23* are expected to be approved early in the 2021–22 reporting period.

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 2020–21. 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 2020–21, 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.

During 2020–21, the department was notified of one privacy complaint made to the Australian Information Commissioner. The department responded to the complaint, and no further action was taken by the Commissioner.

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 2020–21, 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 2020–21, the Auditor-General did not present 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 2020–21 financial statements.

In 2020–21, 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 2020–21, the committee met seven times and presented three reports:

- » *Report No 19: Budget estimates 2020–21*
- » *Report No 20: Annual report 2019–20*
- » *Report No 21: Budget estimates 2021–22.*

Due to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the budget cycle, the committee presented two reports on the department's budget estimates during the period. The committee also considered matters including the updated closed-circuit television code of practice and Parliament House access arrangements.

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.

On 29 July 2020, a National Disability Strategy position paper was released for public consultation by the Department of Social Services. The results of these consultations will inform the development of a new National Disability Strategy for release in the second half of 2021.

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

As at 30 June 2021, the department had 178 employees – 127 ongoing, 18 non-ongoing and 33 casual.

The department's workforce is 60.9% female, 39.1% are aged over 50 years, and 0.6% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Employee statistics

Tables 9 to 13 show the department's employee statistics as at 30 June 2021 (and 30 June 2020 for comparison), 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, as at 30 June 2021

Classification	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
SES 2	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1
SES 1	4	1	–	–	–	–	4	1	5
EB 2	5	14	1	–	1	–	7	14	21
EB 1	18	23	1	4	–	–	19	27	46
PSL 6	5	18	–	2	–	–	5	20	25
PSL 5	1	3	1	–	–	–	2	3	5
PSL 4	5	24	7	1	1	–	13	25	38
PSL 3	3	2	–	–	–	2	3	4	7
PSL 2	–	–	–	1	16	13	16	14	30
PSL 1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	42	85	10	8	18	15	70	108	178

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

Table 10: Employment type by classification and gender, as 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 exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 11: Employment type by employment status, as at 30 June 2020 and 30 June 2021

Employment type	Full-time		Part-time		Casual		Total	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Ongoing	113	113	17	14	–	–	130	127
Non-ongoing	14	16	1	2	–	–	15	18
Casual	–	–	–	–	33	33	33	33
Total	127	129	18	16	33	33	178	178

Figures exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 12: Employment type by office and location, as at 30 June 2020 and 30 June 2021

	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Office								
Executive	9	11	–	–	–	–	9	11
Executive support / project staff	2	3	–	–	–	1	2	4
Table Office	12	10	–	–	1	–	13	10
Procedure Office	10	9	–	1	–	–	10	10
Committee Office	62	61	6	12	–	–	68	73
International and Parliamentary Relations Office	8	7	2	–	–	–	10	7
Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office	10	9	3	3	1	1	14	13
Finance Office	5	6	1	–	–	–	6	6
People Strategies Office	6	5	3	2	–	–	9	7
Serjeant-at-Arms' Office	7	7	–	–	31	31	38	38
State or territory								
Australian Capital Territory	131	128	15	18	33	33	179	178
Total	131	128	15	18	33	33	179	179

Figures include the Clerk of the House.

Table 13: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, as at 30 June 2020 and 30 June 2021

Employment type	Staff numbers	
	2020	2021
Ongoing	1	1
Non-ongoing	–	–
Casual	–	–
Total	1	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. As recommended in the latest accreditation report, the department has established a working group to identify and carry forward areas for future improvement.

One of the requirements for retaining accreditation is to be reassessed against the standard every three years by an independent assessor. As routine accreditation is due in the next period, the department as usual will consider the continuing relevance of the framework to the department.

Staff survey

In June 2021, 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 78% in 2021 and an average of 79.2% 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 70.5% in 2021 and an average of 74.6% over the past five years).
- » The 'benefits' satisfaction index measures the level of staff satisfaction with pay and working conditions (satisfaction rate of 69.4% in 2021 and an average of 76.6% over the past five years).

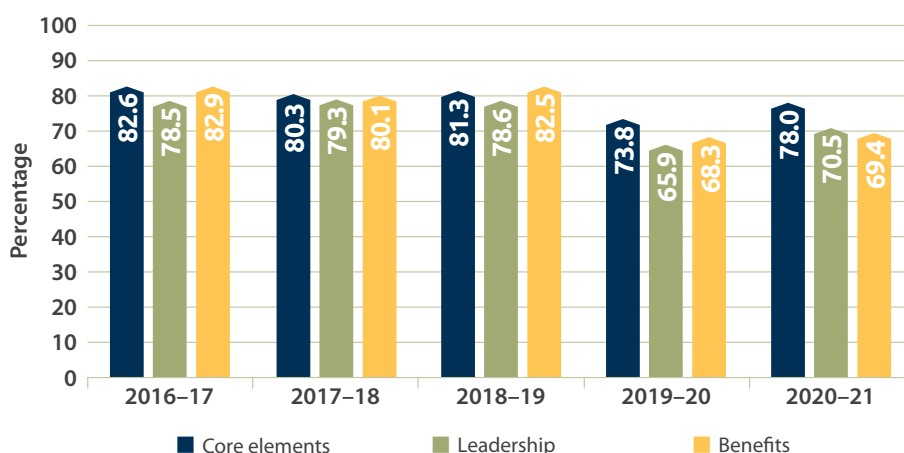
Figure 6 shows the performance of the satisfaction elements over the past five years.

In response to the survey undertaken in 2020, the department introduced four co-design working groups to give staff a further opportunity to make a practical contribution to conversations about the department's future, aligned with the issues of concern that were identified in the survey:

- » staff engagement
- » culture and leadership
- » building capability
- » staff wellbeing.

Each working group presented practical options to the Executive for consideration.

Figure 6: Staff survey satisfaction elements, 2016–17 to 2020–21



People strategies: planning and delivery

Recruitment

The department advertised to fill 16 ongoing vacancies during 2020–21 (compared with 14 in 2019–20), of which seven were filled by external applicants.

Retention

In 2020–21, 13 ongoing and 27 non-ongoing staff left the department. The turnover rate was 10% for ongoing staff.

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

Alumni

The department formed an alumni association of former staff in 2008. On 30 June 2021, it had 284 members. The association issued one newsletter during the year. There was no annual general meeting or reception for members during the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social Club

The Department of the House of Representatives Social Club was limited in its ability to bring staff together in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, the club shifted its focus to activities that were COVID-safe, including outdoor morning teas, fortnightly book sales and raffles, small team celebrations for Christmas and coordinating charitable donations. During the financial year, the club raised over \$3,900 for various charities through its participation in Jeans for Genes Day, STEPtember, Walk for Autism and the Push-Up Challenge. The club also donated non-perishable items to the Canberra Basket Brigade's Christmas appeal to help those who are in need in the local community.



The department's Social Club comes together for its annual general meeting, 30 July 2020. Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

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 offered placements of three to six months to graduates from government agency graduate programs. Graduates were enabled to 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. Ten graduates undertook placements in the department in 2020–21.

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



Graduate placement program members Michaela Gillard, Sharda Bhargava and Savannah Pingol. Image: Penny Bradfield, Auspic/DPS.

Learning and development

In 2020–21, the department delivered a total of 54 face-to-face and virtual training and development sessions to employees, based around the core themes of health and safety, respectful relationships, workplace bullying and harassment prevention, management and leadership capability.

Table 14 shows the number of staff from each classification attending training, the total number of training days attended, and the average training days attended per person for 2020–21 (and the latter for 2019–20 also, for comparison).

Table 14: Staff attendance at training courses

Classification	Headcount	Training days attended	Average training days attended per person	
			2019–20	2020–21
Senior Executive Service	7	10.9	2.9	1.6
Executive Band 2	21	70.7	2.7	3.4
Executive Band 1	46	114.5	2.3	2.5
Parliamentary Service Level 6	25	49.6	1.9	2.0
Parliamentary Service Level 5	5	11	1.2	2.2
Parliamentary Service Level 4	38	80.3	1.4	2.1
Parliamentary Service Level 3	7	22.7	1.2	3.2
Parliamentary Service Level 2	30	17.2	1.6	0.6
Total	179	376.9	1.9	2.2

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. Five employees accessed studies assistance during the year (compared with six in 2019–20). Collectively, financial assistance of \$6,713 was administered (compared with \$6,097 in 2019–20), along with a total of 29 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 2020. The cycle involves 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 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.

During 2020–21, the department continued to build on its commitment to diversity and inclusion through various initiatives and developments. In December 2020, the Clerk launched the department's new Workplace Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2020–2022. The strategy seeks to ensure a positive work environment where diversity is celebrated and inclusion is a focus for all employees, and it sets out a framework for 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 on these important aspects of workplace behaviour. A review of the policies and guidelines establishing this framework of appropriate behaviours was completed in 2020.

The department also continued to be involved with the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program, which offers graduates an opportunity to undertake a three-month placement in the department under our Indigenous Secondment Program. This is the fifth year of the Indigenous Secondment Program and it is a significant part of the department's commitment to providing 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 2020–21, there were two graduates placed with the department through the Indigenous Secondment Program.

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. The agreement continues to remain in operation and, following extensive consultation, staff voted in favour of the Clerk issuing a determination under section 24(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* to give effect to salary increases in lieu of bargaining. The first salary increase (2%) under the determination was applied in May 2021, with further increases to be applied in November 2021 and 2022 (each at 2%). 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* in 2020–21 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 shows the numbers of staff employed under different employment instruments.

Table 15: Employment arrangements for SES and non-SES staff, as at 30 June 2021

Employment arrangement	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise agreement	–	172	172
Individual flexibility arrangement	–	–	–
Australian workplace agreement	–	–	–
Common law contract	–	–	–
Determination under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Parliamentary Service Act 1999</i>	6	–	6

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 2021

Classification	Salary range	
	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Executive Band 2	143,525	152,076
Executive Band 1	110,892	123,691
Parliamentary Service Level 6	89,367	101,425
Parliamentary Service Level 5	82,604	87,407
Parliamentary Service Level 4	73,029	79,011
Parliamentary Service Level 3	66,068	70,975
Parliamentary Service Level 2	58,716	64,111
Parliamentary Service Level 1	51,904	56,793

In 2020–21, departmental employee benefits totalled \$20.842 million (compared with \$20.892 million in 2019–20).

Non-salary benefits

The department offers staff a range 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. Tables 17 to 19 summarise 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 senior executive staff, parliamentary officers may be provided with an opportunity to act in the position of the absent senior executive staff. These short acting opportunities are not included in Tables 17 to 19.

Table 17: Key management personnel, 2020–21

Name	Position	Term as key management personnel
Claessa Surtees	Clerk	Full year
Catherine Cornish	Deputy Clerk	Part year – retired 29 March 2021
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table) / Deputy Clerk	Full year – appointed Deputy Clerk on 1 April 2021
Glenn Worthington	Clerk Assistant (Table)	Part year – appointed 18 March 2021
Jerome Brown	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	Part year – resigned 11 December 2020
Peggy Danaee	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	Part year – appointed 18 March 2021
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Part year – resigned 15 January 2021
Russell Chafer	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Part year – appointed 18 March 2021
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, 2020–21

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary (\$)	Bonuses (\$)	Other benefits and allowances (\$)	Superannuation contributions (\$)	Long-service leave (\$)	Other long-term benefits (\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Claessa Surtees	Clerk	384,206	–	16,012	56,705	9,490	–	–	466,413
Catherine Cornish	Deputy Clerk (until 29 March 2021)	176,167	–	19,874	32,322	4,437	–	–	232,800
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table) / Deputy Clerk	212,193	–	26,737	36,552	15,066	–	–	290,548
Jerome Brown	Clerk Assistant (Procedure) (until 11 December 2020)	91,445	–	11,883	16,245	2,216	–	–	121,789
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees) (until 15 January 2021)	102,435	–	14,649	19,046	2,647	–	–	138,777
James Catchpole	Serjeant-at-Arms	203,457	–	26,737	35,385	4,829	–	–	270,408
Peggy Danaee	Clerk Assistant (Procedure) (from 18 March 2021)	96,284	–	7,683	12,462	20,748	–	–	137,177
Russell Chafer	Clerk Assistant (Committees) (from 18 March 2021)	90,493	–	7,683	13,546	6,403	–	–	118,125
Glenn Worthington	Clerk Assistant (Table) (from 18 March 2021)	86,213	–	7,683	11,743	6,584	–	–	112,223
Total		1,442,893	–	138,941	234,006	72,420	–	–	1,888,260

Other senior executives

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2021, the department had one senior executive who did not meet the definition of key management personnel for part of the year (see Table 19).

Table 19: Remuneration and benefits of senior executives, 2020–21

Remuneration band (\$)	Number of senior executives	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 (\$)		
0 – 220,000	1	94,933	–	14,854	20,307	(84,530)	–	–	45,564

Other highly paid staff

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2021, the department did not have any highly paid staff who did not meet the definitions of key management personnel or senior executives; therefore, there is no reporting 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 2020–21, to continue to meet its obligations under the WHS Act, the department:

- » engaged Deloitte Risk Advisory to assist with the continual development of the work health and safety management system, so there is a robust system in place to ensure workers are protected from safety risks across the spectrum of activities the department conducts and the shared workplace it operates in

- » actively engaged with Comcare in respect to COVID-19 inspections and other safety matters
- » 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
- » 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 providing influenza vaccinations and healthy living reimbursements.

Three 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.

Following an anonymous complaint made in early 2021, Comcare reviewed the department's policies, procedures and controls for managing claims of bullying and harassment, including holding a meeting with the department's Workplace Equity and Harassment contact officers, and union and staff representatives. Comcare found that the 'Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking' (the department) had complied with its duties under the WHS Act and Regulations.

Response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The department continued to prioritise the wellbeing and support of staff throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health and other updates, based on advice from government agencies and authorities, including the Chief Medical Officer, and decisions of the Presiding Officers and the Clerk, were regularly communicated to staff. Information and resources were made available on the department's intranet. A COVID-19 Coordination Group was established as a responsive consultative forum, with all offices across the department represented.

Following advice from the Australian Public Service Commission to Commonwealth agencies to provide the greatest support possible to assist employees in receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, the Clerk approved a new category of leave to cover getting vaccinated and reasonable travel time.

Emphasis was placed on mental health and resilience throughout the year, with staff encouraged to make use of the department's employee assistance program, talk to

their managers or a senior manager about any concerns, and take up additional training opportunities.

Risk mitigation plans, templates and guidance for COVID-safe events at Parliament House and committee travel were developed, building on existing risk management practice, including the department's risk register.

After a sustained period of working from home in the previous year, and occasions again this year when staff were encouraged to work from home where possible as part of health precaution measures, there is a greater appreciation of the ability to work remotely. Some staff continued to work part of the week from home.

Remote working capability has been enhanced with the rollout of Windows 10 and Office 365. The department initiated issuing new laptops to all staff. With cameras and microphones the laptops support videoconferencing, Microsoft Teams and other online meetings. There were improvements in remote access to the parliamentary computing network provided by DPS. The department conducted a major review of its flexible working arrangements and introduced a new flexible working policy and guidelines in May 2021.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office continued to work closely with the other parliamentary departments and health authorities to continually review COVID-19 arrangements and ensure that necessary measures were in place for the safety of all staff working at Parliament House.



One of the COVID-19 information and check-in stations located throughout Parliament House, providing masks, hand sanitiser and the Check In CBR QR code, May 2021. 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 36 contracts above the reporting threshold, 28 of which were reported on AusTender within the prescribed period. No other instances of non-compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules have been identified.

Reportable consultancy contracts

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 Rule, the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant internal policies.

During 2020–21, one new consultancy contract was entered into, although no expenditure was made on this during the period. In addition, four ongoing consultancy contracts were active in 2020–21, involving total expenditure of \$0.064 million.

Table 20: Reportable consultancy contracts, 2020–21

Reportable consultancy contract	Number	Expenditure (\$)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	1	–
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	4	63,656.74
Total	5	63,656.74

Table 21: Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure, 2020–21

Organisation	Proportion of 2020–21 total spend (%)	Expenditure (\$)
BellchambersBarrett Pty Ltd (32 600 351 648)	94	59,806.74
JLL Public Sector Valuations Pty Ltd (39 167 493 889)	6	3,850.00
Total	100	63,656.74

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.

Reportable non-consultancy contracts

During 2020–21, 35 new reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into involving total expenditure of \$1.252 million. In addition, 27 ongoing non-consultancy contracts were active in 2020–21, involving total expenditure of \$0.504 million.

Table 22: Reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2020–21

Reportable non-consultancy contract	Number	Expenditure (\$)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	35	1,251,623.52
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	24	499,764.59
Total	59	1,751,388.11

Table 23: Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure, 2020–21

Organisation	Proportion of 2020–21 total spend (%)	Expenditure (\$)
Dell Australia Pty Limited (46 003 855 561)	24.98	438,537.00
Technology One Limited (84 010 487 180)	15.91	279,341.98
Yellow Edge Pty Ltd (25 099 253 255)	10.87	190,729.00
Data#3 Limited (31 010 545 267)	8.15	143,044.22
Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd (63 000 341 819)	7.26	127,503.20
Total of the largest shares	67.18	1,179,155.40

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website at www.tenders.gov.au.

Competitive tendering and contracting

There were no instances during 2020–21 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 2020–21, 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 2020–21, external legal expenditure was \$46,566 (\$17,947 in 2019–20). The department did not incur any internal legal expenses during 2020–21 (also nil in 2019–20).