

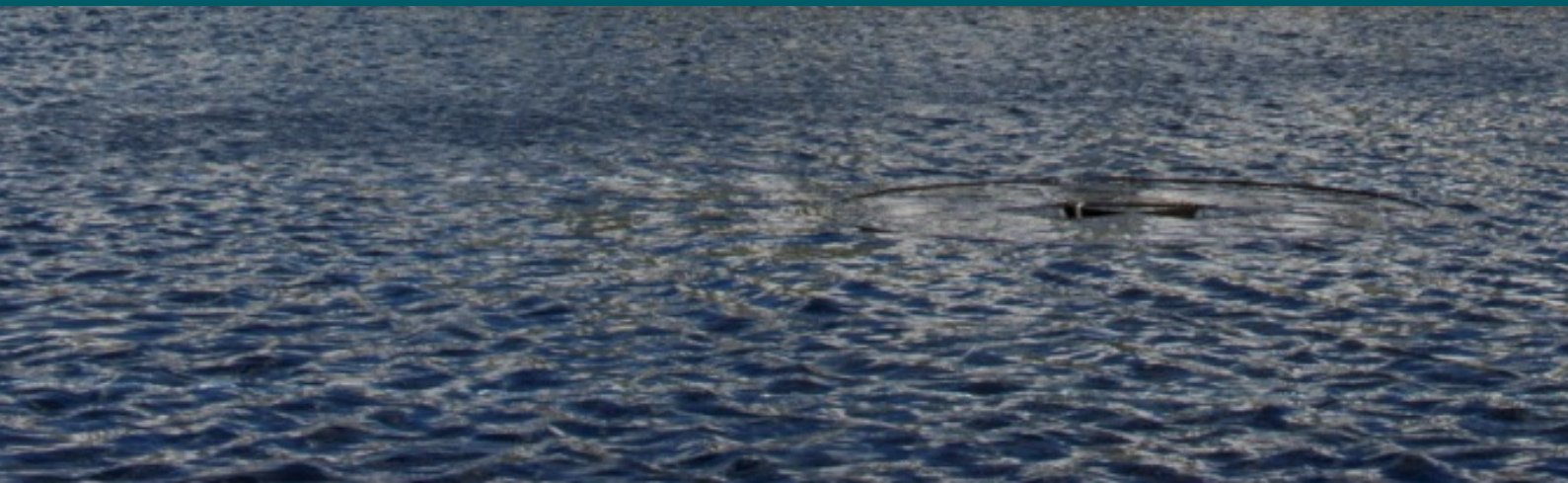


PARLIAMENT  
of AUSTRALIA



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## The parliamentary service



# The Parliamentary Service

The Australian Parliament is established under the Constitution to make Commonwealth laws, supervise the spending of public money, scrutinise government activities and provide a forum for national debate. The parliamentary service provides professional support, advice and facilities to each House of the Parliament, to parliamentary committees and to senators and members of the House of Representatives. It consists of four parliamentary departments with distinct but overlapping roles.

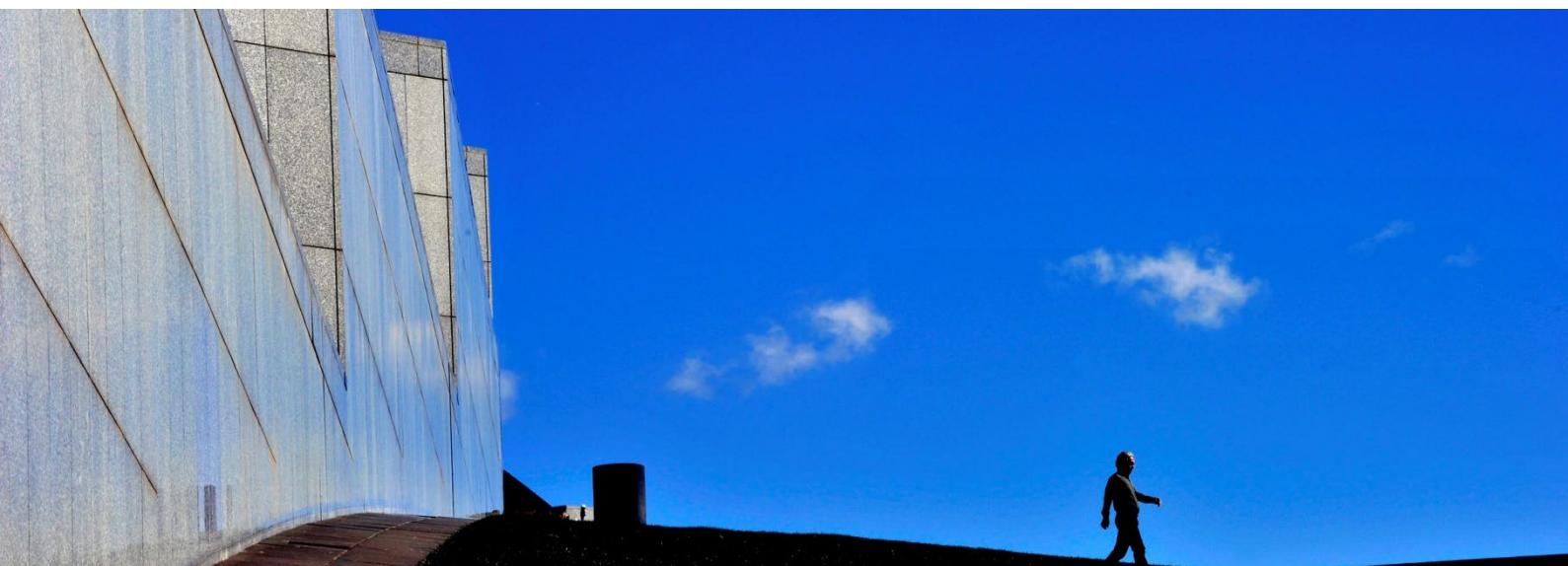
- The **Department of the Senate** provides secretariat support for the Senate and its committees, and advice and support to enable senators and others to participate in their meetings. Its work is substantially driven by the requirements of the Senate and senators. The department also provides a parliamentary education program to Australian school students through the Parliamentary Education Office.
- The **Department of the House of Representatives** provides services to support the efficient conduct of the House of Representatives and its committees, and a range of services for members in Parliament House. It also undertakes activities to promote the work of the House in the community and is responsible for the conduct of the Parliament's international and regional relations.
- The **Department of Parliamentary Services** provides a wide range of services and facilities to ensure that the Parliament functions effectively. These include audio visual and Hansard services, library and research services, art services, building grounds and design intent services, visitor services, security services, and information and communication technology services.
- The **Parliamentary Budget Office** supports the work of the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the financial impact of policy proposals and by publishing reports on budget issues.

**This framework adds a formal dimension to the engagement which has long characterised the work of the parliamentary service**

## Purpose

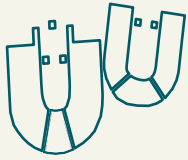
While each department performs a unique role, we share a common goal in serving, supporting and upholding the institution of the Parliament, and together provide services to ensure:

- Parliament and its committees are supported effectively
- that senators and members are supported to undertake their work
- the community can easily access and engage in the work of the Parliament and parliamentary committees
- that national, international and regional relationships are maintained with other parliaments, parliamentary bodies and organisations
- Australian Parliament House (APH) is sustained as a workplace and national institution
- the parliamentary service is independent and non-partisan.



## Objectives

## Strategies



Provide services and support to enable the Houses and their committees to function effectively



- Provide timely and accurate advice and support services related to the exercise of the legislative power of the Commonwealth
- Deliver high quality secretariat support, research, analysis and advice to the Houses, their committees, parliamentarians and their staff
- Effectively manage office accommodations including the supply and management of equipment, furniture, information systems, transport, publishing, printing and messenger services



Ensure parliamentarians are supported in their work and we are responsive to future needs



- Develop cost effective and innovative ways to deliver services to parliamentarians
- Provide induction programs and seminars for parliamentarians and their staff, and advice on parliamentary procedure, process and administration
- Implement efficient and effective infrastructure, systems and services to respond to the changing needs of the Parliament and parliamentarians
- Explore and develop innovative technology and systems for the timely delivery of information and services to the Houses, their committees, parliamentarians and their staff



Enhance engagement in the work of the Parliament



- Support the Parliament's engagement with the community and initiatives to develop parliamentary democracy in our region
- Improve and enhance access to parliamentary information and proceedings
- Improve accessibility and quality of services for visitors to APH
- Deliver high quality education and outreach programs that promote understanding of the Parliament and its work
- Promote significant parliamentary events to enable greater community engagement through social media and emerging technologies

## Objectives

## Strategies



Build and maintain international and regional relationships



- ➔ Provide advice and services to support the Parliament's national, international and regional relationships
- ➔ Host and participate in domestic and international inter-parliamentary forums and events to share insights and contribute to high-quality parliamentary practice
- ➔ Support the development of regional parliaments, primarily within the Indo-Pacific region, through capacity building and professional development programs
- ➔ Arrange incoming and outgoing delegations, and participation in international parliamentary organisations



Ensure Australian Parliament House operates as a safe and accessible workplace and national institution



- ➔ Ensure a secure environment while maintaining public accessibility
- ➔ Ensure adaptations of the uses of the building are strategic, appropriate and reference design integrity principles
- ➔ Effectively manage all assets within APH, in keeping with its status as an icon of parliamentary democracy and building of national significance



# Leadership across the parliamentary service

Under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*, the heads of the four parliamentary departments, reporting to the Presiding Officers (the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate), provide leadership and strategic direction, and manage the affairs of those departments in a way that is consistent with the interests of the parliamentary service as a whole. They assist the Presiding Officers to fulfil their accountability obligations to the Parliament.

The heads are supported in these endeavours by Senior Executive Service (SES) level officers, required under the Act to provide strategic leadership that contributes to an effective and cohesive parliamentary service; to promote cooperation within and between departments, including to deliver outcomes across department boundaries; and to promote the Parliamentary Service Values, the Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and compliance with the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct.

We enhance our ability to operate as an independent, non-partisan and professional parliamentary service by developing and maintaining the capabilities of our people to support the Parliament, its committees, parliamentarians and their staff. We encourage our staff to demonstrate leadership qualities at all levels.

**Our pride in parliamentary service  
is reflected in the quality  
of our work**

# Collaborative governance and engagement

We all share a common purpose of supporting the Parliament and parliamentarians. The parliamentary departments work together to support our common purpose through an established governance framework.

We work collaboratively on a range of key initiatives across the parliamentary service, including the development and implementation of the Australian Parliamentary Digital Strategy 2019–2022 and the Australian Parliamentary Service Reconciliation Action Plan.

- Meetings of department heads are conducted on a quarterly basis — these meetings are essential to identify opportunities for collaboration, consideration and decision making, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of the parliamentary administration.
- Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group meetings — this group supports the department head meetings by overseeing implementation of corporate initiatives of common interest across the parliamentary departments.
- Parliamentary ICT Advisory Board (PICTAB) and Strategic ICT Group (SIG) meetings — PICTAB is the peak parliamentarians representative board and SIG is the strategic ICT committee for the parliamentary departments, overseeing and guiding strategic elements of ICT service delivery for the Parliament.
- Service level agreements — established between parliamentary departments to provide confidence and define the level of service and performance provided by one department to another.

In addition, we are each accountable to the Parliament and the public through a variety of parliamentary committees and advisory groups that oversee our operations, and through the various reporting and accountability obligations under the Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework.



# The Parliamentary Service Commissioner and Merit Protection Commissioner

The Parliamentary Service Commissioner's role is to advise the Presiding Officers on the management of policies and practices of the parliamentary service and, at their request, conduct inquiries into parliamentary service matters.

The Parliamentary Service Merit Protection Commissioner focuses on ensuring accountability and integrity in employment decision-making in the parliamentary service by providing independent reviews of employment actions, recruitment and Code of Conduct inquiry services to parliamentary departments.

An annual report of the commissioners' activities during the year is provided to the Presiding Officers and presented to Parliament.







[www.aph.gov.au](http://www.aph.gov.au)

 **Richard Pye**  
Clerk of the Senate

 **Claressa Surtees**  
Clerk of the House of Representatives

 **Rob Stefanic**  
Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services

 **Linda Ward**  
Acting Parliamentary Budget Officer