



Compass and Perspective, tuart, 1988 by Howard Taylor in House of Representatives garden. A gift of the Government, Parliament and people of Western Australia to the Parliament of Australia.

PERFORMANCE

- Chamber and Federation Chamber
- Community relations and awareness
- Committee services
- Inter-parliamentary relations
- Members' services and corporate support

Chamber and Federation Chamber

The work of the Chamber and Federation Chamber program component is delivered primarily through the Clerk's Office, the Chamber Research Office and the Table Office. Other departmental areas also contribute as necessary.

During the year, we provided effective secretariat and advisory support for the Chamber and Federation Chamber of the House of Representatives. Our main functions were to:

- advise the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives
- advise on programming of House business, and provide procedural support
- process and draft bills
- 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
- keep procedural and statistical records on the work of the House
- provide secretariat support to several domestic committees.

In 2012–13, the budget allocation for the component was \$3.240 million and expenditure was \$2.983 million. Staff levels, by location, are shown in Appendix 11.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The program component's work is focused on supporting the sittings of the House of Representatives Chamber and meetings of the Federation Chamber. Performance is measured in two ways—qualitatively, through the annual survey of members; and quantitatively, through information on the sittings of the House, the meetings of the Federation Chamber and the business conducted there.

The annual survey of members (see Appendix 12) showed a continuing high level of satisfaction with the department's support for the Chamber and Federation Chamber. All respondents were satisfied with our advice and support. Respondents were 'extremely satisfied' or 'highly satisfied' with the following areas:

- advice and services received from the Clerks-at-the-Table in the Chamber and Federation Chamber—95 per cent (85 per cent in 2011–12)
- advice and services received from other staff in relation to Chamber and Federation Chamber duties—90 per cent (80 per cent in 2011–12)
- quality and availability of procedural and statistical publications and support in obtaining such information—90 per cent (70 per cent in 2011–12).

Statistical information on the sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber in 2012–13 and the two preceding years are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Performance summary, Chamber and Federation Chamber, 2010–11 to 2012–13

Aspect of performance	2010–11 ^c	2011–12	2012–13
Number of sittings of the House	52	68	59
Number of meetings of the Federation Chamber	46	59	55
Hours of sittings of the House ^a	511	691	602
Hours of meetings of the Federation Chamber ^a	248	306	256
Number of bills introduced	186	256	241
Number of bills that passed both Houses and were assented to ^b	116	221	228

a Excludes suspensions.

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

c Election year.

In 2012–13, sitting days totalled 59. This figure represents a decrease of 9 days from the previous year (13.2 per cent fewer days). There was a corresponding reduction in the total number of sitting hours. In 2012–13 the House sat for 89 fewer hours than the previous year (12.9 per cent less time) and the Federation Chamber met for 50 fewer hours than the previous year (16.3 per cent less time). Legislative activity continued at a high level during the period, with 241 bills introduced (256 in 2011–12) and 228 bills passed by both Houses and assented to (221 in 2011–12). The continued high level of legislative activity in a reduced number of sitting days placed significant demands on departmental staff, particularly in the final sitting fortnight, when 76 bills were prepared for assent by the Governor-General, one-third of all bills assented to during the year.

Detailed information on the business of the House and the Federation Chamber is in Appendix 3 and in the department's publication *Work of the Session* (available on the Parliament of Australia website).

ADVICE ON PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and other staff members provided advice to the Speaker, members and others on the practice and procedure of the House.

We provided immediate advice to and support for the Speaker, ministers, shadow ministers, members and others during proceedings, as well as detailed written advice. Subjects addressed included the application of the standing orders and practice of the House, the content of questions without notice, the procedure for referring bills to House committees for inquiry, the election of House officers, procedures for private members' business, delegated legislation and the disallowance process, the requirements of the Constitution and standing orders in respect

of financial legislation, privilege matters and requirements of the House in respect of the registration of members' interests.

PROGRAMMING AND COORDINATION OF BUSINESS

Throughout 2012–13, we continued to provide advice and services to facilitate sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber, including:

- 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 in the proposed order of consideration
 - 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 the Federation Chamber
- providing chamber support from the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office for sittings of the House and meetings of the Federation Chamber to oversee ceremonial and security arrangements and ensure the availability of chamber papers
- processing members' questions in writing to ministers, including editing for compliance with the standing orders, publication in the *Notice Paper* for the next sitting day, and managing answers to questions
- providing a captioning service for the televised and webcast proceedings of the House and Federation Chamber
- publishing *This Week in the House*, a weekly online forecast of expected business for the House, and its counterpart, *Last Week in the House*.

Table 2 provides details of the number of questions in writing to ministers dealt with by the House of Representatives in the five years from 2008–09 to 2012–13.

Table 2 Questions in writing to ministers and answers to questions in writing, 2008–09 to 2012–13

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11 ^c	2011–12	2012–13
Questions in writing ^a	642	571	441	678	411
Questions answered ^b	497	444	335	491	374

a Excluding questions withdrawn.

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

c Election year.

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)
- House business (matters potentially involving all members—for example, question time, debate on committee reports or matters of privilege).

A longitudinal view of the amount of time the House (Chamber and Federation Chamber inclusive) devoted to each of these types of business is shown in Figure 5. In the Forty-third Parliament, there was a reduction in the proportion of time allocated to government business and business of the House, which is reflected in the significant increase in private members' business time.

MINORITY GOVERNMENT AND AGREEMENTS ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

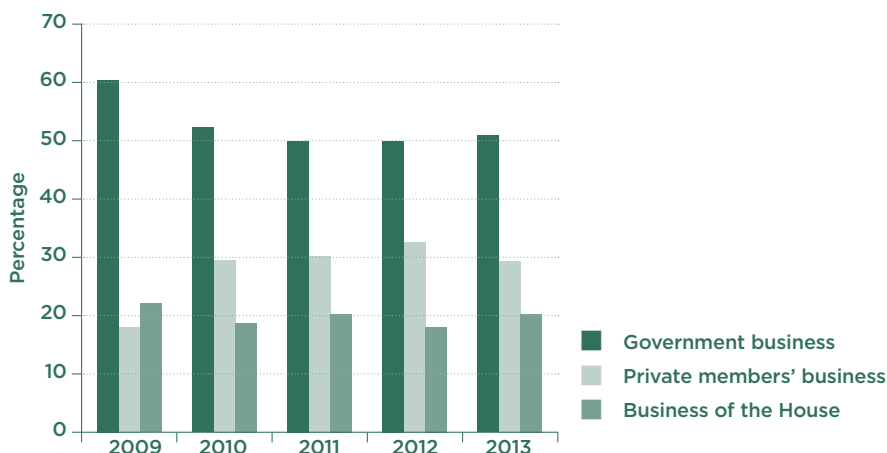
The department's annual reports for 2010-11 and 2011-12 outlined the effects of the formation of minority government and of aspects of the agreements on parliamentary

reform made at the beginning of the Forty-third Parliament on the operation of the department.

The additional demands placed on the chamber support areas as a direct result of the parliamentary reform agreements under minority government continued in 2012-13. While there was a reduction in sitting days and hours and a slight reduction in the number of bills introduced overall, the intensity of work on sitting days increased. This can be partly attributed to a very large increase, off a very high base, in the number of detailed amendments moved to bills.

Throughout 2012-13 the House retained the longer sitting hours of the Chamber and the Federation Chamber that were reported on in the two previous annual reports. The report for 2011-12 provided information on the shadowing arrangements the Table Office has been using to mitigate the demands placed on employees by the longer sitting hours. These arrangements continued, but they were less effective throughout this reporting period as a result of turnover among the shadowing staff which required new volunteers to be inducted into their roles.

Figure 5 Government and private members' business and business of the House (Chamber and Federation Chamber), 2009 to 2013



Note: 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

Legislation

Our support for the legislative process in 2012–13 included:

- receiving bills from the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, and keeping them in custody under embargo before their introduction
- providing bills to ministers for introduction, and to all members in the Chamber after introduction
- uploading bills, explanatory memorandums and proposed amendments to the Parliament of Australia website, and providing an over-the-counter inquiry service for access to hard copies of bills and associated material
- processing all bills and amendments to bills—from introduction to assent for bills initiated in the House, and from introduction in the House until passage by the House for bills initiated in the Senate
- providing a legislative drafting service for private members
- preparing and delivering messages to the Senate—242 messages relating to the passage of bills in 2012–13 (244 in 2011–12) and 26 other messages (15 in 2011–12)
- preparing and issuing each sitting day a *Daily Bills List*, which provides cumulative information on the status of all bills before the parliament or assented to in the current calendar year.

Chamber staff of both Houses continued to work with the developer of the bills system to maintain optimum levels of technical support. The Bills System Advisory Group continued its role in advising the Bills System Advisory Board on system enhancements and satisfying business requirements.

Queries on the bills and legislation collection made available through the website during the year totalled 19,323,018, an increase of 14.5 per cent from the previous year (16,883,831 in 2011–12). This total represented 24 per cent of the queries made through ParInfo Search. Work to include bills from earlier parliaments in the electronic storage system continued, but proceeded slowly because of other demands on Table Office staff.

Legislative workload

During the year, 241 bills were introduced (256 in 2011–12), a decrease of 5.9 per cent from the previous year but still well above the long-term average. Of these, 236 were initiated in the House of Representatives and 5 were received from the Senate. A total of 229 bills¹ passed both Houses (221 in 2011–12), of which 224 were initiated in the House of Representatives (210 in 2011–12) and 5 in the Senate (11 in 2011–12). Table 3 summarises bills introduced and assented to from 2008–09 to 2012–13.

In 2012–13, the House passed 221 bills (221 in 2011–12). This represented 3.7 bills on average for each sitting, compared with 3.3 bills on average passed in the previous year.

Table 3 Number of bills introduced in the House, and number of bills assented to, 2008–09 to 2012–13

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11 ^b	2011–12	2012–13
Bills introduced	210	236	186	256	241
Bills assented to ^a	148	178	116	221	228

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

b Election year.

¹ Figure includes the Constitution Alteration (Local Government) 2013, which was passed by both Houses but not submitted to a referendum—see section 128 of the Constitution.

The House amended 48 (21.3 per cent) of the bills it passed (47 in 2011-12). The Table Office incorporated the amendments into the text of the bills and arranged for their reprinting (as third-reading prints) before transmittal to the Senate. The House also agreed to Senate amendments, and/or made amendments requested by the Senate, to 17 House bills (26 in 2011-12), with further processing by the Table Office before the bills were presented to the Governor-General for assent. In addition, the House made amendments to one bill in place of Senate amendments that were not agreed to.

The number of amendments moved during consideration in detail continues to increase sharply, with an increase of more than 300 per cent in the last two years. This has placed significant demands on departmental staff responsible for:

- drafting amendments for private members
- circulating, storing and publishing amendments through the bills system and the website
- preparing the relevant supporting documents for consideration of amendments in the House
- creating third-reading and assent prints of the relevant bills when amendments are passed.

Of the 923 amendments moved, 728 were passed, including 27 private members' amendments. The House did not amend any bills initiated in the Senate in 2012-13, or in the previous year.

The Table Office prepared 48 third-reading prints (47 in 2011-12) and 223 assent prints (210 in 2011-12). All documents accurately reflected the decisions of both Houses.

Legislative drafting

The department drafts bills, amendments and second-reading (in-principle) amendments for private members. It also ensures that these documents comply with the Constitution and the standing orders. Further, the department prepares bills and amendments in correct form and arranges copies for circulation.

The increase in the number of private members' bills being requested and introduced, noted in last year's annual report, has continued. In 2012-13, 30 private members' bills were introduced, the highest number since Federation in 1901. Two private senators' bills were passed by the House and became law, including the Parliamentary Service Amendment Bill 2013, introduced in the Senate by the President and in the House by the Speaker. Of the 923 amendments moved this year, 222 were private members' amendments, of which 27 were agreed to. Table 4 provides chamber statistics for private members' legislation. The table does not reflect all of the department's work in this area, as some drafted material is not introduced into the House. Table 4 shows the significant increase in the level of activity of the Forty-third Parliament (from 2010 onwards) compared with that of the Forty-second Parliament (from 2008 to 2010).

In order to continue meeting the increased demand for drafting services, the department has continued the arrangement entered into in 2010-11 with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) whereby a senior OPC drafter has been seconded to the department. This arrangement has had mutual benefits for the department and the OPC.

Table 4 Private members' bills introduced and amendments moved, 2008-09 to 2012-13

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 ^c	2011-12	2012-13
Bills introduced	6	15	17	25	30
Second-reading amendments moved ^a	10	12	14	17	9
Consideration in detail amendments moved ^{a,b}	85	134	292	732	923

a Includes Federation Chamber.

b Includes government amendments.

c Election year.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS AND HOUSE DOCUMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

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

Votes and Proceedings is prepared from the *Votes Officer's Minutes*, an electronic draft record of the proceedings of the House and the Federation Chamber. *The Votes Officer's Minutes* are more detailed than the *Votes and Proceedings* and are compiled progressively throughout a sitting day. It enables anyone with access to the internet to follow events in the House and Federation Chamber as they occur. Internal and external clients continued to provide positive feedback on this service.

As noted last year, the greater uncertainty and complexity associated with proceedings of the House in the context of a minority government placed greater pressure on staff and often meant considerably extended hours.

Documents

During the year, we processed all documents presented to the House and recorded their details in *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Index to Papers Presented to Parliament*. We made copies available on request to members and their staff and others, principally in Parliament House, including through an online daily document-ordering system. The original documents were added to the records of the House, which we continued to maintain. We also continued to review our requirements for tabling stock in light of the ever-improving online availability of documents and declining demand for hard copies.

In 2012–13, documents presented to the House numbered 6,116 (6,533 in 2011–12), a decrease of 6.4 per cent compared to the previous year.

The development of an electronic repository for the Parliamentary Papers Series, noted last year, was completed and the repository became accessible in February 2013. It enables

access to the documents themselves as well as the data accessible through the Tabled Papers Register.

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

Parliamentary Papers Series

The Parliamentary Papers Series consists of documents of a substantial nature presented to the parliament. As reported previously, in May 2010 the Joint Committee on Publications undertook an inquiry into the electronic distribution of the series and recommended that an electronic Parliamentary Papers Series be developed, with a repository based in the parliament and managed by the chamber departments. The Presiding Officers agreed that an electronic Parliamentary Papers Series should be developed and that a digital repository should be managed by the parliamentary departments. As noted above, the repository became accessible from the beginning of 2013.

House records

The department is responsible for the custody and preservation of, and access to, the official records of the House, including Acts, bills, *Votes and Proceedings*, and all documents presented to the House dating from 1901. The records are stored in an archive in the basement at Parliament House. We continue to monitor the suitability of the archive environment.

House records of particular interest in the wider community this year have been the Yirrkala bark petitions, presented to the House in August 1963. These are both notable Aboriginal artworks and significant documents in the story of Indigenous land rights, and are displayed in the public area of Parliament House. The fiftieth anniversary of the petitions was chosen as the theme of NAIDOC Week for 2013, and there have been numerous requests for information about the petitions and for permission to reproduce them.

House pictorial collection

Work continued on the upgrade of the cataloguing and storage of the House pictorial collection during the reporting period, but it was affected by the need for the Chamber Research Office to respond to sustained high levels of demand for its services. During the 2013 election period, reduced commitments should enable this project to be finalised. Completion of the project will enable better access to the department's collection of images and ensure compliance with records management standards.

Petitions

The continued high number of signatories to petitions in recent years demonstrates that Australians have a strong level of interest in using the House petitioning process to raise issues of interest and concern to them. Table 5 shows the number of petitions presented to the House, and the number of signatories, for the past five years. In 2012-13, 124 petitions were presented, fewer than the 183 petitions presented in 2011-12. (See also information on the Standing Committee on Petitions at page 20.)

RESEARCH

The Chamber Research Office continued in its function of collecting, analysing and publishing procedural and statistical information on the work of the House and its committees.

In 2012-13, the office provided:

- advice, and assistance with advice, to the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and members on the application of the standing orders and House practices
- secretariat support to the Standing Committee on Procedure and the Standing Committee on Petitions
- advice about and publications on House statistics, practices and procedure

- information to the public, the media and other parliaments on the operations of the House.

The services of the office continued to be in high demand due to sustained high levels of interest in the procedures and operations of the House.

Publications

The highlight of the year was publication of the sixth edition of the authoritative procedural text, *House of Representatives Practice*, in September 2012. The text has been revised considerably since the previous edition, published in 2005. Many of the revisions have been made in response to continuing procedural developments in the House during the Forty-third Parliament. The publication of the sixth edition was widely welcomed.

The value of a new edition in the context of minority government is indicated in the Speaker's comments: 'My staff and I think of it as the Olympic edition. Members will not be surprised that it records many firsts' (House of Representatives Debates, 29 November 2012).

The office continued its pattern of producing regular publications that outline significant procedural events and popular statistics. These are usually produced after each sitting fortnight. The *Procedural Digest*, a subject-based record of proceedings, is published online, and the *Procedural Extracts*, a technical document, is also prepared. The office published the *Statistical Digest* after each sitting fortnight. *Work of the Session*, a comprehensive six-monthly overview of the business of the House and committees, was published in August 2012 and January 2013. The series of 21 infosheets on the work of the House was updated in January 2013. Together, these publications provide a current and concise record of the work of the House and the more significant aspects of the nature of that work.

Table 5 Petitions and signatories to petitions, 2008-09 to 2012-13

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 ^a	2011-12	2012-13
Number of petitions presented	141	163	129	183	124
Number of signatories	234,622	270,964	445,921	446,619	325,350

^a Election year.

The Chamber Research Office maintains, publishes and distributes the standing orders of the House. An insertion was added to the Standing and Sessional Orders on 10 October 2012 to reflect an amendment made by the House on that day.

Collaboration with the Department of the Senate

The office continued its longstanding collaboration with colleagues in the Department of the Senate, including in a joint presentation on the work of the parliament for a national conference held at Parliament House, and in orientation seminars for the Australian National Internship Program and the Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program (discussed in detail on page 26).

Collaboration with other parliaments

Through the different formats of its publications, the office caters for a wide variety of readers, and staff are frequently asked to share experiences and knowledge with counterparts in other parliaments. During the year the office continued to collaborate with colleagues and members from other parliaments by participating in study programs and meetings during delegation visits. These colleagues and members are often interested in the work of the office and

the systems it has established over the years to develop, record and publish information on the procedural work of the House.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

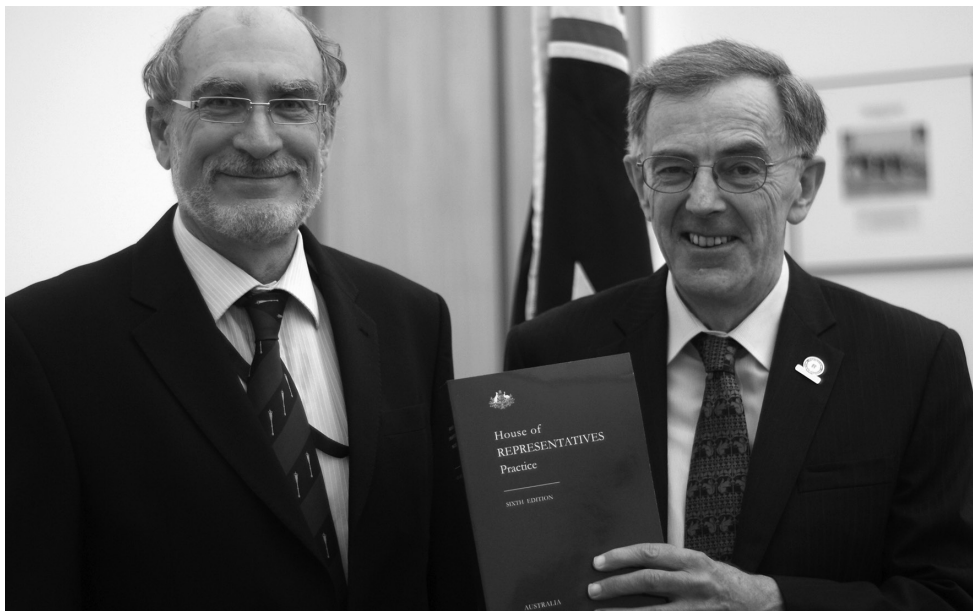
The department continued to provide effective secretariat and advisory support to a number of House committees, and to one joint committee dealing with the powers and procedures of the House (see Table 6).

In 2012–13, these committees held a total of 105 meetings (117 in 2011–12) and produced 50 reports (39 in 2011–12). The large number of meetings and reports presented is primarily due to the role of the Selection Committee in the Forty-third Parliament. Details of meetings and reports are set out in appendixes 4 and 5.

Selection Committee

The Selection Committee continued to operate during the reporting period. It has four important roles:

- selecting and programming private members' business and committee and delegation business
- setting speaking times for second-reading debates (the committee has not as yet exercised this role)



Clerk of the House, Mr Bernard Wright (editor) (at right) and Mr Peter Fowler (assistant editor) at the launch of House of Representatives Practice, sixth edition, September 2012. Mr Wright and Mr Fowler were assistant editors of each previous edition since the second edition in 1989.

- considering all bills introduced and determining whether to refer bills directly to House or joint committees for inquiry. This power can be exercised by an individual member of the committee (68 bills were referred to committees under this procedure in 2012-13; 85 in 2011-12)
- recommending items of private members' business for a vote of the House (60 items of private members' business, including 7 bills, were voted on in 2012-13; 69 items in 2011-12).

The committee consists of 11 members: the Speaker (as chair), the chief whips of the three parties, three government members, two opposition members and two non-aligned members. The committee met 36 times during the reporting period, typically twice each sitting week. A third meeting was sometimes conducted to enable a bill just introduced to be referred to a committee for inquiry. The Selection Committee is supported by Table Office staff.

Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration

The Appropriations and Administration Committee 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 the Department of Parliamentary Services each year.

The committee has nine members (four government and four non-government) and is chaired by the Speaker. 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 three reports.

Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests

The Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests met nine times during the reporting period. During 2012-13, the committee completed and presented to the House five reports on right-of-reply matters that had been referred to it. In relation to an inquiry referred by the House in May 2012 into whether, in the course of a statement made to the House by the Member for Dobell (Mr Craig Thomson MP), the member deliberately misled the House, the chair of the committee advised the House that the committee had suspended its inquiry following the laying of criminal charges against Mr Thomson.

Standing Committee on Petitions

The Petitions Committee continued to assess petitions for compliance with relevant House standing orders, and to enable the presentation of petitions found to be in order and of ministerial responses to petitions presented previously. The committee and secretariat also communicated with principal petitioners about petitions received. On sitting Mondays, the chair of the committee presented 'in-order' petitions which other members had not elected to present. During this timeslot the chair also presented written responses from ministers to

Table 6 Committees supported by Chamber and Federation Chamber component, 2012-13

House committees
Selection Committee
Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration
Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests
Standing Committee on Petitions
Standing Committee on Procedure
Standing Committee on Publications
Joint committee
Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings

petitions presented earlier and on which the committee had sought comment. The terms of presented petitions and ministerial responses were published in Hansard and on the Parliament of Australia website in accordance with standing orders. During the year, 124 petitions were presented (a decrease of 32 per cent from the previous year) with a total of 325,350 signatures (a decrease of 27 per cent from the previous year). The lower petition numbers should be considered in the context of the high volume received in 2011–12 compared with other years since the committee was established.

There were 74 ministerial response letters presented, representing responses to 92 petitions. Excluding the 23 petitions which were presented in the final two sitting weeks in June, the response rate approximated 91 per cent. Responses from ministers do not usually agree to petitioners' requests, but rather provide current information about the subject matter of issues raised in petitions.

The committee sometimes holds public roundtable hearings with principal petitioners and representatives of relevant government agencies. These are not intended to resolve or pursue matters raised in petitions but to further explore the issues with petitioners and to allow public servants to explain the relevant legislation, policy, programs or administration. In 2012–13, the committee held four interstate hearings with principal petitioners—two in Perth in August 2012 and one each in Sydney and Brisbane in April 2013. The committee also met with public servants in Canberra in March 2013 to discuss a variety of petitions.

Standing Committee on Procedure

The committee continued to monitor the procedural reforms implemented in the Forty-third Parliament and presented its report, *Monitoring and review of procedural changes implemented in the 43rd Parliament: 4th report*, in November 2012. The report complemented the findings of three previous reports on the procedural changes flowing from implementation of the reforms proposed in the 2010 *Agreement for a better parliament: parliamentary reform*. The committee focused particularly on changes to opportunities for

private members, question time and the House committee system.

In June 2013 the committee presented two reports: *Maintenance of the standing and sessional orders* and *Electronic voting in the House of Representatives*. The first report—of an inquiry that has been adopted during each of the last three parliaments by the Procedure Committee—examined minor irregularities in the Standing and Sessional Orders. The committee also revisited some changes it had recommended in previous reports on the reforms of the Forty-third Parliament and several procedural policy matters. The second report reviewed the existing evidence on electronic voting in the House and provided a basis for any possible future in-depth inquiry.

Standing Committee on Publications

The committee met three times in 2012–13, and met with the Senate Publications Committee another nine times. The committee presented nine reports on which documents presented to parliament should be included in the Parliamentary Papers Series. All reports were agreed for inclusion.

Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings

The *Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946* requires 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 broadcasting time between the two chambers and determine a more detailed schedule of broadcasting allocations. As detailed on page 41 of this report, the committee tabled redrafted general principles and advice to the ABC during the reporting period.

The committee also provided advice to the Presiding Officers on rules for media-related activity in Parliament House and its precincts following a review. These rules were subsequently issued by the Presiding Officers as is described in more detail on page 40.

Under the Broadcasting Act, the committee has nine members, including the Speaker and the President of the Senate. By tradition, the committee's chair is the Speaker and the President is vice-chair. The committee met four times in the reporting period and is supported by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

PROCEDURAL TRAINING

The department continued to support the development of specialised knowledge and skills in the application of parliamentary law, practice and procedure through a range of measures. These measures include:

- regular parliamentary briefings delivered by senior departmental staff
- training programs run by senior departmental staff, including a workshop on parliamentary privilege and a seminar on the legislative process
- sitting debriefs following each sitting week or fortnight, focusing on matters of procedural interest
- shadowing opportunities, enabling staff to learn specialist skills such as the preparation of House procedures, the *Notice Paper* and *Votes and Proceedings*. With sufficient experience, the use of shadowing allows chamber support staff to finish work earlier on some sitting nights and provides a

backup in the event of staffing absences or turnover

- opportunities for participation in the Australia and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT) professional development seminar, in January 2013
- for a small number of staff, participation in the Graduate Certificate in Parliamentary Law and Practice, currently taught by the University of Tasmania under the auspices of ANZACATT.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Work continued on the project to develop the document production system for the table offices of the department and the Department of the Senate. In August 2012 the project adopted an 'agile development methodology', in which applications are developed over a number of increments ('sprints'). Each sprint either develops new or improves on existing functionality and allows for frequent feedback, testing and refinement of requirements.

The first sprint was released and tested in December 2012, and a further four sprints were released and tested as of 30 June 2013. The production release, planned for October 2013, will enable the Table Office to produce the *Notice Paper*, *Daily Program*



Staff from the department's Chamber Research Office at the launch of House of Representatives Practice, sixth edition, September 2012.

and *Votes and Proceedings* using common data available to all users. It is anticipated that a total of 13 sprints will be needed to meet all the requirements of the production system. The project is scheduled for completion in April 2014.

As mentioned above, work was completed on the implementation of an electronic Parliamentary Papers Series. Since the beginning of 2013, all Parliamentary Papers have been available through ParInfo Search.

Work continued on the redevelopment of the department's Procedural Records System, a searchable database containing records of procedural events in the House and Federation Chamber. This joint project with the South Australian House of Assembly is scheduled for completion before the commencement of the Forty-fourth Parliament.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

The increase in sitting hours of the Chamber and the Federation Chamber in the Forty-third Parliament has increased demand for appropriately trained procedural support staff. Procedural training and development continued to be a priority during the year. An intensive training program, which enabled participating departmental staff to develop a detailed understanding of bills and the legislative process, was delivered for the first time in 2010–11 and offered again in 2012–13. This two-part program provided targeted assistance to staff who were less experienced in providing procedural support to the House and to staff responding to the growing number of inquiries into bills by committees supported by the department.

OUTLOOK

In 2012–13, considerable time and resources were invested in the redevelopment of the central document production system and associated measures for the table offices of the department and the Department of the Senate. Staff have worked collaboratively with the developers and colleagues in other parliamentary departments to refine the functionality of the system and review associated workflows. The first two months of 2013–14 will see an intensive effort on this project, in anticipation of a rollout of the first components of the new system in October 2013. The election period during 2013–14 will bring with it a slight reduction in sitting days and related parliamentary business. Although there will be a pause in parliamentary proceedings, staff will be fully engaged in finalising the records of the Forty-third Parliament and preparing for the opening of the Forty-fourth Parliament. The experience of minority government has shown the department's ability to adapt and respond to changing circumstances, and we aim to build on that in continuing to support the House and Federation Chamber, maintaining our responsiveness to any future procedural changes. We will continue to focus on ensuring that we have sufficient numbers of suitably trained staff to support both the Chamber and the Federation Chamber.

Community relations and awareness

In 2012–13, the department continued to promote community engagement with the work of the House of Representatives and its committees through a range of multimedia products and services. Building on the achievements of previous years, the International and Community Relations Office worked with other departmental areas to inform the community about, and encourage community participation in, the House's work. School and other visits to the parliament were supported by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

In 2012–13, the budget allocation for the component was \$1.472 million and expenditure was \$1.418 million. Staff levels, by location, are shown in Appendix 11.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Our community outreach products and services remained popular throughout the year. Social media was used increasingly to engage the community with the work of the House of Representatives and its committees. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of Parliament House, celebrated in 2013, provided an additional opportunity to promote the House's work to the community.

Chamber gallery and school visits to Parliament House continued at a high level during the year.

COMMUNITY LIAISON

Print and electronic media

We continued to deliver parliamentary information to the community through our flagship products: the magazine *About the House*, our two television programs—*About the House* and *MPI (Matters of Public Importance)*—and the web page About the House News. Three issues of the magazine were published during the year. Seven episodes of *MPI* and four episodes of *About the House* were produced and broadcast on the Australian Public Affairs Channel and on Sky News Multiview, with replays made available on the About the House News web page.

Community feedback, through emails, letters and phone calls, indicated a high level of satisfaction with our products. The following comments were indicative of the feedback received.

'Recently I picked up a copy of *About the House* magazine and found many of the articles interesting.'

'Our library [Murrindindi Library Services, Yea] was given a copy of your magazine, *About the House*—we found it very informative.'

'I receive *About the House*, fantastic publication—well set out, interesting and informative—thank you!'

The About the House Twitter feed, introduced in 2011, continued to grow in popularity, attracting more than 12,400 followers (an increase of almost 5,000 from June 2012). For the first time one of the House of Representatives committees, the Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee, used the About the House Twitter feed to receive questions from the community for a committee roundtable on constitutional issues. More than 30 questions were sent in and the roundtable generated much commentary on Twitter.

Complementing the Twitter feed, we posted more regularly on the About the House Facebook page, resulting in an increase in followers to 550. Our media advisers also continued to promote the work of parliamentary committees through direct contact with the media and the community, including an email alert service that has more than 3,300 subscribers (100 more than in 2011–12). Regular reporting of committee work in newspapers and on television and radio indicates that the department's community engagement strategy is contributing to increased media coverage of parliamentary committee work.

Seminars and presentations

In 2012–13, 11 seminars were conducted on the work and procedures of the House of Representatives (compared to 12 in 2011–12). Seven of these were seminars for individual government departments and organisations. For the first time a seminar on the operations and work of the Australian Parliament was conducted jointly by the House of Representatives and Senate departments.

There were 320 participants in the overall seminar program (a decrease of 22 from 2011–12). The seminar statistics reflected the usual trend of fewer seminars and fewer participants in the year leading up to a federal election. Evaluations by seminar participants were collected electronically; the average ratings are detailed in Table 7.

One university lecture was presented by the Deputy Clerk under the House Calls program, at the University of Tasmania in Hobart. The House Calls program provides an opportunity for staff and students to gain an understanding of the more practical aspects of the roles of the House and its members.

Projects and events

The department contributed to the twenty-fifth anniversary of Parliament House, taking a lead role in coordinating a number of projects for the anniversary. This included the publication and launch of a book on the commissioned art and craft of Parliament House. The book, entitled *Interwoven*, aims to honour and make more widely known the works of art and craft that are integral to the design and construction of the building. There was a major undertaking by the parliamentary departments to locate the original artists, craftspeople and photographers to seek their agreement for images of their

work to be incorporated in the publication and to invite them to the book's launch (see page 42).

The department also had the lead coordinating role for the Parliament House twenty-fifth anniversary Open Day on 24 August 2013, and helped with the planning for that event. As part of the day's activities, we announced a competition for year 10 to 12 students, called 'My First Speech'. The competition was first run in 2011 and proved popular with schools throughout Australia. The winning students presented their speeches at the Open Day, and the results will be reported in next year's annual report.

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS PROGRAM

In 2012–13 the parliamentary assistants program, successfully run by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, entered its thirteenth year. The program offers university students part-time employment in the House of Representatives in order to promote understanding and engagement with the work of the parliament. (For further details see page 47.)

PARLIAMENTARY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Australian National Internship Program has operated since 1993 under an agreement between the Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University and the Presiding Officers. Australian and foreign students enrolled at the university under the program undertake an internship placement of about 10 weeks as part of their formal course of undergraduate study. In the second semester of 2012, most students enrolled in the program were placed with a member or senator; and in the first semester of 2013, around half the students were placed with a member or

Table 7 Seminar rating average, 2012–13 (%)

	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	Excellent
Seminar content	0.0	0.0	14.3	57.1	28.6
Level of detail	0.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	16.7
Presenters	0.0	0.0	50.0	33.3	16.7
Material and information in handouts	0.0	0.0	14.3	57.1	28.6

senator. The departments of the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as the Parliamentary Library, assist the program. The House and Senate departments provide a daylong orientation seminar before the students take up their placements at Parliament House and elsewhere. During the placement, each student completes a research project on a topic nominated and agreed with their host. The report is assessed by the university and counts towards their degree at their home university.

The program has continued to provide students from around Australia and from other countries with an opportunity to extend and complement their academic studies by studying and working within the parliamentary environment.

PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

Each year, a small number of Australian Defence Force representatives spend a week at Parliament House, hosted by a member or senator. This arrangement began in 2003 as an expansion of a program begun in 2001, under which members and senators took up a short placement with Defence personnel and participated in their working life. Arrangements for participation by members and senators are made through the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence in conjunction with the Department of Defence. The program usually takes place in September or October. In 2012-13, 15 Australian Defence Force representatives were placed with a member or senator in each of two programs. The first program was held in September 2012 and the second in June 2013. (The 2013 program was brought forward in anticipation of the election later in the year.)

The departments of the House of Representatives and the Senate collaborate to support the exchange program and each provides orientation seminars on the work of the Chamber and committees. Participants also receive a briefing from the Parliamentary Library on the services it provides to members and senators.

PUBLIC VISITS TO THE HOUSE

Public visits to observe proceedings

The reporting year saw high and sustained public interest in the sittings of the House of Representatives. The interest was reflected in the numbers of visitors to the House of Representatives galleries. Over the 59 sitting days, 75,312 people attended the galleries—visitor numbers peaked at more than 1,600 visitors per day on seven occasions. In the last sitting week of the year, more than 5,000 visitors attended some part of proceedings.

The high levels of interest partly reflected a number of high-profile parliamentary events during the year. These included the Closing the Gap statement on 5 February 2013 by former Prime Minister Gillard, viewed by nearly 500 visitors, and final passage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Bill 2012 through the House on 13 February 2013, which was seen by some 840 visitors. Budget and budget reply nights were also well attended, due in part to the Treasurer and Leader of the Opposition presenting key proposals in an election year. More than 1,700 people visited on budget day, 14 May 2013 (up from 713 in 2012), and a record 3,370 on the day of the budget reply (up from 603 in 2012).

These major events required close coordination between the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office and the Parliamentary Security Service to ensure that all gallery visitors went through a secondary security screening outside the gallery entrances in an efficient and timely manner. Departmental and security staff also worked together to ensure that chamber proceedings continued without interruption as people moved through the galleries.

School visits to Parliament House

School visits to Parliament House are coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, working in partnership with the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) and Visitor Services.

In 2012–13 there was an increase in the number of school students participating in educational tours of Parliament House, with 115,651 students recorded, up from 114,794 in the previous year. The increased student numbers came from New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. All other states recorded slightly lower numbers than in the previous financial year (see Table 8).

All visiting students participated in a guided tour and visited both chambers; of those, 88 per cent (101,657) received hospitality and 81 per cent (94,015) participated in the PEO program, an increase of 3 per cent on the previous financial year. Following advice to the Speaker from the PEO Advisory Committee, the department sought and was granted additional funding to provide modest hospitality to school groups visiting Parliament House.

Bookings for school visits in 2014 opened on 1 July 2013, and by the end of that week we had already booked 65,321 students from 1,726 schools.

Parliamentary Education Office

Although administered by the Department of the Senate, the Parliamentary Education Office is jointly funded by the department. Its mission is to provide parliamentary education services to schools, teachers and students. It also provides parliamentary education support services to members and senators.

The two departments liaise closely on the PEO's strategic direction and the content of its teaching, educational material and online resources through the PEO Advisory Committee, jointly chaired by the Deputy Speaker and Deputy President. The committee can also provide the Presiding Officers with advice on the support needs of members and senators in relation to parliamentary education. The committee met in November 2012 and June 2013. The Clerk Assistant (Table) or her representative attended as an observer.

In 2012–13, a record 94,015 students in 3,223 school groups from around Australia participated in the PEO's experiential role-play program at Parliament House (compared with 89,624 students in 2,669 school groups last financial year). A number of members of parliament and senators met with student groups when they visited Parliament House. The cumulative total of students who have participated in the role-play programs since the Parliament House building opened on 9 May 1988 is more than 1.6 million.

The development of a new parliamentary booking system, which will include school tours, is well advanced. The new system is expected to provide improved efficiency and functionality for staff and improve the information and service provided to schools and tour operators booking programs at Parliament House.

The PEO continues to invest in a comprehensive range of outreach strategies to ensure it is able to provide parliamentary education services to a broad student population, not just those able to travel to Canberra.

Table 8 Students visiting Parliament House, by location and year, 2008–09 to 2012–13

Year	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas.	Vic.	WA	Other	Total
2008–09	4,031	69,673	341	14,333	4,024	1,113	16,913	3,591	171	114,190
2009–10	3,703	70,294	623	15,845	4,618	1,394	17,041	4,378	59	117,955
2010–11	2,730	67,715	707	16,411	4,205	1,262	17,458	4,048	62	114,598
2011–12	1,637	66,036	899	17,389	5,059	1,676	17,312	4,706	80	114,794
2012–13	1,657	67,955	881	16,395	4,742	1,471	17,245	5,064	241	115,651

The PEO website remains a highly effective and popular vehicle for the dissemination of parliamentary education material and resources to teachers and students located around Australia. PEO website patronage increased in 2012-13, counting 590,827 visitor sessions and more than 5.9 million pages viewed. This compares to 589,998 visitor sessions and almost 4.9 million page views in 2011-12. While there was only a modest increase of 0.14 per cent in visitor sessions, the number of pages viewed increased by more than 20 per cent, which may reflect improved and expanded content and improved site navigation. During the year the PEO extensively revised and updated its web content and developed much new material, particularly for secondary students. It also focused on providing improved factual information about current events and the achievements and statistics of the Forty-third Parliament.

The PEO continued its work with members and senators on a limited scale through a targeted school visit program called Parliament Alive. In the reporting period, visits took place under the program to schools in the Mildura region in Victoria, the Renmark region in South Australia, and Rockhampton and Mackay in central Queensland. These activities provided participating students with an invaluable opportunity to learn firsthand about the role and work of their federal member or senator. A highlight of the Parliament Alive program was the active involvement of members and senators.

In addition to Parliament Alive, the PEO conducted a number of specially targeted activities at Parliament House involving students, trainee and qualified teachers, parliamentary visitors and Indigenous groups. These activities included overseeing the long-running Rotary Adventure in Citizenship program in budget week, supporting several National Youth Science Forums in January, and on several occasions arranging for senior secondary economics students to attend hearings of the House Economics Committee where the Governor of the Reserve Bank was testifying.

The PEO also continued to produce a wide range of educational resources, both in print and online, including a new instructional video for teachers to encourage them to conduct House of Representatives parliamentary role-play activities in the classroom. In addition, several short single-subject videos and a video on the Usher of the Black Rod were produced, the latter as part of a new People in Parliament series. Demand for PEO publications and resources from both teachers and parliamentarians continued to be strong over the course of the year. PEO publications and resources were constantly reviewed and updated to ensure their currency, accuracy and ongoing relevance.

During the year the PEO actively monitored the development of the national curriculum in civics and citizenship. The PEO provided input to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's shape paper and has commenced a detailed review of the draft civics and citizenship curriculum for years 3-10, which was released in May 2013.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

The media player used on the House of Representatives web pages was upgraded to provide better quality viewing of multimedia and improved functionality across desktop and mobile devices.

Increased use of social media resulted in increased interaction with the community, particularly in relation to committee work.

A joint seminar between the House of Representatives and Senate departments on the operations of the Australian Parliament gave public servants the opportunity to participate in a whole-of-parliament seminar, rather than attending separate seminars about each house.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, together with the Office of the Usher of the Black Rod, has been working closely with a third-party vendor on a new joint venue management system. The new system should provide a more user-friendly and efficient booking service that enables schools to book visits to the building and departmental staff to make committee room, courtyard and public gallery bookings online.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, with the Security Branch and the Parliamentary Experience Branch of the Department of Parliamentary Services, continued to coordinate and provide induction training to colleagues from other parliamentary departments. Training covers the functions and responsibilities of the House of Representatives, and operational requirements for the Chamber, Federation Chamber and chamber galleries.

OUTLOOK

We will continue work on a project that will deliver a number of our outreach products and services in a digital format. This will allow us to use the latest technology to provide information to the community and should also contribute to a reduction in printing and distribution costs.

We will continue to explore opportunities to use social media to facilitate direct community input into the work of House of Representatives committees.

We will further develop our strategic plan for community outreach by assessing how our products and services have been delivered during the course of the Forty-third Parliament and mapping out the approach we will take in the Forty-fourth Parliament.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office will continue to meet regularly and work with our colleagues in the PEO and Visitor Services, as well as the wider community, to provide the best possible service to the variety of people who visit Parliament House. The Parliament and Civics Education Rebate will continue to provide financial assistance for students in years 4–12 across Australia to travel to Canberra.

A new contractor, BUSY At Work, has taken over the administration of this program. The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, together with the PEO and Visitor Services, has met the new contractors and will continue to work with them to assist participating schools.

Committee services

The work in this program component is primarily performed by the Committee Office. The office supports parliamentary committees in discharging their responsibilities of parliamentary consideration of policy and legislation and scrutiny of government.

The expenditure on these services in 2012–13 was \$7.978 million, which was \$0.065 million below the budget allocation of \$8.043 million. Staff levels, by location, are shown in Appendix 11.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

On 1 July 2012, nine Committee Office secretariats were supporting nine House investigatory committees and 11 joint investigatory committees. Most committees had multiple inquiries in progress, which originated during the previous financial year. Committee efforts during the reporting period were focused on completing these and any other inquiries referred during the period, due to the possibility that the sittings in late June 2013 would be the last for the Forty-third Parliament.

The office supported three joint select committees during 2012–13:

- The Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety was established in September 2010 and, by resolution of both chambers, had its life extended to report by 27 June 2013, rather than by April 2013. Accordingly, the committee presented its fourth and final report on 24 June 2013 and was then dissolved.
- The Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government was established in November 2012, and presented a preliminary report in January 2013. The committee's final report was tabled in March 2013, and the committee was then dissolved.
- The Joint Select Committee on Broadcasting Legislation was established in March 2013. The committee presented its report on 24 June 2013 and was then dissolved.

Committees supported by the Committee Office in 2012–13 are shown in Table 9.

The department also supports the Liaison Committee of Chairs and Deputy Chairs (of House committees and joint committees supported by the department). While this committee has formal processes, and is chaired by the Deputy Speaker, it is not a formal committee of the parliament but a means by which chairs and deputy chairs of committees administered by the House can discuss aspects of committee administration and support. In previous parliaments the committee generally met every six months, but it met more frequently in the Forty-third Parliament. The committee met four times in 2012–13: in September and November 2012 and in May and June 2013.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The 2012–13 financial year was marked by high levels of committee activity as House and joint committees continued to play an increased role in the scrutiny of legislation. Bills inquiries are generally conducted within short timeframes and before the Forty-third Parliament were not a significant feature of House and joint committee work. In addition to the increased number of bills inquiries, the fact that the end of the financial year coincided with a winter adjournment—and an anticipated general election—caused most investigatory committees to seek to finalise ongoing inquiries as soon as possible in 2012–13. This led to a large number of reports being tabled presented the end of the reporting period, and an increase in the workload of Committee Office staff.

On 1 July 2012, the investigatory committees supported by the department had 46 ongoing inquiries. During 2012–13, these committees started work on 82 new inquiries and presented 104 reports relating to 93 inquiries and reported by way of oral statement on a further 12 occasions. As at 30 June 2013, the committees had 16 ongoing inquiries.

The inquiry-related activities of committees are summarised in appendixes 4 and 5. Changes to the standing orders at the beginning of the Forty-third Parliament, which enabled the re-established Selection Committee to refer bills to House and joint committees, continued

to make a significant impact on committee workloads. Prior to the Forty-third Parliament, committees administered by the department only occasionally conducted inquiries into bills and pre-legislation proposals. In 2012–13, 37 packages comprising 51 bills were referred by the Selection Committee to committees supported by the department.

During the year, the Committee Office supported some inquiries that attracted significant public interest, and innovative methods were required to effectively manage stakeholder engagement in often very short timeframes. For example, in June 2013, the Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee held a constitutional roundtable, in which several of Australia's eminent constitutional

lawyers participated, and which featured a live Twitter feed covering the formal proceedings in Parliament House. As the roundtable progressed, Twitter users commented on the proceedings, proposed questions for the roundtable and responded to questions raised by members of the committee. Members and witnesses also tweeted during proceedings. Following the roundtable, and with assistance from the International and Community Relations Office, a compilation of tweets was published online, complementing the transcript and video of proceedings.

For its inquiry into cyber safety for senior Australians, the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety conducted an online survey of people over 55 years of age. Given the focus

Table 9 Committees of the Forty-third Parliament supported by the Committee Office, 2012-13

House committees
Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Standing Committee on Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry
Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and the Arts
Standing Committee on Economics
Standing Committee on Education and Employment
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications
Standing Committee on Regional Australia
Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs
Joint committees
Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Joint Select Committee on Broadcasting Legislation
Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government
Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Note: Six other House committees, mainly those concerned with the domestic operations of the House, and the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings, are supported by other program components of the department and are discussed on pages 19–22.

on senior Australians, the survey was designed so that stakeholders with low computer literacy could participate without difficulty, and was also advertised in print media. The survey was closed in November 2012, at which time it had received 504 online responses and a further 32 responses posted to the secretariat in hard copy.

In July 2012, as part of the Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee's inquiry into foetal alcohol spectrum disorders, the committee attended the Maminwamtikura Women's Bush Camp in Mimbi, near Fitzroy Crossing. The committee considered this a valuable opportunity to bring the parliament to a remote Indigenous women's meeting, and was given a special dispensation to enable men to attend. These camps are held every few years in extremely remote locations and there were many logistical issues involved in organising and conducting a hearing with limited facilities. As several language groups participate in the camp, two different translators were used to ensure that all participants were able to take part in the hearing.

In 2012-13, Committee Office staff provided support to a number of committee delegations.

In July 2012, the secretariat of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade supported a visit of the Trade Sub-Committee to Japan and the Republic of

Korea. The visit was approved by the then Prime Minister as an additional parliamentary delegation to support the committee's inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationships with Japan and the Republic of Korea. During the 11-day visit, the committee met with ministers, and chairs and senior members of trade, agriculture, knowledge economy and foreign affairs committees, from both countries. These meetings allowed for an exchange of views on trade and investment and particularly the free trade agreement negotiations underway between Australia and each country. The committee's visit informed the report for the inquiry, tabled in June 2013.

In August and September 2012, the secretariat of the Standing Committee on Regional Australia supported committee members during their visit to Canada and Mongolia as part of the annual parliamentary committee visit to the Asia-Pacific region. The aim of the delegation was to examine how these two very different countries were dealing with the challenges posed to communities by the substantial workforces required for resource operations in regional locations. The program for the delegation included high-level meetings with officials and companies in Canada and Mongolia, as well as visits to remote worksites and inspections of associated facilities and towns. The findings from this trip were incorporated into the committee's report on



A delegation from the Standing Committee on Regional Australia with Mr Z. Enkhbold, Speaker of the Parliament of Mongolia (centre), in the Speaker's dining room of the State Great Khural, Ulaan Baatar, September 2012.

fly-in, fly-out workforce practices in regional Australia, *Cancer of the bush or salvation for our cities?*

In 2012–13, the government tabled responses to some important reports. For instance, the government responded to a report on an inquiry conducted by the Standing Committee on Education and Employment, *Workplace bullying: we just want it to stop*, tabled in November 2012. This report examined the prevalence and extent of workplace bullying in Australia, its effect on victims, strategies to prevent it, and how workplaces and governments can improve their strategies for dealing with it once it has occurred. The report contained 23 recommendations incorporating a range of measures designed to strengthen strategies to both prevent and deal with this problem. The government response, tabled in February 2013, was largely supportive of the committee's report: 19 of the 23 recommendations were either supported or supported in principle, and the other four recommendations were noted.

In February 2013, the government responded to the June 2012 report by the Standing Committee on Education and Employment, *Work wanted: mental health and workforce participation*. This report examined the barriers to workforce participation experienced by people suffering from mental ill-health, and made 15 unanimous recommendations designed to help reduce and overcome these barriers. In this case, the government response was uniformly positive, agreeing in full, in part or in principle to every recommendation.

ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE

The most important indicator for the Committee Office is the level of satisfaction with committee services reported by members in the department's annual survey of members (for more details see Appendix 12). As Table 10 shows, in the 2013 members' survey, all members who used the services stated that they were 'extremely satisfied', 'highly satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the procedural advice, research, analytical drafting and administrative support services in relation to committee activities.

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

In addition to providing day-to-day support for committees, the department also continued to assist the work of committees by developing support systems and projects to ensure that support staff are equipped to perform their roles effectively.

Records management and archiving

The Records Management Unit completed the project of implementing the use of electronic records management in the entire Committee Office by the year's end.

Archiving of residual paper committee records continued during the year in conjunction with the Records Management Unit. More than five shelf metres were transferred into the custody of the National Archives.

Table 10 Committee Office performance indicators

Indicator	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11 ^d	2011–12	2012–13
Members' satisfaction rates (%) ^a	95	100	100	95	100
Reports, total ^b	51	57	42	90 (11)	104 (12)
Staff numbers, Committee Office ^c	61	63	63	63	64

a Members' satisfaction rates represent the proportion of members who stated they were 'satisfied', 'highly satisfied' or 'extremely satisfied' with committee services.

b Oral reports (shown in parentheses) may be given in discharge of a reference from the Selection Committee.

c Staff numbers are based on historical data for 30 June each year.

d 2010–11 was an election year. Committees ceased to exist upon dissolution of the House (July to September 2010).

Digitisation of committee reports

As reported last year, the department has undertaken to post digital copies of all House and joint committee reports tabled since 1901. All 417 House committee reports are now available electronically. During the posting process, 1,528 joint committee reports were identified as missing from the report register. At the end of the financial year, 221 of these reports were still to be published electronically. The department aims to complete this project before the start of the Forty-fourth Parliament.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

The Committee Office has been involved in several projects aimed at improving its operational efficiency and maintaining a high standard of service to its clients and stakeholders.

HTML generator

Improvements continued to be made in the provision of information online, through the publication of committee reports (including graphics, tables and footnotes) as web pages

as well as making reports available in PDF. In this way, the department is seeking to comply with the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) requirements as set out by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Providing reports in this format extends accessibility by enabling screen readers to easily translate information for vision-impaired people.

At the end of the financial year, the backlog of reports for the Forty-third Parliament had been cleared, and any new reports were being published in HTML within approximately one week of their presentation in the House. In the new parliament, the focus will shift to converting those reports from the Forty-second and Forty-first Parliaments that are not yet available in HTML.

During the year, work began on developing a new committee report template that will facilitate publishing committee reports in PDF, HTML and ePub formats. This project is due for deployment at the beginning of the Forty-fourth Parliament.



A delegation from the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade visiting AEON supermarket in Kyoto, Japan, for 'Australia Fair', a promotion of Australian food, July 2012.

Extension of database redevelopment

The department and the Department of the Senate continued to collaborate on a project to redevelop the Senate Committee Information Database (SCID) system so it can be used by committee secretariats in this department. The redeveloped SCID (renamed as the Shared Committee Information Database) will provide for the electronic lodgement, management and publishing of committee submissions, public hearing information and other associated committee information to the Parliament of Australia website. SCID will streamline the management of committee information and replace a number of older information management and web publishing tools.

During the reporting period, the CommDocs system was deployed to committee secretariats in the Department of the Senate. CommDocs provides a secure and access-controlled web-based interface for committee secretariat staff to distribute committee documents to

committee members. A project to upgrade CommDocs to the latest SharePoint platform and improve the management of access continued. The new version of CommDocs will be available to committee secretariats from both departments at the start of the Forty-fourth Parliament.

OUTLOOK

As expected, 2012–13 was a very busy year, with the approaching election placing considerable pressure on committees to finalise inquiries and reports. The Committee Office expects that, during the first part of 2013–14, it will devote its time to finalising the business of the Forty-third Parliament and beginning preparations for the start of the Forty-fourth Parliament. Committee Office staff also have made plans to work on departmental projects during the election period.

Inter-parliamentary relations

The Australian Parliament's international program is focused on broadening bilateral links with other national parliaments, promoting parliamentary cooperation through participation in international parliamentary organisations, and strengthening parliamentary democracy, particularly in our immediate region.

Activities and projects are coordinated primarily through the International and Community Relations Office (ICRO), with input from all four parliamentary departments. The office is funded jointly by this department and the Department of the Senate.

In 2012–13, the budget allocation for the component was \$1.299 million and expenditure was \$1.285 million. Staff levels, by location, are shown in Appendix 11.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

A comprehensive incoming and outgoing visits program during the year provided a significant number of opportunities to strengthen bilateral links with national parliaments, particularly those in our immediate region. Parliamentary strengthening programs were expanded. Additional support was provided for Pacific parliaments, and a new program was established targeting women's participation in and engagement with parliaments in the Pacific region. We continued to expand on the information available to the community on the Australian Parliament's international program.

DELEGATIONS AND VISITS

During 2012–13, the department coordinated 27 official overseas visits, which included bilateral visits to 13 countries; attendance at 7 conferences, workshops and seminars; and 11 other visits (see Appendix 8). There were 13 official visits to Australia by parliamentary delegations from other countries as guests of the Australian Parliament (see Appendix 6), along with 10 other visits (see Appendix 7).

The regional focus of the visits program was maintained. Eight of the 13 official visits to Australia were from parliaments in the

Asia–Pacific region. These included parliamentary delegations from Myanmar in September and October 2012, which were the first official visits to Australia from that parliament.

The outgoing delegations program included the annual parliamentary delegation visit to countries that belong to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. This year's visit was to Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. The program also included delegations to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, along with four committee visits in the Asia–Pacific region.

In 2013, Australia celebrated the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations with Vietnam. This anniversary was marked by the signing of a cooperation agreement between the Australian Parliament and the National Assembly of Vietnam. ICRO assisted with negotiations on the agreement and coordinated a visit to Vietnam by the Speaker of the House of Representatives during which the agreement was formally signed.

The annual parliamentary dialogue with the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China was held in Canberra in May 2013, under the terms of the parliamentary memorandum of understanding between Australia and China. ICRO coordinated the visit by the Chinese parliamentary delegation. The agenda for this year's dialogue included developments in the parliamentary and legal systems of the two countries, economic cooperation and trade, and people-to-people links.

An audit revealed that ICRO now manages more than 500 diplomatic and official passports. ICRO processed 120 passport applications and 634 visa requests in 2012–13.

SUPPORT FOR OTHER PARLIAMENTS

The Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program, established with AusAID funding, delivered a range of capacity-building projects for the parliaments of the Cook Islands, Kiribati,

Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. ICRO coordinated the overall program, which included needs assessments; procedural, community outreach and information technology training; and participation in seminars. As part of the program, departmental staff helped deliver a number of projects, including:

- developing legislation for the Public Accounts Committee in Tonga
- preparing an updated parliamentary needs assessment for Kiribati
- arranging study visits to Australia for the Tongan Speaker and a Tongan information technology officer.

In association with the Tasmanian Parliament, the Australian Parliament provided technical assistance to a broader parliamentary support program for Samoa, which was funded by AusAID and managed by the United Nations Development Programme. ICRO coordinated the technical support, organising staff attachments to and from Samoa and a parliamentary seminar series in Samoa; organising the development of human resource

and information technology strategic plans and a business modelling review; and establishing a 'partnerships for parliamentarians' scheme to encourage information sharing and mentoring between parliamentarians of Australia and Samoa. Technical assistance was also provided for an AusAID-managed project to construct a new parliament building in Samoa.

The department, on behalf of Australian federal, state and territory parliaments, supported Pacific Island parliaments by administering an Education Trust Fund which provided them with training and equipment. During the year, it was agreed to rename the fund—now called the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Fund—to integrate it into the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program.

AusAID provided funding for the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships project, under the Australian Government's Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development initiative. The project will support the professional and skills development of women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, develop engagement between women and their



Signing of the cooperation agreement between the Australian Parliament and the National Assembly of Vietnam, May 2013. Photo: Australian Embassy, Hanoi.

parliaments, and support research into gender equality—and greater awareness in parliaments about gender issues—in creating gender-sensitive parliaments in the Pacific region.

A forum was held in Sydney in February 2013 to launch the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships project and help determine its priorities. It was attended by more than 40 women parliamentarians from 19 Australian and Pacific parliaments. They agreed on 12 priorities to address gender equality in Pacific politics. Following the forum, a submission was made to the Pacific Plan Review, and parliamentary exchanges and skills scholarships were established to progress the project.

A website was established for the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program, including the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships project, to help inform participants and the broader community about activities under the program.

The high regard in which the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program is held was demonstrated during the Forty-fourth Australian and Pacific Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in Canberra in the first week of July 2013 when, at a reception in honour of the delegates, Governor-General Quentin Bryce said:

This is one of the best examples anywhere in the world of parliaments cooperating and working together: in training staff on an international level, working with presiding officers and individual MPs to meet their different needs, all with the aim of reinforcing parliaments, and developing the number and capacity of women parliamentarians throughout the region through the Women's Partnership.

Feedback on the program in Samoa was also received by email from an AusAID representative at the Australian High Commission in Apia, who wrote: 'The program is viewed by many as one of the most effective examples of twinning in the region and it is leveraging great benefits in our bilateral program in Samoa.'

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ORGANISATIONS

Australian parliamentary delegations attended meetings and conferences of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (for more details see Appendix 8).

A community outreach workshop for Pacific parliaments was held in Samoa in August 2012. The two-day workshop was coordinated in association with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and was supported by funding from AusAID. It was the third year in a row that this meeting was held as a joint initiative. The workshop was attended by parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from 11 Pacific parliaments and included presentations and panel discussions. An outcomes statement was issued at the end of the workshop outlining 19 outreach priorities for Pacific parliaments.

Support was provided for the w.comm national women's parliamentary initiative aimed at connecting women in the community with politics. The initiative was established by Commonwealth women parliamentarians in Australia. In 2012–13, under the project, women parliamentarians from across Australia advocated on the issues of sexualisation of children and the digital enhancement of images. The w.comm committee contributed to a magazine article, a television program segment, a social media forum and a new w.comm website. An annual planning workshop was also coordinated for this initiative, and the 2013–14 action agenda was developed as part of the workshop.

Parliamentary groups, which provide links between the Australian Parliament and other national parliaments and which are formed under the auspices of the Australian National Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, were restructured. The existing groups were streamlined, and new regional networks were formed to cover those parliaments not previously covered by existing country groups.

The Commonwealth of Australia Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association decided to withdraw from the association, effective 31 December 2012, due to ongoing concerns about the direction of the association at an international level and the lack of progress in implementing reforms, particularly in the area of accountability. As the regional secretariat for the association had been based at ICRO, transitional arrangements were put in place to manage the transfer of responsibilities to an interim regional secretariat based at the Tasmanian Parliament.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

Parliamentary strengthening projects were expanded and existing parliamentary groups were restructured.

New websites were established to provide greater information to the community on the Australian Parliament's international program. A seminar was conducted for 70 members of the diplomatic community in Canberra to help inform them about the processes and work of the Australian Parliament and the operation of our international program.

OUTLOOK

Preparations will be undertaken for the Forty-fourth Parliament, including examination of opportunities to further develop the strategic direction of the parliament's international program. A review commissioned by the Presiding Officers will contribute to this process.

Parliamentary strengthening programs have become a priority area for the international program and will be a major focus of work in the year ahead. We will also look for opportunities for greater engagement with Asian parliaments through capacity-building projects.

Members' services and corporate support

The members' services and corporate support program component provides advice, services and support to members and their staff in Parliament House; pays members' salaries and allowances; and provides corporate services advice and support to the department. The department's responsibilities include:

- organising members' office accommodation, furniture and fittings; mail and courier services; and bookings for committee rooms and chamber galleries
- maintaining a number of databases of information about members and former members and publishing certain information about members, such as their contact details
- paying members' salaries and allowances
- providing financial and human resource management advice, services and ICT and office services support to the department.

These responsibilities are undertaken by the Finance Office, the Information Systems and Publishing Office, the People Strategies Office and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

The department is the primary contact for providing services to members, and we liaise closely with the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) on matters such as building maintenance, security and ICT services.

The expenditure for the members' services and corporate support program component in 2012–13 was \$7.824 million. The budget allocation was \$7.919 million. Staff levels, by location, are shown in Appendix 11.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The 2013 members' survey indicated their levels of satisfaction with the department's services. The services provided by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office received a 100 per cent satisfaction level again this year. This year, most pleasingly, all members responding were extremely or highly satisfied (89 per cent in 2012). Once again this year, all members were also satisfied with their home pages on the Parliament of Australia website (62 per cent were either extremely or highly satisfied compared with 60 per cent in 2012). In respect

of services for salary, electorate allowances and deductions, 100 per cent of members were satisfied, as in 2012, and 69 per cent were extremely or highly satisfied (89 per cent in 2012).

SERVICES AND ADVICE

Media services

In the last sitting week of 2012, the Presiding Officers tabled the *Rules for media related activity in Parliament House and its precincts* in their respective chambers, which came into force from the first sitting week of 2013. The new rules replaced the *Guidelines for filming and photography* and *General media rules in Parliament House and its precincts* and arose from a yearlong consultation process by the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings, supported by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

The rules clarify for the media, members and senators and their staff the areas in the building and precincts where media activity is permitted, permitted only after prior approval, or not permitted. The rules also control still photography in the chambers by accredited media personnel, and filming and photography more broadly throughout the parliamentary precincts.

It is a condition of access for building occupants to comply with the rules; when breaches occur, a graduated range of sanctions may be applied. Administration of the rules has been delegated to the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod. The Serjeant-at-Arms has written to media representatives on several occasions about photographs that have been taken in contravention of the rules and published in newspapers and on websites. The Serjeant-at-Arms and Usher of the Black Rod and their delegates also negotiate with representatives of the press gallery when major events are occurring in the building. Such arrangements were necessary during the reporting period in order to manage media access during ballots for leadership of the Labor Party.

HIGHLIGHTS

A high priority for the program component was providing advice and support to the Speaker and the Speaker's Office on the control and management of the precincts, chamber and gallery security, and ceremonial and other events at Parliament House. We worked closely with colleagues in the Department of the Senate and DPS on these matters.

We also worked in partnership with parliamentary departmental colleagues to deliver major projects, such as ICT enhancements. Another priority was to represent the department and support the interests of the House and members on a number of inter-parliamentary committees and boards providing whole-of-parliament governance.

New rules for media-related activity in Parliament House and its precincts were introduced during the reporting period.

We continued to develop and replace many of the support systems for the Chamber, committees and members' services. All projects proceeded after detailed business cases were developed.

Following the Presiding Officers' approval of the recommendations of the *Review of information and communication technology for the parliament* (June 2012) by Mr Michael Roche, the department put in considerable effort, with the other parliamentary departments, to consolidate and integrate ICT services within DPS, to take effect from July 2013. This was a major change project for the parliamentary administration, and of particular significance given the importance of ICT to the work of the parliament and the department.

The first office rollouts were completed as part of the office furniture replacement project, which is a major project for the department due for completion in late 2014.

The Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings is also responsible for determining the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's schedule of radio broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings. The general principles established by the committee determine that the allocation of live broadcasts between the two chambers should be approximately equal. For question time, either the House or the Senate session is broadcast live and the other is broadcast later in the day. These general principles are complemented by standing determinations, which provide more detailed advice to the ABC for the radio broadcasts.

In June 2013 the Presiding Officers tabled a simplified, although essentially similar, set of general principles and standing determinations on behalf of the committee. These are to come into force on adoption by the chambers of new resolutions governing the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings. It is hoped that the

resolutions, also drafted by the committee, will be adopted by the chambers in the Forty-fourth Parliament.

Information services

To help keep members and their staff informed about developments in the House, four editions of the members' bulletin, *House Update*, were published during the year. In addition, the annual series of briefings on procedural and other developments in the House was continued. A total of six briefings were held during the year.

The department continued to operate its drop-in centre every sitting Tuesday to enable members and their staff to get information or provide feedback on any of the services provided by the department. During the year, the drop-in centre held 16 sessions, and during these there were eight queries. As in previous years, the sessions were staffed by senior departmental staff members, with a

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE

The parliamentary departments worked together to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of Parliament House.

The theme for the anniversary was 'celebrating threads of our nation' to honour the artists, designers and craftspeople who produced the commissioned art and craft works in Parliament House and the internal fit-out and fabric of the building. It also honoured the contributions of the thousands of people who have worked in Parliament House since 1988.

The aim for the anniversary was to achieve a successful and fitting celebration that would leave a lasting legacy, within a modest budget.

Events to mark the anniversary held at Parliament House in the first half of 2013 included:

- the launch in March of *Australia's Parliament House—more than 25 years in the making!*, a new digital chronology celebrating the milestones in parliament over the past 25 years as well as significant events in the life of the building and its landscape setting. A copy of the chronology is available at www.aph.gov.au/25th_Anniversary_Chronology
- the launch by the Presiding Officers on 15 May 2013 of the book *Interwoven: the commissioned art and craft for Parliament House*. The parliamentary departments commissioned Ms Pamilie Berg AO and Mr Wade Bartlett to write and design the book for the twenty-fifth anniversary. The book features more than 60 commissioned works, such as artist Arthur Boyd's design for the Great Hall Tapestry, which was woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, and Papunya artist Michael Nelson Jagamarra's design for the 196 square metre forecourt mosaic *Possum and wallaby dreaming*. It includes essays by Parliament House architects Romaldo Giurgola AO, Hal Guida and Ms Berg and a foreword by the Presiding Officers. The book highlights previously unpublished images of the art and craft works that are integrated into Parliament House
- a morning tea on 24 June to acknowledge and thank all those who have worked at Parliament House. A certificate to the building's principal architect, Mr Giurgola, was presented by the then Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP.

Planning for a Parliament House open day, to be held on 24 August 2013, was undertaken.

representative of DPS, which is responsible for electorate office ICT, invited to attend to increase the value of the service to members.

Accommodation services

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office coordinates accommodation, capital works and maintenance services within the House of Representatives' wing.

During the year, the office arranged 22 office relocations as a result of changes in the ministry and to office holders. There were 493 requests to supply and move furniture. All tasks were performed to agreed timeframes and standards, and to the satisfaction of party whips and individual members.

We liaised with DPS in relation to several accommodation projects affecting suites within the House of Representatives wing, including the ongoing office lighting upgrades and the installation of residual-current devices.

Replacement of office furniture

Following feedback on the trial office suite and after further consultation with staff, the department worked closely with procurement officers in DPS to develop tender and evaluation documentation for office furniture. The documentation was lodged with AusTender on 19 October 2012. A panel of seven furniture suppliers was appointed, which can be used by the four parliamentary departments. Included in the scope are

workstations, screening, accessories (for example, countertops), tables, mobile pedestals, and personal and general storage. New visitor and meeting chairs will be tendered for later in 2013.

The new furniture will replace furniture that has been in place since 1988. It is scheduled to be installed for departmental administrative staff and the staff of members in heavily used officeholders' suites (approximately 230 people in total) in a rolling program over the next 14 months. Three suites and a temporary office had been provided with the new furniture as at 30 June.

Maintenance, access and transport services

Maintenance requests are coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, and include emergency, routine and periodic work. During the year, 304 emergency requests were processed; all were attended to within five minutes of receipt. Routine maintenance requests for repairs or alterations to suites or common areas totalled 333. The office's pre-emptive approach to maintenance avoids a large number of emergency requests, particularly by

members returning after a break. Two major office refurbishments involving redecoration and replacement of carpet and furniture were undertaken as a result of the furniture replacement project.

There were 188 requests for assistance with telephone faults, relocations and allocations of telephone numbers. Faults reported were referred to telephone support within five minutes of receipt, and telephone support officers resolved faults within an agreed time period.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office approved 656 requests by DPS for access to suites and general circulation areas for general maintenance and services.

During the year, the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office responded to 178 filming or photography requests.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office continued to coordinate transport services for members, including managing the shuttle service on behalf of the Department of Finance and Deregulation during sitting weeks. In 2012–13 there were 12,480 bookings, 97.6 per cent of which were met. This figure is consistent with last year's



Artists, craftspeople and designers featured in *Interwoven*: the commissioned art and craft for Parliament House, with the principal architect, Mr Romaldo Giurgola AO, and the Presiding Officers at the launch of the book on 15 May 2013. Photo: Auspic.

booking numbers and reflects the shuttle service's continued high use, and particularly a steady increase in use on Sundays.

Parliament House security

The Serjeant-at-Arms represents the department on the Security Management Board. The board was established pursuant to section 65A of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* to provide advice to the Presiding Officers on security policy and the management of security measures for Parliament House. The board met 10 times during the year. Matters considered included:

- the testing and revision of the Continuity of Parliament Plan. The department held a trial exercise with staff from the Table Office and Serjeant-at-Arms' Office in May 2013 to test arrangements for a situation in which the chamber would need to sit at a venue other than Parliament House. The exercise offered an opportunity for the department to test its own contingency plans as well as their integration in the Parliament House-wide plan. Lessons learned during the exercise will be incorporated into the business continuity and resumption plans
- ICT security, and adoption by the parliamentary departments of the Australian Government Information Security Manual as the model for security governance arrangements, tailored as necessary to the needs of the parliament
- the review of a security incident on 23 August 2012, when a person gained unauthorised access to the private areas of Parliament House
- security screening arrangements
- arrangements for authorising the Australian Federal Police to enter the parliamentary precincts
- planned reviews of the pass policy and perimeter security
- a proposed strategic framework for security at Parliament House.

Police access to the parliamentary precincts

Officers of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) must seek the permission of the Presiding Officers before attending the parliamentary precincts. Traditionally this permission has been sought by the AFP officer-in-charge at Parliament House through the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod as appropriate. Towards the end of the reporting period, the Presiding Officers agreed that approval of requests for access to the House of Representatives or Senate wings would be through the Serjeant-at-Arms or Usher of the Black Rod respectively. Approval of requests for access to most other areas of the building would be through DPS.

Authorised Assembly Area

DPS has now assumed responsibility for managing events on the Authorised Assembly Area at the front of Parliament House. The area is allocated variously to individuals, community groups and organisations to promote their causes and hold events. Under the authorisation signed by the Presiding Officers, the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod are to be notified as soon as is practicable of any protests, other public assemblies, functions or events on the precincts that may disrupt the smooth running of the building or affect the security or decorum of the chambers.

Security screening

Guests of government and parliament are subject to automatic exemption from security screening on entry to Parliament House. Approvals for any other exemptions from security screening are jointly made by the Usher of the Black Rod and the Serjeant-at-Arms. During the year, exemptions from security screening were approved for 43 groups or individuals (37 in 2011-12).

Heritage Advisory Board

The Heritage Advisory Board held eight meetings during the year. The primary function of the board is to oversee and provide advice to the Presiding Officers on the heritage

management of Parliament House. The board is also required to oversee detailed heritage issues for Parliament House. The members of the board are the Secretary, DPS (chair), the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod.

Matters considered by the board during the year included:

- the interim and final reports by the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee into the performance of DPS. The board noted in particular comments at paragraphs 5.20 to 5.22 of the interim report relating to completion of the Central Reference Document
- the development of a conservation management plan for Parliament House, including the establishment of an expert advisory panel to provide high-level and independent advice to aid the development of the plan
- the management of cultural heritage items at Parliament House.

Information and communications technology review

Last year's report referred to a review of information and communications technology for the parliament undertaken by Mr Michael Roche. The Presiding Officers approved the report's recommendations in September 2012. As a result, ICT services within the parliament will be consolidated within DPS, and the ICT responsibilities of the chamber departments will transfer to that department from 1 July 2013. DPS is responsible for the parliamentary computing network infrastructure and electorate office ICT.

The parliamentary departments worked during the reporting period to consolidate and integrate ICT services within DPS. A chief information officer was appointed and an inter-departmental project board oversaw the development of a memorandum of understanding and an associated service level agreement. The memorandum, developed as a high-level, principles-based document, was in final form at year end. The service level agreement was in draft form at year end, to

be developed by a joint management committee, which will be established under the auspices of the memorandum. Four of this department's staff will transfer to DPS from 1 July 2013. In addition, funding for ICT assets will transfer to DPS.

The consolidation of ICT services and support is aimed at providing more effective service delivery to members and parliamentary departments. A one-stop shop has been established by DPS for members and senators to allow them to choose from a wider range of supported devices.

Software and hardware services

Projects continued to develop and replace many of the ICT support systems for the Chamber, committees and members' services. These systems included the Table Offices Production System, the Procedural Records System, the Shared Committee Information Database (formerly the Senate Committee Information Database) and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office bookings system—the venue management system—for school visits, chamber gallery reservations and committee room bookings.

The development of the new venue management system is a joint project of the department and the Department of the Senate. DPS is represented on the project board, which is chaired by this department. After a tender evaluation process, departmental staff began working closely with the successful contractor to implement what will be one of the first systems in parliament to be hosted in the cloud. This innovation is cost-effective and secure and allows more flexibility should DPS decide to use the system in future. The new venue management system will be operational within the next financial year.

Layouts for committee pages for SCID (see page 35) were developed and presented to committee staff for consideration. Following approval, work started on building the IT infrastructure to support online submission lodgement and simplify the process for publishing other committee information on the website. Work also began on developing a new committee report template that will make

it easier to publish committee reports in PDF, HTML and ePub format. These projects are due for deployment by the start of the Forty-fourth Parliament.

Following a request from the former Speaker, the Hon Peter Slipper MP, departmental ICT and finance staff developed an online shop from which members and staff can purchase a small range of quality parliamentary gift items. The facility was developed entirely in-house for minimal cost, and is operating successfully.

Implementation of the electronic records management system, e-Trim, continued during the year. The entire Committee Office as well as several other workgroups, including the Clerk's Office, now use the system to file their records electronically. In addition, the department upgraded its TRIM software to version 7.2.

During the year, 162 multifunction devices were deployed to members' offices in Parliament House and within the department to replace existing printers and fax machines.

Internet and intranet services

A project to develop and deploy additional website enhancements continued. The project is managed by DPS and supported

by this department and the Department of the Senate. A major component of work undertaken by the two chamber departments was the development of SCID and the redevelopment of the committee report template.

A redevelopment of the secure intranet portal for committees, CommDocs, is ongoing. The project involves upgrading to the SharePoint 2010 platform and adding more functionality to accommodate a wider range of committee membership types. This project will be ready for deployment at the beginning of the Forty-fourth Parliament.

In conjunction with the Department of the Senate, a project began to provide an improved video-streaming service on the Parliament of Australia website. The new service replaces ParlReplay and is hosted on an Ooyala platform, which uses adaptive bitrate streaming technology and can be accessed by desktop, iOS and Android devices. This externally hosted system is scalable as our video and audio demand grows. Closed captioning for pre-recorded videos is now provided, which enables us to satisfy WCAG 2.0 requirements for accessibility for audio-visual material on the website.



Interwoven: the commissioned art and craft for Parliament House, published as part of the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations for Parliament House, May 2013.

Printing

The department's in-house printing service produced around 2.7 million impressions in 2012–13 (a decrease from around 4 million in 2011–12). The decreased volume was a result of the concerted effort to contain costs by reducing the number of printed copies of both committee reports and chamber documents. While the number of committee reports tabled and printed during the year increased, fewer copies of each report were printed. Also, fewer copies of chamber documents were printed on sitting days.

Parliamentary assistants program

The parliamentary assistants program, managed by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, entered its thirteenth year. Parliamentary assistants are university students who perform the duties of messengerial attendants for an average of 10 hours per week; rosters are planned around student commitments and the requirements of the House of Representatives.

There were six students in the program this year: three were existing assistants, and three were new appointments. The successful applicants came from metropolitan and country New South Wales, Canberra and Victoria, and all were studying at universities in Canberra. Former parliamentary assistants were also engaged in the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office to work at the front counter and in other areas of members' services.

MEMBERS' SALARIES

All processing of members' salaries and entitlements by the People Strategies Office was in accordance with legislation and administrative decisions. In the 2013 members' survey, 73 per cent of members were 'extremely' or 'highly' satisfied (89 per cent in the 2012 survey), and in total 100 per cent were satisfied with services in relation to their base salary, electorate allowances and deductions (consistent with the 2012 survey). Annual expenditure on members' salaries and other entitlements was \$35.022 million.

The base salary of members was adjusted by the Remuneration Tribunal from 1 July 2012, and the increase was processed by the People Strategies Office in the same month. The additional salary of office holders, ministers and shadow ministers was adjusted accordingly.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

The program component provided corporate services advice and support to the department, and a payroll service to DPS and the Parliamentary Budget Office.

Operational performance indicators for finance, human resources and other corporate support services were met, and there was compliance with internal and external governance and reporting requirements. Also, during the year:

- a business impact analysis was undertaken
- the department's business continuity plan was reviewed, revised and approved
- office-level business resumption plans were reviewed and finalised and two plans were tested
- the department made the transition to the whole-of-government stationery and office supplies contract
- a new enterprise agreement for the department was negotiated
- a leadership training and development program was implemented for the Executive, directors and committee secretaries, and others in the department
- requirements of the work health and safety legislation were met.

Related information is detailed in the 'Management and accountability' section of the report.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

The focus in 2012–13 was again on achieving results. It was a demanding year for the program component, which carried out its ongoing advisory, operational and project responsibilities in a context of administrative change. Strategies to enhance and sustain performance levels included planning, people management, relationship building, innovation, sound governance arrangements and review. Performance was again at a high standard sustained by the professionalism of staff.

The department continues to work closely with the departments of the Senate and Parliamentary Services on a range of matters and on various interdepartmental boards and groups. This collaboration ensures that strategic priorities are addressed effectively.

OUTLOOK

In 2013–14 the department will continue to provide advice and services of a high standard to support members in Parliament House, to pay their salaries and entitlements, and to support the department. In the first half of the year, the parliament will be prorogued and the House dissolved prior to a general election and the beginning of the Forty-fourth Parliament. This will be a busy period for the program component. Subsequently, we anticipate that activity levels will be consistent with those that are normal during the first year of a parliamentary cycle.

We anticipate that important priorities for the members' services and corporate support program component during the year will include:

- finalising the service level agreement and asset and funding transfers associated with the consolidation of ICT in DPS, and monitoring subsequent performance
- deploying the new venue management system
- finalising a whole-of-parliament protective security policy with parliamentary departmental colleagues
- overseeing consultancy reviews to develop design principles and a conservation management plan for Parliament House, through participation in the Heritage Advisory Board
- reviewing departmental performance information and reporting, in preparation for the anticipated coming into effect of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
- progressing implementation of e-Trim through remaining areas of the department
- further developing capability within the program, including through the documentation of systems and processes and the use of supplementary and back-up resources.

The department will continue to ensure that whole-of-parliament governance arrangements operate effectively.