

# PART 3

## MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY



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*The Clerk of the House, David Elder, with the recipients of 2015 Australia Day Achievement Medallions. Left to right: Lisa McDonald, Samantha Manette and Shane Dennis.*

# Corporate governance

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is accountable to the House of Representatives for the department. The Clerk of the House of Representatives, who is responsible for leading the department, reports to the Speaker.

## Legislation

During 2014–15, the department's operations were governed by the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Other legislation, including the *Fair Work Act 2009*, also applies to the operations of the department. These Acts set out the Clerk's responsibilities for managing the department.

## Executive and senior management

The department's Executive comprises the Clerk of the House, the Deputy Clerk and three Senior Executive Service Band 1 staff—the Clerk Assistant (Committees), the Clerk Assistant (Table) and the Serjeant-at-Arms—each of whom is responsible for one or more of the department's offices (see Figure 1 on page 6). The senior managers of the department are the Executive and staff at the Executive Band 2 Level.

A selection process was conducted for the position of Clerk Assistant (Table) following the retirement of Ms Joanne Towner. Ms Catherine Cornish was appointed to the position in April 2015.

## Management committees

### Executive

The Executive held 12 formal meetings during the year to discuss and resolve a wide range of departmental management issues. As well as standing items on finance and people strategies, matters addressed included:

- leadership development programs for departmental staff
- departmental ICT requirements and innovations
- corporate and business planning matters
- the department's organisational structure
- planning for significant events, such as celebrations for the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta
- the department's interest in the project to refresh the Parliament of Australia website
- the department's furniture replacement project
- arrangements for staff parking at Parliament House.

### Audit Committee

The department's Audit Committee met four times in 2014–15. The committee comprised the Clerk Assistant (Table) as chair, the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Clerk Assistant (Committees) and three independent members. At 30 June 2015, the independent members were Mr Tim Courtney of the Australian Electoral Commission, Ms Susan McNeilly of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and Mr Dermot Walsh of the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman. Representatives of the Australian National Audit Office, the department's internal audit team and the Chief Financial Officer attended all meetings.

During the reporting year, the Audit Committee reviewed the department's draft financial statements from 2013–14 and recommended that the Clerk sign them. It also reviewed the Chief Financial Officer's report on the certificate of compliance process, and recommended that the Clerk sign the certificate on the basis that the department's compliance processes were satisfactory and that the department was financially sustainable.

In May 2015, the department appointed Bellchambers Barrett Pty Ltd as internal auditor for a term of three years. At the end of the reporting year, the internal auditor was engaged in developing a strategic internal audit plan for 2015–18.

The committee's 2014 annual report was provided to the Clerk on 20 February 2015.

### **Consultative Committee**

The Consultative Committee is an important mechanism for communicating and consulting with staff on workplace issues. The committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Clerk, has four departmental representatives, two elected staff representatives, and two union-nominated representatives.

The committee met five times during 2014–15. Standing agenda items for the meetings included:

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

Matters discussed during the year included the consolidation of the parliament's ICT services, paid parking arrangements and other parking issues, and the review of the parliament's international program.

## **Planning and evaluation**

### **Corporate plan**

The department's Corporate Plan 2013–16 remained in force during the reporting period. The corporate plan contains a statement of the department's purpose, describes the department's priorities for the period covered by the plan, and provides the framework for annual business plans. It provides a focus for efforts to build on the department's capacity to deliver its services, develop its people, sustain its capability, and collaborate internally and with other key people and organisations. The department's corporate plan is available on the Parliament of Australia website.

### **Business plan**

The department's business plan for 2014–15 was issued in 2014. Progress on implementing the plan was monitored during the year through six-monthly and quarterly reporting meetings. Solid progress was made on reaching the targets set out in the plan.

## **Members' survey**

The department receives periodic and ongoing feedback from members to gauge the effectiveness of its service provision.

The department conducted its twelfth annual members' survey in May and June 2015, using the same format as in previous years. A random sample of 30 members were surveyed, 22 of whom responded (21 participated last year). All participants were asked whether they were satisfied with the advice, services and support they received from the department. The results confirmed that the department continues to provide a high standard of service.

Details of the survey findings are in Appendix 3.

## **Accountability mechanisms**

The department's main formal external accountability mechanisms are the Portfolio Budget Statements and the annual report prepared pursuant to section 65 of the Parliamentary Service Act. The annual report for 2013–14 assessed performance against the targets set in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2013–14 and presented the department's financial statements.

Copies of the department's annual report and Portfolio Budget Statements were provided to all members and published on the Parliament of Australia website.

## Risk management and fraud control

The department's risk management policy, fraud control plan and accompanying risk assessments were in place during 2014–15. As in previous years, new staff were informed of their financial management responsibilities and the department's fraud risk assessment and fraud control plan in the regular induction programs. There were no losses of public money and no instances of fraud identified during the year. In 2015, the department reviewed its risk management and fraud control processes and prepared new documentation for release at the beginning of 2015–16.

A departmental business continuity plan was in force throughout the reporting year. Terms of reference for the department's business continuity network were adopted in October 2014, which focused on assisting staff to manage the risk of business interruptions. The department also introduced a regime for regular testing of office-level business resumption plans.

## Ethical standards

The Parliamentary Service Values and Code of Conduct set out in the Parliamentary Service Act provide a framework for ethical conduct for staff of the department. The department actively promotes sound ethical behaviour. All staff who are new to the department are advised about what it means to work in a values-based environment and how ethical standards apply to their day-to-day work.

## Service charter

The department's service charter for members and the community continued to provide the basis for the standards of service that members and the public can expect from the department. The charter is available on the Parliament of Australia website.

## Social justice and equity

The department's role is to support the House of Representatives rather than to deliver services directly to the public. Accordingly, contributing to achieving social justice within the broader community is not a direct responsibility of the department. However, the department works towards achieving social justice indirectly through the work of the House of Representatives itself, its members and its committees.

## Inter-parliamentary departmental collaboration

### ***Meetings of heads of parliamentary departments***

Formal quarterly meetings between the Clerk, the Clerk of the Senate, the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services and the Parliamentary Budget Officer continued during the reporting year. Meetings were held on 20 August 2014, 20 November 2014, 18 February 2015 and 20 May 2015. Responsibility for chairing the meetings rotates between the departments on an annual basis.

Matters discussed in 2014–15 included:

- the development of a strategic plan for parliamentary administration
- the introduction of paid parking in the Parliamentary Triangle
- strategic asset and accommodation reviews
- budget processes for the parliamentary departments
- commemoration of the Anzac centenary
- the capital works program
- award modernisation
- ICT projects.

## Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group

The Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group supports the parliamentary departmental heads by overseeing and advising on the implementation of corporate services matters and initiatives of common interest across the parliamentary departments.

The group's members are the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod, the Chief Operating Officer of the Department of Parliamentary Services, and the Assistant Parliamentary Budget Officer, Corporate Strategy Branch of the Parliamentary Budget Office. Responsibility for chairing the group rotates annually. In 2014–15, the group held four formal meetings; matters discussed included:

- the proposed new parliamentary service determination
- parking in the parliamentary precinct
- proposed legislative amendments, and the development of the policy rationale for these, and
- governance structures and requirements within the parliamentary departments.

## Shared services

At the beginning of the year, staff in the department's People Strategies Office provided payroll services to the Parliamentary Budget Office. In September 2014, the Parliamentary Budget Officer advised the Clerk that the office no longer required these services from the department. The arrangement was officially terminated in November 2014.

## Purchaser–provider arrangements

The department does not have any other purchaser–provider arrangements in place for selling services to or buying services from an Australian government agency.

The department receives certain building and ICT services from the Department of Parliamentary Services, and audit services from the Australian National Audit Office. These services are accounted for in the department's financial statements as resources received free of charge.

The department also has agreements in place with the Department of the Senate for the provision of inter-parliamentary services (by this department) and parliamentary education services (by the Department of the Senate). The department runs parliamentary education seminars on a fee-for-service basis for government agencies.



*The Federation Chamber. Photo: David Foote AUSPIC/DPS.*

# External scrutiny

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

## Freedom of information

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

## Public interest disclosure

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

## Judicial and administrative decisions

No judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals or by the Australian Information Commissioner during 2014–15 had, or are anticipated to have, a significant effect on the operations of the department.

## Reports by the Auditor-General, parliamentary committees or the Commonwealth Ombudsman

The Australian National Audit Office audited the department's 2013–14 financial statements and provided an unqualified audit report.

During the reporting year, the Clerk made submissions to:

- the House of Commons Governance Committee on the inquiry into the governance of the House of Commons
- the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee on the inquiry into the Acts and Instruments (Framework Reform) Bill 2014
- the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee on the inquiry into the Parliamentary Service Amendment Bill 2014
- the House Standing Committee on Procedure on the inquiry into the role and operations of the Federation Chamber
- the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee on the inquiry into the proposed Parliament House security upgrade works
- the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit on the inquiry into the development of the Commonwealth Performance Framework.

The department continued to support the Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration in its consideration of the department's funding requirements. The Clerk and other departmental staff provided the committee with information on the department's budget position and attended the committee's meetings to enable the committee to discharge its responsibilities under Standing Order 222A. On 14 May 2015, the committee tabled *Report No. 8: Annual report 2013–14* and *Report No. 9: Budget estimates 2015–16*.

In the annual report, the committee noted that it had met three times during the period covered by the report and concluded that it has played a positive and responsible role in assessing the department's funding requirements and bringing them to the attention of the government. In the budget estimates report, echoing previous reports, the committee commended the department's careful financial management over many years, and indicated that it will continue to monitor closely the department's financial position into the future.

No investigations by the Commonwealth Ombudsman in 2014–15 involved the department.

## Privacy

While not an agency to which the *Privacy Act 1988* applies, the department abides by the principles of the legislation in its dealings with employees, including handling employees' records.

## Disability reporting mechanisms

The National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 sets out a 10-year national policy framework to improve the lives of people with disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. A high-level two-yearly report will track progress against each of the six outcome areas of the strategy and present a picture of how people with disability are faring. The first of these reports was published in 2014 on the Department of Social Services website ([www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)).



*Members of the Defence Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade with Commander Andrew Willis MVO RAN, Commanding Officer of HMAS Warramunga, during an inspection of Navy Base HMAS Stirling in Western Australia.*

# Management of people

## Staffing numbers

At 30 June 2015, the department had 151 employees—125 ongoing and 26 non-ongoing (at 30 June 2014, the number of staff was 154, comprising 125 ongoing and 29 non-ongoing). Further information on staffing levels can be found in Appendix 2.

## Indigenous representation

At 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015, the department had no Indigenous staff. The department is reviewing recruitment methods for attracting Indigenous staff.

## Investors in People

The department has held accreditation against the Investors in People standard since 2002. The standard is an international quality framework with 10 indicators that set a level of good practice and a basis for continuous improvement of an agency's performance through its people.

Investors in People has additional evidence requirements that agencies may elect to be assessed against. In 2012 the department met more than 26 of the additional evidence requirements and was awarded Investors in People Bronze. The department's accreditation will be reviewed in 2015–16.

## Staff survey

In June 2015, the department conducted its tenth annual staff survey. As in previous years, most staff participated in the survey. The survey measures the quality of the department's leadership, the level of staff satisfaction with pay and conditions of service, and the strengths of the department. The results are taken into account in the department's ongoing development of its strategy for attracting and retaining staff.

The department has established a number of internal benchmarks based on the results of the survey. These benchmarks, or index scores, correspond to the total percentages of staff selecting 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' in response to specific sets of questions.

- The 'core elements' satisfaction index measures the extent to which the department provides the core elements needed to attract, focus and keep the most talented staff (86 per cent in 2015, 81 per cent in 2014, 86 per cent in 2013, and an average of 83 per cent over the last five years).
- The 'leadership' satisfaction index measures the level of satisfaction of staff with their managers, as measured against the department's leadership statement (88 per cent in 2015, 87 per cent in 2014, 87 per cent in 2013, and an average of 86 per cent over the last five years).
- The 'benefits' satisfaction index measures the level of staff satisfaction with pay and working conditions (87 per cent in 2015, 85 per cent in 2014, 87 per cent in 2013, and an average of 86 per cent over the last five years).

## People strategies: planning and delivery

### **Organisational reviews**

The department conducts organisational reviews as required to ensure that workloads in all areas are matched with the number of staff required to perform the work, and that the classification levels or work value requirements of individual jobs are appropriate to the work being conducted.



### **Recruitment of staff**

The department advertised to fill seven ongoing vacancies during 2014–15 (six in 2013–14), of which five were filled by external applicants.

### **Retention of staff**

A total of 11 ongoing and 17 non-ongoing staff left the department in 2014–15—a turnover rate of 8.8 per cent of ongoing staff (9.7 per cent in 2013–14). Appendix 2 includes details of separations.

Exit interviews with staff leaving the department continued to be conducted by Senior Executive Service managers. Two interviews were conducted during the year.

### **Graduate placement program**

The parliamentary graduate placement program continued in 2014–15. The program involves three-month placements of staff from the graduate recruitment programs of Australian government agencies. An objective of the program is to promote the work of the parliament to agencies and the staff of those agencies.

The Department of the Senate and the Parliamentary Budget Office continued their involvement, and the Department of Parliamentary Services became involved in the 2015 program. The program continued to draw a high level of interest from individual graduates and from a range of agencies. Six graduates undertook three-month placements in the department in 2014–15.

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

### **Alumni**

The department formed an alumni association of former staff in 2008. On 30 June 2015 there were 200 members. The association issued one newsletter during the year.

On 8 October 2014, the annual general meeting of the association was held and was attended by 11 association members. At the meeting, two co-chairs were elected and the membership of the alumni board was increased by self-nomination of attendees. The board met once in 2014–15.

A reception for members of the association and staff was held on 21 November 2014.

### **Training and development**

Table 10 shows the department's training and development expenditure as a percentage of expenditure on salaries in 2013–14 and 2014–15. It also shows the average number of person-days spent on training, and the average staffing level in both years. The average number of training days for staff decreased from 4.3 to 3.1 days of off-the-job training per person per year. The fluctuation in staff training days generally reflects the stages of the parliamentary cycle.

**Table 10 Expenditure on training and development programs, 2013–14 and 2014–15**

	2013–14	2014–15
Expenditure as a percentage of annual payroll	1.14%	1.14%
Average training days per person	4.3	3.1
Average staffing level	155	155.6

Table 11 compares the average attendance of staff at training courses in 2013–14 and 2014–15. It also shows the average staffing level and total number of training days attended in 2014–15 for each classification.

**Table 11 Average staff attendance at training courses, 2013–14 and 2014–15**

Classification	Average staffing level	Total number of training days attended	Average number of training days attended	
	2014–15	2014–15	2013–14	2014–15
Senior Executive Service	5.5	21.4	3.0	3.9
Executive Band 2	21.8	40.0	3.1	1.8
Executive Band 1	38.6	82.9	3.2	2.1
Parliamentary Service Level 6	26.5	70.9	4.6	2.7
Parliamentary Service Level 5	6.1	20.5	2.8	3.4
Parliamentary Service Level 4	27.5	119.7	5.0	4.3
Parliamentary Service Level 3	9.2	20.2	6.0	2.2
Parliamentary Service Level 2	20.3	16.6	4.0	0.8
Not specified	–	95.2	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>155.6</b>	<b>487.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>

### **Leadership development**

The department has invested in leadership development with a range of external providers for over a decade and has trend data from staff surveys on leadership for the entire period. Staff participated in leadership programs designed for each level. A new program for Parliamentary Service Level 4 and 5 staff commenced during the year.

### **Workplace diversity**

The workplace diversity program aligns the department’s workplace diversity strategies and actions with the Parliamentary Service Values.

New staff continued to receive training in the prevention of discrimination, bullying and harassment as soon as practicable after their commencement. All staff were offered refresher information sessions, and harassment contact officers received further training.

### **Knowledge management**

The Knowledge Management Steering Committee met three times during 2014–15. The committee comprised staff from all areas of the department and was chaired by the Clerk Assistant (Table). During the year there were some changes to membership and secretariat support, mostly as a result of staffing changes.

The committee continued to support the department’s commitment to knowledge management processes. It monitored the department’s ICT activities including the records management program, development and use of apps, use of social media, and the Table Offices Production System. In addition, the committee maintained a watching brief on emerging technologies relevant to the department and progress on parliament-wide ICT developments.

### **Studybank**

Twelve staff participated in the department’s Studybank program during the year (compared with 17 staff in 2013–14). Collectively, they received financial assistance of \$13,969 (compared with \$18,236 in 2014), along with 50.1 days of study leave on full pay.

### **Performance assessment**

All eligible staff participated in the annual work performance assessment cycle, completed on 31 October 2014. The cycle consists of setting individual work objectives, conducting performance assessments, preparing individual development plans and providing feedback to supervisors. The individual development plans are compiled and the development requirements of staff are reviewed. These then form the basis for the training program for the next calendar year.

## Employment framework

The Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2012–15 covers all staff except Senior Executive Service staff. The department's Senior Executive Service staff are covered by determinations made under section 24(1) of the Parliamentary Service Act.

Staff salary scales under the agreement are summarised in Table 12.

**Table 12 Salary scales of staff covered by the 2012–15 enterprise agreement, at 1 December 2014**

Classification	Salary scale (\$)
Executive Band 2	132,608–140,509
Executive Band 1	102,457–114,286
Parliamentary Service Level 6	82,570–93,709
Parliamentary Service Level 5	76,320–80,758
Parliamentary Service Level 4	67,474–73,001
Parliamentary Service Level 3	61,044–65,576
Parliamentary Service Level 2	54,250–59,235
Parliamentary Service Level 1	47,955–52,473

## Salaries expenditure

In 2014–15, departmental salaries and allowances totalled \$18.04 million (\$18.10 million in 2013–14).

## Work health and safety

The department's aim under the health and safety management arrangements is to create and maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

Workstation assessments are conducted for staff on request. Included in the workstation assessment is education on the correct set-up of workstations including the correct height of the desk at both sitting and standing positions. This information is also included in orientation sessions for new staff.

The department's Comcare premium rate for 2014–15 was 0.60 per cent of payroll, a decrease from the 2013–14 rate of 0.67 per cent.

During the year, no dangerous occurrences required notification under section 37 of the *Work Health Safety Act 2011*. No investigations were carried out and no directions or notices were received by the department under section 191 of the Act.

No compensation claims were received from staff in 2014–15.

# Management of financial resources

## Asset management

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

A stocktake of plant and portable and attractive assets was completed during 2014–15. The department completed a desktop review of the office machines and furniture and fittings asset classes. Impairment testing was undertaken during the stocktake. No material impairment adjustments were required.

The furniture replacement project continued during 2014–15. Cash reserves and departmental capital budget funding were used to replace furniture items in departmental offices and the offices of certain parliamentarians. Ninety-six per cent of offices had been refurbished as at 30 June 2015 at a cost of \$2.995 million. Phase one of the project is under budget and is scheduled for completion in late 2015. Through an existing panel arrangement, the department replaced meeting and visitor chairs in departmental offices. Quotes were sought to replace meeting chairs in executive offices.

During 2014–15, phase two of the Table Offices Production System went live. This system at a cost of \$2.258 million replaces the ageing document production system and will enable more efficient creation and publication of chamber documents. Other projects included the commencement of the redevelopment of the department's intranet and completion of the development of a new online booking system (the Venue Management System) for school groups and committee rooms in Parliament House at a cost of \$0.284 million.

## Purchasing

In addition to the asset purchases mentioned above, contracts were entered into for the purchase of asset valuation services and the purchase of licence renewals and support for departmental business systems. The department accessed existing panel arrangements for the procurement of training and leadership development programs and the provision of task chairs for departmental staff.

The department continued to access whole-of-government contracts for the provision of travel and related services. The purchase of stationery and office supplies was made through the whole-of-government contract with Staples. The department accessed an established panel arrangement for the provision of specialist risk and fraud control management and policy development.

The department initiated an open tender procurement during the reporting period for the provision of internal audit services.

## Consultants

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

Before engaging consultants, the department takes into account the skills and resources required for the task, the skills available internally, and the cost-effectiveness of engaging external expertise. The decision to engage a consultant is made in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and related instruments, including the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant internal policies.

During 2014–15, the department entered into five new consultancy contracts involving total actual expenditure of \$0.138 million. In addition, four ongoing consultancy contracts were active in 2014–15, involving total actual expenditure of \$0.123 million.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).

### Auditor-General access and exempt contracts

The department's contracting activities have been disclosed through the government's AusTender system, as required. There were no instances during 2014–15 where contracts were let that did not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises, or where the chief executive exempted a contract from being published on AusTender.

### Procurement initiatives to support small business

The department supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Participation statistics for small and medium enterprises and small enterprises are available on the Department of Finance's website at [www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts](http://www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts).

Consistent with paragraph 5.4 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the department's procurement practices to support small businesses include:

- using the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for low-risk procurements valued under \$200,000
- making on-time payments by electronic funds transfer or through the use of payment cards

### Advertising and market research

Section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* requires the department to detail amounts paid to advertising agencies, market research organisations, polling organisations, direct mail organisations and media advertising organisations during the financial year.

The department's total advertising expenditure for 2014–15 was \$5,015, a decrease from the previous year's total (\$28,155). This decrease is attributed to a reduction in the number of advertisements for publicising the work of the House and committees, including publicising inquiries undertaken by committees. In addition, new charging arrangements were scheduled to commence for chamber-related gazettals, but this is yet to occur.

The expenditure was as follows:

- nil for publicising the work of the House and committees (\$25,689 in 2013–14)
- \$175.00 for advertising in relation to inquiries being undertaken by parliamentary committees (nil in 2013–14)
- \$4,758 for publicising recruitment advertising (nil in 2013–14)
- nil to the Attorney-General's Department for chamber-related gazettals (\$2,336 in 2013–14).

### Grants

Information on grants awarded by the department during 2014–15 is available at [www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Department\\_of\\_the\\_House\\_of\\_Representatives/Grants](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Department_of_the_House_of_Representatives/Grants).

### Ecologically sustainable development and environmental reporting

The Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) is responsible for managing the Parliament House building and precincts. DPS reports in accordance with section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* in its annual report, which is available from the Parliament of Australia website.

# Outlook

In 2015–16, the department will continue to support the House and members. The department must continue to be capable of delivering advice and support of a high standard, and of anticipating and responding quickly to developments and changing requirements.

The department will continue to seek efficiencies, and to innovate, with emphasis on ICT improvements. To ensure resilience, the department will test business continuity and resumption plans, and will work in collaboration with the other parliamentary departments to ensure capability at a whole-of-parliament level. It will implement new requirements under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act.

In 2015–16 the department will negotiate a new enterprise agreement with staff. The agreement-making process will be undertaken based on the government's bargaining framework.

The department will also continue to give priority to supporting and enhancing whole-of-parliament governance arrangements. These processes are important in ensuring that strategic priorities are addressed effectively, and the parliamentary departments work collegially to support the institution.



*Members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories and secretariat at a private meeting in Canberra.*