



Part 3

Management and accountability

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Corporate governance

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

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

Governance structure

Legislation

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

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

Executive and senior management

As at 30 June 2019, the department's Executive comprised the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and four Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 staff: the Clerk Assistant (Table), Clerk Assistant (Procedure), Clerk Assistant (Committees), and the Serjeant-at-Arms. Each SES Band 1 officer is responsible for one or more of the department's offices (see Figure 1 on page 9). The roles and responsibilities of the Executive are described on page 10.

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

Departmental management committees

Executive

In 2018–19, the department’s Executive held 12 formal meetings to consider and take decisions on a range of departmental management and administrative matters. As well as standing items relating to finance and people strategies, during the year the Executive discussed:

- » matters arising out of the departmental and Executive planning sessions
- » corporate planning, risk management, and information governance frameworks
- » areas of cooperation with the other parliamentary departments
- » arrangements for the 2018 Parliament House Open Day
- » information and communications technology (ICT) projects and security
- » protective security and building works
- » various departmental policies and strategies.

Audit Committee

The department’s Audit Committee provides independent assurance to the Clerk on the department’s risk, control and compliance framework, and its external accountability responsibilities, with specific reference to the Clerk’s position of accountable authority under the PGPA Act. Guided by the Audit Committee’s charter, the members of the Audit Committee play an essential role in ensuring the integrity and transparency of the department’s reporting.

The 2018–19 reporting period was the first full year of the Audit Committee operating under an independent chair, Mr Paul Groenewegen. The committee’s membership includes two other independent members, and two of the department’s SES Band 1 officers, ensuring a majority of the committee’s membership is independent of the department. The appointment of an independent chair continues to strengthen the committee’s actual and perceived independence. The combination of internal and external members provides a valuable mix of skills, expertise and experience, and an understanding of the department’s operations and environment.

At 30 June 2019, the independent members were Mr Tim Courtney of the Australian Electoral Commission and Mr Dermot Walsh of the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The two internal members were Mr Peter Banson, Clerk Assistant (Table), and Ms Catherine Cornish, Clerk Assistant (Procedure).

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

The committee met four times in 2018–19. It recommended to the Clerk that he sign the financial statements and management response letter and include the annual performance statement in the annual report. In addition, the committee reviewed the:

- » Audit Committee charter
- » Audit Committee work plan
- » internal audit charter
- » Audit Committee annual report.

Other departmental committees

Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee is an important mechanism for communicating and consulting with staff on workplace issues. Chaired by the Deputy Clerk, the committee's membership includes three other representatives from the department's Executive, two elected staff representatives, and two union-nominated representatives. The committee met seven times during 2018–19. Standing agenda items for the meetings are:

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

Other matters discussed in the reporting period included:

- » proposals for training opportunities
- » the possible impacts of DPS's Corporate Business Operations Centre
- » staff suggestions and queries relating to amenities, parking and training opportunities
- » the remit, role and composition of the committee
- » proposed structure and results of the annual staff survey.

Knowledge Management Steering Committee

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

The committee is chaired by the Clerk Assistant (Table), and includes representatives from all areas of the department. In 2018–19 it met twice and discussed matters such as:

- » the remaking of the Archives (Records of the Parliament) Regulations
- » the department's information system register, including an audit against ISO 16175
- » changes to protective markings guidelines
- » the department's new Information Governance Policy and Framework
- » ICT project priorities for 2018–19
- » the establishment of a central 'lessons learnt' register.

Collaboration across parliamentary departments

Meetings of heads of parliamentary departments

In 2018–19, the Clerk, the Clerk of the Senate, the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) and the Parliamentary Budget Officer held four formal meetings. Matters discussed included:

- » the Parliament House accommodation review
- » Parliament House Open Day and the 30th anniversary of Parliament House
- » the Australian Parliament digital strategy
- » archives regulations and the management of parliamentary records
- » security-related capital works
- » the parliamentary reconciliation action plan.

The parliamentary departments continue to work together under the Australian Parliament's *Strategic plan for parliamentary administration*, which brings together the key priorities across the whole of the parliamentary administration, identifying shared goals and formalising a collaborative approach to achieving optimal outcomes in providing support and services to the parliament.

Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group

In 2018–19, the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group met five times to discuss matters of common interest across the parliamentary departments. Membership comprises the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod, an Assistant Secretary of DPS, and the Assistant Parliamentary Budget Officer from the Parliamentary Budget Office. Responsibility for chairing the group rotates annually.

Matters discussed over the reporting period included:

- » work health and safety policies across the four parliamentary departments
- » possible shared services arrangements for the parliamentary departments
- » proposed amendments to the Parliamentary Services Classification Rules

- » Code of Conduct determinations
- » breastfeeding-friendly workplace re-accreditation for Parliament House.

Other inter-parliamentary department forums

In 2018–19, the department was active in a number of other inter-parliamentary department forums that considered matters of common interest, particularly ICT and security. Departmental representatives participated in meetings of the following groups:

- » Parliamentary ICT Strategic Initiatives Steering Group—this group brings the parliamentary departments together to make decisions in relation to ICT strategic initiatives for the parliament. The group is chaired by the Chief Information Officer of DPS, and the department is represented by the Deputy Clerk.
- » Joint Management Committee—this committee is responsible for oversight of ICT service delivery in accordance with formal agreements between the parliamentary departments. Responsibility for chairing the committee rotates on an annual basis, and the department is represented by the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » Joint Management Group—this group considers security-related matters. It is chaired by a senior representative from the Australian Federal Police, and the department is represented by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.
- » Incident Planning and Response Committee—this committee manages security and emergency incident planning and response operations. The committee is chaired by a senior representative from the Australian Federal Police, and the department is represented by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.

Departmental planning

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

The corporate plan is the department's primary planning document. As required under the PGPA Act, the department's *Corporate Plan 2018–19* was published in August 2018. It covered 2018–19 and three forward years to 2021–22. The corporate plan sets out the department's purpose, the activities undertaken to achieve that purpose, and the measures for assessing the department's performance. It also describes the environment in which the department operates and the department's risk management and oversight systems, and recognises the inter-relationships between these.

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

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



*A member of staff presenting to colleagues at the department's annual planning day, November 2018.
Image: Department of the House of Representatives.*



*Departmental staff at a plenary session during the department's annual planning day, November 2018.
Image: Department of the House of Representatives.*

Departmental accountability and reporting

The department's main formal external accountability mechanisms are the Portfolio Budget Statements and the annual report, prepared pursuant to section 65 of the Parliamentary Service Act. The annual report for 2017–18 provided an assessment of the department's performance against the targets set in the 2017–18 Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plan, and presented the department's financial statements.

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

Managing risk

Risk assessment and management

The department's approach to risk and management of risk is underpinned by its *Risk management policy and framework (2017)* and *Risk management plan 2017–19*.

The risk management policy and framework details the department's commitment to embedding systematic risk management into governance, management and planning processes. It outlines the department's risk appetite and tolerance, and allocates responsibility for aspects of planning, mitigation, oversight and reporting to identified staff at various levels. The accompanying plan identifies the key strategic risks for the department and the treatments to be applied.

During 2018–19 the department carried out its biennial review of its strategic and fraud risk documents, which involved active involvement from members of the Executive and Executive Band 2 staff from across the department. Updated policy, framework and plan documents were approved for 2019–21.

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

Comcover benchmarking

In the first half of 2019, the department completed the Comcover risk management benchmarking program survey. The survey assessed the maturity of the department's risk management capability against the nine elements of the Commonwealth risk management policy. Based on the results of the 2019 survey, the department achieved a risk maturity level of 'advanced', which is higher than the previous year's assessed level of 'systematic' and higher than the average maturity state of all survey participants ('integrated').

Business continuity

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

The plan requires scenario-based exercises designed to test aspects of the department's business continuity capability, with a new exercise developed each year. During 2018–19, the department's scenario-based exercise involved the International and Parliamentary Relations Office (IPRO) and the Parliamentary Skills Centre (PSC). The exercise was facilitated and reviewed by the department's internal auditors, who concluded that IPRO and the PSC demonstrated an ability to effectively respond to a range of sudden disruptions.

Internal audit

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

During the reporting period, Bellchambers Barrett conducted the following:

- » a review of security and the Protective Security Policy Framework
- » a review of compliance with work health and safety requirements
- » a review of the department's Transport Office
- » the development of strategic and fraud risk assessments and management plans.

Preventing fraud

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

The department's *Fraud Control Plan 2017–19* outlines strategies and processes for preventing and detecting fraud, and for investigating and reporting instances of fraud should they occur. All new staff are required to complete online training on financial management responsibilities and fraud control. The department's monitoring and reporting framework requires regular reporting to the Executive and the Audit Committee. No significant instances of fraud were identified or reported to the Speaker during the year.

The internal auditors prepared the department's *Fraud risk assessment 2017–19*. It provides details of the approach and methodology used in assessing fraud risks within the department. It also details a range of processes and activities in terms of their potential fraud risks, and the controls in place that prevent, detect or deter the risks. This assessment was updated during the reporting period, through a process of consultation with the departmental Executive and senior management, in which fraud risks were identified and assessed. The fraud risk assessment and fraud control plan have been updated and approved for 2019–21.

Ethical standards and behaviour

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

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

Statement of significant non-compliance with the finance law

The department did not identify any instances of significant non-compliance with the finance law during 2018–19. The finance law incorporates the PGPA Act, any rules and instruments created under the PGPA Act, and appropriation and supply Acts.

Public interest disclosure

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

During 2018–19, the department continued to ensure that information on public interest disclosure procedures was available to all staff. During the year, four authorised officers were approved to handle public interest disclosures.

Privacy

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

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental reporting

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

External scrutiny

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

Judicial and administrative decisions

During 2018–19, no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals or the Australian Information Commissioner had, or are anticipated to have, a significant effect on the operations of the department.

Reports on the operations of the department

In 2018–19, the Auditor-General did not table any reports directly relating to the administration of the department or its operations. The Australian National Audit Office provided an unqualified audit report on the department's 2018–19 financial statements.

In 2018–19, the Commonwealth Ombudsman did not issue any reports on the operations of the department. There were no capability reviews of the department released during the period.

The department continued to support the Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration's consideration of the department's funding requirements and budget position. During 2018–19, the committee met twice and tabled two reports: *Report no. 16: Annual report 2017–18* and *Report no. 17: Budget estimates 2019–20*.

In its budget estimates report, the committee noted that the supplementary funding of \$12.4 million provided over four years, starting from 2017–18, was being used to strengthen the department's procedural capacity and provide additional support for the parliamentary committees administered by the department. In the same report, the committee noted that the department had been provided additional funding in 2019–20 to support the parliament to host the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum in January 2020, and in 2021–22 to support the parliament to host the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth in January 2022.

Disability reporting mechanisms

Disability reporting now sits within the framework of the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, which sets out a 10-year national policy to improve the lives of people with disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. A high-level two-yearly report will track progress against each of the six outcome areas of the strategy, and present a picture of how people with disability are faring. The first of these progress reports was published in 2014, and can be found at www.dss.gov.au.

Freedom of information

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

Management of people

Workforce profile

At 30 June 2019, the department had 164 employees—123 ongoing, 8 non-ongoing and 32 casual.

The department's workforce is 62 per cent female, 38 per cent are aged over 50 years and 1.16 per cent identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Employee statistics

Tables 8 to 12 show the department's workforce statistics for 2018–19, including whether staff are in ongoing, non-ongoing or casual positions. The tables provide information on the substantive classification of staff, as well as their gender and geographical location.

Table 8: Employment type by classification and gender, at 30 June 2019

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

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

Table 9: Employment type by classification and gender, at 30 June 2018

Classification	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
SES 2	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
SES 1	3	1	–	–	–	–	3	1	4
EB 2	10	13	–	1	–	–	10	14	24
EB 1	24	15	–	3	–	–	24	18	42
PSL 6	7	16	1	–	–	–	8	16	24
PSL 5	1	6	–	1	–	–	1	7	8
PSL 4	3	17	1	5	1	1	5	23	28
PSL 3	2	2	–	2	1	1	3	5	8
PSL 2	2	1	–	1	16	14	18	16	34
PSL 1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	52	72	2	13	18	16	72	101	173

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

Table 10: Employment type by employment status, at 30 June 2018 and 30 June 2019

Employment type	Full-time		Part-time		Casual		Total	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Ongoing	117	109	11	15	–	–	128	124
Non-ongoing	13	7	2	1	–	–	15	8
Casual	–	–	–	–	32	32	32	32
Total	130	116	13	16	32	32	175	164

Table 11: Employment type by office and location, at 30 June 2018 and 30 June 2019

	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Office								
Executive	8	9	1	1	–	–	9	10
Executive support/ project staff	4	2	–	–	–	–	4	2
Table Office	10	9	–	1	1	1	11	11
Procedure Office	8	7	–	1	–	–	8	8
Committee Office	58	60	7	–	–	–	65	60
International and Parliamentary Relations Office	8	7	1	–	–	–	9	7
Parliamentary Skills Centre	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Parliamentary and Business Information Services Office	10	10	2	4	1	1	13	15
Finance Office	5	6	–	1	–	–	5	7
People Strategies Office	7	7	1	–	–	–	8	7
Serjeant-at-Arms' Office	10	7	2	–	31	30	43	37
State or territory								
ACT	129	124	14	8	33	32	176	164
Total	129	124	14	8	33	32	176	164

Table 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, at 30 June 2018 and 30 June 2019

Employment type	Staff numbers	
	2018	2019
Ongoing	–	–
Non-ongoing	3	2
Casual	–	–
Total	3	2

Employee engagement

Investors in People standard

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

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

Staff survey

In June 2019, the department conducted its annual staff survey to measure employee sentiment, views about leadership and observations about the broader working environment.

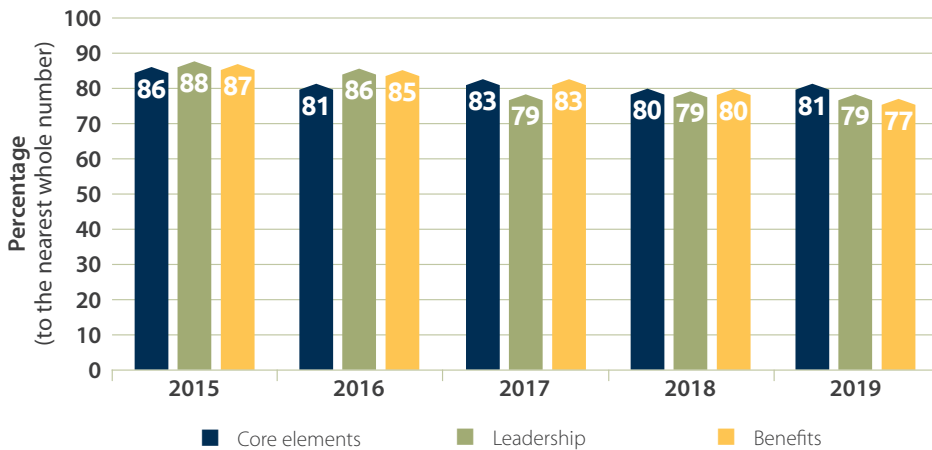
The results of the survey are used to inform improvement initiatives and to further develop the culture of the department. Ideas and feedback from employees are an essential element when seeking to deliver sustainable change across the department and to sustain a high-performance culture.

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

- » The 'core elements' satisfaction index measures the extent to which the department provided the core elements needed to attract, focus and keep the most talented staff (satisfaction rate of 81 per cent in 2019 and an average of 82 per cent over the past five years).
- » The 'leadership' satisfaction index measures the level of satisfaction of staff with their managers against the department's leadership statement (satisfaction rate of 79 per cent in 2019 and an average of 82 per cent over the past five years).
- » The 'benefits' satisfaction index measures the level of staff satisfaction with pay and working conditions (satisfaction rate of 77 per cent in 2019 and an average of 82 per cent over the past five years).

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

Figure 6: Staff survey satisfaction elements, 2015–2019



People strategies: planning and delivery

Recruitment

The department advertised to fill 21 ongoing vacancies during 2018–19 (compared with 30 in 2017–18), of which nine were filled by external applicants.

Retention

Twenty-four ongoing and 15 non-ongoing staff left the department in 2018–19. The turnover rate was 13 per cent for ongoing staff (compared with 8 per cent in 2017–18).

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

Alumni

The department formed an alumni association of former staff in 2008. On 30 June 2019, it had 247 members. The association issued one newsletter during the year, and its board met once. On 21 November 2018, the association held its annual general meeting and two co-chairs were elected.

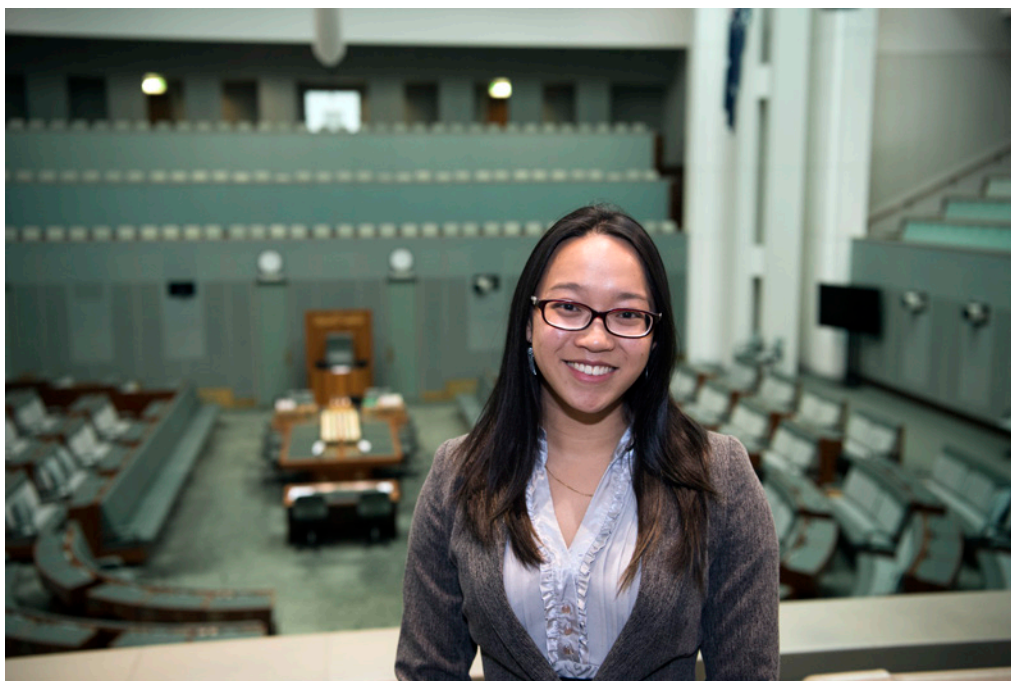
Graduate placement program

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

The program involves three-month placements of people from the graduate programs of Australian Government agencies and the staff of those agencies. Graduates develop the necessary knowledge and skills to make a significant contribution to the department

and broader parliamentary service. The program continued to draw a high level of interest from graduates from a range of agencies. Four graduates undertook placements in the department in 2018–19.

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



2018–19 Graduate Program participant Beatrice Duong. Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

Learning and development

In 2018–19 the department delivered 109 face-to-face training and development sessions to employees, based around the core themes of critical thinking, writing skills, management capability and fostering high performance. Priority skills training focused on leadership development, and the department has engaged a range of external providers to deliver specialised training to staff.

Table 13 compares the average attendance of staff at training courses in 2017–18 and 2018–19. It also shows the staffing level and total number of training days attended in 2018–19 for each classification.

Table 13: Staff attendance at training courses

Classification	Headcount	Training days attended	Average training days attended per person	
			2017–18	2018–19
Senior Executive Service	6	28	3.7	4.7
Executive Band 2	20	104	5.9	5.2
Executive Band 1	41	217	5.2	5.3
Parliamentary Service Level 6	28	182	3.7	6.5
Parliamentary Service Level 5	5	26	3.8	5.2
Parliamentary Service Level 4	27	153	5.7	5.7
Parliamentary Service Level 3	6	19	2.8	3.2
Parliamentary Service Level 2	31	27	1.8	0.9
Not specified	–	100	–	–
Total	164	856	4.8	5.2

Studies assistance

The department's study assistance scheme allows employees to complete relevant tertiary study to improve their professional skills and knowledge. Six employees accessed studies assistance during the year (compared with seven in 2017–18). Collectively, financial assistance of \$7,874 was administered (compared with \$22,595 in 2017–18), along with a total of 47 days of study leave on full pay.

Performance assessment

All eligible staff participated in the annual work performance assessment cycle, which was completed on 31 October 2018. The cycle consists of setting individual work objectives, conducting performance assessments, preparing individual development plans and providing feedback to supervisors. Information from the individual development plans is used to formulate the training program for the next calendar year.

Diversity and inclusion

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

New staff continued to receive training in the prevention of discrimination, bullying and harassment and all staff were required to attend a training update in relation to these important aspects of workplace behaviour. The department is committed to actively building a diverse and inclusive workplace that promotes gender equality and harnesses the skills and experiences of people from all backgrounds. The department's diversity and

inclusion program has a significant focus on increasing workforce participation rates across all diversity groups.

The department continued to support the commitments outlined in the Australian Parliament's *Reconciliation action plan 2016–18*.



2018–19 Indigenous secondees Jane Stack and Nicole Bowman. Image: Graham Tidy, Auspic/DPS.

The department continued its commitment to graduates from the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program through the department's Indigenous Secondment Program. Graduates were invited to participate in three-month placements with the department. This is the second year of the Indigenous Secondment Program and it is a significant part of the department's commitment to provide opportunities for the career progression and professional development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. At the completion of the program, participants return to their home departments with valuable experiences of parliamentary operations. In 2018–19, two graduates were placed with the department through the Indigenous Secondment Program.

Employment arrangements

The *Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020* came into effect on 6 December 2017 with a nominal expiry date of 29 November 2020. The agreement provides non-SES staff with competitive remuneration and employment conditions. There is no provision in the agreement to remunerate staff based on performance. The Clerk did not make a determination under section 24(1) of the Parliamentary Service Act in 2018–19 to pay staff a monetary bonus.

Employment conditions for SES staff are set out in individual determinations made under subsection 24(1) of the Parliamentary Service Act. Many of these conditions are aligned with

the department's enterprise agreement. Table 14 provides a breakdown of staff under the department's employment instruments.

Table 14: Employment arrangements for SES and non-SES staff, at 30 June 2019

Employment arrangements for SES and non-SES staff, at 30 June 2019			
	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise agreement	–	158	158
Individual flexibility arrangements	–	–	–
Australian workplace agreements	–	–	–
Common law contracts	–	–	–
Determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Parliamentary Service Act 1999</i>	5	–	5

Remuneration

Salary ranges under the 2017–20 enterprise agreement, as at the end of the reporting period, are summarised in Table 15.

Table 15: Salary scales of staff covered by the 2017–20 enterprise agreement, as at 30 June 2019

Classification	Salary range	
	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Executive Band 2	139,318	147,618
Executive Band 1	107,642	120,065
Parliamentary Service Level 6	86,748	98,450
Parliamentary Service Level 5	80,182	84,845
Parliamentary Service Level 4	70,888	76,695
Parliamentary Service Level 3	64,132	68,894
Parliamentary Service Level 2	56,995	62,232
Parliamentary Service Level 1	50,382	55,128

In 2018–19, departmental salaries and allowances totalled \$19.325 million (compared with \$19.410 million in 2017–18).

Executive remuneration

The PGPA Rule requires the reporting of executive remuneration information for specified officials of Commonwealth entities on an accrual basis. Table 17 summarises the remuneration of key management personnel and senior executives. There are no other

highly paid staff for whom remuneration details are required to be provided. During short absences of SES staff, parliamentary officers may be provided with an opportunity to act in the position of the absent SES staff member. These short acting opportunities are not included in Tables 16 or 17.

Key management personnel

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2019, the department had seven executives who meet the definition of key management personnel. Their names and the length of term as key management personnel are summarised in Table 16.

Table 16: Key management personnel, 2018–19

Name	Position	Term as key management personnel
David Elder	Clerk	Full year
Claessa Surtees	Deputy Clerk	Full year
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table)	Full year
Catherine Cornish	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	Full year
Bronwyn Notzon-Glenn	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Part year – ceased on 27 February 2019
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Part year – appointed on 29 March 2019
James Catchpole	Serjeant-at-Arms	Full year



The Clerk and the Serjeant-at-Arms with the official secretary to the Governor-General, during the ceremony for the prorogation of the Forty-fifth Parliament. Image: David Foote, Auspic/DPS.

In accordance with the PGPA Rule, information about the remuneration and benefits of key management personnel is set out in Table 17.

Table 17: Remuneration and benefits of key management personnel, 2018–19

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary (\$)	Bonuses (\$)	Other benefits and allowances (\$)	Superannuation contributions (\$)	Long-service leave (\$)	Other long-term benefits (\$)	(\$)	
David Elder	Clerk	358,697	–	22,218	55,012	20,707	–	–	456,634
Claressa Surtees	Deputy Clerk	259,008	–	16,434	42,519	10,222	–	–	328,183
Peter Banson	Clerk Assistant (Table)	186,592	–	26,635	35,649	10,909	–	–	259,785
Catherine Cornish	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	186,779	–	26,635	35,676	7,011	–	–	256,101
Bronwyn Notzon-Glenn	Clerk Assistant (Committees) (until 27 February 2019)	129,468	–	17,671	26,076	4,236	–	–	177,451
Stuart Woodley	Clerk Assistant (Committees) (from 29 March 2019)	55,072	–	6,761	9,179	1,123	–	–	72,135
James Catchpole	Serjeant-at-Arms	184,194	–	26,635	32,844	7,860	–	–	251,533
Total		1,359,810	–	142,989	236,955	62,068	–	–	1,801,822

Other senior executives

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2019, the department did not have any senior executives who did not meet the definition of key management personnel. All key management personnel are included in Tables 16 and 17.

Other highly paid staff

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2019, the department did not have any highly paid staff who did not meet the definitions of key management personnel or senior executives, and whose details are therefore not reported in Tables 16 and 17.

Work health and safety

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

The department aims to achieve high standards of work health and safety in its operations and to fulfil its duty of care by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. There are a number of shared work health and safety risks across Parliament House that are the responsibility of all parliamentary departments. During the reporting period, a joint risk assessment was completed with the other parliamentary departments. The department's internal auditors also conducted a review of the department's work health and safety as part of the department's strategic internal audit plan 2018–21 which found that the department's overarching work health and safety framework substantially aligns with requirements of the WHS Act and better practice. The review produced six recommendations which have been substantially addressed at the time of reporting.

The department is responsive to the individual work health and safety needs of its staff. Workstation assessments are conducted for staff on request. These include education on the correct set-up of workstations—for example, the height of the desk at both sitting and standing positions. Workstation information is provided in orientation sessions for new staff.

In 2018–19, the department continued to apply an evidence-based risk management approach. The department aims to deliver high-quality and timely outcomes, establishing a safety culture through leadership, direction, capability and governance. Through the Rehabilitation Management System the department enhances positive early intervention outcomes that have supported injured or ill workers to achieve an early, safe and sustainable return to work. There has been a strong focus in providing and fostering a flexible workplace to take account of employees' health and wellbeing.

The department's Comcare premium rate for 2018–19 was 0.23 per cent of payroll, a decrease from 0.27 per cent in 2017–18.

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

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

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 office machines and equipment, plant, and portable and attractive assets was completed during 2018–19. During the stocktake process a visual assessment for impairment was undertaken by Finance Office staff. The verification of impairment testing was undertaken in conjunction with asset counting.

During the year the department transferred status B furniture assets to DPS. The assets were transferred to DPS for no consideration and had a carrying value at the date of transfer of \$2.519 million. Management of these assets is now governed by a memorandum of understanding between DPS and the department.

The furniture replacement project was completed in July 2018. This project consisted of replacing the office furniture located in the staff area of members' offices. A combination of cash reserves and departmental capital budget funding was used to replace these furniture items.

The department adopts a 'break-fix' replacement policy for office machines and equipment. During the year asset purchases included replacement of TVs, fridges, shredders and dishwashers.

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

Purchasing

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

During the reporting period the department entered into 79 contracts above the reporting threshold, 65 of which were reported on AusTender within the prescribed period. No other identified instances of non-compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules have been identified.

Consultants

Consultants are engaged where the department lacks specialist expertise or when independent research, review or assessment is required. Consultants are typically engaged

to investigate or diagnose a defined issue or problem; carry out defined reviews or evaluations; or provide independent advice, information or specialist solutions to assist in the department's decision-making.

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

During 2018–19, five new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total expenditure of \$0.161 million. In addition, four ongoing consultancy contracts were active in 2018–19, involving total expenditure of \$0.025 million.

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

Competitive tendering and contracting

There were no instances during 2018–19 where contracts were let that did not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises, or where the accountable authority exempted a contract from being published on the AusTender website.

Procurement initiatives to support small business

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

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

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

Advertising and market research

During 2018–19, the department did not conduct any advertising campaigns.

Legal services expenditure

Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 11.1(ba) of the Legal Services Directions 2017 requires the department to publicly disclose its legal services expenditure. During 2018–19, external legal expenditure was \$182,872 (\$195,502 in 2017–18). The department did not incur any internal legal expenses during 2018–19 (nil in 2017–18).

