



Part 3

Management and accountability

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Presentation of the 2024 Australia Day medallions at the House of Representatives rose garden.

Image: Department of the House of Representatives.

Corporate governance

The department is responsible for the provision of procedural, information and administrative services to members, the House and the broader parliament. As Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives, the Speaker's role is in some ways analogous to that of a minister of state in relation to an executive government department.

The *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* restates the principles that the legislative arm of government is separate from the executive arm, and that staff employed under the Act are responsible to the Australian Parliament rather than to the government of the day. The Speaker oversees administration of the department and is accountable to the House in respect of that role. The Clerk, who is responsible under the *Parliamentary Service Act* for leading the department and its day-to-day management, reports to and advises the Speaker on departmental matters.

The department's corporate functions and staff provide critical support that enables the department to deliver programs and services, and meet its legislative obligations. The department's corporate areas are focused on providing quality and timely services, and on being responsive to the changing policy and operational needs of the department. At the start of 2024, a Corporate Governance Office was established to consolidate the various compliance and reporting obligations of the department.

This section discusses the department's governance structure and support services, which provide a framework to ensure accountability and the overall effectiveness of the department.

Governance structure

Legislation

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

The *Parliamentary Service Act* and the *PGPA Act* govern the department's operations. Other legislation, including the *Fair Work Act 2009* and the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), also apply 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 2024, the department's Executive comprised the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and four Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 staff: the Clerk Assistant (Table), Clerk Assistant (Procedure), Clerk Assistant (Committees) and Serjeant-at-Arms. Each SES Band 1 officer is responsible for one or more of the department's offices (see Figure 1 on page 8). The roles and responsibilities of the Executive are described on page 9. The senior management of the department comprises the Executive and managers at the Executive Band 2 level.

Departmental management committees

Executive

In 2023–24, the department’s Executive held 11 formal meetings to consider and take decisions on a range of departmental management and administrative matters. Standing agenda items include finance, information and communications technology (ICT), people strategies, work health and safety, and risk management.

During the year the Executive also discussed:

- » implementation of recommendations of the review of parliamentary workplaces
- » anticipated changes in payroll processing for Members
- » finalising a revised *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) between parliamentary departments in relation to the provision of information and communications technology services
- » enterprise agreement negotiations
- » corporate planning and information management
- » updated fraud and corruption control arrangements
- » ICT projects and cyber security
- » various departmental policies and strategies.

Audit and Risk Committee

The department’s Audit and Risk 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.

Updated in 2024, the committee’s charter (available at www.aph.gov.au/dhr/AuditCharter), guides the members of the Audit and Risk Committee in their essential role in ensuring the integrity and transparency of the department’s reporting.

In 2023–24, membership of the committee comprised an independent chair and two independent members.

Chair

Mr Stephen Sheehan joined the committee as an independent member in 2021 and was appointed chair in 2023. Mr Sheehan is a financial management consultant who has over 40 years’ experience working in financial management and accounting roles that spanned both public and private sector entities. Mr Sheehan has considerable experience in financial management and reporting, accounting, risk and assurance, performance reporting, organisational management and governance.

Mr Sheehan’s senior executive career in the Australian public service included roles as the chief financial officer of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the Department of Health and Ageing and CRS Australia. Mr Sheehan provides audit committee services and financial management advice to a range of Commonwealth agencies. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce and is a Fellow of CPA Australia.

Independent members

Ms Emily Purvis joined the committee as an independent member in 2021. Ms Purvis is the executive manager of governance at Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT, a large charity operating in the Canberra region. She is an executive with experience in the provision of high-level governance, strategic and regulatory policy advice. She has a range of skills in service delivery and governance at the executive level within the public and community services sectors, including over 18 years' experience in the Commonwealth public service. Ms Purvis has experience at the board level in the not-for-profit sector. Ms Purvis holds a Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Science, Graduate Diploma of Antarctic and Southern Ocean Studies (Hons), Master of Science and Graduate Certificate in Management. She is an associate of the Governance Institute of Australia and a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Mr Alistair Nicholson joined the committee as an independent member in 2021. Mr Nicholson is an experienced consultant with a background in governance, strategy development, information management and risk management. He has provided governance, compliance and risk advice to a number of government and corporate organisations including the Attorney-General's Department, Services Australia and its predecessors, the Department of Defence, the Department of Primary Industries and Energy and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Mr Nicholson's business improvement advice has been recognised by an IBM Asia Pacific Achievement Award and a Government Technology Efficiency Award. Mr Nicholson is immediate past-president and board member of the Canberra chapter of ISACA – the International Systems Audit and Control Association that certifies professionals in information management governance. He holds a Bachelor of Science and is a Certified Information Systems Auditor and Certified Information Systems Manager. Mr Nicholson sits on another Commonwealth agency audit and risk committee and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Observers

The Serjeant-at-Arms – who manages the department's corporate functions – attends committee meetings as an adviser, together with the Chief Finance Officer and other relevant departmental officers, representatives of the Australian National Audit Office and the department's internal auditors.

Audit and Risk Committee meeting attendance and remuneration

Table 16: Audit and Risk Committee meeting attendance, 2023–24

Member	Sept 2023	Dec 2023	Mar 2024	Jun 2024	Remuneration
Stephen Sheehan <i>Chair</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$15,400
Emily Purvis <i>Independent Member</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$6,000
Alistair Nicholson <i>Independent Member</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$6,600

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. A new Consultative Committee was established following the commencement of the Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2024–26. The committee met six times during 2023–24.

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
- » other workplace issues including filling vacancies and the staff suggestion box.

Other matters discussed in the reporting period included:

- » the department's response to the Jenkins review
- » department structural changes and staffing, and associated accommodation changes
- » Enterprise Agreement bargaining
- » updates to human resources policies and guidelines.

Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee was established in May 2022 under the WHS Act, following a request from a health and safety representative. The committee provides a forum for consultation and dissemination of information on matters that are likely to affect the health, safety and welfare of departmental staff, in accordance with the requirements of the WHS Act.

The committee consists of three management representatives and four staff representatives and is chaired by the Serjeant-at-Arms. The committee met four times in 2023–24.

Information and Data Governance Committee

The Information and Data Governance Committee replaced the Knowledge Management Steering Committee this year as a forum to discuss issues in information and data governance 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 is chaired by the Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and includes representatives from all areas of the department. The Information and Data Governance Committee met once in the period to discuss the information governance policy and framework.

Collaboration across parliamentary departments

Meetings of heads of parliamentary departments

In 2023–24, the Clerk, the Clerk of the Senate, the Secretary of the DPS, the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the head of the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS) held four formal meetings. Matters considered during the period included:

- » regular briefing on staff employment matters
- » the new Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of ICT services
- » an update from the Australian Parliamentary Service Commissioner.

The parliamentary departments continued to work together under the *Strategic framework for the parliamentary service*. The framework emphasises the common goals of the parliamentary departments in serving, supporting and upholding the institutions of the parliament.

Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group (PAAG)

In 2023–24, the Parliamentary Administration Advisory Group (PAAG) met four times to discuss matters of common interest across the parliamentary departments. Membership comprises the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod, the First Assistant Secretary Corporate Services from DPS and the Assistant Parliamentary Budget Officer from the Parliamentary Budget Office. A representative from PWSS also attended the meetings, and representatives from the Department of Finance and the Australian Public Service Commission attended some meetings by invitation.

Matters discussed over the reporting period included:

- » employment matters including enterprise agreement negotiations
- » remaking the Parliamentary Service Determination 2013
- » governance and corporate matters, including business continuity planning, shared service arrangements and work health and safety policies and reporting
- » implementing recommendations arising from reviews into parliamentary workplaces
- » matters of relevance in the broader public service, including regular meetings with the Australian Public Service Commission.

Parliament of Australia Human Resources Advisory Panel (HRAP)

The advisory panel was established during the period, by parliamentary department heads in response to a recommendation from PAAG. The formalisation of this cross-agency human resources forum is intended to respond in part to recommendations of reviews of the parliamentary work environment, to strengthen and formalise mechanisms for collaborating and cooperating on shared work health and safety matters.

A primary purpose of the panel is to ensure the effective management of shared work health and safety risks, promote a safe working environment, and address and escalate work health and safety issues as necessary. The panel also shares information about the implementation of human resource initiatives across Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces.

The panel has representatives from human resource areas of all parliamentary departments, the PWSS and Department of Finance. The department is represented on the panel by Directors and Assistant Directors of the People Strategies Office.

Other inter-parliamentary department forums

In 2023–24, the department continued to be active in other interdepartmental forums that considered matters of common interest, particularly around ICT and security. Departmental representatives participated in meetings of the following groups:

- » **Security Management Board** – this board comprises representatives from agencies with shared responsibilities for security in Parliament House: the Australian Federal Police, DPS, and the two House departments. The board is established under the Parliamentary Service Act to advise the Presiding Officers on security policy and the management of security measures for Parliament House, 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.
- » **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Champions** – this group comprises the RAP Champions for each of the parliamentary departments, and monitors implementation of the parliamentary service’s existing Reconciliation Action Plan and development of a new plan for 2024 onwards. The department is represented by the Clerk Assistant (Committees).
- » **Access and Inclusion Champions Group** – this group comprises the Access and Inclusion Champions for each of the parliamentary departments, the Department of Finance and the PWSS, and provides a coordinated mechanism to support improving access and inclusion across Parliament House for people with disability.
- » **Strategic ICT Group** – this group is the strategic ICT committee for the parliamentary departments. It provides strategic advice on priorities for ICT projects and initiatives, and considers issues relating to ICT strategy, policy and risk. It is chaired by the DPS Chief Information Officer and the department is represented by the Clerk Assistant (Procedure).
- » **Monthly ICT meetings** – these provide a forum for discussion with senior executives within the DPS on all ICT service delivery matters. The department is represented by the Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and the Chief Information Officer.
- » **Service Delivery Working Group** – this group is responsible for operational oversight of the MoU for the provision of ICT services. It provides advice to the Strategic ICT Group, and the department is represented by its Chief Information Officer.

- » **Information Security Working Group** – this is a forum to progress information security initiatives that require input from all parliamentary departments. The group is responsible for providing feedback and advice to the DPS Director of Cyber Security, to ensure a consistent and effective approach to information security across the parliamentary service. The department is represented by the Chief Information Officer, in their role as Information Technology Security Adviser.
- » **Business Initiatives meetings** – these fortnightly meetings are a forum for detailed discussions with the DPS on current and planned IT projects. The department is represented by its Chief Information Officer.

Departmental planning

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

The corporate plan is the department's primary planning document. Meeting the relevant requirement under the PGPA Act, the department's *Corporate Plan 2023–24* was published in August 2023.

The corporate plan covers 2023–24 and three forward years to 2026–27. It sets out the department's purpose, the activities undertaken to achieve that purpose, and the measures for assessing the department's performance. It also describes the environment in which the department operates, planned capability initiatives and the department's risk management and oversight systems.

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

The department continues to embed the corporate plan through its comprehensive work performance management framework that applies to all staff, as well as through a format of fortnightly reporting sessions to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and to the department in six-monthly reporting.

The annual 'Departmental conversations' was held on 1 November 2023. This is the principal forum for the department to reflect, collaborate and create collectively. This year, with the theme of 'The Parliamentary Workplace', staff discussed the department's approach to recruiting and retaining staff; maintaining a safe and respectful workplace; and the role of parliamentary officers in history, and into the future. The Clerk made her annual address to staff.

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 2022–23 provided an assessment of the department's performance against the targets set in the 2022–23 Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plan and presented the department's financial statements.

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

Managing risk

Risk assessment and management

The department's approach to risk and management of risk is underpinned by its *Risk management policy and framework 2023–25* and *Risk management plan 2023–25*.

The risk management policy and framework detail the department's commitment to embedding systematic risk management into governance, management and planning processes. It outlines the department's risk appetite and tolerance, and allocates responsibility for aspects of planning, mitigation, oversight and reporting to identified staff at various levels. The risk management plan identifies the key strategic risks for the department and the treatments to be applied and is accompanied by separate operational risk management plans for specific business areas or subject matter.

Both documents are reviewed every two years. The *Risk management policy and framework 2023–25* and the *Risk management plan 2023–25* were approved in January 2024.

Staff can access both documents via the departmental intranet. The department has a monitoring and reporting framework that requires regular reporting on risk and risk treatments to the Executive and to the Audit and Risk Committee. The department has identified risk champions to lead and support activities addressing risk and encourage effective risk management practices.

The department also completes the biennial Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking Program survey. Results from this survey in 2023 indicate that the department has a risk maturity of 'embedded'. This is the second highest rating available and the maturity level the department identified as its goal. The next survey is scheduled for 2025.

Business continuity

The department has a business continuity framework and business continuity plan to provide overarching advice to management about the actions required should a business disruption event occur. The business continuity framework provides governance arrangements and details critical business functions for each office in the department. The business continuity plan provides immediate actions to be considered when a business disruption event occurs, including activating, managing and deactivating the plan.

The business continuity network, coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office and with representation from across the department, is responsible for business continuity governance and oversight. The business continuity framework supports regular tests of the department's business continuity capability, including desktop reviews, desktop scenario exercises, notification and call-out communications exercises, live scenario exercises and business recovery exercises. The network met once during the reporting period.

Conscious of the operational environment, the department collaborates with other relevant departments on business continuity matters. During 2023–24, a joint desktop scenario exercise was conducted with the Department of the Senate, with a focus on cybersecurity

incident response management. The department has cybersecurity and data breach incident response plans, designed to reflect best practice principles and coordinate with the relevant plans of DPS as the department's provider of ICT services.

The Serjeant-at-Arms is a member of the newly formed Working Group on the Continuity of Parliament Plan, the first task of which is to review and update the Continuity of Parliament Plan.

Internal audit

A strategic internal audit plan is prepared for the department every three years, and an annual audit plan is prepared in consultation with senior management. The strategic internal audit plan 2021–24 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, reviews were conducted of the department's:

- » travel arrangements
- » learning and development framework
- » legislative compliance
- » ICT and data governance
- » departmental payroll services.

Following the appointment of RSM Australia as the internal auditor in August 2022, a new strategic internal audit plan was developed to inform audit priorities for the next two years. A new plan will be developed for 2024–27.

Preventing fraud

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

The department prepared the *Fraud Control Plan 2023–25* during the period, drawing on the *Fraud Risk Assessment 2023–25*. 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. The department will move to implementing a fraud and corruption control framework in 2024–25, in accordance with expanded requirements under the Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework 2024.

All new staff are required to complete online training on financial management responsibilities and fraud control and all staff undertake mandatory online fraud prevention training every two years. The Finance Office also provided department wide fraud awareness training with the rollout of the TechnologyOne CiA training. The department's monitoring and reporting framework requires regular reporting to the Executive and the Audit and Risk Committee.

There were no identified instances of fraud during the year.

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. The department also runs scenario-based workshops throughout the year with members of the Executive facilitating discussions on expectations of professional behaviour in the parliamentary service.

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 2023–24. 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 the Act.

During 2023–24, the department continued to ensure that information on public interest disclosure procedures was available to all staff. Training was also provided to authorised officers during the period.

Privacy

Although not an entity to which the *Privacy Act 1988* applies, the department abides by the principles of this 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* (EPBC Act) in its annual report, which is available from the Parliament of Australia website and the Commonwealth Transparency Portal.

APS Net Zero 2030 emissions reporting

As part of the reporting requirements under section 516A of the EPBC Act, and in accordance with the APS Net Zero 2030 policy, the department is required to publicly report on the emissions from its operations.

The APS Net Zero emissions reporting for the department includes staff and business activities incorporating flights, car hire and accommodation and fleet vehicle usage (see

Tables 17 and 18). Emissions attributed to the running of Parliament House, including for departmental staff working in the building, are separately reported by DPS in its annual report.

Table 17: Emissions inventory for the Department of the House of Representatives (location-based approach for electrical emissions), 2023–24

Emission source	Scope 1 kg CO ₂ -e	Scope 2 kg CO ₂ -3	Scope 3 kg CO ₂ -e	Total kg CO ₂ -e
Electricity (location-based approach)	N/A	0.000	0.000	0.000
Natural gas	0.000	N/A	0.000	0.000
Solid waste*	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.00
Refrigerants*	0.000	N/A	N/A	0.000
Fleet and other vehicles	4.535	N/A	1.154	5.689
Domestic commercial flights	N/A	N/A	57.641	57.641
Domestic car hire*	N/A	N/A	0.814	0.814
Domestic travel accommodation*	N/A	N/A	16.071	16.071
Other energy	0.000	N/A	0.000	0.000
Total kg CO₂-e	4.535	0.000	75.680	80.215

Note: the table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

*indicates emission sources collected for the first time in 2023–24. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.

Table 18: Emissions inventory for the Department of the House of Representatives (market-based approach for electrical emissions), 2023–24

Emission source	Scope 2 t O ₂ -3	Scope 3 t CO ₂ -e	Total t CO ₂ -e	Percentage of electricity use
Electricity (location-based approach)	0.000	0.000	0.000	N/A
Market-based electricity emissions	0.000	0.000	0.000	N/A
Total kg CO₂-e	-	-	-	N/A
Mandatory renewables¹	-	-	-	N/A
Voluntary renewables²	-	-	-	N/A

Note: The table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

¹ Mandatory renewables are the portion of electricity consumed from the grid that is generated by renewable sources. This includes the renewable power percentage.

² Voluntary renewables reflect the eligible carbon credit units surrendered by the entity. This may include purchased large-scale generation certificates, power purchasing agreements, GreenPower and the jurisdictional renewable power percentage (ACT only).

External scrutiny

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

Judicial and administrative decisions

During 2023–24, 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 2023–24, the Auditor-General did not present any reports directly relating to the administration of the department or its operations. The Australian National Audit Office provided an unqualified audit report on the department's 2023–24 financial statements.

In 2023–24, 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 2023–24, the committee met six times and presented three reports:

- » Report No 27: Annual Report 2022–2023
- » Report No 28: Additional Estimates 2023–2024
- » Report No 29: Budget Estimates 2024–2025.

Disability reporting mechanisms

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 is the overarching framework for inclusive policies, programs and infrastructure that will support people with disability to participate in all areas of Australian life.

The strategy sets out where practical changes will be made to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia. It acts to ensure the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into Australia's policies and programs that affect people with disability, their families and carers.

All levels of government have committed to deliver more comprehensive and visible reporting under the strategy. A range of reports on progress of the strategy's actions and outcome areas are available at www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/ads.

The department continually seeks to improve accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities, including through aligning its actions with this strategy and working with other parliamentary departments through the Access and Inclusion Champions Group.

Freedom of information

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

Management of people

Workforce profile

As at 30 June 2024, the department had 192 employees – 151 ongoing, five non-ongoing and 36 casuals.

The department's workforce is 65% female, and 50% of leadership positions are held by women. Of all staff, 34% are aged over 50 years, and 2% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Employee statistics

Tables 19 to 22 show the department's employee statistics as at 30 June 2024 (and 30 June 2023 for comparison), including whether staff are in ongoing, non-ongoing or casual positions. The tables provide information on the substantive classification of staff, as well as their gender and geographical location.

Table 19: Employment type by classification and gender, as at 30 June 2024

Classification	Ongoing		Non-Ongoing		Casual		Total		
	Man/ Male	Woman/ Female	Man/ Male	Woman/ Female	Man/ Male	Woman/ Female	Man/ Male	Woman/ Female	Total
SES 2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
SES 1	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	4
EB 2	10	13	0	0	0	0	10	13	23
EB 1	18	32	0	3	0	0	18	35	53
PSL 6	11	27	0	1	0	0	11	28	39
PSL 5	1	6	0	1	0	0	1	7	8
PSL 4	6	18	0	0	0	0	6	18	24
PSL 3	2	2	0	0	1	4	3	6	9
PSL 2	0	0	0	0	15	16	15	16	31
PSL 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	52	99	0	5	16	20	68	124	192

The department had no staff recorded in the human resource management information system as non-binary, using a different term or preferring not to answer.

Figures for this table exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 20: Employment type by classification and gender, as at 30 June 2023

Classification	Ongoing		Non-Ongoing		Casual		Total		Total
	Men/ Male	Woman/ Female	Men/ Male	Woman/ Female	Men/ Male	Woman/ Female	Men/ Male	Woman/ Female	
SES 2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
SES 1	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	4
EB 2	8	14	0	0	0	0	8	14	22
EB 1	21	26	0	1	0	0	21	27	48
PSL 6	8	24	0	2	0	0	8	26	34
PSL 5	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	7	9
PSL 4	6	16	0	3	0	0	6	19	25
PSL 3	2	0	1	0	1	1	4	1	5
PSL 2	0	0	0	0	13	15	13	15	28
PSL 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	51	88	1	6	14	16	66	119	176

The department had no staff recorded in the human resource management information system as non-binary, using a different term or preferring not to answer.

Figures for this table exclude the Clerk of the House.

Table 21: Employment type by office and location, as at 30 June 2023 and 30 June 2024

Office	Ongoing		Non-Ongoing		Casual		Total	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
Executive / Executive Support	11	11	0	0	0	0	11	12
Table Office	10	14	1	0	0	0	11	14
Procedure Office	12	13	0	0	0	0	12	13
Committee Office	66	67	2	2	0	0	68	69
International and Parliamentary Relations Office	6	10	0	0	0	0	6	10
Information Management Office	13	13	1	1	1	1	15	15
Finance Office	6	5	0	1	0	0	6	6
People Strategies Office	6	8	3	1	0	0	9	9
Corporate Governance Office	N/A	2	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	2
Serjeant-at-Arms' Office	9	8	0	0	30	35	39	43
State or Territory								
ACT	139	151	7	5	31	36	177	193
Total	139	151	7	5	31	36	177	193

Figures include the Clerk of the House.

Table 22: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, as at 30 June 2023 and 30 June 2024

Employment type	Staff numbers	
	2023	2024
Ongoing	2	3
Non-Ongoing	0	0
Casual	0	0
Total	2	3

Employee engagement

Staff Recognition and Rewards Framework

During the reporting period, the department recognised and rewarded employee achievements, reinforcing the department's strategic objectives, vision and values through its Recognition and Rewards Framework.

The framework provides for both formal and informal options to recognise and reward employees for their professional dedication, alignment with departmental values and performance that contributes to the achievement of the department's strategic priorities.

The framework seeks to build employee motivation and productivity, assist with retention of high-performing employees and contribute to a positive workplace culture. It also seeks to place people and inclusion at the centre of how we engage with each other and with external stakeholders.

Thirty-three employees were formally recognised through these processes.

People strategies: planning and delivery

Recruitment

The department advertised to fill 31 ongoing vacancies during 2023–24 (compared with 28 in 2022–23), of which 17 were filled by external applicants.

Retention

In 2023–24, 24 ongoing and 15 non-ongoing staff left the department. The turnover rate was 17% for ongoing staff (compared with 9% in 2022–23).

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

Alumni

The department formed an alumni association of former staff in 2008. As of 30 June 2024, the association had 307 members. It issued three newsletters during the year, in July, November and May, and held a reception and annual general meeting in November 2023.

Social club

'Reps Community', the social club of the department, has been busy over the past 12 months. Reps Community continued its charitable focus as well as supporting the department's staff. The club held events for the Biggest Morning Tea and R U OK day, as well as a barbecue breakfast in support of Legacy, raising more than \$430 for these worthwhile causes. The club has maintained a series of coffee mornings for new starters, afternoon social gatherings, and the traditional Easter egg hunt and morning tea for staff and their children. The club also supported a trivia night with DPS and Senate colleagues in the Great Hall.

Reps Community held several raffles throughout the year, for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter and a Christmas raffle in preparation for the departmental Christmas party for staff, which was held in the Members Dining Room in Parliament House. Reps Community also arranged for the donation of food hampers and continues to support local charities through aluminium can recycling and 'Lids for Kids' programs.

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 program offers three-month placements to employees of graduate programs of Australian Government agencies. The program exposes graduates to parliamentary processes and to the departments supporting the work of the parliament.

Graduates develop the necessary knowledge and skills to make a significant contribution to the department and broader parliamentary service, while gaining valuable insights into how their home department or agency interacts with the parliament and its committees. The program continued to draw a high level of interest from graduates from a range of agencies.

Seven graduates undertook placements in the department in 2023–24. Feedback from graduates confirmed that the program is highly successful and that the objectives of the placements were met.



Participants in the 2024 Parliament of Australia Graduate Program. Image: Geoffrey Dunn, AusPic/DPS.

Learning and development

In 2023–24, the department delivered a total of 56 face-to-face and virtual training and development sessions to employees, based around the core themes of health and safety, respectful relationships, workplace bullying and harassment prevention, business skills, and management and leadership capability. This is in addition to training and information-sharing sessions delivered internally by departmental staff focusing on building staff capability in the areas of parliamentary practice and procedure.

Table 23 shows the number of staff from each classification attending training, the total number of training days attended, and the average training days attended per person for 2023–24 (and the latter for 2022–23, for comparison).

Table 23: Staff attendance at training courses

Classification	Headcount	Training days attended	Average training days attended per person	
	2023–24	2023–24	2022–23	2023–24
SES	5	2.69	0.2	0.5
EB 2	41	22.59	0.8	0.6
EB 1	60	20.84	0.6	0.3
PSL 6	34	22.87	0.8	0.7
PSL 5	8	6.59	0.4	0.8
PSL 4	16	8.76	1.1	0.6
PSL 3	5	2.20	1.2	0.4
PSL 2	15	3.84	0.5	0.3
Not specified		64		
Total	184	154.38	1.0	0.83

Studies assistance

The department's studies assistance scheme allows employees to complete relevant tertiary study to improve their professional skills and knowledge. Eight employees accessed studies assistance during the year (compared with three in 2022–23). Collectively, financial assistance of \$6,373 was administered (compared with \$5,095 in 2022–23), along with a total of 87 days of study leave at full pay.

Performance assessment

All eligible staff participated in the annual work performance assessment cycle, which was completed on 30 April 2024. The cycle involves setting individual work objectives, conducting performance assessments, preparing individual development plans and providing feedback to supervisors. Information from the individual development plans is used to formulate the training program for the next calendar year.

The department moved to its first full cycle under the new online performance management system. The new system guided employees and managers through the steps in the cycle using workflows and provided enhanced reporting capabilities to better support performance management processes across the department.

Diversity and inclusion

The department is committed to actively building a diverse and inclusive workplace that promotes equity and harnesses the skills and experiences of people from all backgrounds. The department partners with the following external organisations that provide strategic and operational-level advice to build capability through inclusion:

- » Australian Breastfeeding Association
- » Australian Network on Disability
- » Diversity Council.

Further support and capability are provided through the department's employee assistance program provider.

Training programs were delivered across the organisation to build awareness and understanding of diversity, inclusion, discrimination, bullying and harassment, cultural awareness, and safety and wellbeing.

The department is supportive of staff participation in employee networks operating in the parliamentary service, including the Parliamentary Service Indigenous Employee Network, the Parliamentary Disability Employee Network, Access and Inclusion Champions Group and the DPS LGBTQIA+ Network.

The department facilitated the Australian Parliament's reaccreditation with the Australian Breastfeeding Association as a breastfeeding friendly workplace.

Women in leadership

The department continues to have a significant level of female workforce participation. As at 30 June 2024, the proportion of female employees in the department was 65%, compared to 63% in 2022–23. The department continues to have strong female representation in leadership roles, with women accounting for 50% of employees at the Executive Band 2 level and above. Across all other classification levels, the representation of women continues to be high.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander engagement

The department continued to promote engagement with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and culture through a range of activities and commitments within the *Australian Parliamentary Service Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan*. Work continued on a new 'Stretch' Reconciliation Action Plan for the parliamentary service, expected to be finalised in 2024. The department also delivers cultural appreciation training as part of the internal training calendar.

During the reporting period, the department also participated in the Jawun APS secondment program, a professional development opportunity for employees to contribute their skills to support the economic development of First Nations Australians while learning about First Nations culture and history. Two employees participated in the program in 2023–24. The department had three First Nations staff members as at 30 June 2024 (Table 22).

People from culturally and linguistically diverse background

As at 30 June 2024, 9% of employees (17 people) self-reported as being born overseas. As at 30 June 2024, 10% of employees (20 people) reported that English was not their first spoken language.

More broadly, the department values workforce diversity and seeks to attract and support employees from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and heritages. The department benefits from the diverse views, backgrounds and beliefs of employees.

People with disability

The department holds Bronze membership status in the Australian Network on Disability, a not-for-profit organisation resourced by its members to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business.

The department has an employee-centric approach to supporting people with disability and their managers. This includes workplace adjustments and assistive technology to eliminate workplace barriers; provision of supervisor training courses; and dedicated case management support to provide employees with disability, ill health or injury – and their managers – with information on flexible and inclusive work environments.

In 2023–24, 2% of staff (three people) self-identified as having a disability.

Set the Standard report (Jenkins review)

During the reporting period, the department has continued to engage in implementing the recommendations contained in the Australian Human Rights Commission's report on its Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces, *Set the Standard*.

While some of the report's 28 recommendations relate more directly to parliamentarians and their staff, or to other organisations, the department appreciates that it has an important role in contributing to the overall culture in parliamentary workplaces. Together with other agencies, the department has engaged in implementing several of the recommendations.

In the first six months, the Clerk regularly met with the heads of the other parliamentary departments and the independent chair of the Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce to progress implementation of recommendations. Similarly in the first six months, the Deputy Clerk represented the department on the Implementation Group, which consisted of representatives from parliamentary departments and relevant public sector agencies.

Other staff participated in various interdepartmental working groups to progress work on implementing recommendations, including through PAAG and HRAP. The department has one staff representative on the Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce's staff consultation group.

Separately and in parallel to the interdepartmental collaboration, the department has continued to work on its own initiatives to further foster a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace. This has included a series of well-received, scenario-based workshops for staff at all levels throughout the department, with a focus on appropriate behaviour in the workplace. This and other work continue into the 2024–25 reporting period.

Employment arrangements

The *Department of the House of Representatives Enterprise Agreement 2024–2026* came into effect on 26 April 2024 following a staff ballot where 99% of participants voted in favour. The agreement provides non-SES staff with competitive remuneration and employment conditions which include enhancements to align with APSC negotiated common conditions across the Commonwealth Public Service. 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 2023–24 to pay staff a monetary bonus.

Employment conditions for SES staff are set out in individual determinations made under section 24(1) of the *Parliamentary Service Act*. Many of these conditions are aligned with the department's enterprise agreement. The terms and conditions of the Clerk's appointment are determined by the Speaker, as per section 63 of the *Parliamentary Service Act*. Table 24 shows the numbers of staff employed under different employment instruments.

Table 24: Employment arrangements for SES and non-SES staff, as at 30 June 2024

	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise agreement	0	187	187
Individual flexibility arrangement	0	0	0
Australian workplace agreement	0	0	0
Common law contract	0	0	0
Determination under section 24(1) of the <i>Parliamentary Service Act 1999</i>	5	0	5

Remuneration

Salary ranges under the 2024–2026 enterprise agreement, as at the end of the reporting period, are summarised in Table 25.

Table 25: Salary ranges of staff covered by the 2024–2026 enterprise agreement, as at 30 June 2024

Classification	Salary range	
	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
EB 2	156,820	166,163
EB 1	121,163	135,148
PSL 6	97,645	110,817
PSL 5	90,255	95,503
PSL 4	79,794	86,329
PSL 3	72,187	77,550
PSL 2	64,154	70,049
PSL 1	56,711	62,054

In 2023–24, departmental employee benefits totalled \$22.378 million (compared with \$21.262 million in 2022–23).

Non-salary benefits

The department offers staff a range of additional non-remuneration benefits, including:

- » annual influenza vaccination
- » mental health and wellbeing support
- » mentoring and coaching programs
- » in-house capability development programs
- » access to a serious illness leave bank
- » studies assistance to eligible employees
- » access to flexible working arrangements
- » contributions to relevant professional memberships.

Executive remuneration

The PGPA Rule requires the reporting of executive remuneration information for specified officials of Commonwealth entities on an accrual basis. Tables 26 to 27 summarise the remuneration of key management personnel and senior executives. During short absences of senior executive staff, parliamentary officers may be provided with an opportunity to act in the position of the absent senior executive staff. These short acting opportunities are not included in Tables 26 or 27.

Table 26: Key management personnel, 2023–24

Name	Position	Term as key management personnel
Claressa Surtees	Clerk	Full year
Peter Banson	Deputy Clerk	Full year
Peggy Danaee	Serjeant-at-Arms	Full year
Russell Chafer	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	Full year
Glenn Worthington	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	Full year
James Catchpole	Clerk Assistant (Table)	1 July 2023 to 5 May 2024
Justin Baker	Clerk Assistant (Table)	6 May 2024 to 30 June 2024

In accordance with the PGPA Rule, information about the remuneration and benefits of key management personnel is set out in Table 27.

Table 27: Remuneration and benefits of key management personnel, 2023–24

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary (\$)	Bonuses (\$)	Other benefits and allowances (\$)		Long-service leave (\$)	Other long-term benefits (\$)		
Claressa Surtees	Clerk	377,116.93	-	\$26,729.63	58,461.94	14,151.19	-	-	476,459.69
Peter Banson	Deputy Clerk	293,174.93	-	-	51,978.54	10,074.91	-	-	355,228.38
Peggy Danaee	Serjeant-at-Arms	236,236.18	-	-	42,281.40	12,210.34	-	-	290,727.92
Russell Chafer	Clerk Assistant (Committees)	234,855.28	-	-	42,137.97	9,037.56	-	-	286,030.81
Glenn Worthington	Clerk Assistant (Procedure)	229,004.13	-	-	45,868.73	-13,305.12	-	-	261,567.74
James Catchpole	Clerk Assistant (Table)	199,144.73	-	-	36,027.43	6,046.47	-	-	241,218.63
Justin Baker	Clerk Assistant (Table)	37,651.13	-	-	3,613.95	3,831.22	-	-	45,096.30
Total:		\$1,607,183.31		\$26,729.63	\$280,369.96	\$42,046.57			\$1,956,329.47

Other senior executives

The department did not have any senior executives who did not meet the definition of key management personnel for part of the year.

Other highly paid staff

During the reporting period ended 30 June 2024, the department did not have any highly paid staff who did not meet the definitions of key management personnel or senior executives; therefore, there is no reporting on other highly paid staff.

Work health and safety

The department is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the 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, and consideration of these matters will be strengthened through the new Parliament of Australia Human Resources Advisory Panel.

In 2023–24, to continue to meet its obligations under the WHS Act, the department:

- » maintained a robust work health and safety management system, to ensure workers are protected from safety risks across the spectrum of activities the department conducts and the shared workplace it operates in
- » held quarterly meetings with the health and safety committee
- » provided work health and safety training and information to all staff, with a continued focus on mental health awareness training through the department's internal training calendar
- » continued to promote flexible working arrangements, including part-time, working from home, and flexible start and end times
- » enhanced positive early intervention outcomes that have supported injured or ill workers to achieve an early, safe and sustainable return to work
- » conducted workstation assessments with a strengthened approach to reasonable adjustment
- » provided a confidential counselling service through the employee assistance program
- » worked closely with the PWSS to provide training and awareness of services to staff
- » continued to promote a healthy lifestyle, including providing influenza vaccinations, vaccination leave and healthy living reimbursements.

During the reporting period, 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 most assets is minimal.

The department adopts a 'break-fix' replacement policy for office machines and equipment. During the year asset purchases included mobile drawer units, fridges and televisions.

A review of the intangible assets category was conducted to verify assets in use. Four assets were disposed of, due to being replaced by either cloud-based systems or systems owned by the Department of Parliamentary Services. 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 29 contracts above the reporting threshold, three of which were not reported on AusTender within the prescribed period. No other identified instances of non-compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules have been identified.

Reportable consultancy contracts

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

Before engaging consultants, the department considers 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 2023–24, one new reportable consultancy contract was entered into, for which \$0.016 million actual expenditure was incurred during the period. In addition, three ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$0.065 million.

Table 29 lists the organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure during the reporting period.

Table 28: Reportable consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Reportable consultancy contract	Number	Expenditure (\$)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	1	15,899.40
Ongoing contracts entered into during the previous reporting period	3	65,078.78
Total	4	80,978.18

Table 29: Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure, 2023–24

Organisation	Proportion of 2023–24 total spend (%)	Expenditure (\$)
RSM Australia Pty Ltd	73.01	59,125.00
Atturra Business Applications	19.64	15,899.40
JLL Public Sector Valuations Pty Ltd	6.11	4,950.00
Dr Gabrielle Appleby	1.24	1,003.78
Total	100	80,978.18

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.

Reportable non-consultancy contracts

During 2023-24, 28 new reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$0.338 million. In addition, 17 ongoing non-consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total expenditure of \$0.139 million.

Table 31 lists the organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure during the reporting period.

Table 30: Reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Reportable non-consultancy contract	Number	Expenditure (\$)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	28	512,269.25
Ongoing contracts entered into during the previous reporting period	17	354,297.12
Total	45	866,566.37

Table 31: Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure, 2023–24

Organisation	Proportion of 2023–24 total spend (%)	Expenditure (\$)
Comcare	20.07	173,946.80
Technology One Ltd	19.70	170,708.05
Aurion Corporation Ltd	10.82	93,785.29
Ninetwofive Interiors Pty Ltd	5.44	47,135.00
Micro Focus Pty Ltd	4.91	42,558.63
Total of the largest shares	60.94	528,133.77

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

Competitive tendering and contracting

There were no instances during 2023–24 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 enterprises (SME) and small enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance’s website. 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
- » promoting and supporting the onboarding of e-invoicing where payment is made within five calendar days.

Advertising and market research

During 2023–24 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 2023–24, external legal expenditure was \$27,723 (\$11,161 in 2022–23). The department did not incur any internal legal expenses during 2023–24 (also nil in 2022–23).