

2023 PRESIDING OFFICERS' STATEMENT REGARDING THE CONDITION OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE

This is the Presiding Officers' ninth annual statement on the condition of Parliament House. The Presiding Officers' statement continues as a response to a recommendation by the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee in its 2012 report on the performance of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS).

As one of the most visited and recognisable buildings in Australia the Presiding Officers commissioned a Building Condition Assessment Report (BCAR) in 2014–15. The report was due to the building's age and requirement for infrastructure renewal, to ensure its 200-year aspirational lifespan could be achieved. The BCAR outlined a 10-year program of works to address deterioration in the building fabric and preserve it into the future ensuring it will continue to meet the changing needs of parliament.

On 9 May 2023, Parliament House celebrated its 35th Anniversary. This report details capital works and maintenance programs that contribute to maintaining Parliament House and its precincts as befits its status as an iconic building and location of national significance.

The capital works and major building maintenance activities are outlined below.

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

Accessible bathrooms upgrade

The project aims to upgrade 60 bathrooms to ensure compliance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*. As at 1 September 2023, 33 out of the 60 bathrooms have been completed. The remaining 27 bathrooms will be delivered at a rate of nine per annum over the next three years to minimise inconvenience to the operation of the building.

Baby change tables were added to the scope of the accessible bathroom project in 2023. There are 23 accessible bathrooms equally distributed through Parliament House identified for change table installation. As at 1 September 2023, 15 baby change tables have been installed. Another eight will be programmed in the 2023–24 financial year.

Construction of a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility

In 2021, the need for an adequate secure space at Parliament House was identified to service the demands of ministers, parliamentarians, and other priority users. The Office of National Intelligence (ONI) has been working closely with DPS to establish a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) within Parliament House.

In early 2022, the ground floor Library was identified as an ideal location for a SCIF that would fulfill the security, infrastructure, and capacity requirements. The SCIF was completed in August 2023.

The next phase of this project involves the re-establishment of the Library Reading Room, which includes designing a space consistent with original design intent. This phase is expected to be completed by March 2024.

Fire systems and services upgrade

This program of work focuses on enhancing various aspects of Parliament House's fire detection and suppression systems. This includes replacement of fire doors, detectors, sprinklers, and the treatment of penetrations through fire compartments. In 2023, this program of work progressed further with the installation of a colour graphics system and nitrogen inerting system.

In June 2023, a new colour graphics system was installed. This system replaces the outdated paper-based system previously used by the fire maintenance contractor and emergency services and was designed to improve efficiency and provide better visual representation of the sprinkler valve rooms.

The second installation, the nitrogen inerting system, removes oxygen from the sprinkler system and replaces it with nitrogen. By doing so, it prevents corrosion from occurring within the sprinkler system. This is a crucial step in ensuring the longevity and effectiveness of the fire system. The installation was completed in April 2023.

Heating and cooling systems (and other in-ceiling services) upgrade

The heating and cooling infrastructure for Parliament House is a complex system that covers every space in the building and is nearing end-of-useful-life. Planning has commenced to define the requirements for a multi-disciplinary program of work aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of heating and cooling systems to ensure better control and improved comfort for all building occupants.

This program will be the largest capital works project since the construction of Parliament House. The program will include upgrades and replacements for heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), hydraulic services (hot and cold-water supply), integration with fire services, lighting, as well as acoustic and seismic treatments for ceilings.

The timing for delivery of this program of work is dependent on the ability to relocate Parliament House building occupants for periods of time for access to the services to undertake the work.

Electrical and lighting systems upgrade

The upgrade of the electrical distribution boards was completed in September 2022. This project saw the replacement of all 833 distribution boards impacting every area of the building and took five years to complete.

The core infrastructure of a new lighting control system was installed in February 2023. The completion of this project provides the building management system with a building wide centralised lighting control system.

The project to replace and upgrade inefficient external light fittings with LED technology continued. The installation of veranda lights and enclosures were completed in January 2023 and the final design for the sloped and curved wall lighting has been finalised. The procurement and installation of replacement assets is scheduled for late 2023.

Electric vehicle charging stations

The Electric Vehicle (EV) Program includes the installation of 58 EV chargers across four car parks. Work officially commenced on 21 June 2023.

The program entails the following:

- 10 chargers in the public car park.
- 8 chargers in the Ministerial car park.
- 20 chargers in the Senate car park.
- 20 chargers in the House of Representatives car park.

This program is a crucial step towards reducing global carbon emissions and providing convenient and efficient charging options for zero-emission vehicles. By strategically placing these EV chargers in car parks, the department is taking a significant step towards a greener and more sustainable future.

MAJOR BUILDING MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Maintenance work

Throughout the 2022–23 period, various building maintenance tasks were carried out to ensure the optimal condition and functionality of the building infrastructure. These tasks included:

- assisting the ongoing capital works program, which involved supporting and contributing to the larger-scale construction projects taking place
- maintaining and preserving clear finish surfaces, such as timber windowsills, and cleaning and waxing of Class A and B furniture
- implementing an ongoing interior painting program (approx. 50,559m²) to maintain the appearance of walls, doors, and trims
- conducting re-sealing and replacement of parquet floors as needed to maintain their quality and safety
- replacing carpets (approx. 1,105m²) in general circulation areas to address wear and tear
- performing pressure cleaning on external windows and building walls, including an extensive 6600 square meters of external façade.

Commissioned and global furniture

Furniture refurbishment and repair was completed to extend the useful life of 694 items including:

- refurbishment of 107 ministerial and parliamentary timber visitor chairs
- refurbishment and reconditioning of 566 lounges and lounge chair cushions, and
- refurbishment of 15 timber items including 4 desks, 5 credenzas, 1 cabinet and 5 bookshelves.

Post-Election Activities

DPS has made progress in the ongoing program to refurbish ministerial suites to ensure appropriate presentation and function. Five ensuite refurbishments were completed in 2022–23.

Since July 2023, 10 further suites were completed and an additional two suites are due for completion by the end of October 2023 with three more suites planned to be refurbished by the end of Summer Recess 2023–24.

Landscape maintenance

Notable Parliament House landscape activities undertaken in 2022–23 included:

- resurfacing of two original clay-based tennis courts
- replanting of approximately 900 Junipers trees and shrubs on Parliament
- resurfacing of the Senate sports fields, and
- planting of approximately 900 Callistemon shrubs on the slip road embankments.

Overview of principal maintenance works undertaken

The following table outlines a historical overview of maintenance works from 2017-18 to 2022–23:

Nature of works	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Painting (sq mtrs)	53,600	65,358	59,067	39,461	33,752	50,559
Re-seal of parquetry flooring (sq mtrs)	13,013	14,614	10,047	6,937	14,352	12,600
All external glazing cleaned* (partial)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	*Yes
All external walls cleaned* (partial)	No	No	No	Yes	*Yes	*Yes
No. of bathrooms or ensuites re-tiled	17	37	2	5	4	11
Replacement of carpet (sq mtrs)	7,775	3,700	5,235	3,448	722	1,105
Repair of expansion joints (lineal mtrs)	1,320	1,137	1,320	0	0	35
No. refurbished Status A & B furniture	277	739	617	816	481	694

The maintenance works undertaken in 2022–23 resulted in:

- satisfaction with facilities and building condition increasing from 89% in 2020–21 to 97% in 2022–23, exceeding the target of 85%, and
- satisfaction with landscape condition and appearance maintained a result of 99% in 2022–23, exceeding the target of 85%. The result in 2021–22 was 99%.

(Source: 2023 Building Occupant Satisfaction Survey)