



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA
HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

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13 July 2015

Ms Rebecca Gordon
Inquiry Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Dear Ms Gordon

Inquiry into the delivery of electoral education

Thank you for your e-mail of 30 June 2015 inviting me to make a submission to the Committee's inquiry into the delivery of electoral education.

I propose to make some brief remarks on the contribution that the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office makes to electoral education, which includes facilitating the involvement of Members, here at Parliament House.

All school visits to Parliament House are co-ordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, on behalf of, and in partnership with, the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) and Visitor Services (Department of Parliamentary Services). The Serjeant's Office administers all booking requests from schools, or their agents, for one or more of the following tour components:

- A guided tour of Parliament House, which might include visiting a chamber gallery;
- A lesson with the Parliamentary Education Office; and
- Schools Hospitality (where students receive light refreshment and may have the chance to meet with their local Member, schedules permitting). The Department receives administered funding to deliver this particular component.

Co-ordination of bookings involves liaison with parliamentary colleagues in the PEO and Visitor Services, the school (or their agent) to confirm arrangements, as well as correspondence with the relevant local Member to advise of booking times. Senators are also able to attend the schools hospitality if desired. The co-ordination of the booking service was consolidated in the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office in 1998 following concerns expressed by schools and their agents about the lack of a single contact point for bookings.

Attachment A contains a summary of the number of PEO lessons, Visitor Services tours, and Hospitality meetings that were conducted from 2012-15. (You might receive statistics from other sources, but I thought including these summaries provides the Committee with a sense of the volume of bookings supported by the Serjeant's Office.)

The Committee will note that in 2014–15, 90,132 students from around Australia completed a lesson with the PEO (compared with 87,657 students in 2013–14) and 120,216 students went on a tour with Visitor Services (up from 113,497 in 2013-14). 100,254 hospitality meetings were also conducted in 2014-15, compared with 96,341 in 2013-14. The Committee may be interested to know that the cumulative total of students who have participated in the programmes since the Parliament House building opened on 9 May 1988 is more than 1.89 million. This is a good example of the parliamentary departments working collaboratively to deliver electoral education services to the community, and schools in particular, and to support the role of parliamentarians in interacting with students, an opportunity which is highly valued by Members and Senators.

More broadly, the Department also represents Parliament House, on behalf of the PEO and Visitor Services, at the biannual PACER meetings. PACER is the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate programme, which provides a rebate for students from schools that are at least 150 kilometres from Canberra (with more remote schools receiving a larger rebate) to enable students from those schools to visit Canberra to learn more about civics and citizenship.

Schools may visit Parliament House, the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, the National Electoral Education Centre and the Australian War Memorial, as well as other sites of cultural and historical interest. The parliamentary administration is an important stakeholder, and the Department has worked collaboratively with PACER partners over many years to enhance and strengthen the programme. Outside of the regular meeting times, the Department corresponds with the PACER group to assist with administration and related activities.

I trust this information is of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

DAVID ELDER
Clerk of the House

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR SCHOOL VISITS TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

ATTACHMENT A

Parliamentary Education Office Lessons

1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015

Month	Schools	Groups	Students
July	152	253	8,175
August	203	325	11,181
September	211	310	10,072
October	185	291	9,487
November	197	302	9,467
December	45	76	2,448
Total	993	1,557	50,830
January	0	0	0
February	61	115	3,988
March	150	279	10,001
April	91	153	5,045
May	142	265	9,425
June	174	296	10,843
Total	618	1,108	39,302
TOTAL	1,611	2,665	90,132

1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014

Month	Schools	Groups	Students
July	148	244	8,194
August	231	368	12,553
September	198	309	10,131
October	189	298	10,128
November	195	311	10,149
December	29	44	1,463
Total	990	1,574	52,618
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January	0	0	0
February	50	90	3,315
March	123	222	7,757
April	91	150	4,915
May	150	267	9,147
June	177	292	9,905
Total	591	1,021	35,039
TOTAL	1,581	2,595	87,657

1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

Month	Schools	Groups	Students
July	155	253	8,360
August	250	412	13,922
September	200	325	10,198
October	180	297	10,187
November	234	358	11,239
December	35	56	1,777
Total	1054	1,701	55,683
January	0	0	0
February	55	105	3,640
March	144	218	7,564
April	98	167	5,443
May	175	316	11,191
June	178	301	10,494
Total	650	1,107	38,332
TOTAL	1,704	2,808	94,015

(# New booking system, called Venue Management System effective 1 January 2014)

Visitor Services Tours

1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015

Month	Hospitality	Groups	Students
July	9,361	342	11,219
August	15,149	540	18,094
September	13,796	486	15,827
October	11,768	429	13,789
November	10,161	388	11,912
December	2,469	94	3,012
Total	62,704	2,279	73,853
January	0	0	0
February	3,727	123	4,267
March	9,417	342	12,204
April	4,644	168	5,453
May	9,514	325	11,341
June	10,248	359	13,098
Total	37,550	1,317	46,363
TOTAL	100,254	3,596	120,216

1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014

Month	Hospitality	Groups	Students
July	8,167	303	10,269
August	14,139	513	16,912
September	13,029	474	15,318
October	10,576	396	12,926
November	11,604	411	13,240
December	2,147	75	2,362
Total	59,662	2,172	71,027
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January	0	0	0
February	3,043	91	3,371
March	7,912	264	8,884
April	4,311	166	5,394
May	10,415	350	11,932
June	10,998	379	12,889
Total	36,679	1,250	42,470
TOTAL	96,341	3,422	113,497

1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

Month	Hospitality	Groups	Students
July	9,084	307	10,183
August	16,609	592	19,305
September	12,389	456	14,422
October	12,038	403	13,106
November	11,725	415	12,815
December	1,771	73	2,174
Total	63,616	2,246	72,005
January	0	0	0
February	3,373	108	3,757
March	7,336	247	8,378
April	4,935	176	5,820
May	10,957	362	12,601
June	11,440	398	13,090
Total	38,041	1,291	43,646
TOTAL	101,657	3,537	115,651

(# New booking system, called Venue Management System effective 1 January 2014)