

Overview of Parliamentary Library Resource Agreement

The Parliamentary Librarian operates under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*:

- (1) The functions of the Parliamentary Librarian are:
 - (a) to provide high quality information, analysis and advice to Senators and Members of the House of Representatives in support of their parliamentary and representational roles; and
 - (b) to undertake such other responsibilities within the joint Department, consistent with the function set out in paragraph (a), as are conferred in writing on the Parliamentary Librarian by the Secretary of the joint Department with the approval of the Presiding Officers.
- (2) The Parliamentary Librarian must perform the function mentioned in paragraph (1) (a):
 - (a) in a timely, impartial and confidential manner; and
 - (b) maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and integrity; and
 - (c) on the basis of equality of access for all Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, parliamentary committees and staff acting on behalf of Senators, Members or parliamentary committees; and
 - (d) having regard to the independence of Parliament from the Executive Government of the Commonwealth.

The requirement for a resource agreement is identified in Section 38G of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* which states:

- (1) The Secretary of the joint Department must provide resources to the Parliamentary Librarian in accordance with an annual agreement that satisfies the requirements of subsection (2).
- (2) The agreement must be:
 - (a) made between the Secretary of the joint Department and the Parliamentary Librarian; and
 - (b) approved by the Presiding Officers in writing after receiving advice about the contents of the agreement from the Library Committee.
- (3) The Presiding Officers may approve the agreement for the purposes of subsection (2) either before or after the agreement is made by the Secretary and the Parliamentary Librarian.

Resources allocated to the Library's budget change in accordance with those of the department, i.e. the parameter increase from the Department of Finance and Deregulation and a reduction due to the efficiency dividend. In 2010-11, a one off allocation of \$500,000 was provided to "to enhance the capacity of the Parliamentary Library to assist non-Government parties in developing policies in the lead up to Federal Election".

Efficiencies implemented since the commencement of the resource agreement include:

- Greater productivity from implementation of new automated systems.
- Reduction in expenditure on the Library collection.
- Reduction in staffing

The Library has benefited from DPS projects including funding digitisation of Hansard and the replacement of the Electronic Media Monitoring System.

The Parliamentary Library's Statement of Client Services lists the services available to clients. Changes are approved by the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library, Presiding Officers and Secretary, DPS.