
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Appropriations and Administration Committee

House of Representatives
Annual Report 2010–11

November 2011
Canberra

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Membership of the Committee

Chair Mr Harry Jenkins MP

Members Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP

Mr Ewen Jones MP

Ms Nola Marino MP

Mr Kelvin Thomson MP

Ms Jill Hall MP

Mr Craig Kelly MP

Hon Bruce Scott MP

Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP

Secretary Ms Robyn McClelland

Annual Report 2010–11

The Committee

- 1.1 The Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration, appointed under standing order 222A, considers estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of the House of Representatives for each year and provides to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, estimates of amounts for inclusion in the appropriation bills for the Department.
- 1.2 The Committee also considers proposals for changes to the administration of the Department of the House of Representatives or variations to services provided by the Department, other matters of finance or services as may be referred to it by the Speaker or the House, the administration and funding of security measures affecting the House, and proposals for works in the parliamentary precincts that are subject to parliamentary approval. The Committee reports on these matters to the Speaker or the House, as appropriate.
- 1.3 When conferring with the Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations and Staffing, the Committee may consider estimates of the funding required for the operation of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) each year, and provide to the Speaker for presentation to the House and transmission to the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, estimates of amounts for inclusion in appropriation bills for the DPS. To date, the Committee has heard from DPS on its estimates and budgetary position, but has not reported to the House on these matters.
- 1.4 Standing order 222A(vi) (ii) provides that the Committee make an annual report to the House the amounts for inclusion in the appropriation bills for the Department of the House of Representatives.

- 1.5 The House Appropriations and Administration Committee was established at the beginning of the 43rd Parliament on 29 September 2011. The establishment of the Committee reflected a requirement in the Agreement for a Better Parliament: Parliamentary Reform.¹ Members of the committee were appointed on 25 October 2010.
- 1.6 The establishment of the Committee is significant. It means that, for the first time, a formal and representative group of members, led by the Speaker, will be able to consider the funding needs of the Department of the House of Representatives on a regular basis and make representations as it judges necessary.

First Report

- 1.7 During the reporting period the Committee tabled its first report – *Budget estimates 2011 – 2012 for the Department of the House of Representatives*. The report was presented in accordance with standing order 222A(a) (ii) which requires that the Committee provide to the Speaker for presentation to the House the amounts for inclusion in the appropriation bills for the Department of the House of Representatives. The report was tabled on 12 May 2011. In summary, the total appropriation to be approved by the Parliament for the Department of the House of Representatives in the Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2011–2012 was \$23.253m compared to \$22.387m in 2010–11 . The Committee endorsed the department’s proposals to seek additional operational funding in the form of New Policy Proposals in the 2011–12 Budget for the following:
- funding to support additional sitting hours of the House and Main Committee; and
 - support for the new Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network.
- 1.8 The Committee was pleased to note that, as a result, there were two expense measures for the department in the 2011–12 Budget year, that is, additional funding was provided.

¹ The Agreement was agreed by the Leader of the House on behalf of the Labor Party, the Manager of Opposition Business on behalf of the coalition and the member for Lyne on behalf of the non-aligned Members and signed on 6 September 2010.

Meetings of the Committee

1.9 During the reporting period the Committee met four times, on 28 October 2010, 22 November 2010, 3 March 2011 and 11 May 2011, and considered the following matters:

28 October 2010

- a paper prepared by the secretariat on the role of the Committee
- a draft letter from the Speaker to the Prime Minister regarding a request for additional funding for the Department of the House of Representatives – the Committee supported the letter

22 November 2010

- a presentation to the Committee by Mr Bernard Wright, Clerk of the House on the budget of the Department of the House of Representatives – the Committee approved the department's proposal for additional funding
- a presentation to the Committee by Mr Alan Thompson, Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) – the Committee approved the department's proposal for additional funding

3 March 2011

- a briefing for the Committee by the Clerk of the House on the status of the Budget bid for the Department of the House of Representatives and the budgetary outlook for the department – the Committee resolved to seek additional funding for the new Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network
- a briefing for the Committee by the Secretary, DPS on the Budget for that department

11 May 2011

- a briefing for the committee by the Clerk of the House on the department's Budget bid, an update on the department's finances for 2010-11 and on the draft report to the House on the Committee's consideration of the Budget estimates – the Committee resolved that the draft report be the report of the committee

- a briefing for the Committee by the Secretary, DPS on the budget outlook for the DPS for 2011-12 .

Harry Jenkins MP
Chairman
November 2011

