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20 October 2005

Chairman
Joint Committee on Publications
Parliament of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission to the Inquiry into the Distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series

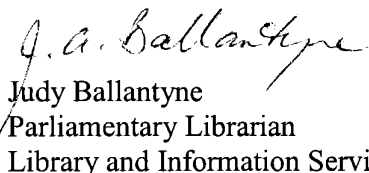
The attached submission to the *Inquiry into the Distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series* addresses the terms of reference as set out below:-

Terms of Reference

To inquire and report on the distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series (PPS), with particular reference to:

- The potential impact of changes to the distribution of the PPS made by the Presiding Officers, namely the tightening of eligibility guidelines and the cessation of blister packs to commence on 1 January 2006;
- The provision of the PPS in a digital format, either as an alternative or an adjunct to the hard copy series;
- The feasibility of a subscription service, either in digital or hard copy form; and
- The possibility of partial or full cost recovery for the series

Submitted for the Committees' consideration.


Judy Ballantyne
Parliamentary Librarian
Library and Information Services Manager

Submission attached.

SUBMISSION TO: Joint Committee on Publications

INQUIRY: To Inquiry into the Distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series

SUBMISSION BY:

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SUBMISSION

The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia does not support the proposed changes to the supply of the Parliamentary Papers Series. This submission addressed the terms of reference as follows:

Terms of Reference

1. *The potential impact of changes to the distribution of the PPS made by the Presiding Officers, namely the tightening of eligibility guidelines and the cessation of blister packs to commence on 1 January 2006;*

The concerns of the Parliamentary Library of Western Australia with the proposed cessation of providing blister packs commencing 1 January 2006 are as follows:

- a. The Parliamentary Papers Series provides publications that are often hard to find and hard to obtain.
 - b. A valuable collection of information will no longer be continued.
 - c. There will be a cost to this library to investigate and obtain publications that would normally be supplied as part of the PPS collection.
2. *The provision of the PPS in a digital format, either as an alternative or an adjunct to the hard copy series;*
 - a. The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia supports the proposal of providing the PPS in a digital format as an adjunct to the hard copy series. Today's Library Catalogues are able to display electronic documents. The Parliamentary Library of Western Australian's policy is to obtain a hard copy document which is added to the main library collection and where

there is an electronic copy of the document it is added to the catalogue record to allow viewing online.

- b. The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia would not support the proposal to replace the hard copy PPS with only a digital copy.
 - i. Electronic only copies are fine for small documents, however reading larger documents online is difficult, time consuming and often requires the document to be printed off.
 - ii. An electronic only copy makes an assumption that everyone has access to a computer with the capacity to download documents.
 - iii. The permanency of electronic only copies will need to be guaranteed.
 - iv. Changing in computer technology and software programs used to manage PPS electronic collection will need to remain up-to-date to ensure that today's electronic documents can be accessed in the future.

3. The feasibility of a subscription service, either in digital or hard copy form

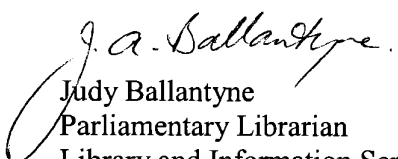
The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia would not support PPS as a subscription service. The reciprocal arrangements that are in place at the present time work well. The cost to the Western Australia Parliamentary library for the management and binding of the PPS blister pack collection is significant; to have to pay a subscription on top would be prohibitive.

4. The possibility of partial or full cost recovery for the series

The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia would not support any form of cost recovery. The reciprocal arrangements between parliaments where States, Territories and the Federal Parliaments provide copies of all their reports free should be maintained. Any form of cost recovery would put these arrangements in jeopardy.

Statement

The Parliamentary Library of Western Australia receives and provides free copies of parliamentary papers to all States, Territories and Federal Parliamentary Libraries on a reciprocal basis. The PPS hard copy collection is maintained by the Western Australian Parliamentary Library for research and to provide relevant and timely information to Members of the Western Australian Parliament. As part of the democratic process it is Parliament's responsibilities to ensure tabled information is available to all Australians no matter if they are technology savvy or not. The best option for maintaining the PPS collection is in hard copy and complimented with an electronic version.


Judy Ballantyne
Parliamentary Librarian
Library and Information Services Manager