

# **SUBMISSION BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES**

## **1. Introduction**

In this submission, we:

- provide background information on the objectives, scope and administration of the Parliamentary Papers Series (PPS)
- outline previous, present and future distribution arrangements for the PPS
- describe current and substantially parallel arrangements for the dissemination of Commonwealth publications
- discuss how accessible such information is and how much duplication is involved
- argue that it is timely for the committee to consider in principle the question of just what responsibility the Parliament should accept for the dissemination of documents of the executive, such reports comprising a major component of the PPS
- recommend that, if the series is maintained, a user pays system be trialled to assess demand for the PPS, and make several other recommendations.

## **2. Background**

The Parliamentary Papers Series (PPS) has been in existence, in one form or another, since Federation and has been intended to provide a convenient and accessible permanent record of certain papers concerning the parliament and government.

The series consists of reports, returns and statements from departments, authorities, parliamentary and ad hoc committees of inquiry and royal commissions and the like which have been presented to the Parliament and considered appropriate for inclusion. Also included in the series have been other documents of an ad hoc nature, including ministerial statements and petitions, which either House has ordered to be printed or made a Parliamentary Paper, either through its own action or through the recommendation of the Publications Committee of either House acting independently or jointly. Documents becoming parliamentary papers are labelled accordingly and distributed free of charge to eligible organisations.

The responsibility for deciding whether documents are of a substantial nature or important enough to form part of the series resides with both Houses or either House of the Parliament. The responsibility has been delegated, by way of the standing orders, to the Publications Committee of each House acting independently or jointly. From 1987 the committee has followed guidelines to the effect that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, parliamentary and ad hoc inquiries and royal commissions presented to Parliament should be recommended to be made Parliamentary Papers. Interim annual reports of departments and authorities, reports of unfinished parliamentary inquiries and reports of ad hoc inquiries with short term

interest do not fall within the guidelines. Other documents of an individual or non-recurring nature are considered on their merits.<sup>1</sup>

As detailed in Table 1, over the past four years, more than 50 per cent of ‘major’<sup>2</sup> documents tabled in the Parliament have been included in the PPS. The broader set of documents is distributed to eligible agencies through parallel schemes to the PPS, as described later.

Table 1 Documents in the PPS and ‘major’ documents tabled, from 2000 to 2004

<b>Year</b>	<b>Documents in PPS (No.)</b>	<b>‘Major’ documents tabled (No.)</b>	<b>PPS documents/ ‘major’ documents tabled (%)</b>
2001	240	515	46
2002	629	1027	61
2003	442	785	56
2004	419	739	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>3066</b>	<b>56</b>

During this four year period, on average, 58% of documents in the PPS have originated from the executive government and 42% from the Parliament, as set out in Table 2.

Table 2 Source of documents in the PPS, 2000 to 2004

<b>Year</b>	<b>Executive government (%)</b>	<b>Parliament (%)</b>
2001	29	71
2002	71	29
2003	60	40
2004	55	45
<b>Average</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>

The functions involved in the administration of the PPS are as follows:

<b>Function</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provision of copies of documents for presentation to Parliament	Author body
Selection of documents presented to Parliament for inclusion in the series	Joint Committee on Publications
Documents ordered to be printed or made a Parliamentary Paper	House of Representatives/ Senate
Each document assigned a sequential number	Chamber departments
Provision of copies of documents to distribution agent	Author body
Receipt of PPS copies of documents by distribution agent	Chamber departments

<sup>1</sup> *House of Representatives Practice, 5<sup>th</sup> edn*, p 597.

<sup>2</sup> Does not include deemed documents and miscellaneous documents tabled during debate.

monitored and followed up	
Documents labelled with PPS number on receipt by distribution agent	Distribution agent
Compilation and maintenance of index to PPS series	Chamber departments
Compilation of a table of contents for each volume in each annual set of documents (for blister pack recipients only)	Chamber departments
Distribution of documents	Distribution agent
Receipt and processing of documents	Recipient bodies

In 1997 the Joint Committee on Publications inquired into the future of the Parliamentary Papers Series, in response to a request for advice by the Presiding Officers on a proposal to discontinue it. The committee recommended that the Parliamentary Papers Series should continue in its present form until there was a viable replacement either in electronic or printed form (or both), but that proposals for the replacement of the series should be explored further. The Presiding Officers accepted these recommendations.

In May 2005, the Presiding Officers approved changes to the distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series—with effect from 1 January 2006, eligibility guidelines for inclusion on the free distribution list have been tightened, and blister pack sets are no longer to be distributed—and sought the views of the Committee on potential further changes to the methods of providing the PPS.

### **3. Terms of Reference**

#### **3.1 Potential impact of changes to the distribution of the PPS made by the Presiding Officers**

In brief, there has been and will be little impact for the Department of the House of Representatives (DHR) of the Presiding Officers' changes to the distribution of the PPS. From 2006, the department will benefit from modest cost savings as a result of the changes (pp 10 – 11 refer). The department has received some feedback from agencies affected by the changes (p 10 refers).

From 2006, the impact for recipients of the series will be as follows:

- 22 recipients (including foreign embassies and Commonwealth government departments) previously in receipt of a pamphlet copy, will no longer receive copies
- 15 recipients of a blister pack will receive a pamphlet copy
- 19 recipients of a blister pack and a pamphlet copy will receive a pamphlet copy
- 12 recipients will be unaffected by the changes; and
- current recipients of blister packs who wish to have a consolidated set of documents, will need to assemble sets themselves.

The potential impact of changes to the distribution of the PPS needs to be considered in a broader context, however, and relevant factors and issues are now addressed.

### 3.1.1 *Distribution list for free copies of the Parliamentary Papers series*

The distribution list for free copies of the Parliamentary Papers series at the time of the Committee's previous inquiry in 1997, and currently and as from January 2006, is attached—Attachments A and B respectively.

As is apparent, the free distribution list for the PPS has been tightened significantly from that applying in 1997. In 1997, 205 pamphlet copies (including 60 stock copies for the Parliament) and a further 50 bound or blister packs were distributed. Today, 97 pamphlet copies (including 40 stock copies for the Parliament) and 37 blister packs are distributed, and from January 2006, 89 pamphlet copies will be distributed (including 40 stock copies for the Parliament). The distribution list for the PPS is now far more closely aligned to the distribution list applying for other systems for disseminating Commonwealth publications (page 7 refers).

Agencies are currently required to provide 150 copies for the PPS—110 trimmed and 40 untrimmed (the untrimmed for blister pack stock). With the tightening of the guidelines from January 2006, this requirement will be reduced and no untrimmed copies will be required. Copies are currently delivered to CanPrint Communications P/L for distribution to recipient agencies. (CanPrint is also the distribution agent for the Commonwealth Library Deposit and Free Issue Schemes, see page 5).

Pamphlet copies of the PPS are distributed progressively to recipients as they are received. Blister pack sets are stored until the annual set is compiled and they are distributed in bulk.

### 3.1.2 *Other systems in place for dissemination of Commonwealth publications*

#### (a) Hard Copies

The copy requirements for presentation of Government documents to the Parliament are summarised in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 'Guidelines for Presentation of Government Documents, Ministerial Statements and Government Responses to the Parliament'<sup>3</sup>.

In summary, the copy requirements when tabling in session are as follows<sup>4</sup>:

• PM&C Tabling Officer	5
• House of Representatives	75
• Senate	100
• Press	80
• Parliamentary Library	21
• PPS	150
• Library Deposit Scheme	<u>44</u>
	475.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.pmc.gov.au/guidelines/index.cfm>

<sup>4</sup> Additional copies are required for reports of Royal Commissions, and for out of session tabling.

Documents may be distributed once they become public documents after presentation to either House.

The 175 copies provided for the House of Representatives and the Senate are for distribution on request to Members of Parliament, their staff and parliamentary staff.<sup>5</sup>

The 80 copies for the Press are provided for distribution to the Parliamentary Press Gallery.

*Commonwealth Parliamentary Library Arrangement with State Parliamentary Libraries*—The 21 copies supplied to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library provide nine copies for distribution to each of the State, Territory and New Zealand Parliamentary Libraries and 12 copies for internal use.

*Commonwealth Library Deposit and Free Issue Schemes (LDS)*—The 44 copies are for distribution through the Commonwealth Library Deposit and Free Issue Schemes. Under the schemes, Australian government departments and agencies are required to provide one copy of each publication they produce to each participating deposit library. Deposit libraries comprise the National Library of Australia, State Libraries and publicly funded universities identified under the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*.<sup>6</sup>

The LDS supplements legal deposit, a statutory requirement under the *Copyright Act 1968* and equivalent State legislation, administered by the National Library of Australia and State reference libraries respectively.

The publishing department or agency may distribute copies directly to the deposit libraries itself, or may send copies to the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) LDS Distribution Service (CanPrint Communications P/L) for distribution.<sup>7</sup> Copies are distributed progressively on receipt.

(b) Electronic copies

Electronic copies of many Commonwealth documents, including many PPS documents, are available from agency websites. The recently established website *Publications.gov.au*, maintained by the AGIMO, Department of Finance and Administration, provides an on-line publications register to assist people searching for these publications. A search facility can be used to locate government publications held by Australian libraries or on Australian Government websites. The DHR understands that if a PP were published on-line on an Australian government website, a search of the AGIMO site should locate it.

In its 1997 inquiry, the Committee did not support alternative methods of publication for the PPS at that stage, identifying ‘concerns relating to equity and access to

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<sup>5</sup> The DHR has encouraged on-line access to documents and has progressively reduced its requirements for tabling stock over recent years.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Australian Government Information Management Office:

<http://www.agimo.gov.au/information/publishing/deposit>

<sup>7</sup> The PM&C guidelines require 44 copies for the LDS; AGIMO requires 42 copies for the LDS.

electronic documents, price and the retention of records.’<sup>8</sup> The Committee anticipated that such shortcomings would be overcome in the next few years, given the pace of development in the field of electronic publishing and intended monitoring progress in the area.<sup>9</sup>

The department does not comprehensively monitor the incidence of electronic publishing by government agencies—nor does any other agency—and is thus not fully aware of the extent to which documents that currently comprise the PPS are available on the Internet or in alternative form of publication. It has certainly been the case for many years, however, that all official parliamentary material, including parliamentary documents in the PPS, has been published routinely on the web.

From observation, the incidence of electronic publishing by the Commonwealth government has increased significantly since the Committee’s previous inquiry in 1997. Commonwealth agencies have been obliged from 1 June 2000, under the Commonwealth Government’s Online Strategy, to routinely place online a number of categories of material, including reports submitted to Parliament.<sup>10</sup> For Commonwealth government documents presented to the Parliament, electronic publishing is likely to have become the norm for many if not most agencies, as an adjunct to hard copy. Agencies need to facilitate access to such information, including through use of appropriate meta-data.

The department considers it likely increasingly to be the case that people wishing to access recent government documents, would seek the material on the Internet.<sup>11</sup> While access could not be guaranteed, the electronic record—through agency web sites—is likely to provide a convenient and reasonably accessible record of most recent PPS documents for many people. However, this would not be the case for older documents. And if people wished to obtain copies of the electronic documents, they would need to download them and print them off, with associated costs.

The department understands that Commonwealth government agencies are legally bound to lodge their web site contents with the National Archives for permanent retention. However, archiving of electronic records and web sites is likely to be at an early stage of development in most agencies.

The issues of price and retention of records identified by the committee in its previous inquiry, thus remain. Efforts to facilitate access to on-line information need to be fostered, and the department supports enhanced central monitoring of agencies’ compliance with online service obligations and preservation and retention of document responsibilities, with appropriate reporting to the Parliament.

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<sup>8</sup> *Future of the Parliamentary Papers Series*, 1997, p 30.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p 31.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.agimo.gov.au/information/oiso>

<sup>11</sup> For example, in terms of access to government services, the Department notes that a recent report on *Australians’ use of and satisfaction with e-Government services*, concluded that the ‘Internet is now a mainstream choice for people to make contact with government. Thirty-nine per cent of Australians have had contact with government via the Internet over the last 12 months. And that number is growing as is the sophistication of the transactions undertaken.’ Australian Government Information Management Office, 2005, p 1.

### 3.1.3 *Issues*

#### (a) Appropriateness of Function

Quite apart from issues of the cost of the series, it would be reasonable for the committee to consider in principle the question of just what responsibility the Parliament should accept for the dissemination of documents of the executive, such reports comprising a major component of the series. It would seem that many years ago concerned parliamentarians worked hard to secure the provision of information to the Parliament about the activities of the executive, symbolised in the campaign to require the presentation of timely and useful annual reports. Success was achieved in these matters, with key requirements eventually being set out in statutory form. One gains the impression that the issue of further dissemination by means of the historic 'order to print', although technically a separate matter, was perhaps seen as a step reasonably related to this more parliament-focussed movement. It is no exaggeration to say a major success has been achieved in embedding the requirements for the provision to the parliament and the public of basic information on the work of executive departments and agencies. It is timely that the committee should now not only acknowledge just how much more accessible such information is (and how much duplication is involved) but that it should consider whether, even apart from the issue of cost, the Parliament should accept the principle that it is its responsibility to carry out this further stage in the dissemination of reports of the executive.<sup>12</sup>

#### (b) Duplication

As previously outlined, multiple systems are in place for dissemination of Commonwealth publications, with significant redundancy in provision of copies.

In particular, the distribution lists for the PPS, the LDS and the Parliamentary Library arrangement with State Parliamentary departments overlap significantly, posing the question as to whether there is scope for reduction or rationalisation of distribution and/ or administration. This could be achieved through a single overarching scheme, centrally administered.

A comparison table is at Attachment D. The table shows that as from 1 January 2006, 33 of 51 PPS recipients (73%) will also be on LDS or Parliamentary Library exchange lists. Thirty-one of 41 LDS recipients (76%) will also receive the PPS, and six of nine Parliamentary Library exchange recipients (67%) will also receive the PPS.

In its submission to the committee's 1997 inquiry, the Department of the House of Representatives proposed that the LDS be enhanced to provide an alternative to the PPS. In response, the committee indicated that before recommending that the PPS be discontinued in favour of enhanced LDS it would need to be satisfied that the following matters had been thoroughly addressed: 'the cost and comprehensiveness of the proposed scheme, the supply of documents for the scheme, the supply of documents to some organisations which receive documents through the PPS but not

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<sup>12</sup> In a submission to the committee's previous inquiry (submission 52A), the DHR provided information about systems used by other Parliaments for distribution of documents presented to them. Only a small minority of jurisdictions disseminated parliamentary and executive documents free of charge to eligible recipients.

the LDS, (notably Commonwealth government departments), the detailed provision of a replacement index and numbering scheme and a firm proposal as to who would administer the scheme and how.’<sup>13</sup> The committee recommended a working party to examine the matter. The recommendation was accepted by the Presiding Officers but not progressed.

The department notes that there have been developments in relation to some of these matters since the committee’s inquiry, and that there would be a number of options available to address other matters. The department’s comments in relation to each of the matters identified by the committee are set out below.

<p>Cost and comprehensiveness</p>	<p>Significant cost savings for agencies would result from cessation of PPS distribution where there is overlap between the distribution list for free copies of the PPS and the combined LDS/ Parliamentary Library lists. Where a PPS recipient is not on the other lists, there could be a check as to whether the recipient wished to receive Commonwealth publications—or continue receiving the PPS for a fee.</p>
<p>Supply of documents</p>	<p>This was an issue in 1997 when the LDS was limited to documents printed by the Australian Government Publishing Service. It is no longer an issue because the LDS now applies to all government documents.</p>
<p>Supply of documents to some organisations which receive documents through the PPS but not the LDS</p>	<p>This was an issue in 1997 because the distribution list for the PPS then included many recipients not on the lists for the LDS/ Parliamentary Library arrangement. With the tightening of the PPS free list that has taken place since 1997, it is now a less significant issue, as previously indicated.</p>
<p>Replacement index and numbering scheme</p>	<p>A proposal to cease PPS distribution where there is overlap could be implemented in a number of ways.</p> <p><i>Options:</i></p> <p>1. Retention of the PPS</p> <p>The PPS would continue to exist and all elements of the administration of the PPS (excepting distribution of hard copies and table of contents for blister packs) would remain.</p> <p>The Joint Committee on Publications would continue to identify documents for inclusion in the series. Indexing and numbering arrangements for the PPS would continue. Indexes for the series are produced by the Departments of the House of Representatives and the Senate, as a by-product of the preparation of the official records of the House and the Senate. A cumulative on-</p>

<sup>13</sup> op cit, p 31.

	<p>line list of documents included in the Parliamentary Paper Series is published and updated at the end of each sitting fortnight:  <a href="http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/publ/PPS.htm">http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/publ/PPS.htm</a>).</p> <p>In addition, an index of <u>all</u> documents presented to Parliament would continue to be prepared, published twice each year and consolidated annually and by Parliament.</p> <p>The logic would be that the PPS has value and warrants retention.</p> <p>2. Discontinue the PPS.</p> <p>As above, the index of documents presented to Parliament, would continue to be prepared.</p> <p>3. Continue the PPS but introduce some changes</p> <p>At this stage, the department favours this option and supports trialling a user pays system for the PPS. It would have the advantage of assessing demand for the series.</p>
Administration of scheme	<p>If it were proposed to cease distribution of the PPS where there is overlap in distribution, the implications for administration would vary depending on which of the implementation options were chosen.</p> <p>Under the first option referred to above, there would be minimal implications for existing administration of the PPS. There would be savings, and the parties would need to consider the implications for cost sharing.</p>

(c) Timely delivery of PPS

An issue which will lessen significantly with the cessation of blister packs from 2006 is timely delivery of the PPS to recipients. Because blister packs are distributed in bulk once a full set of documents for the year is available, the timing of their distribution is tied to the last arriving document. Despite regular reminders to and follow-up of agencies by the Table Offices of the two chamber departments, agencies may be more than two years behind in submitting copies of documents.<sup>14</sup> As set out in Table 3, this means that there may be a delay of 18 to 30 months between the time the reports are presented to the Parliament and the recipients' receiving them. This is clearly not satisfactory, and the department endorses the committee's recommendation in its previous inquiry (recommendation 2) to address this matter.

<sup>14</sup> On occasions there has been resort to photocopying documents from House stock.

Table 3 Status of Distribution of Blister Packs for the PPS, 2000 to 2004

<b>Date of PPS Series</b>	<b>Status/ Date blister pack distributed</b>
2000	458 documents in series, distributed July 2002
2001	240 documents in series, distributed May 2003
2002	629 documents in series, distributed May 2004
2003	442 documents in series, 14 documents (3.2%) outstanding at October 2005
2004	419 documents in series, 33 documents (7.9%) outstanding at October 2005

This is not an issue for most pamphlet copies which are delivered progressively on receipt.

(d) Agency feedback on changes to the distribution of the PPS

Agencies were informed of changes to the distribution arrangements for the PPS in July 2005. There have been two main points made in response:

- Four of 22 bodies deleted from the free distribution list have sought to continue on the list—the four were Commonwealth government departments and included three central agencies. The DHR has some sympathy with the case put by the central agencies in particular;
- A State library and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) had problems with the cessation of the blister packs, and concerns that problems with follow-up and monitoring of outstanding copies would be passed on to CanPrint and to libraries. (The department notes that this would not be the case if the chamber departments continued their central monitoring and follow-up). The ALIA respondent also indicated that the PPS had lost its usefulness in 2001 when blister packs were introduced.

The department has not replied to respondents at this stage, pending the outcomes of the Committee's inquiry.

(e) Cost

The chamber departments meet the costs of support for the Joint Committee on Publications, indexing, follow-up of defaulting agencies and other administrative costs (eg, advice to agencies as to whether a proposed publication would be likely to become a Parliamentary Paper) as well as processing, storage and distribution costs for the distribution agent, CanPrint. Costs are shared approximately equally by the two departments.

The cost of printing documents included in the series is met by each author body.

Excluding salary and author body costs, the approximate costs incurred by the Department of the House of Representatives for the PPS series from 1998 to 2002 (the latest year for which blister packs have been distributed), are set out in Table 4. The

series cost for the DHR has averaged \$65 000 and has ranged from \$48 000 for the 1998 series to \$90 000 for the 2000 series. The cost per parliamentary paper for the DHR has averaged \$157, and has ranged from \$119 for the 1998 series to \$232 for the 2001 series.

Table 4 PPS series cost to Department of the House of Representatives—  
excluding salary and author body costs, 1998 to 2002

PPS year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
PPs in series (No.)	402	463	458	240	629
Cost (\$'000)	48	60	90	56	70
Cost per PP (\$)	119	129	195	232	111

The Presiding Officers recent changes to the guidelines will result in savings to the DHR from January 2006 from the cessation of blister packs estimated at ~\$30 000 per year (~40% to 50% of DHR's current administrative costs). There will also be minor savings in postage reflecting the reduced number of recipients.

### 3.2 The provision of the PPS in a digital format, either as an alternative or an adjunct to the hard copy series

As discussed previously, the PPS, at least in terms of its constituent documents, has already been provided or at least substantially provided in digital format in recent years. At issue are the completeness of, and long term access to, such material and the department has addressed these issues in its previous comments.

What has not been provided to date is a consolidated annual set of PPS documents in digital format. Without evidence of unmet demand, however, the department's inclination would be not to pursue the provision of such a product at this stage. There are inherent problems in preserving digital records<sup>15</sup> which need to be further progressed. It is understood, for example, that the CD ROM format is not seen as a suitable for long term preservation and accessibility of digital records. Moreover, the logic of publishing an annual set of diverse documents together is not compelling now that individual PPS documents can by and large be accessed on-line.

A further consideration is that it is questionable whether it is the core business of the Department of the House of Representatives, to provide such a service.

### 3.2 The feasibility of a subscription service, either in digital or hard copy form

### 3.3 The possibility of partial or full cost recovery for the series

These two elements of the terms of reference are related and are addressed together.

<sup>15</sup> National Archives of Australia *An approach to the preservation of digital records*, December 2002, pp 10-11.

It would certainly be feasible in principle to provide the PPS by means of a subscription service, on a partial or full cost recovery basis. The chamber departments already administer small subscription services for assent and third reading prints of bills.

The issues are whether there will be demand for such a service, and at what price. If we assume an average cost for the series of the order of \$130 000—these costs would need to be looked at more closely in conjunction with our Senate colleagues—then full cost recovery for 50 subscribers would involve a fee of \$2 600, and for 25 subscribers a fee of \$5 200.

A significant factor is that a majority of PPS recipients also receive free copies of all documents presented to the Parliament through the parallel schemes previously outlined. It is thus not a level playing field. A PPS recipient in receipt of stock free of charge through the LDS, may choose not to pay a fee for PPS stock. In addition, recent material is freely accessible through the Internet.

As was concluded by the committee in its previous inquiry:

it would be impossible to forecast the outcome because the price elasticity of demand for the series is unknown. At best, the cost of administering the series would be defrayed by the users. At worst, so few organisations would subscribe that the series would not remain viable.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, the department supports trialling a user pays system to assess demand for the PPS, particularly as an alternative to cessation of hard copy PPS delivery. Existing and former PPS recipients could be invited to subscribe to the series, and based on the response, a judgment could be made as to the practicality of the endeavour.

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The department endorses the recent changes to the distribution list for the PPS made by the Presiding Officers. Only a small minority of respondents removed from the free distribution list for the PPS have sought to remain on the free list. The cessation of delivery of blister packs overcomes the problem of the unsatisfactory time-lag currently involved in distributing such sets.

The department finds that parallel and overlapping systems for the dissemination of government and parliamentary documents exist. It considers that there is prima facie scope to reduce the hard copy distribution of such material even further where there is overlap with immediate savings and efficiencies.

The department **recommends** that if the series is maintained the chamber departments trial a subscription service for the PPS on a partial cost recovery basis, to assess demand.

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<sup>16</sup> op cit, p 28.

In relation to the ongoing problems with obtaining copies of certain documents for the PPS series, the department notes and endorses the recommendation made by the committee in its previous report—that Ministers should ensure that agencies for which they have responsibility fulfil the obligation to produce sufficient copies of documents for the parliamentary paper series; and a report identifying those agencies which default should be tabled in each House every twelve months.<sup>17</sup>

The department **recommends** that each House Publications Committee reports annually on defaulting agencies.

The department notes that the committee addressed the uncertain status of electronic publishing in the Commonwealth in its previous report and that access to such material has increased significantly in recent years. Efforts to facilitate access to such information need to be fostered.

The department **recommends** that relevant central agencies strengthen monitoring of agencies' compliance with online service obligations and preservation and retention of record responsibilities, with appropriate reporting to the Parliament.

Without clear evidence of unmet demand, the department is not inclined to pursue the provision of a consolidated set of PPS documents in digital form. There are inherent problems in preserving digital records which need to be further progressed, and the logic of an annual compilation of disparate documents is not compelling now that individual documents can be readily accessed electronically. Rather than a consolidated set of documents in digital form, it is preferable to pursue enhanced and longer term access to existing on-line material.

The department considers that provision of the PPS through a subscription service is feasible in principle, and supports trialling a user pays system to assess demand.

Finally, the department considers it timely for the committee to consider in principle the question of just what responsibility the Parliament should accept for dissemination of documents of the executive, such documents comprising a major component of the PPS.

October 2005

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<sup>17</sup> op cit, p iii.

**ATTACHMENT A**

**Table 5 Free distribution list for the PPS, 1997**

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>PPS as at 1997</b>	
	<b>Pamphlet copy</b>	<b>Blister pack</b>
State, inc. National Library	1	9 (National Library x 2)
Parliamentary	8	7
Municipal	4	
University	1	27
National Archives	8	1
Foreign embassies	18	
Political parties	4	
Overseas	8	4
Government departments	26	
Hunter Valley Research Foundation	1	
Department of the House of Representatives	30 (50 for royal commission and committee reports)	1
Department of the Senate	30 (50 for royal commission and committee reports)	1
LDS	41	
Commonwealth Government Bookshop counter sales	25	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>50</b>

## ATTACHMENT B

**Table 6 Free distribution list for the PPS, currently and as from 2006**

Recipient	Current PPS		PPS from 2006 Pamphlet copy
	Pamphlet copy	Blister pack	
State, inc. National Library	3	8	8
Parliamentary	6	6	6
Municipal	3		3 (to be asked whether they wish to continue receiving the PPS)
University	17	19	25
National Archives		1	1
Foreign embassies	7		
Political parties	1		
Overseas	5 (inc. NZ x2)	1	5
Government departments	14		
Australian National Audit Office	1		1
Department of the House of Representatives	20 (30 for royal commission and committee reports)	1	20 (30 for royal commission and committee reports)
Department of the Senate	20 (30 for royal commission and committee reports)	1	20 (30 for royal commission and committee reports)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>89</b>

## ATTACHMENT C

**Table 7 Free distribution list for deposit libraries and free issue libraries**

<b>Deposit Libraries</b>	<b>Free Issue Libraries</b>
National Library of Australia	Australian Catholic University
State Library of New South Wales	Australian National University
State Library of Victoria	Central Queensland University
State Library of Queensland	Charles Darwin University
State Library of South Australia	Charles Sturt University
State Library of Western Australia	Deakin University
State Library of Tasmania	Curtin University of Technology
Northern Territory Library	Edith Cowan University
	Flinders University of South Australia
	Griffith University
	James Cook University
	La Trobe University
	Macquarie University
	Monash University
	Murdoch University
	Queensland University of Technology
	University of Adelaide
	University of Ballarat
	University of Canberra
	University of Melbourne
	University of New England
	University of New South Wales
	University of Newcastle
	University of Queensland
	University of South Australia
	University of Southern Queensland
	University of Sydney
	University of Tasmania
	University of Technology Sydney
	University of Western Australia
	University of Western Sydney
	University of Wollongong
	Victoria University of Technology
<b>8</b>	<b>33</b>

## ATTACHMENT D

**Table 8 Overlap between the PPS, LDS and Parliamentary Library Exchange<sup>18</sup>**

<b>Libraries</b>	<b>C'wlth Parl Library dist.</b>	<b>LDS</b>	<b>PPS blister</b>	<b>PPS pamphlet</b>	<b>Total copies</b>
ACT Government Library	✓				1
Australian Catholic University		✓			1
Australian Defence Force Academy				✓	1
Australian National Audit Office				✓	1
Australian National University		✓	✓	✓	3
Burnie Library				✓	1
Central Queensland University		✓			1
Charles Darwin University		✓			1
Charles Sturt University		✓	✓	✓	3
Curtin University of Technology		✓	✓		2
Deakin University		✓	✓	✓	3
Department of the House of Representatives				✓ (20 copies)	20
Department of the Senate				✓ (20 copies)	20
Edith Cowan University		✓	✓		2
Flinders University of South Australia		✓	✓	✓	3
Gordon Institute of TAFE				✓	1
Griffith University		✓		✓	2
James Cook University		✓	✓		2
La Trobe University		✓	✓		2
Launceston Library				✓	1
Library of Congress – USA			✓		1
Macquarie University		✓	✓	✓	3
Monash University		✓	✓		2
Murdoch University		✓	✓		2
National Archives of Australia			✓		1
National Assembly Library Korea				✓	1
National Diet of Japan				✓	1
National Library of Australia		✓	✓	✓	3
Newcastle Region Public Library				✓	1
Northern Territory Library		✓	✓	✓	3
Parliament of Canada				✓	1
Parliament of New South Wales	✓		✓	✓	3
Parliament of New Zealand	✓			✓ (2 copies)	3
Parliament of Queensland	✓		✓	✓	3
Parliament of South Australia	✓				1
Parliament of Tasmania	✓		✓	✓	3
Parliament of the Northern Territory	✓				1
Parliament of Victoria	✓		✓	✓	3
Parliament of Western Australia	✓		✓	✓	3
Queensland University of Technology		✓	✓	✓	3

<sup>18</sup> Table 8 includes the current entitlements of PPS recipients remaining as from January 2006. Distribution of blister packs will cease from that date and recipients will receive a pamphlet copy instead. Recipients of both a blister pack and a pamphlet copy, will receive a pamphlet copy.

<b>Libraries</b>	<b>C'with Parl Library dist.</b>	<b>LDS</b>	<b>PPS blister</b>	<b>PPS pamphlet</b>	<b>Total copies</b>
State Library of New South Wales		✓	✓		2
State Library of Queensland		✓	✓	✓	3
State Library of South Australia		✓	✓		2
State Library of Tasmania		✓	✓		2
State Library of Victoria		✓	✓		2
State Library of Western Australia		✓	✓		2
University of Adelaide		✓	✓		2
University of Ballarat		✓			1
University of Canberra		✓	✓	✓	3
University of Melbourne		✓			1
University of New England		✓		✓	2
University of New South Wales		✓	✓		2
University of Newcastle		✓	✓	✓	3
University of Queensland		✓	✓	✓	3
University of South Australia		✓			1
University of Southern Queensland		✓		✓	2
University of Sydney		✓	✓	✓	3
University of Tasmania		✓			1
University of Technology Sydney		✓	✓	✓	3
University of Western Australia		✓		✓	2
University of Western Sydney		✓			1
University of Wollongong		✓			1
Victoria University of Technology		✓			1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>158</b>

**Library Deposit Scheme recipients (41):**

Also receive both PPS blister packs and pamphlets = 14 of 41 (34.1%)

Also receive PPS blister packs but not pamphlets = 13 of 41 (31.7%)

Also receive PPS pamphlets but not blister packs = 4 of 41 (9.8%)

Do not receive PPS copies = 10 of 41 (24.4%)

**Commonwealth Parliamentary Library exchange (PLE) recipients (9):**

Also receive both PPS blister packs and pamphlets = 5 (55.5%)

Also receive PPS blister packs but not pamphlets = 0

Also receive PPS pamphlet copies but not blister packs = 1 (NZ receive 2 pamphlet copies) (11.1%)

Do not receive PPS copies = 3 (33%)

**Current Parliamentary Papers Series recipients (73):**

Also on LDS list = 31 (42.5%)

Also on Parliamentary Library exchange = 6 (8.2%)

Not on either LDS or PLE lists = 36 (49.3%)

**PPS recipients as of 1 January 2006 (51):**

Also on LDS list = 31 (60.8%)

Also on Parliamentary Library exchange = 6 (11.8%)

Not on either LDS or PLE lists = 14 (27.4%)