

Question: 1
Topic: Committee workload
Asked: 27 February 2017

Senator Paterson asked: ...if we could break down in those last three parliaments which were legislation and which were references—and Senate select committees as well.

Answer: The following table and charts break down legislation, references and select committees inquiries for the last three parliaments. For the sake of completeness, joint committees supported by the Senate Department are also included.

Table 1: Number of inquiries

	43rd Parl	44th Parl	45th Parl (to 2/3/17)
Refs Ctee inquiries readopted ¹	15	6	26
New Refs Ctee inquiries	80	124	34
Bill inquiries ²	235	216	47
Other Leg Ctee inquiries ³	5	6	0
Select Ctee inquiries ⁴	5	12	6
Joint Select Ctee inquiries ^{5 6}	14	2	0
Joint Ctee inquiries ⁶	30	9	9
Total	384	375	122

- References which lapsed in the previous parliament and were readopted
- Includes one bill considered by a references committee in the 43rd Parliament
- For instance, inquiries into the performance of agencies
- One additional select committee inquiry is scheduled to commence on 27 March 2017
- NB: the number of inquiries, not the number of committees. In particular the Joint Select Committee on Gambling in the 43rd Parliament considered 10 separate inquiries
- This is the number of joint committee inquiries administered by the Senate department.

Chart 1: Number of inquiries (actual)

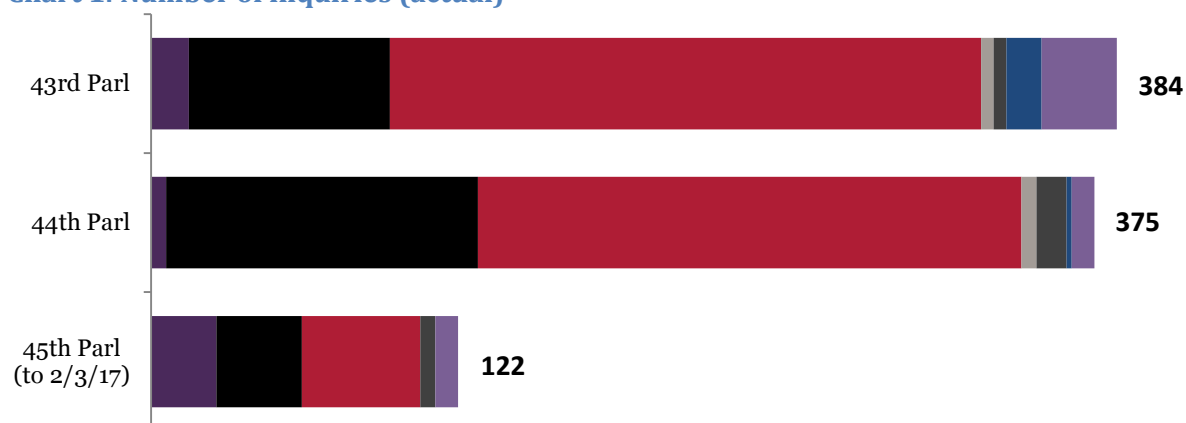


Table 2: Period covered

	43rd Parl	44th Parl	45th Parl (to 2/3/17)
Time (in weeks)	149	130	26

As an indicator of the level of committee activity, the following chart averages the number of inquiries referred over the duration of each parliament. For instance, there were fewer references in the 44th Parliament than the 43rd, however, the 44th Parliament was 19 weeks (4 and a half months) shorter in duration so the level of activity over time was higher. Similarly, the figures for the 45th Parliament cover only 6 months, to the end of February 2017, but as can be seen the rate at which matters have been referred is higher than in the previous two parliaments.

Chart 2: Comparison of inquiries (pro rata)

