

Question: 2

Topic: Committee workload

Asked: 27 February 2017

Senator Paterson asked:

CHAIR: This will definitely need to be on notice, but, as a proportion of the Senate's budget, how much is now going to committee activities relative to other activities?

Mr Pye : We are talking about the committee office rather than committees more broadly. As you know there are committees that are looked after by some of the other offices as well. It is about \$8.8 million out of about \$23 million, so a third.

CHAIR: Historically is that about proportional or is it higher than usual?

Mr Pye : It is a bit higher than usual.

CHAIR: Perhaps you could quantify, proportionally over the last three parliaments, what the figures have been?

Answer: The answer given at the hearing (\$8.8 million) was the base figure for salary and suppliers and did not include allocation of corporate overheads (eg. superannuation, leave liabilities etc.) attributed to the office. Those overheads are accounted for in the following table, which shows total Committee Office expenditure as a proportion of departmental expenditure over time.

Committee Office expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Estimated
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Committee office expenditure *	8,291	8,766	8,148	7,703	8,961	10,657	10,178
Total department expenditure ^	21,257	22,310	20,402	20,165	21,934	23,901	23,852
% of department expenditure	39%	39%	40%	38%	41%	45%	43%

* Actual figures include an allocation of corporate overheads and are taken from the department's Annual Reports - *Appendix 1 Expenses and resources for outcome 1*. The estimated figure for the current financial year also includes an allocation of corporate overheads.

^ Total departmental expenditure is taken from the department's Annual Reports - *Appendix 1 Expenses and resources for outcome 1*.

Expenditure on committee office support is expected to be marginally lower this financial year than last year, because committees were not appointed until September 2016.