

Question: 7

Topic: Appointment of the new Deputy Clerk of the Senate

Received: 20 March 2017

Senator Wong asked:

Is the position description for the Deputy Clerk of the Senate, as advertised, substantially similar to the role as it previously existed, or have there been changes?

If so, please detail the changes and indicate what has prompted the changes.

Answer:

Changes have been made to give more prominence to the Deputy's advisory and chamber support functions, prompted by a policy decision to provide additional procedural and legislative support for non-government senators. It is expected that the Deputy Clerk will work together with the Clerk Assistant (Procedure) and other staff to enhance this function.

Two roles in particular have been moved to free up time for the above change: Oversight of information management/policy and responsibility for the Senate Public Information Office (added to the Deputy's responsibilities in 2011) remain with Mr Pye; The role of the Registrar of Senators' Interests (and secretary to the Senators' Interests Committee) has been moved to the Committee Office. These changes will be reviewed at the end of 2017.

The Deputy will now be a member, but not Chair, of the department's Audit Committee: this change follows the Clerk's decision to adopt a best-practice recommendation from the ANAO that departmental audit committees be chaired by one of their independent members.

The other duties of the position (eg, Secretary to Privileges Committee, corporate governance roles, oversight of learning and development programs) remain unchanged.