



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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CLERK OF THE SENATE

D15/49891

12 October 2015

Ms Lyn Beverley  
Secretary  
Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Beverley

**ESTIMATES HEARING 19 OCTOBER 2015 – DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE**

In accordance with the usual practice, I attach the latest information, statistics and graphs of recent committee activity.

Yours sincerely

(Rosemary Laing)

# SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

## REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES – OCTOBER 2015

#### RECENT TRENDS

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The following data shows trends and comparisons in the activities of Senate standing committees. Workload continues to increase.

- At 17 September 2015 there have been a total of 278 references in the 44th Parliament. At a similar period in the 43rd parliament there were 189 references and in the 42nd parliament there were 227 references. This is shown in **graph 1**.
- At 17 September 2015 in the 44th parliament, a total of 336 reports had been tabled. In comparison, in the 43rd parliament there were 296 reports and in the 42nd parliament there were 304 reports tabled for the same period respectively. This is shown in **graph 3**.
- Of the two busiest committees at any one time during the 44th parliament, the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees have not exceeded the 15 previously reported references inquiries, but the Economics committees were managing 18 inquiries in September 2015.
- At present, the Senate Department is also supporting 4 Select committees and 1 Joint Standing committee (NDIS).

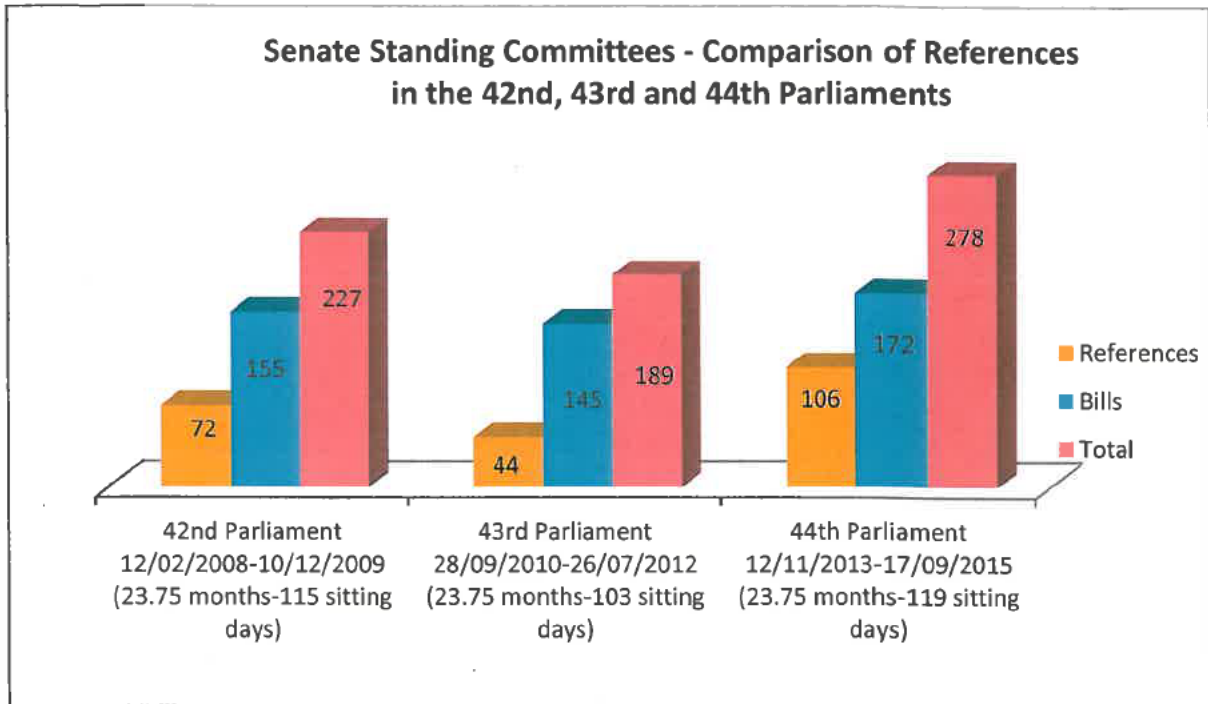
#### Previous trends – 41<sup>st</sup> to 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliaments

- The 43<sup>rd</sup> parliament experienced an increase in the total number of matters referred to standing committees. There were a total of 321 references to standing committees in the 43<sup>rd</sup> parliament compared to 300 references in the 42<sup>nd</sup> and 234 in the 41<sup>st</sup> respectively.
- During the 43<sup>rd</sup> parliament, there was also an increase in the number of committee reports tabled. A total of 506 reports were tabled in the last parliament, an increase from 462 reports in the 42<sup>nd</sup> parliament and 388 in the 41<sup>st</sup> parliament.
- The number of public hearings (excluding estimates hearings) increased in 2012-13 to 183. 144 public hearings were held in 2011-12 and 118 in 2010-11 (**see graph 4**).
- The busiest committees at any one time during the 43rd parliament were the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees, which twice dealt with a maximum of 12 references at one time (in November 2010 and May 2011) and the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport committees, which managed 12 references simultaneously during March 2013.

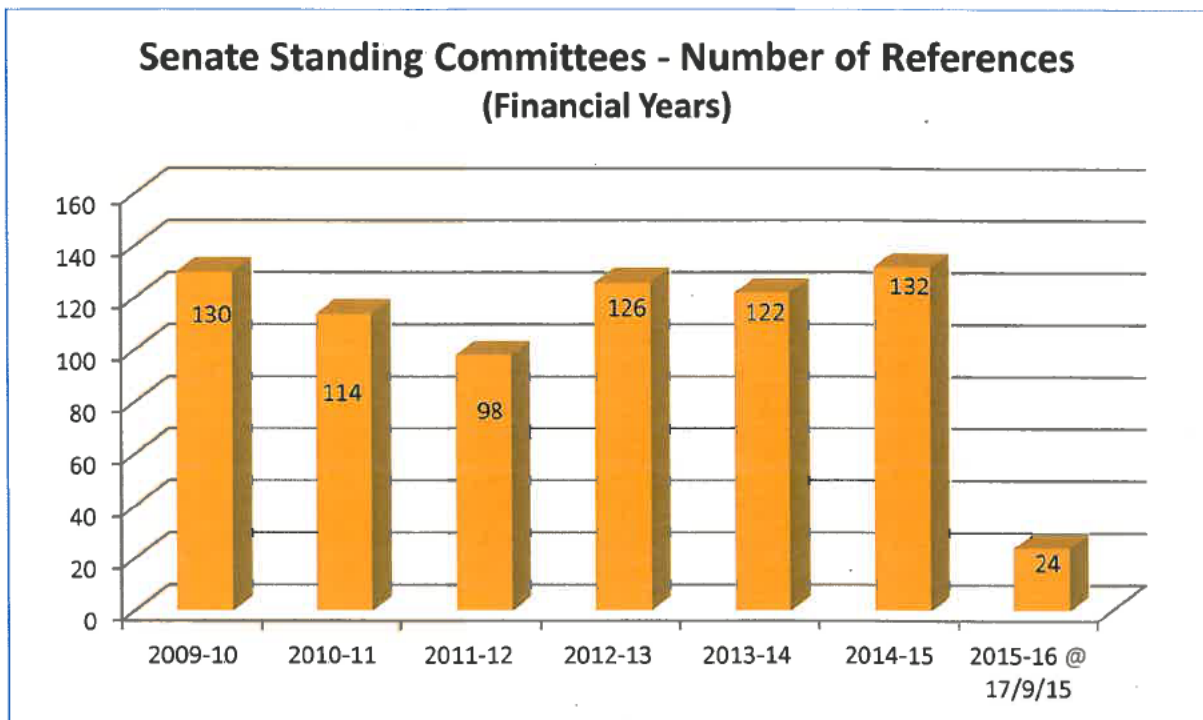
*Average staffing for 2014-15:* At the last pay in September 2015 there were 61 Full Time Equivalent staff in the Committee Office (**see FTE graph**). Recruitment has been undertaken to ensure there is adequate support for Committees as the Committee Office workload has increased.

*Cost of running Senate committees:* The current budget for the Committee Office is \$8.5 million (cash). In 2014-15, operational costs for the Committee Office were \$8.9 million (note that this figure includes corporate overheads). The attached financial summary includes estimated costs incurred 'by category of committee' for the four years 2011-12 to 2014-15. These staffing costs are based on an estimate of time allocated by departmental staff and are a guide only.

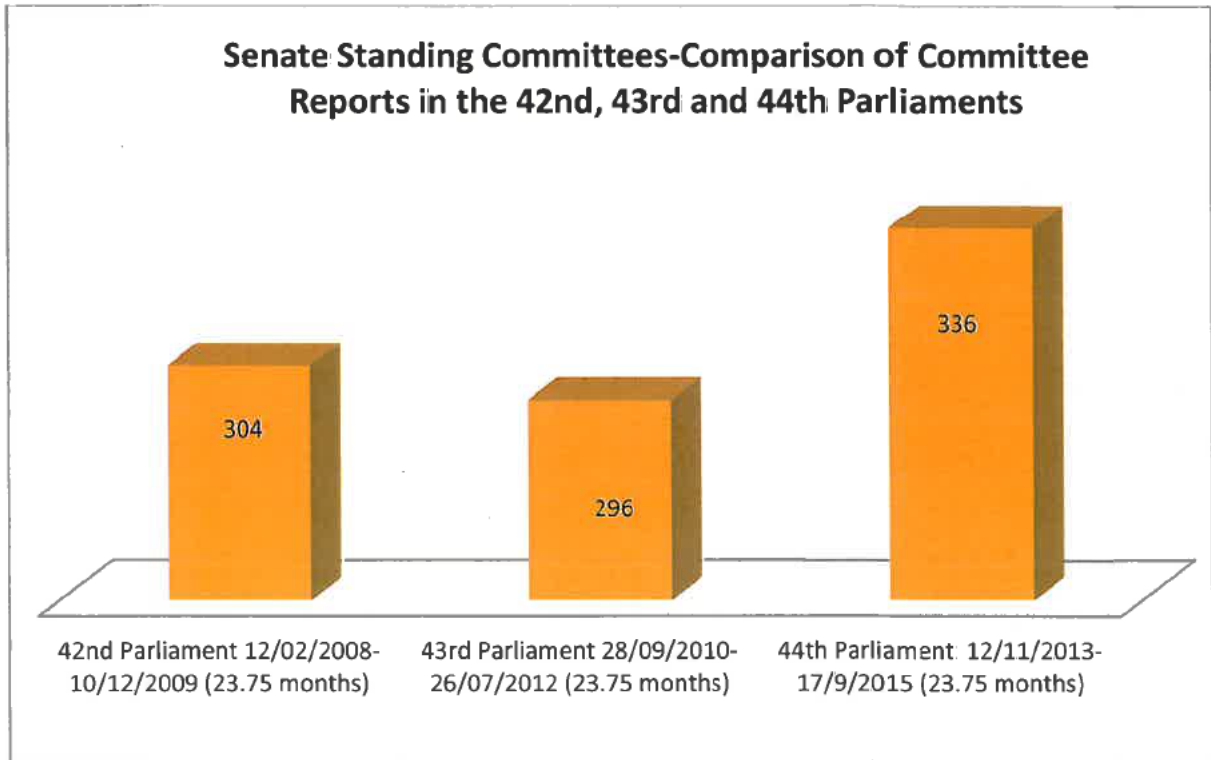
Graph 1



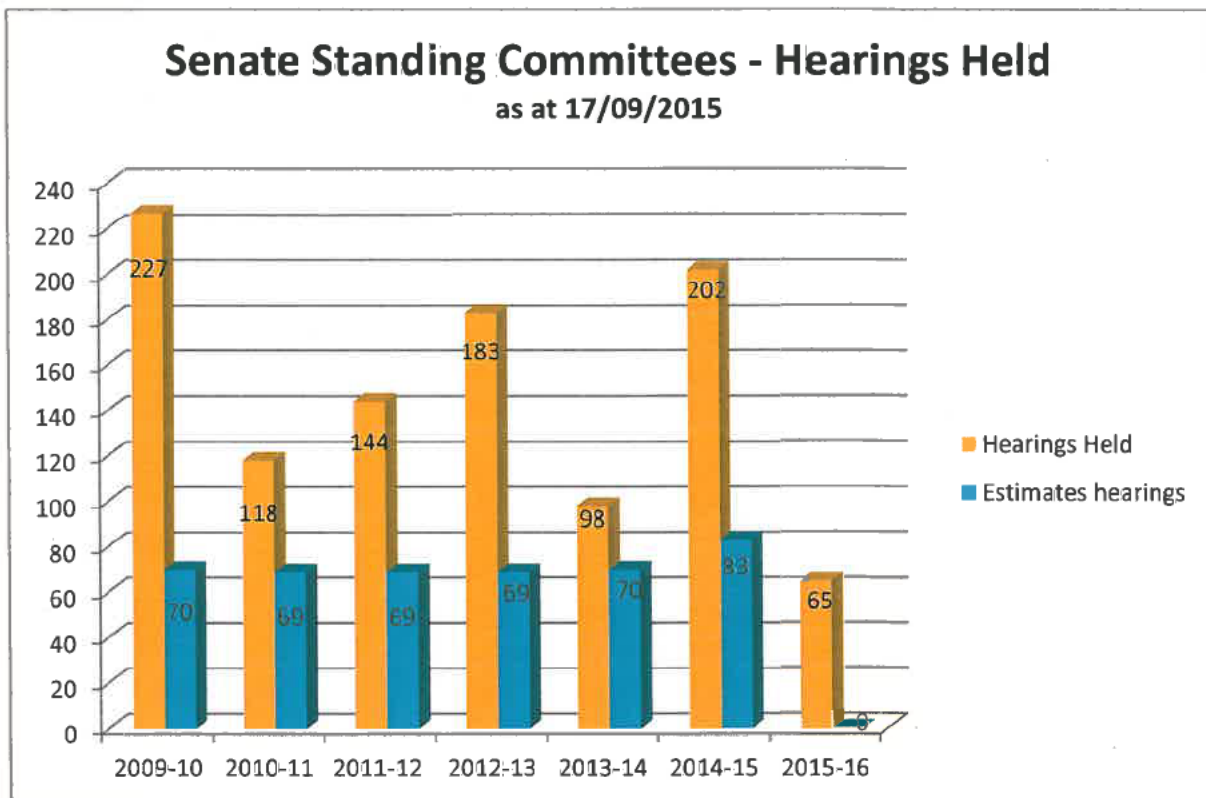
Graph 2



Graph 3



Graph 4



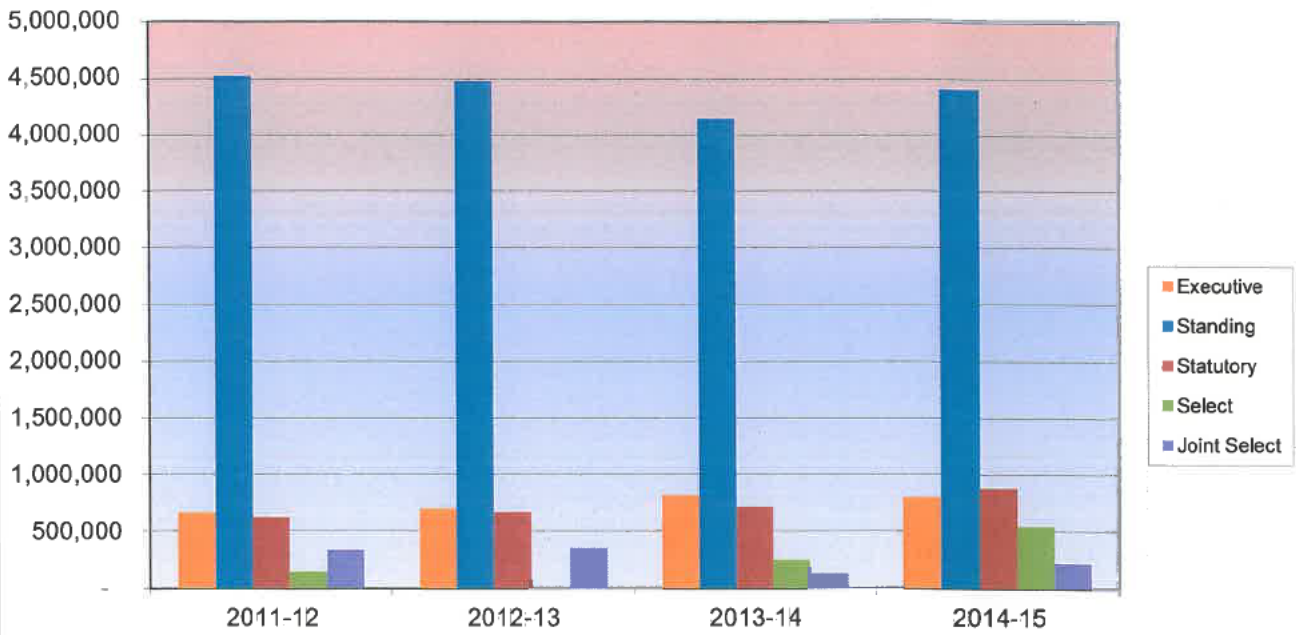
**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE COSTS BY CATEGORY -  
STANDING, SELECT AND JOINT COMMITTEES – 2011-12 TO 2014-15**

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
<b>Executive</b>				
Staff Costs	662,744	699,960	822,952	800,436
Administrative Costs	18,944	21,876	41,541	24,360
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>681,688</b>	<b>721,836</b>	<b>864,493</b>	<b>824,796</b>
<b>Standing</b>				
Staff Costs	4,528,798	4,478,539	4,143,561	4,406,759
Administrative Costs	501,025	395,213	263,927	444,773
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,029,823</b>	<b>4,873,753</b>	<b>4,407,487</b>	<b>4,851,532</b>
<b>Statutory</b>				
Staff Costs	627,266	667,934	715,560	882,953
Administrative Costs	117,289	79,239	60,946	92,300
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>744,555</b>	<b>747,173</b>	<b>776,506</b>	<b>975,253</b>
<b>Select</b>				
Staff Costs	144,071	-	253,201	549,334
Administrative Costs	44,869	12,833	23,391	72,953
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>188,940</b>	<b>12,833</b>	<b>276,592</b>	<b>622,287</b>
<b>Joint Select</b>				
Staff Costs	339,533	350,391	125,875	217,860
Administrative Costs	110,244	29,045	20,201	50,209
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>449,777</b>	<b>379,436</b>	<b>146,075</b>	<b>268,069</b>
<b>Total Program Expense</b>	<b>7,094,783</b>	<b>6,735,030</b>	<b>6,471,154</b>	<b>7,541,937</b>

*Staff costs - the salaries of Senate staff working within the secretariat.*

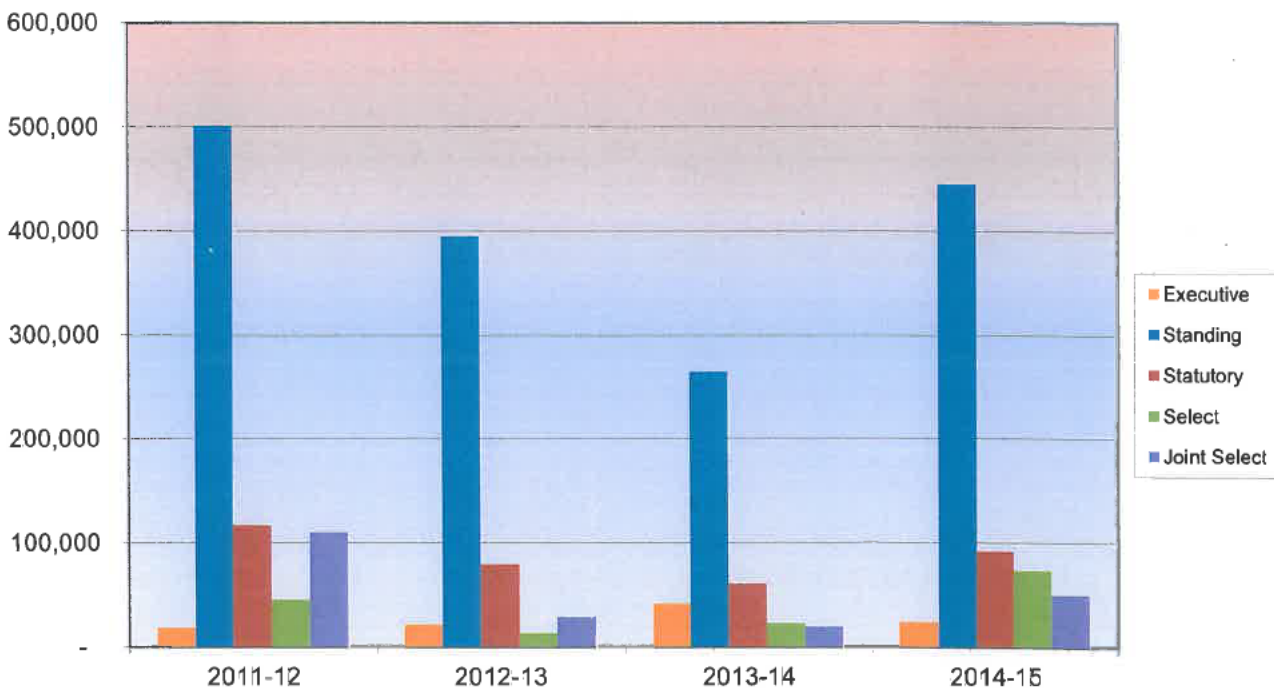
*Administrative costs – includes advertising inquiries, refreshments at hearings, hire of hearing venues, flights and aircraft charters to attend hearings, printing etc.*

### Committee Office - Staff Costs



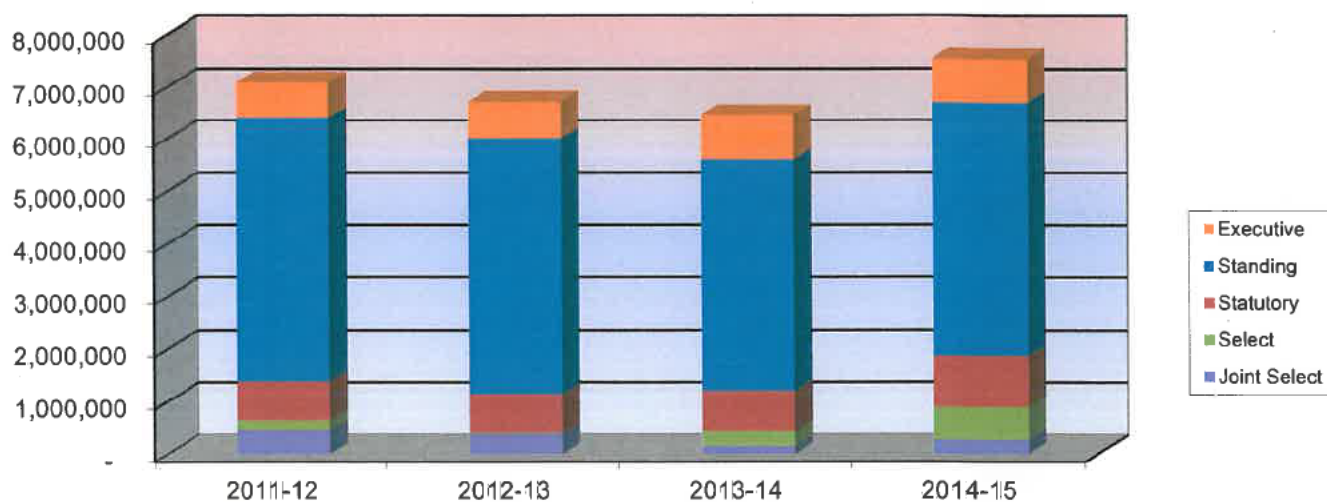
as at 30 June 2015

### Committee Office - Administrative Costs



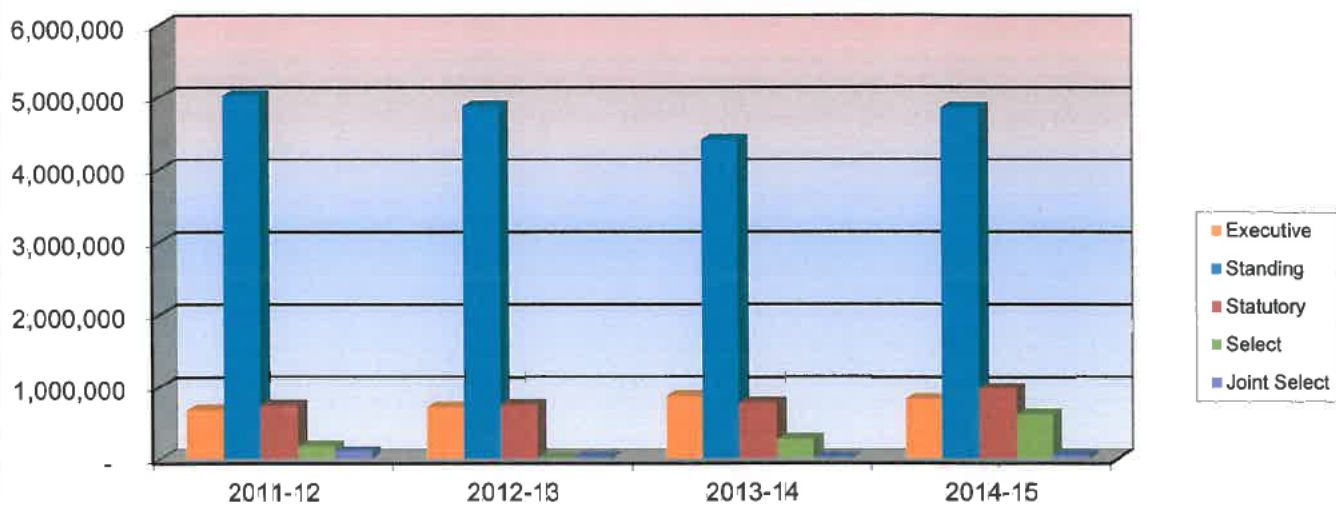
as at 30 June 2015

### Committee Office - Total Expenditure



as at 30 June 2015

### Committee Office - Total Expenditure



as at 30 June 2015

# Committee Office FTE 2000/01 to 2014/15

