

# **Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee—Additional Estimates 2004-05 (February 2005)**

## **Parliament Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary Services**

### **Answers to Questions on Notice**

#### **Topic: Parliamentary Library**

#### **Question P12**

Senator Evans:

- 1 On what date was the position of Parliamentary Librarian last filled on a substantive, full-time basis?
- 2 How many positions does the Parliamentary Library have at the Director, or EL 2, level?
- 3 How many subject groups currently constitute the Information and Research Service?
- 4 Why are there currently more Directors than there are Subject Groups?
- 5 What measures are currently in place within the Library to cut costs, and how do these measures impact on services to clients?

#### **Answer:**

- 1 Mr Hillas MacLean retired from the position of Parliamentary Librarian on 31 January 1992 following 10 years in the position. The position was subsequently filled by Mr John Templeton initially as acting Parliamentary Librarian and subsequently as acting Secretary, Department of the Parliamentary Library. These duties were on a part-time basis as he was also Secretary of the former Department of Parliamentary Reporting Staff.
- 2 The Parliamentary Library currently has 13 positions with the title Director (which in the Department of Parliamentary Services means that the position reports directly to an Assistant Secretary). Of these, 11 Directors are EL2s and 2 Directors are EL1s.
- 3 There are seven subject specialist sections in IRS. These are:
  - Economics, Commerce and Industrial Relations;
  - Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade;
  - Law and Bills Digest;
  - Politics and Public Administration;
  - Science, Technology, Environment and Resources;
  - Social Policy, and
  - Statistics.
- 4 In addition to the seven Directors of subject specialist sections in IRS, there are also two Special Directors, Research, and one Director, Information and Research Services.

### *Special Directors, Research*

These positions are currently located in the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (FADT) section and the Law and Bills Digest (LBD) section. The additional FADT position was the result of the amalgamation of the Foreign Affairs Group and the Defence Group which occurred in 1993. The two existing Directors remained. As well as their subject responsibilities, one Director took on the administrative responsibilities for the new Group and the other Director provides assistance to the Assistant Secretary and Director, Information and Research Services with the quality control of General Briefs and Publications.

The LBD position was created following the restructure which took place in January 1997 to amalgamate the Information Service and the Research Service and to accommodate the requirements of the incumbent Director who wanted to work part-time. The LBD section is the largest in IRS and has the additional responsibility of writing the majority of Bills Digests. While the additional Director position was designed to provide support for these activities, to meet other IRS requirements and to allow for staff development opportunities, at no time has there been more than one Director operating in the LBD section.

### *Director, Information and Research Services*

This position was formerly known as the Deputy Head, Information and Research Services. The title was changed as part of the rationalisation of titles in the amalgamated department, but the duties are unchanged.

5 No specific savings measures have yet been identified within the Information and Research Services Group. Expenditure in 2004-05 has, however, been reduced as a result of the extended election break and associated reductions in demand for library services. As well, spending on consultants has been reduced this financial year.

In the Library Resources and Media Services Group there has been reduced expenditure on serial and newspaper subscriptions. This has been achieved by eliminating titles which have low use levels and reducing the number of duplicated titles. Requests for new subscriptions are scrutinised more rigorously than has been the case in the past.

As well, small savings have been made in office expenses and systems administration but none of these savings should have affected client services.

The amount budgeted for the Parliamentary Librarian position has not been spent so far, and the library is unlikely to spend much of the amount before the end of June 2005.