

The Senate

Finance and Public Administration
Legislation Committee

Budget estimates 2004-05

June 2004

Commonwealth of Australia
ISBN 0 642 71394 4

This document is prepared by the Senate Finance and Public Administration
Legislation Committee and printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament
House, Canberra.

Membership of the Committee

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Senator Andrew Murray (Deputy Chair)	AD, WA
Senator George Brandis	LP, QLD
Senator the Hon. John Faulkner	ALP, NSW
Senator Michael Forshaw	ALP, NSW
Senator the Hon Bill Heffernan	LP, NSW

Participating members

Senators Abetz, Carr, Chapman, Conroy, Coonan, Eggleston, Evans, Ferguson, Ferris, Fifield, Harradine, Harris, Knowles, Lees, Ludwig, McGauran, Mackay, Marshall, Murphy, O'Brien, Payne, Ray, Ridgeway, Sherry, Tchen and Tierney and Watson.

NOTE: all senators may attend a meeting of a legislation committee in relation to estimates, question witnesses and participate in the deliberation of the committee at such a meeting (see Standing Order 26(8)).

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Budget Estimates 2004–2005

Introduction

1.1 On 11 May 2004, the Senate referred to the Committee for examination and report the following documents:

- Particulars of proposed expenditure for the service in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2005;
- Particulars of certain proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2005;
- Particulars of proposed expenditure in relation to the parliamentary departments in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2005;

1.2 The Senate also referred the following:

- Particulars of certain proposed supplementary expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2004;
- Particulars of proposed supplementary expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2004; and
- The annual Tax Expenditures Statement.

1.3 The Committee considered these documents in so far as they related to the portfolios allocated to the Committee by the Senate on 13 February 2002.

1.4 The Committee is required to report to the Senate on or before 17 June 2004.

Portfolio coverage

1.5 The Committee has responsibility for examining the expenditure and outcomes of the following portfolios:

- Parliamentary departments;¹
- Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio; and
- Finance and Administration Portfolio.

Appendix 1 lists the departments and agencies under the portfolios mentioned above.

1 As a matter of comity between the Houses, it is traditional that neither House inquires into the operations of the other House. For this reason, neither the annual report of, nor the proposed expenditure for, the Department of the House of Representatives is referred to a Senate committee for review.

Hearings

1.6 The Committee held public hearings on Monday, 24, Tuesday, 25 and Wednesday, 26 May 2004. Copies of the Committee's transcript of evidence are tabled in three volumes of Hansard for the information of the Senate. Copies of Hansard are available on the internet at the following address: <http://aph.gov.au/hansard>.

1.7 Further written explanations furnished by departments and agencies will be tabled, when received, in volumes entitled Additional Information. That information is also available on the Committee's internet page, found at the following address: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fapa_ctte/estimates/index.htm

1.8 As a matter of Parliamentary Privilege, all information is 'tabled' on receipt.

1.9 Over the course of the three days' hearings—totalling 27 hours and 43 minutes—the Committee took evidence from the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Paul Calvert; the Minister for Defence, representing the Prime Minister, Senator the Honourable Robert Hill; the Minister for Finance and Administration, Senator the Honourable Nick Minchin; and the Special Minister of State, Senator the Honourable Eric Abetz, together with officers of the departments and agencies concerned.

Questions on notice

1.10 Once again, the Committee is concerned about the late submission of some answers to questions on notice.

1.11 The Committee reminds agencies of Standing Order 26(9) that empowers the Committee to set a date for the receipt of answers to questions on notice. The Committee's convention is to set six-week deadlines from the end of its hearings. The Committee considers this to be a reasonable amount of time for agencies to supply answers. Departments and agencies are obliged to comply with Committee deadlines.

1.12 Furthermore, the Committee observes that providing answers immediately before a department's appearance does not allow the Committee sufficient time to adequately study them.

1.13 The due date for submitting responses to questions on notice arising from the additional estimates hearings of February 2004 was 31 March 2004. The following table measures department and agency performance with meeting the Committee's deadline.

Department/agency	Total no. of questions ²	Answered on or before deadline		Answered after deadline		Outstanding at the next estimates hearings	
Senate	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
DPS	2	2	100%	-	-	-	-
PM&C	53	39	74%	6	11%	8 ³	15%
ANAO	1	1	100%	-	-	-	-
Ombudsman	1	1	100%	-	-	-	-
ONA	2	2	100%	-	-	-	-
IGIS	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
APSC	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
OSGG	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
DoFA	22 ⁴	0 ⁵	0%	21	95%	1 ⁶	5%
Comsuper/PSS/CSS	4	0 ⁷	0%	4	100%	-	-
AEC	14	0 ⁸	0%	14	100%	-	-
CGC	1	0 ⁹	0%	1	100%	-	-

2 The total number of questions is based on the allocated question number. It should be noted that questions often have numerous parts to the overall question—in effect, this can translate into agencies having double or more the number of questions than appear in the column.

3 These questions were outstanding at the time of tabling this report. See Appendix 3 for details

4 One question (F30) was a portfolio wide question

5 DoFA provided the Committee with regular written advice and explanations regarding the delays for providing answers

6 Question on notice F20 was outstanding at the time of tabling this report. See Appendix 3 for details

7 See footnote 5

8 *op cit*

9 *op cit*

Explanations for late receipt of answers

1.14 The Committee reminds Commonwealth officers that when delays in answering questions on notice are likely to occur, agencies are expected to provide explanations for the delay. The Committee appreciates that the nature of some questions will unavoidably mean protracted delays. However, the Committee will only accept these delays where acceptable explanations are provided.

1.15 Of particular concern to the Committee was the explanation given by PM&C at the hearing of Tuesday, 25 May, as to why it had not furnished answers to several questions on notice from the February hearings. The following exchange ensued:

Senator FAULKNER—I have a couple of questions about Kirribilli House. I think there are answers to questions on notice that are still outstanding from the last estimate round in relation to functions at Kirribilli House between 1 July 2003 and 1 January 2004 and the costs that were borne by the taxpayer. What is the status of those? Why have they not been answered and when might we expect an answer?

Ms Scott—That answer is not available at this time. We hope to make it available as soon as possible.

Senator ROBERT RAY—What does ‘that answer is not available’ mean? Can you translate that so we can understand what you are saying?

Ms Scott—We are not in a position to provide an answer to you.

Senator ROBERT RAY—I can understand that, but is it because the department has not completed the necessary research or because it has gone to the Prime Minister’s office and is awaiting clearance there and, if so, when did it go?

Ms Scott—We are simply not in a position to provide the answer at this time to the committee.

Senator ROBERT RAY—That is not satisfactory. What do you mean you are not in a position to provide an answer? You must be able to explain why you are not in a position to provide an answer. We are going to accept it if it is a reasonable explanation.¹⁰

1.16 It only emerged after further questioning by the Committee and the assistance of the minister attending that draft answers were lodged on 7 April 2004, with the Prime Minister's Office, which are still awaiting clearance.¹¹

1.17 The Committee is concerned that it had to prise out of officials an answer to a question on a basic process matter. It is also concerned that such a straightforward matter should be met with a series of ambiguous and unhelpful answers. These stand in contrast to the DoFA practice of updating the Committee through the secretariat on

10 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 83

11 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 84-85

progress with answering questions taken on notice and providing explanations for any delays.

Deadline for submitting answers

1.18 The Committee has set 9 July 2004 as the deadline for submitting answers to questions on notice arising from this estimates round.

1.19 The following sections of the report lists the issues considered by the Committee and discusses some of these in detail.

Parliamentary Departments

1.20 The Committee took evidence from the parliamentary departments on Monday, 24 May 2004.

Department of the Senate

1.21 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Departmental savings required to cover costs associated with the increased security arrangements at Parliament House;
- Impacts of the amalgamation of parliamentary departments on the Department of the Senate;
- Regulations relating to Senate printing services;
- Ensuring parliamentary privilege is protected within search warrants, particularly in relation to electronic material;

Appropriations, savings and effects of the amalgamation of joint parliamentary departments

1.22 The Committee spent time examining reduced appropriations for the Department, and the Department's proposed responses. The President of the Senate, Senator Calvert, highlighted to the Committee a \$1.2 million cut in appropriations for the Department, reflecting the distribution of costs associated with increased security arrangements at Parliament House. The President noted that these savings were intended to derive from the amalgamation of joint parliamentary departments, recommended in the Parliamentary Services Commissioner's review (also known as the 'Podger review'). As savings resulting from departmental amalgamations should be realised in the new Department of Parliamentary Services, the President noted that they should also be reflected in the appropriations for that department.¹²

1.23 The Committee heard that an initial proposal to effect this reallocation involved reducing charges to the Department of the Senate for security services, under the current purchaser-provider model. However, in response to recommendations made by the Appropriations and Staffing Committee the Presiding Officers decided:

... to end the purchaser-provider model and transfer the funds to the Department of Parliamentary Services, subject to safeguards which are set out in the Appropriations and Staffing Committee report...¹³

1.24 The Committee heard that the latter proposal requires the approval of the Minister for Finance and Administration.¹⁴

1.25 Two other proposals were raised during the Committee's examination of the proposed transfer of security related funding. Firstly, the department proposed a change of standing orders to give the Appropriations and Staffing Committee an oversight role of security arrangements in the Senate. Secondly, the Committee heard that the department are proposing to amend the Parliamentary Service Act to enhance the role of the Security Management Board, ensuring Senate control over security.¹⁵

1.26 The Committee heard that the impact of department amalgamations on the Department of the Senate is principally financial, as the department's budget will be greatly reduced by the aforementioned transfer of funds. The Committee heard that the department anticipates future funding problems, and was unable to be assured that services to Senators would not be impacted upon.¹⁶

Parliamentary privilege and search warrants

1.27 The Committee raised concerns about matters of privilege and cost associated with the seizure of documents and evidence under police search warrants, particularly in relation to electronic material. The Committee heard that inquiries relating to Senator's offices and affairs had increased, due to increased activity by police and independent commissions against corruption.¹⁷

1.28 The Committee heard that guidelines for law enforcement agencies when searching parliamentarian's offices have been negotiated by the Presiding Officers and Attorney-General, and will be finalised shortly. The Committee questioned whether statutory changes are required to ensure adequate protection of parliamentary privilege in relation to the seizure of electronic material.

13 Mr Harry Evans, Clerk of the Senate, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2004, F&PA3

14 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 3

15 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 3

16 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 5

17 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 13

Department of Parliamentary Services

1.29 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Contracts let for leather furniture for the Senate and House of Representatives;
- Inability of the department to meet the efficiency savings identified in the Podger review;
- Security projects currently being implemented at Parliament House;
- Current and forthcoming capital works projects at Parliament House, including redevelopment of the forecourt and refurbishment of the Queen's Terrace Cafe;
- The occurrence of a major water leak in the Ministerial Wing in April 2004;
- Progress in implementing the recommendations raised in Ms Betty Churcher's review of the Art Section;
- Media coverage of the removal of a member of the public from the chamber gallery;
- Effectiveness of the introduction of CCTV cameras in reducing theft in the building; and
- Matters relating to the Parliamentary computing network including: potential software solutions to the increasing amount of spam email entering the internal email system; mechanisms for dealing with offensive email material; and the slow speed of the electorate office network, and for laptop computers operated away from electorate offices or Parliament House.

Efficiency savings identified following the amalgamation of joint parliamentary departments

1.30 In examining financial matters, the Committee highlighted that in accordance with the transfer of security funding from chamber departments to the joint Parliamentary Services Department, savings measures would also be transferred. The Committee was interested to examine how these savings measures would be handled.

1.31 The Committee heard that while around \$2.2 million has been identified in direct amalgamation savings, there have also been a number of costs, and the department will not meet anticipated savings levels. Senator Ray further clarified this matter:

Senator ROBERT RAY — ...what you are telling me in summary is that you are not going to meet the \$5 million a year that Podger said would accrue from amalgamation.

Ms Penfold — There is no way that we will find \$5 million worth of savings in the first year and probably not for quite a lot of years, if ever.¹⁸

1.32 The Committee heard that by August 2004 the department will be able to advise the Department of Finance and Administration as to the level of direct savings made, and identify future savings options. Possible savings options put before the Committee included cuts in services such as the printing of Hansards, slowing the rate at which ICT projects are completed and deferring capital works around the building.¹⁹ The Committee expressed concern that such savings options should go towards efficiency dividend and salary increases, and not towards funding the shortfall from parliamentary amalgamations.

Increased security measures at Parliament House

1.33 The Committee was interested in the progress of the increased security measures at Parliament House, and was informed that three major projects are currently underway. These projects involve the improvement of perimeter security, consequential work on the Melbourne Avenue car parks, and improvements to the security of the windows in the Ministerial Wing.²⁰

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C)

1.34 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Variations between estimated and actual expenditure for 2003-2004 related to women's policy and the Prime Minister's official residence;
- PM&C moving to new premises and expenditure on security upgrades to its current offices;
- PM&C advice to the Prime Minister in relation to Professor Flint's role as chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Authority;
- A Council of Australian Governments agreement on 'Research involving human embryos and prohibition of human cloning';
- PM&C involvement in relation to the preparation of a terrorism white paper, cognizance of the mistreatment of detainees in Iraq, government handling of complaints made by Lt Col Lance Collins and advice to government on security screening at regional domestic airports;
- Investigations of leaks of official matters;

18 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 20

19 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 21

20 F&PA, 24 May 2004, 22

-
- Progress and expenditure on the report on resolving Senate deadlocks;
 - Reasons for the delay in answers to questions on notice related to functions at Kirribilli House;
 - Expenditure on various Government advertising campaigns; and
 - The Prime Minister's planned meeting with the Governor of California, Mr Arnold Schwarzenegger.

1.35 During these hearings members of the Committee concentrated on women's policy under Output Group 2, particularly issues to do with underspending in the program and the advertising campaign on violence against women. These have been two areas of recurring interest for the Committee over recent estimates hearings.

Administered appropriations for women's programs

1.36 Members sought an explanation for the decrease of over 50 per cent in administered appropriations for women's programs between 2003-04 and 2004-05. The Portfolio Budget Statements show estimated actual appropriation of \$11.589 million for 2004-05 compared with \$25.011 million for 2003-04.²¹

1.37 The officials indicated that the decrease reflects the phasing down or, as it was put to the Committee, 'step-down' in funding for key elements of the program. The decrease appears particularly marked because of the additional funding, in the form of rephased money for the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence program and national initiative to combat sexual assault, provided to the women's policy programs in the previous financial year. According to Ms Scott, Deputy Secretary:

When the programs were announced, they had a certain profile. This reflects the profile of those programs in that they peaked at a certain time and they stepped down. What has happened over and above that is that we have also got additional funding in 2003-04 and 2004-05 for the two campaigns that are brought together as one, and \$5.1 million is provided in 2003-04 and \$1.6 million in 2004-05. But if you looked at the original profile, you would see that they were tracking down.²²

1.38 Members also examined in close detail the anti domestic violence campaign, focusing particularly on the costs involved in cancelling a number of advertisements and other events associated with the campaign. The department informed the committee that six contracts had been cancelled or varied, leading to cancellation fees totalling over \$1.1 million.²³ These cancellation fees come on top of sunk costs in the projects that had been cancelled.²⁴ Although the initial work for some of these projects may be used in the future, it appears that most of the projects will not proceed.

²¹ Table 2.1, PBS 2004-05 Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio, p.32

²² F&PA, 24 May 2004, 49. See also F&PA, 25 May, 4-5

²³ F&PA, 24 May 2004, 81

²⁴ F&PA, 24 May, 81-82, 91-110

1.39 As discussed in the Committee's report on the Additional Estimates in March 2004, the cancellation or variation of numerous projects for the anti domestic violence campaign resulted from a decision in late 2003 by the Ministerial Council on Government Communications to 'refocus' the campaign.²⁵

1.40 During this estimates round, departmental officials explained that aspects of the refocused campaign will provide practical assistance to women in need. This includes the establishment of a help line counselling and referral service.²⁶ In response to questioning officials indicated that the change to the campaign also has involved reshooting a number of advertisements. These have cost about \$200 000, with testing of the new advertisements estimated to cost a further \$150 000.²⁷

Government advertising campaigns

1.41 In addition to advertising under women's policy, members also examined the Government Communications Unit and details of expenditure on a host of government advertising campaigns. These included campaigns related to:

- The superannuation co-contribution;
- Quarantine matters ;
- Defence force recruiting;
- The Natural Heritage Trust;
- Waste oil;
- New Apprenticeships;
- Smartraveller safe travel;
- Citizenship;
- Medicare;
- Tobacco;
- Family assistance;
- Giving and philanthropy;
- Illicit drugs; and
- Higher education.²⁸

1.42 As part of the examination of government advertising, members referred to the upward trend in advertising expenditure in election years and sought assurance

²⁵ Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, *Report on additional estimates 2003-04*, March 2004, p.9

²⁶ F&PA, 24 May, 75

²⁷ F&PA, 24 May, 76-77

²⁸ F&PA, 25 May 2004, 93-100. See also 'Government Communications Unit – Current campaign activity May 2004', tabled on 25 May 2004

that there are no further planned campaigns to those under the estimated 'spike' of over \$100 million in advertising for 2004. The head of the GCU, Mr Williams, indicated that he was not aware of any additional campaigns. Mr Williams also reported that while the 1995 guidelines on government advertising continue to be applied, there is no formal auditing, validation or sign-off to ensure that campaigns comply with the guidelines.²⁹

Office of National Assessments (ONA)

1.43 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Budget increases for increasing ONA's analytical staff and IT upgrades;
- ONA's statutory responsibility for coordinating the intelligence community's collection and analysis of foreign intelligence issues;
- ONA liaison officers in Washington and London; and
- The appointment of Dr Hammer as the new Deputy Director-General.

1.44 The Director-General of ONA, Mr Varghese, told the Committee that he had been focusing on the current inquiry into intelligence agencies being conducted by Mr Flood. As part of this exercise, Mr Varghese has been examining ways to improve ONA's analytical capability, particularly through better training of new and serving analysts. ONA has also been looking at strengthening its role in coordinating foreign intelligence issues.

1.45 Mr Varghese also stated that ONA's budget had increased from \$11.4 million in 2003-04 to \$13.1 million in 2004-05, which comes on top of the more significant increase from \$7.6 million in 2002-03. He indicated that these budget increases had been directed mainly at increasing the number of ONA's analytical staff and a substantial upgrade of information technology.

Australian Public Service Commission

1.46 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Expected growth in non-appropriation revenue, due principally to the Commission's refreshed learning and development programs;
- Progress of the Government's responses to the Finance and Public Administration References Committee reports on recruitment and training in the Australian Public Service, and ministerial advisers (Staff employed under the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984);
- Increased staffing levels at the Commission over recent years;

²⁹ F&PA, 25 May 2004, 101

- The extent of the APS workforce covered by Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs), and cost-benefits of AWAs;
- The process and criteria for determining senior executive bonuses;
- Structural changes to the APS workforce;
- Funding for the Australia and New Zealand School of Government research projects;
- Expenditure on the promotion of effective leadership in the APS, and on service-wide leadership, and the difference between these two outputs;
- Materials developed by the Commission to promote the APS values and code of conduct;
- Progress of the Indigenous employment program;
- Outcomes of merit protection reviews;
- Actions taken by the Commission to increase APS employees' understanding of the role of the Merit Protection Commissioner;
- Guidelines for the authorisation of hospitality expenditure; and
- The cost-effectiveness of advertising APS job vacancies externally.

1.47 The Committee heard that the structure of the APS workforce has continued to change, with an increased number of senior executive service (SES) officers and decreased number of officers at lower levels. The Public Service Commissioner, Mr Andrew Podger, stated that in his view the major cause of this change is technology, with outsourcing and privatisation also contributing.³⁰

1.48 Members of the Committee took the opportunity to discuss with Mr Podger, in his role as Parliamentary Service Commissioner, the actions taken in response to his report into parliamentary amalgamations. Members of the Committee considered it appropriate that, in due course, Mr Podger review the outcomes of the parliamentary amalgamations with reference to the expectations made in his report.³¹

Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

1.49 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included the:

- process for initiating investigative audits, where cases of maladministration appear evident;
- role of the ANAO in auditing third parties, through which Commonwealth money is expended on government programs and policies; and

30 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 30

31 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 35

- ANAO's lease of Centenary House.

Guidelines for auditing third parties

1.50 In relation to auditing of third parties, the Committee heard that the government procurement guidelines now include suggested model contracting clauses, which would give the ANAO access to third party records.³² The Auditor-General, Mr Pat Barrett, outlined to the Committee his expectation that managers of third party contracts should ensure proper accountability. The Committee heard that the ANAO's role was often to ensure that agencies have proper accountability controls in place. Mr Barrett stated:

... it should not be necessary for auditors to have access to records or premises if the agency has indeed done that itself and made sure that it has got particular value for money, that the costs reflected are reasonable and that it has made reasonable checks.³³

Lease of Centenary House

1.51 The ANAO's lease of Centenary House has been examined by the Committee at a number of previous hearings.³⁴ On this occasion, Senator Brandis sought current information regarding the:

- rental rate for Centenary House;
- rental rate and details of the current subtenancy;
- market value of the head lease; and
- outcome of a request by the ANAO to have the lease renegotiated to commercial terms.

1.52 The Committee heard that, consistent with previous correspondence, the lessor would not consider renegotiating the lease. Senator Brandis reminded the ANAO that the original basis put forward by the lessor for not renegotiating the lease was the 'structure of the borrowings and the landlord's obligation to its original mortgagee'.³⁵ Senator Brandis raised with the ANAO his understanding that there had recently been a reassignment of the mortgage debt for Centenary House to a new mortgagee. The ANAO was requested on notice to confirm this reassignment, and clarify with the lessor whether renegotiation of the lease would be possible given the changed arrangements.³⁶

32 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 39

33 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 39

34 See for example, Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, *Report on Budget Estimates 2003–2004*, p.17; and *Report on Additional Estimates 2003-04*, p.11

35 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 42

36 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 43

Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

1.53 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included the:

- planned increase in the number of staff employed by the Ombudsman's office;
- profile of complaints received by the Ombudsman;
- reduction in the number of complaints against the Taxation Office related to mass marketed tax effective schemes;
- role of the Ombudsman with respect to complaints concerning third party service providers;
- new roles for the office, for which additional funding has been allocated.

1.54 The Committee examined the new roles for the Ombudsman's office, stemming from the introduction of the *ASIO Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2003*. Prof. John McMillan, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, explained that under the Act:

... if, for example, ASIO were to request the Australian Federal Police to bring a person in for questioning, one of the rights that is preserved within that legislation is the right of the person who is being questioned or detained to contact the Ombudsman or the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security.³⁷

1.55 The Ombudsman explained that in response to this provision a new style of complaint handling has been introduced so that the office is contactable 24 hours a day.³⁸ The Ombudsman also indicated that the office has been involved in establishing a protocol to ensure that any detainees under the above mentioned Act are aware of the role of the Ombudsman, and how to access the Ombudsman.³⁹

1.56 The Committee heard that the Ombudsman's role in handling complaints against the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Crime Commission has also been expanded. The Ombudsman indicated that two further roles, those of postal industry ombudsman and Norfolk Island ombudsman, may also be taken on depending on the passage of relevant legislation.⁴⁰

1.57 Senator Murray pointed out that the number of Commonwealth services delivered by third parties has increased significantly in recent years, and asked the Ombudsman whether there had been a corresponding increase in complaints relating to third party service delivery. The Committee heard that the Ombudsman Act

37 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 45

38 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 45

39 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 46

40 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 46

restricts the Ombudsman's jurisdiction to the public sector.⁴¹ Prof. McMillan outlined to the Committee two responses that have been made regarding increased outsourcing of government services. These were the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Public Accounts' that the Ombudsman's jurisdiction be extended legislatively, and the Ombudsman's own motion report into complaint handling in the Job Network.⁴²

Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (IGIS)

1.58 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Planned expenditure of the office's increased budget allocation;
- The involvement of IGIS in questioning and detention regimes conducted by ASIO under the *Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2003*; and
- The key areas of work currently conducted by IGIS.

1.59 The Committee welcomed the new Inspector-General, Mr Ian Carnell, and sought his views on conducting government inquiries not directly related to IGIS' mission. Mr Carnell indicated that he would be very cautious about taking on such inquiries, with the new functions and increased workload of the office forming his primary concerns.⁴³

1.60 The Committee heard that current work being undertaken by IGIS includes:

- The inspection program;
- Handling of complaints, including four complaints which have moved to the inquiry stage;
- An inquiry, requested by the Minister of Defence, into a matter concerning Lieutenant Colonel Collins; and
- Ongoing functions such as presentations at induction and training courses.

1.61 Senator Faulkner noted the Committee's sensitivity when asking questions in a public forum about the kinds of matters covered by the IGIS. Senator Faulkner proposed that for future hearings, Mr Carnell canvass issues broadly in an opening statement to the Committee, suggesting:

I think one way of approaching these things is for you to provide that information to the committee in a form that you are comfortable with and for that to stand on the record.⁴⁴

41 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 47

42 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 48

43 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 55

44 F&PA, 25 May 2004, 56

Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

1.62 Issues raised by members and other senators in attendance included:

- Planned overseas travel for the Governor-General;
- Media speculation that the Governor-General is 'frustrated';
- Costs relating to the Governor-General's and official party's accommodation in the Berkeley at Wilton Place in Knightsbridge, London; and
- Water restrictions at Admiralty House in Sydney.

Finance and Administration Portfolio

1.63 The Committee took evidence from the Department and agencies of the Finance and Administration portfolio on Wednesday, 26 May 2004. The Committee's examination of the portfolio was shorter than usual, with the Committee requiring only one day to cover particular matters. The Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC) was released without examination.

Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA)

1.64 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- Appropriations for the Parliamentary departments with regard to security measures, the amalgamation of former joint departments and the implementation of the Podger report;
- Members of Parliament travel entitlement reforms;
- Reporting requirements relating to members of parliament overseas study travel;
- Auditing members of Parliament travel;
- Special accounts;
- Policy expenditure of some \$5.5 billion from the announcement of the 2004-05 budget up to 30 June 2004;
- The total net policy decisions—both revenue and expense measures—of the 2004-05 budget across the forward estimates;
- Answers to questions on notice;
- Historical data relating to budget measures;
- New clauses in the appropriation bills allowing the withdrawal of funding that is no longer required;
- The pre-election economic and fiscal outlook (PEFO) report and the mid-year economic fiscal outlook (MYEFO) report;
- The department's role in costing alternative policies measures;

-
- The costing of government policy relating to Iraq;
 - Treatment of Telstra value (share price) in the Budget;
 - Superannuation expenses relating to Telstra and Australia Post;
 - The treatment of superannuation relating to public trading enterprises and the GFS;
 - Departments and agencies meeting financial reporting deadlines and the \$130 million budget measure to address quality and timeliness;
 - The replacement of AIMS (finance system);
 - The Uhrig review of corporate governance practices in Commonwealth agencies;
 - Medibank Private – capital injection of \$85 million;
 - Reserve Bank of Australia dividends;
 - MOPS staffing numbers and allocations;
 - The Government Members Secretariat (GMS);
 - Parliamentarians' printing entitlements;
 - Parliamentarians' travel allowances; and
 - Certification of parliamentarians' management reports.

Review of parliamentarians' overseas study entitlements

1.65 The Committee questioned the Minister for Finance and Administration, Senator Minchin, regarding a press release indicating the Government's intention to review parliamentarians' overseas study entitlements. Senator Minchin told the Committee that a leadership group of government, consisting of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Treasurer, the Minister for Defence, the Minister for Trade, and the Minister for Finance and Administration—in consultation with the Special Minister of State, Dr Watt (Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration) and Ms Mason (General Manager, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services)—was considering the matter to see what 'administrat[ive] changes could be made to ensure that the use of the entitlement was clearly consistent with the determination'.⁴⁵

1.66 The Minister also outlined the nature of these changes. He stated:

... what we have done in our announcement is make it clear that access to the entitlement by an MP will be strictly restricted—for the purposes of being accompanied by a spouse—to those who are legally married to the parliamentarian or, if not legally married, to a de facto spouse who meets the definition set out in the Parliamentarian Entitlements Act. In future there will be a separate form, which parliamentarians will be required to

45 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 8, 21

lodge, for any proposed use of the overseas study entitlement. That form will include a section which will require the parliamentarian to certify to the effect that an accompanying spouse meets the definition of either one of those two categories: 'legally married' or 'de facto', in accordance with the Parliamentary Entitlements Act.

We have decided that in the future all reports on such overseas study trips will automatically be made available to the public for public scrutiny. So I think they are material changes. In the past, there has not been a certification to that effect. In fact, as you may know, there was only the one form for nominating a spouse for domestic or overseas travel, and it did not require a formal certification to the effect that the spouse met the definition required in the determination for overseas travel. So we are, to that extent, significantly tightening up the administration of the use of this entitlement.⁴⁶

1.67 Senator Minchin went on to say that a formal decision had not been made regarding how parliamentarians' reports would be made public. However, the Minister stated that:

At the moment it is required that the reports be lodged with the Special Minister of State and then he has a discretion, I think. They are FOIable. We have said, in a sense, 'Take away the discretion,' and all MPs should be on notice that, having lodged their report, it will be made publicly available. The exact nature of that mechanism has not been determined and I think it would be a good idea for Senator Abetz to consult as to how best to do that.⁴⁷

New clauses within the appropriation bills

1.68 Senator Conroy explored the application of new clauses contained in the appropriation bills for the 2003-04 financial year's additional estimates, which enable '...the Minister for Finance and Administration to claw back unused departmental appropriations or the difference between the appropriated amount and the amount ... [actually] spent'.⁴⁸ The Committee was told that when a minister surrenders surplus funds, the legal authority, between DoFA and the agency, for the funds remained. The legislation is primarily designed to enable the finance minister to revoke the authority for departments continuing to spend the funds in future years. However, the Committee was assured that the Minister for Finance and Administration could not undertake such action unilaterally. Mr McPhee (General Manager, Financial Management Group) stated that:

46 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 8-9

47 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 9

48 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 25

[t]his is really just an exercise to allow the administrative approach of offering up and accepting savings to be formalised and the appropriation authority to be reduced accordingly.⁴⁹

1.69 Senator Conroy asked the department for an example of how this provision might work or where it has been used. While officers of the department said they could not think of a particular example, Mr McPhee gave the follow hypothetical example:

If the government took a decision to provide funds for an agency to undertake a particular initiative, if it introduced the appropriation bills to give effect to that additional funding and then if something occurred which meant that initiative would not proceed for whatever reason, the agency has already been funded—let us use a figure of \$50 million—to implement the initiative, but the circumstances have changed and that \$50 million is no longer required. In the budget context, it is likely that would come up for consideration as to whether the agency should continue to have access to those funds. If government took a decision to say, ‘There is no justification for that to be provided to that agency’, if the portfolio minister agreed, if there were no other offsetting arrangements and if that was a straight decision, then this is one mechanism by which the original appropriation, which was made in a genuine way, can be cancelled out if you like. Those are the circumstances.⁵⁰

Costing of alternative policy measures

1.70 Senator Conroy asked the department whether it had been asked to cost ALP policy outside an election period since the 2001 federal election. Officials stated that the department had been asked to cost a range of alternative policies, some of which included ALP policy. Mr Bowen (General Manager, Budget Group) told the Committee that, ‘[w]e are asked to cost alternative policies. We are not asked explicitly to cost Labor policy’.⁵¹

1.71 At the Senator’s request, the department took on notice to provide a list of the policies the department had costed. However, the Minister said he was not prepared to provide the Committee with such a list and stated that it was an ‘internal matter for the government’.⁵²

1.72 Discussion ensued that resulted in the Minister agreeing to take on notice to provide the Committee with the total number of alternative policy measures costed. However, the Minister indicated that he was not going to provide details describing the policies or the origins of those policies.

49 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 25

50 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 26-27

51 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 29

52 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 29

Staff employed under the Members of Parliament (Staff) (MOPS) Act 1984

1.73 Committee members and other senators who attended the hearings questioned the minister and DoFA witnesses about the staffing of ministerial and other government offices. Following the usual practice—which the Committee commends⁵³—DoFA submitted tabulations of the numbers, classifications and distribution of the personal staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (the MOPS Act). These tables showed that as at 1 May 2004 personal staff positions in ministers' and other government offices numbered 391.6—an increase of 6.2 from 1 February 2004. There were 83 Opposition personal staff—an increase of 3 from 1 February 2004—and 15 Australian Democrats personal staff—unchanged. Independent members and senators employed a further 10, and 12 were employed by former Prime Ministers—both unchanged.

1.74 DoFA also submitted a table that showed the overall number of personal staff employed by ministers from 1 February 2004 to 1 May 2004 remained at 30. Non-government staff with personal classifications totalled nine, an increase of one for the Opposition.

1.75 In addition to personal classifications, a table submitted indicated the following changes to staff numbers employed as Special Advisers: Government four, a decrease of one from February 2004; Opposition one, unchanged; and the addition of one for the Australian Democrats.

1.76 The allocation of eleven staff—an increase of two from 1 February 2004—employed under the MOPS Act to the Government Members Secretariat was again the subject of some interest at the hearing.

Government Members Secretariat

1.77 Evidence at the Committee's hearings in February 2004 established that the Chief Government Whip in the House of Representative is responsible for the operations of the Government Members Secretariat (GMS). At the time, concerns were raised that this arrangement impedes the Committee's ability to fully examine the activities of the GMS.⁵⁴

1.78 These concerns surfaced again on this occasion when members of the Committee sought information relating to staff budgets, travel and employment arrangements relating to the GMS. The Committee sought an explanation for the increased number of staff but was not provided with a definitive explanation. The following exchange between Senator Ray and the Special Minister of State, Senator Abetz, ensued:

53 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 51

54 Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, *Report on Additional Estimates 2003-04*, pp.14-15

Senator ROBERT RAY—Do we know why they have had that increase? Maybe the minister can help us.

Senator Abetz—Undoubtedly it was considered desirable and needed.

Senator ROBERT RAY—Really? Why was it considered desirable and necessary?

Senator Abetz—The Government Whip has the jurisdiction of the Government Members Secretariat.

Senator ROBERT RAY—So it was his recommendation and request to government, was it?

Senator Abetz—I would assume that that is how it works. How it actually comes about or what commences the process, I am unable to say, but at the end of the day it is the Prime Minister that determines the staff allocations to the Government Whip and to various ministerial offices.⁵⁵

1.79 The Committee asked questions relating to the staffing budget for the GMS. Neither the Special Minister of State, Senator Abetz, nor the department was able to answer the questions at the hearing. Senator Abetz, instead, took the matter on notice.

1.80 The Committee asked questions relating to GMS travel arrangement. DoFA indicated that it does not allocate, and is not aware of, a travel budget for the GMS. Further questions regarding who approves travel undertaken by staff of the GMS established that the Chief Government Whip, Mr Lloyd MP, or Mr Wheeler (Senior Advisor, GMS) were the persons authorised to approve secretariat travel.⁵⁶ Senator Abetz also informed the Committee that the Chief Government Whip signs all contracts for the employment of GMS staff.⁵⁷

1.81 Further questions by Senator Ray relating to the particular levels at which certain staff were employed were immediately taken on notice by Senator Abetz, with him stating that:

I will take that on notice and give it consideration as to whether I want to make that information available.⁵⁸

1.82 Discussion ensued on the matter and resulted in the Committee making a request to the senior portfolio minister, Senator Minchin, to attend the hearing to assist the Committee on these issues. Senator Minchin refused the request on the grounds there was nothing further he could add to what Senator Abetz had already stated.

55 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 54

56 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 55, 67

57 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 55-56

58 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 57

Certification of parliamentarians' management reports

1.83 Senator Murray raised several questions relating to the delays in individual certification of parliamentarians' management reports. In particular, whether there are any outstanding accounts from past financial years of former members and senators to be certified. Mr Barnes (Branch Manager, Service Centre) indicated there were several reports outstanding that were being followed up. However, Mr Barnes conceded that some cases would inevitably be treated as write-offs. Senator Abetz, provided the following update to questions raised by Senator Murray in January 2004:

For the financial year 1999-2000 the answer was that there were 10 not certified. As at 18 May that still remains 10, so there has been no movement there. For 2000-01 the answer was that there were 21 not certified; that has reduced to 19. For the financial year 2001-02 the answer was that there were 28 not certified; that has reduced to 23. For 2002-03 there were 94 not certified; that has reduced to 71.⁵⁹

1.84 Considering that the certification of management reports is an essential accountability mechanism, Senator Murray asked the minister and department if there is some means of penalising a failure to produce a report. Mr Barnes stated that:

The difficulty with the situation is that there is no compulsion for certification. On that basis there is no authority for [the department] to follow up.⁶⁰

1.85 Senator Abetz indicated that he would take Senator Murray's questions on notice and come back to the Committee after giving them further consideration.

1.86 Senator Ray also raised concerns with the 'signing off' of management reports in terms of the accuracy of certain accounts. To this end, Senator Ray asked:

How can I attest to the accuracy of the phone charges when I have not been sent a phone bill to check it off? How can I know that the newsagent has accurately charged the department for the newspapers I get?⁶¹

1.87 Ms Mason responded by stating that '[t]he enhanced certification was and is part of the department's desire to improve its administration of entitlements'.⁶² Ms Mason also indicated that the department was currently looking at these concerns.

1.88 Subsequent to the Budget Estimates, on 17 June DoFA advised senators and members that management reports are to be reworded to remove ambiguities and make it clear that the certification relates to the appropriate 'use' of entitlements rather than the 'cost' of entitlements. A copy of this advice is included in Appendix 4.

59 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 65

60 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 66

61 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 66

62 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 67

Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)

1.89 Issues raised by members of the Committee and other senators in attendance included:

- The AEC's proposed certified agreement;
- Overseas travel by senior AEC executives and members of the commission;
- Preparations for the upcoming federal election;
- Enrolment procedures and public awareness campaigns;
- Prisoner enrolments;
- Complaints alleging a breach of section 326 (electoral act) bribery provisions in relation to Professor Flint;
- AEC Investigations into funding and disclosure matters;
- A function where Ricky Ponting (Australian cricket captain) was a guest speaker;
- Investigations in relation to the Bowman FEC; and
- AEC resources.

The AEC's certified agreement

1.90 The Committee pursued the issue of the AEC's certified agreement (CA) and where the process was up to regarding the current negotiation process. Members were concerned that problems with the CA might impact not only on the morale of staff, but also on the federal election forthcoming. Asked whether a stalled agreement process might lead to a higher risk of disruption at the election, Mr Becker (Electoral Commissioner) told the Committee that he did not see disruption from staff being an issue for the AEC. He stated that:

There is always a risk, but I think it is a minimal risk. If we are talking about industrial action or anything like that, then I think that is highly unlikely. My people are very professional. In fact, the CPSU itself has said that they would not even contemplate advising any industrial action during the election period.⁶³

1.91 Mr Becker informed the Committee that the AEC had submitted its proposal for a certified agreement to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) Written advice from DEWR to the AEC indicated concerns that proposed pay increases were above the APS average and that there are no significant productivity improvements identified to justify these increases. Ms Davis (First Assistant Commissioner, Business Support) indicated that DEWR also had concerns with the 'up-front' nature of one of the proposed pay increases.

63 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 68

1.92 Senator Faulkner asked the commission if it accepted DEWR's interpretation. Ms Davis stated that:

No, we have a different view. While we can understand DEWR's interpretation of the pay rise, our view is that our staff have not had a pay increase since July 2002. We believe that the average pay rise should be calculated from July 2003 rather than when the agreement would be certified, which is probably at least a year after July 2003. We feel that the other productivity improvements included in the agreement are quite significant, so we have been discussing these issues with them.⁶⁴

1.93 Evidence given to the Committee also indicates approximately 40 per cent of AEC staff are on individual AWAs and have already received pay increases. Mr Becker conceded that this was causing a morale problem but said that he believed his staff deserved a pay increase. He was adamant that this would not affect the AEC's running of an election. Mr Becker stated that:

It is a problem, but you mentioned the election cycle that we are coming into and asked if that was problematic. I said, 'No, I don't believe it is because I believe our people are too professional for that.' Yes, they do deserve a pay increase. Yes, it would be nice to resolve it, but I have no magic wand, I am afraid.⁶⁵

Preparations for the upcoming federal election

1.94 The Committee sought a brief indication of the AEC's preparations for the election. The Committee heard that the AEC have all its nationally managed contracts in place, including:

- The cardboard polling place equipment has been manufactured and is in storage;
- Contracts are in place in all states for the printing of ballot papers; and
- Polling places have been identified, and the AEC is currently undertaking inspections of those premises.

1.95 Other activities underway include:

- Providing candidates with lists of polling places;
- A new initiative for providing the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with PDF images of ballot papers, GVT posters and the like, in the unlikely event that freight is slow getting to Australian overseas posts. According to the AEC, this should mean that voters overseas at the time of the election are serviced better than they have been in the past; and

64 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 69

65 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 71

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- Headquarters Australian Theatre have been prepared with postal voting services for Australian Defence Force personnel located overseas in the Pacific, the Middle East, East Timor and/or on warships.

Enrolment procedures and public awareness campaigns

1.96 The Committee pursued several issues relating to new legislation proposing changes to the timing of closing the electoral rolls.

1.97 The Committee heard that the AEC had begun preparing a public awareness campaign about these changes as soon as it became aware of the proposed legislation. Mr Hallett (Assistant Commissioner, Information, Education and Research) told the Committee that:

... [the AEC] have developed a communication plan that basically relies on press advertising and public relations to make sure that Australians are fully informed were such changes to proceed. The latest costing was a little bit less than \$1 million.⁶⁶

1.98 Mr Dacy (Deputy Electoral Commissioner) hastened to add that, the AEC is also prepared for an advertising campaign in the week that the rolls close should the existing arrangements remain in place.

1.99 Senator Faulkner asked the commission for a current estimate of the number of people who would be impacted if the new legislation were to gain passage in the Parliament. Mr Hallett stated that:

I believe that is a calculation we have not done as such but if we go back to the transaction figures for the last election we do know that we received more than 300 000 enrolment cards in that week-long period, of which more than 60 000 were new enrolments. I have had this question posed to me by members of press, and I have said to them that while we have not speculated on how many people may be affected we can look at the transactions at the last election or previous elections.⁶⁷

1.100 Asked whether similar expectations based on the above figures were likely in the event of the new legislation passing, Mr Becker said that it was not necessarily so, stating that:

It largely depends on how much time we have between the passage of the legislation and the calling of the election. If we do have time, we will be letting people know that they should not dawdle about this and get their name on the roll. We would probably be running a fairly significant campaign up to the time. I would not like to try to put a figure on the number of people who could otherwise miss out.⁶⁸

66 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 72

67 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 72-73

68 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 73

Investigations into funding and disclosure

1.101 As on previous occasions, members of the Committee inquired into the status of investigations relating to funding and disclosure of donations. Ms Mitchell (Director, Funding and Disclosure) informed the Committee that the same six inquiries, including disclosure by Australians for Honest Politics and the Fair Go Alliance—that were dealt with at the Committee’s hearings in November 2003 and February 2004—were still under consideration and progressing at different rates.

1.102 Ms Mitchell informed the Committee that there were time limits in pursuing some of these cases, particularly with regard to prosecution. The following discussion ensued:

Senator FAULKNER—We are effectively faced with the statute of limitations here.

Ms Mitchell—In response I would have to say that, yes, to prosecute any matters, we are faced with the statute of limitations. But that does not prevent the AEC from pursuing matters, coming to a conclusion on those matters, publishing that conclusion and seeking voluntary compliance. That is process we are following at this stage anyway. Even if we run out of time to prosecute, and on some of these issues we have run out of time to prosecute, we would still seek voluntary compliance with the provisions of the legislation.

Senator FAULKNER—What are the timing considerations in relation to the Australians for Honest Politics organisation?

Ms Mitchell—We are past the time to prosecute on those. The organisation existed from August 1998 to July 2000, which would mean that should they be determined to be an associated entity they would have to have lodged returns for the financial years 1998-99 and 1999-2000. The due dates for those returns would have been October 1999 and October 2000. Given that we have a three-year period in which to prosecute we would have had to commence prosecutions, for the second return anyway, by October last year.⁶⁹

The AEC's budget and resources

1.103 The Committee asked the AEC about the outcome of the recent DoFA review of the AEC budget.

1.104 Ms Davis explained that the review had taken into account the impact of the electoral cycle on the AEC's budget. Ms Davis went on to say:

... the AEC is very satisfied with the outcome that came from the funding review. If we are talking about a matter of public record, whether that be internal or external, the AEC do have concerns that were recognised by the department of finance, and obviously by government, as we move into the

69 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 76-77

future in the out years. But I think that our concerns in that regard have been recognised and we think that we will be able to cope quite adequately until that time.⁷⁰

1.105 Ms Davis said that the funding concerns for the out years primarily related to the AEC's disburse network, high property costs and associated IT infrastructure costs concerning not only divisional offices but also the head office.⁷¹

Acknowledgements

1.106 The Committee expresses its appreciation of the service provided by the secretariat, broadcasting and transcription services provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services and the service provided by the Black Rod's Office and Committee Room attendants in preparing the rooms and providing refreshments for members and witnesses during the hearing.

1.107 The Committee also wishes to thank all ministers and departmental and agency officers for their assistance.

Next hearings—Supplementary budget estimates 2004-05

1.108 By resolution of the Senate, the Committee is scheduled to consider the supplementary budget estimates for the 2004-05 financial year on Monday, 1 and Tuesday, 2 November 2004.

1.109 While the Committee endeavours to follow the usual convention relating to the order of appearance of witnesses, it reminds ministers, departments and agencies that they need to be prepared to be available on the above days.

Senator Brett Mason

Chair

70 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 89

71 F&PA, 26 May 2004, 90

Appendix 1

Departments and agencies under the three portfolios for which the Committee has oversight

Parliamentary departments

- Department of the Senate; and
- Department of Parliamentary Services.

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet;
- Australian National Audit Office;
- Australian Public Service Commission;
- Office of National Assessments;
- Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman;
- Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security; and
- Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

Finance and Administration Portfolio

- Department of Finance and Administration;
- Australian Electoral Commission;
- Commonwealth Grants Commission;
- Commonwealth Superannuation Administration (Comsuper);
- Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme Board; and
- Public Sector Superannuation Scheme Board.

Appendix 2

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¹ Page numbers correspond to the proof *Hansards*. Sometimes there are slight variations with the final version

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Appendix 3

Outstanding questions on notice from earlier rounds

Additional estimates 2003–04

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Question No.	Department /agency	Senator	Subject of question
PM7	PM&C	Faulkner	Costs in relation to the upkeep of grounds at The Lodge
PM20	PM&C	Ray	Whether PM&C has ever had a coordination role in inter-agency committees considering security and intelligence matters
PM22 to 24	PM&C	Ray	Questions regarding a joint committee report on security matters
PM38	PM&C	Faulkner	Details regarding the number and costs of official functions at Kirribilli House
PM40	PM&C	Ray	Costs relating to the former Governor-General's accommodation at 101 Collins Street
PM52	PM&C	Faulkner	Details of administered programs in the PM&C portfolio

Finance and Administration Portfolio

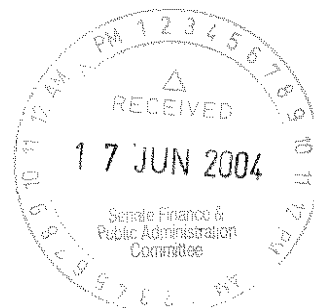
Question No.	Department /agency	Senator	Subject of question
PM20	DoFA	Conroy	Breakdown Of Costs For Homes In Maribyrnong (Comland)

Appendix 4

Correspondence from the Department of Finance and Administration to all senators and members regarding the certification of parliamentarians' management reports



Australian Government
Department of Finance and Administration



Circular 2004/27

ALL SENATORS AND MEMBERS

CERTIFICATION OF MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORTS

As you are aware, monthly certification of management reports was introduced with the August 2003 report.

Since that time, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services has received feedback from some Senators and Members. A concern has been expressed that the form needs to make clear exactly what is being certified.

The purpose of the certification is for a Senator or Member to certify that entitlements have been accessed or used for the purpose specified in the Remuneration Tribunal Determination.

It is not appropriate nor was it intended that a Senator or Member would be certifying that particular dollar amounts were correct.

In light of experience, and to remove any ambiguity from the certification, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services has reviewed the wording of the certification. As a result, some modifications to the wording have been made so that the certification clearly relates to entitlement 'use' rather than entitlement 'cost'.

The modified certification will appear in the June 2004 report.

John Edge
Branch Manager
Account Management Unit
Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

17 June 2004