



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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13 October 2010

Ms Christine McDonald
Secretary
Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms McDonald

ESTIMATES HEARING 18 OCTOBER 2010 – DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE

It has been a practice in the past to provide the Committee with regular updates about the costs and volume of activity of Senate Committees. As long as these updates continue to be of use to the Committee, I will continue the practice.

Please see attached information, tables and statistics of Committee activity updated to September 2010, in the same format as previously provided for ease of comparison.

Yours sincerely

(Rosemary Laing)

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

REPORT TO FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – OCTOBER ESTIMATES 2010

TRENDS DURING THE 42ND PARLIAMENT

The attached statistics and tables show trends and comparisons in the activities of Senate committees during the 42nd parliament:

During the 42nd Parliament:

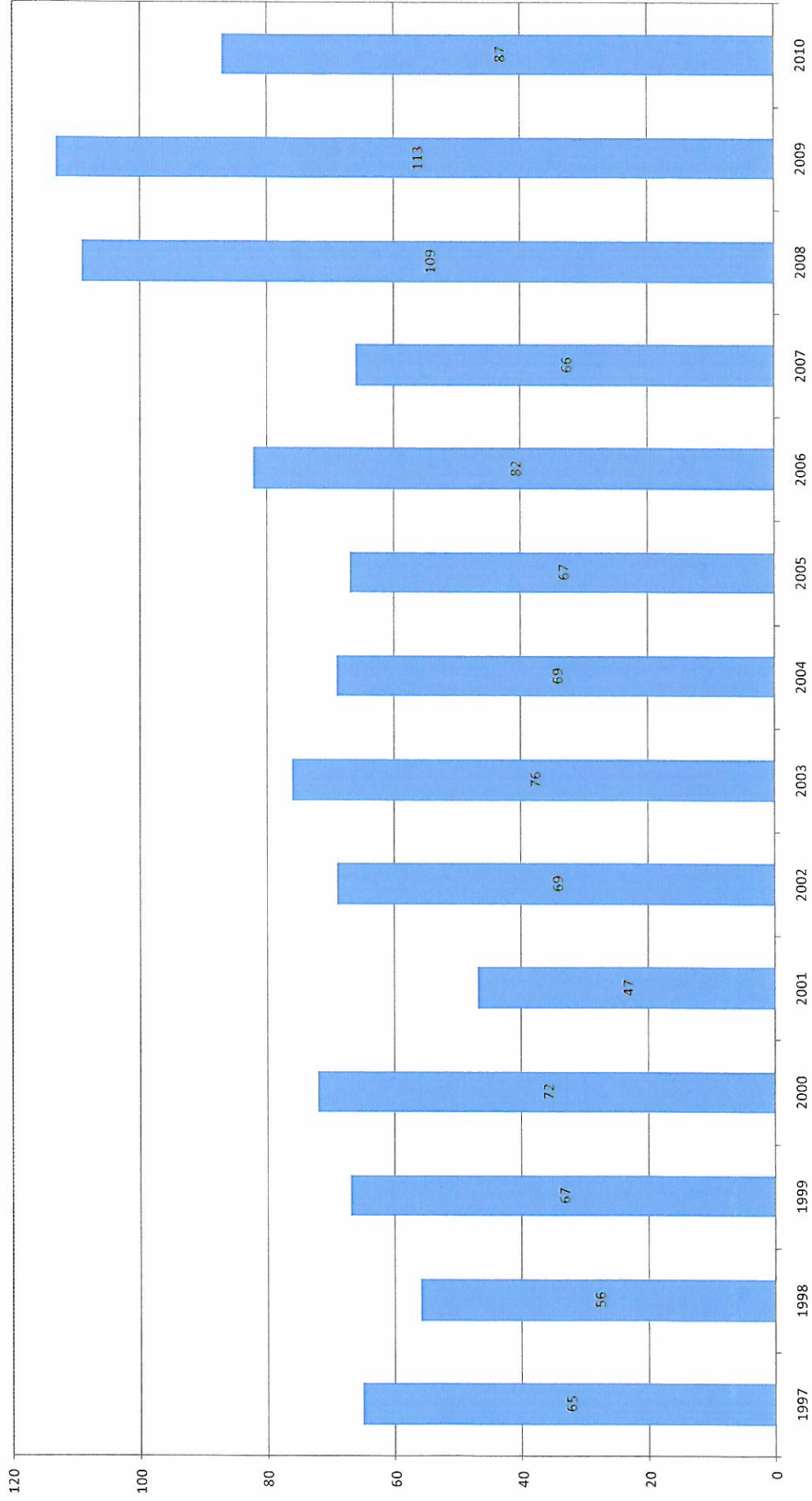
- There was an increase in the total number of references to committees, from 234 in the 41st parliament to 309 in the 42nd parliament (this does not include matters re-referred to committees at the beginning of parliaments).
- The busiest committees at any one time were Economics (maximum of 14 references at one time), Community Affairs (maximum of 14 references at one time) and Legal and Constitutional Affairs (maximum of 7 references at one time).
- This increase in activity is also reflected in the total number of committee reports tabled rising from 396 in the 41st parliament to 493 in the 42nd parliament.
- In 2010 alone, the Economics Committees tabled 25 reports, the Legal and Constitutional Committees tabled 25 reports and the Environment and Communications Committees tabled 20 reports.
- Currently, three select committees administered by the Senate are in operation.

The committee office FTE staffing level as at September 2010 is 58.2, slightly less than at the peak of activity during 2009 when it was 62, but still close to the levels of staffing and committee activity experienced in 2003–04.

A variety of workload management strategies have been used in the Senate committee office to meet the significant increase in workload in the 42nd parliament:

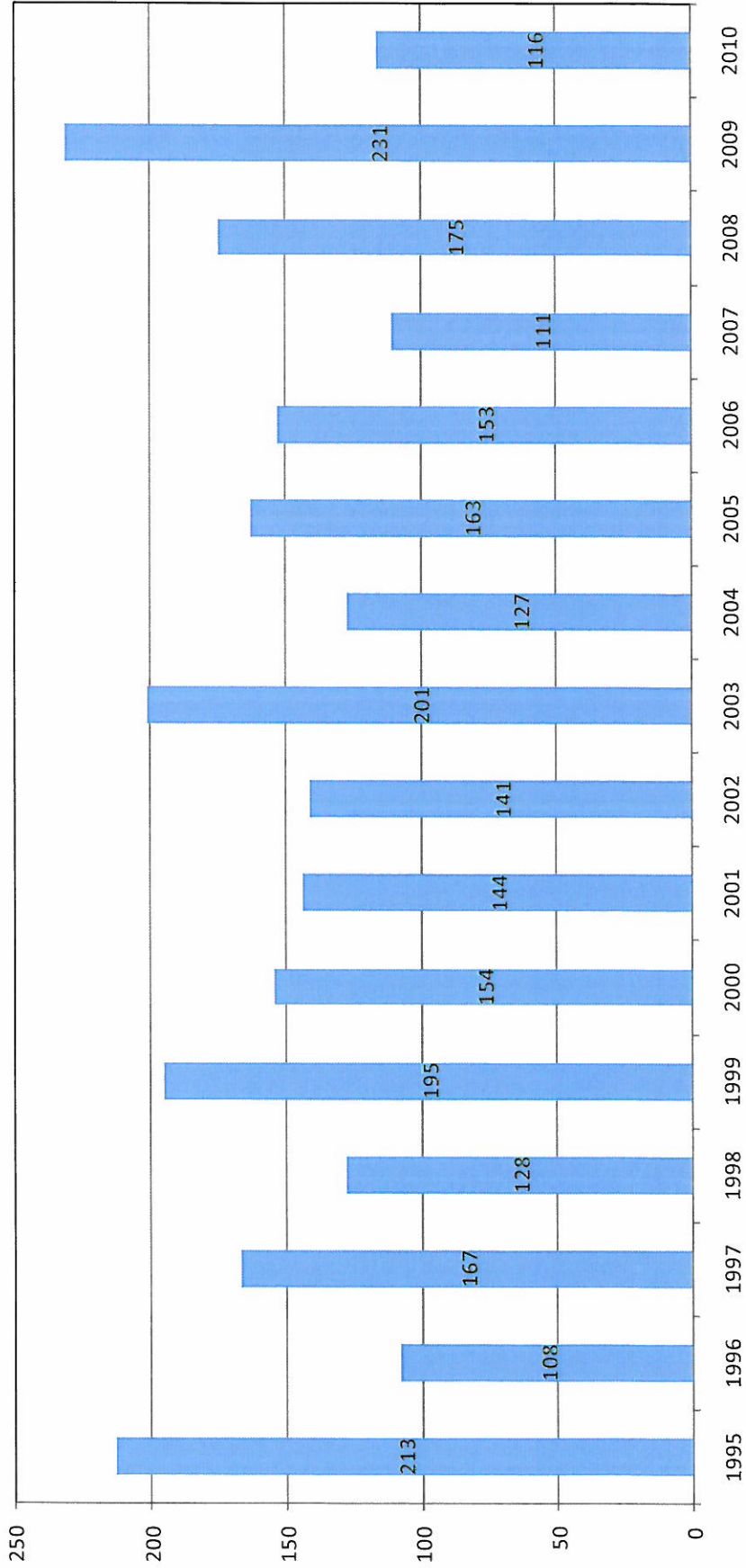
- Committee secretariats which are less busy frequently provide research, analysis and administrative assistance to committee secretariats with large numbers of references and those with very short reporting deadlines;
- Officers from other areas of the Department have undertaken additional duties to assist committee secretariats;
- Committee staff have been asked to work (in some cases, significant amounts of) additional hours.

Senate Standing Committees - Number of References 1997 to 2010 (as at 30/09/10)



NB: figures for 2010 do not include 12 bills and 16 references re-referred

Senate Standing Committees - Hearings Held - 1995 to 2010
(as at 30/9/10)



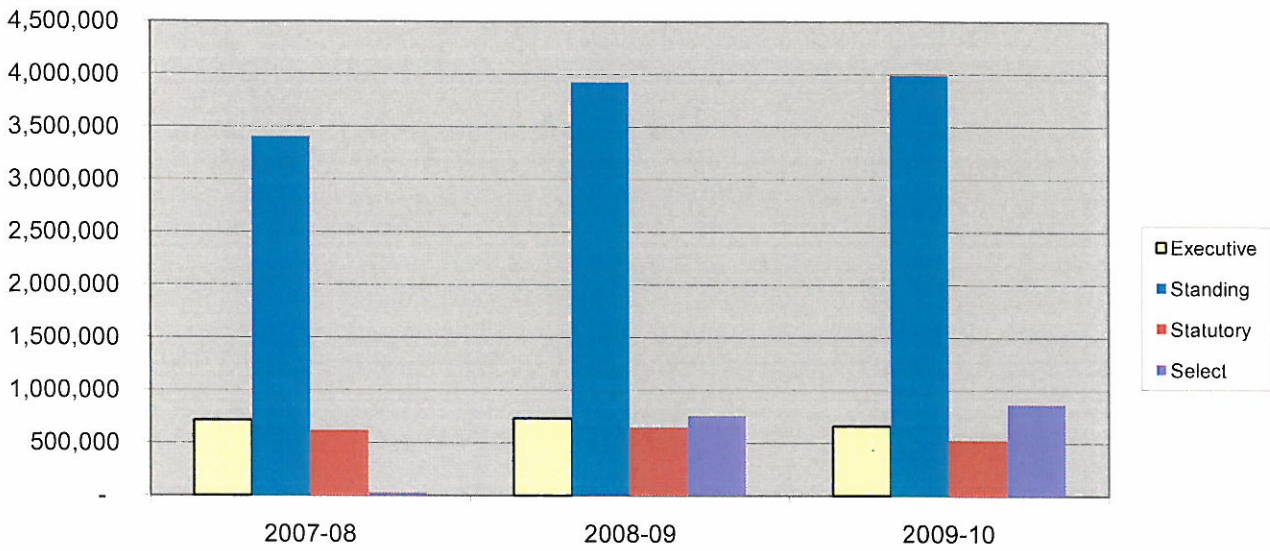
**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE COSTS BY CATEGORY -
STANDING, SELECT AND JOINT COMMITTEES – 2007-08 TO 2009-10**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>2007-08</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>
<i>Executive</i>			
Staff Costs	714,464	730,947	659,811
Administrative Costs	17,157	31,330	26,418
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<u>731,621</u>	<u>762,277</u>	<u>686,228</u>
<i>Standing</i>			
Staff Costs	3,407,126	3,923,416	3,992,496
Administrative Costs	447,673	668,702	669,917
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<u>3,854,799</u>	<u>4,592,119</u>	<u>4,662,413</u>
<i>Statutory</i>			
Staff Costs	615,606	644,454	525,235
Administrative Costs	65,186	99,420	100,171
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<u>680,792</u>	<u>743,874</u>	<u>625,407</u>
<i>Select</i>			
Staff Costs	25,532	758,461	867,248
Administrative Costs	38,237	269,857	167,829
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<u>63,770</u>	<u>1,028,318</u>	<u>1,035,077</u>
<i>Total Program Expense</i>	<u><u>5,330,982</u></u>	<u><u>7,126,588</u></u>	<u><u>7,009,125</u></u>

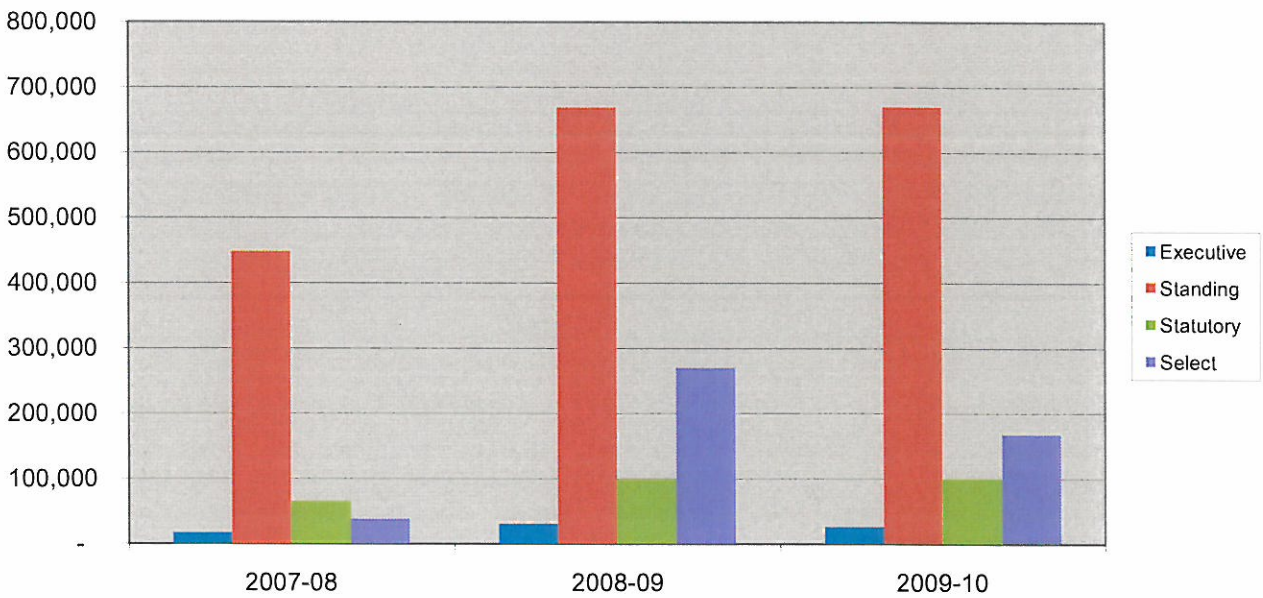
Staff costs - the salaries of Senate staff working within the secretariat.

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



Committee Office - Administrative Costs



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF COMMITTEE COSTS
BY INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE – 2007- 08 TO 2009-10**

	<i>2007-08</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>
Standing Committees			
Community Affairs			
Staff costs	489,755	525,651	536,769
Administrative costs	97,406	111,546	115,247
Economics			
Staff costs	410,767	555,361	565,300
Administrative costs	60,158	111,257	110,497
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations			
Staff costs	408,032	482,181	439,807
Administrative costs	54,709	86,450	64,630
Environment, Communications and the Arts			
Staff costs	394,281	356,511	529,487
Administrative costs	52,004	82,848	61,272
Finance and Public Administration			
Staff costs	372,210	453,016	420,888
Administrative costs	47,858	71,230	60,047
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade			
Staff costs	458,756	478,792	493,891
Administrative costs	39,994	47,669	52,654
Legal and Constitutional Affairs			
Staff costs	449,170	604,366	600,090
Administrative costs	50,624	66,976	98,322

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport			
Staff costs	424,154	467,538	406,264
Administrative costs	44,921	90,726	107,246
Statutory Committees			
Joint Comm on Coporations and Securities			
Staff costs	266,934	313,276	240,863
Administrative costs	29,641	31,358	46,502
ACC/Aust Comm for Law Enforcmt Integrity			
Staff costs	348,672	331,178	284,372
Administrative costs	35,545	68,062	53,670
Select Committees			
Agricultural and Related Industries			
Staff costs	346	63,754	146,829
Administrative costs	12,815	21,061	29,732
State Government Financial Management			
Staff costs	578	348	-
Administrative costs	10,627	7,376	-
Housing Affordability in Australia			
Staff costs	23,042	1,959	-
Administrative costs	13,597	4,027	-
Regional & Remote Indigenous Communities Select Committee			
Staff costs	1,567	220,945	284,081
Administrative costs	1,198	79,925	59,819
Reform of the Australian Federation			

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Staff costs	-	-	3,746
Administrative costs	-	-	53
Fuel & Energy			
Staff costs	-	255,246	296,814
Administrative costs	-	79,652	30,468
National Broadband Network			
Staff costs	-	172,174	137,092
Administrative costs	-	41,340	38,158
Select Committee on Men's Health			
Staff costs	-	28,873	-
Administrative costs	-	11,719	-
Select Committee on Climate Policy			
Staff costs	-	13,848	-
Administrative costs	-	34,356	-

Committee Office FTE 1991/92 to 2009/10

