



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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10 October 2012

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

Dear Ms McDonald

ESTIMATES HEARING 15 OCTOBER 2012 – DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE

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

Yours sincerely

(Rosemary Laing)

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – ESTIMATES OCTOBER 2012

RECENT TRENDS

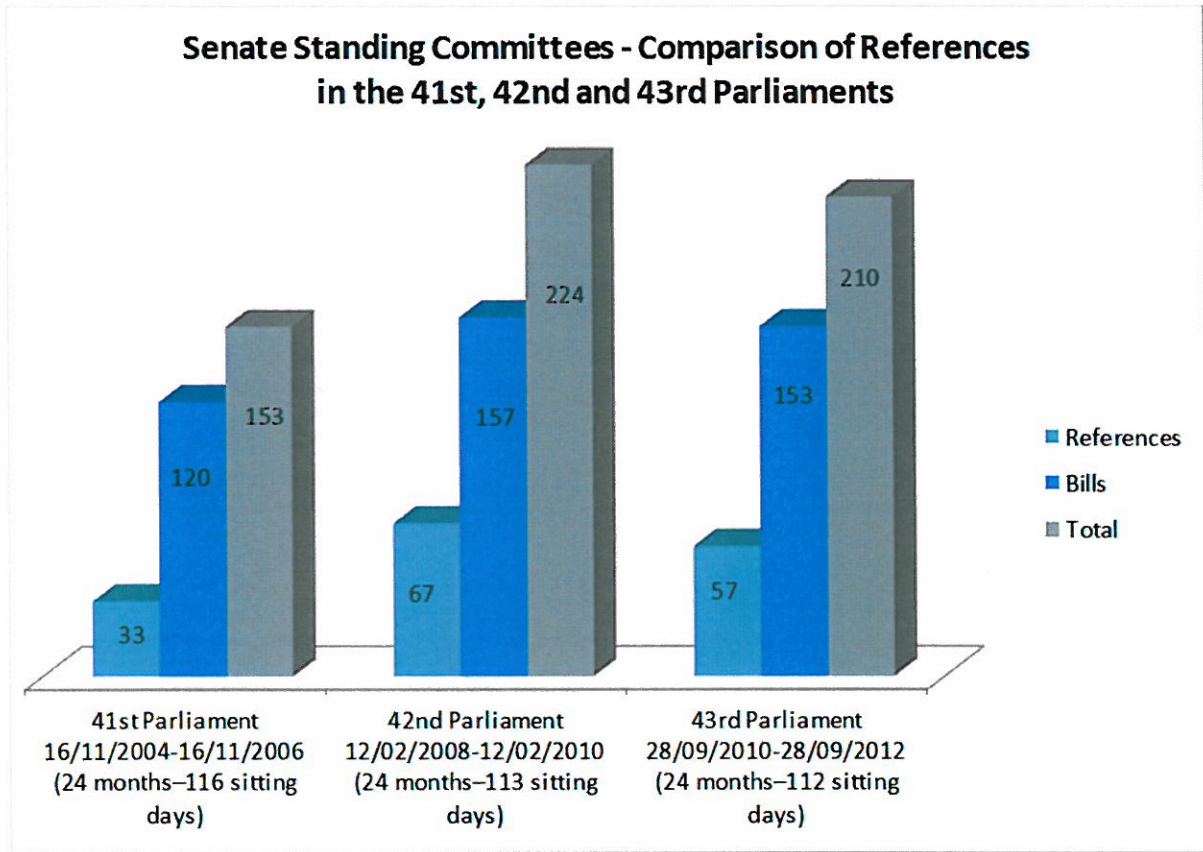
The following data shows trends and comparisons in the activities of Senate committees:

- The 42nd parliament experienced an increase in the total number of matters referred to standing committees, increasing from 234 in the 41st to 309 in the 42nd. So far in the 43rd Parliament (at 28 September 2012) there have been 210 matters referred. This compares to 224 matters referred after a similar period in the 42nd parliament and 153 in the 41st parliament. (see **graph 1**).
- The 42nd parliament also experienced an increase in the total number of committee reports tabled, rising from 396 in the 41st to 493 in the 42nd. Committee reports tabled thus far in the 43rd Parliament (at 28 September 2012) total 323. This compares to 322 reports tabled after a similar period in the 42nd parliament and 239 in the 41st parliament. (see **graph 3**).
- The number of public hearings (excluding estimates hearings) increased in 2011-12 to 144 from 118 in 2010-11. 227 public hearings were held in 2009-10. (see **graph 4**).
- The busiest committees at any one time during the 42nd parliament were Economics (maximum of 14 references at one time) and Community Affairs (maximum of 14 references at one time). In the 43rd parliament, the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committees have twice dealt with a maximum of 12 references at one time (in November 2010 and May 2011).
- Thus far in calendar year 2012, the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committees have tabled 25 reports, the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport committees have tabled 17 reports, and the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Community Affairs committees 15 each.
- Currently, two select committees administered by the Senate are in operation (one Senate select committee and one joint select committee).

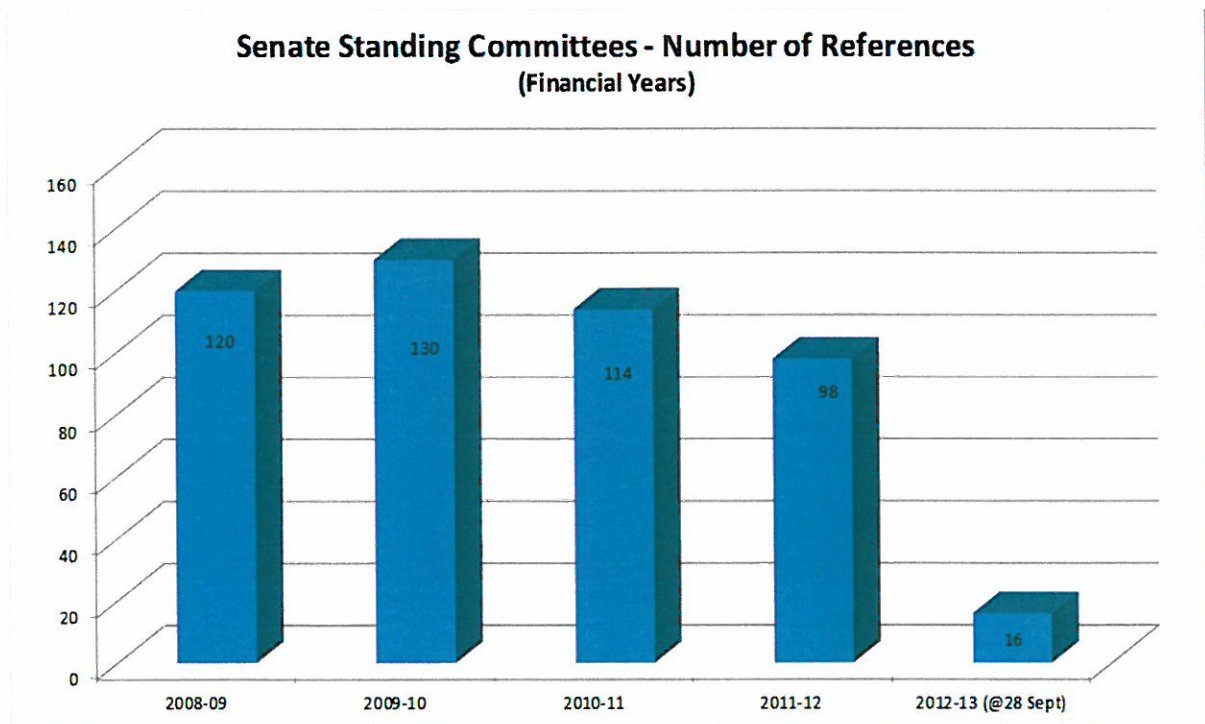
Staffing: the committee office FTE staffing level as at 26 September 2012 was 53.9. It was 59 in 2011-12. Minimal recruitment has taken place in 2012 in light of adjustments being made to resourcing the Committee Office, a response, in part, to the Efficiency Dividend imposed on the department.

Cost of running Senate committees (budget 2011-12): the operational cost for the past financial year was approximately \$7.1 million, consistent with the budget allocated to this office for that year. The attached financial summaries include the approximate break-down of costs incurred by the Committee Office for the four years 2008-09 to 2011-12.

GRAPH 1

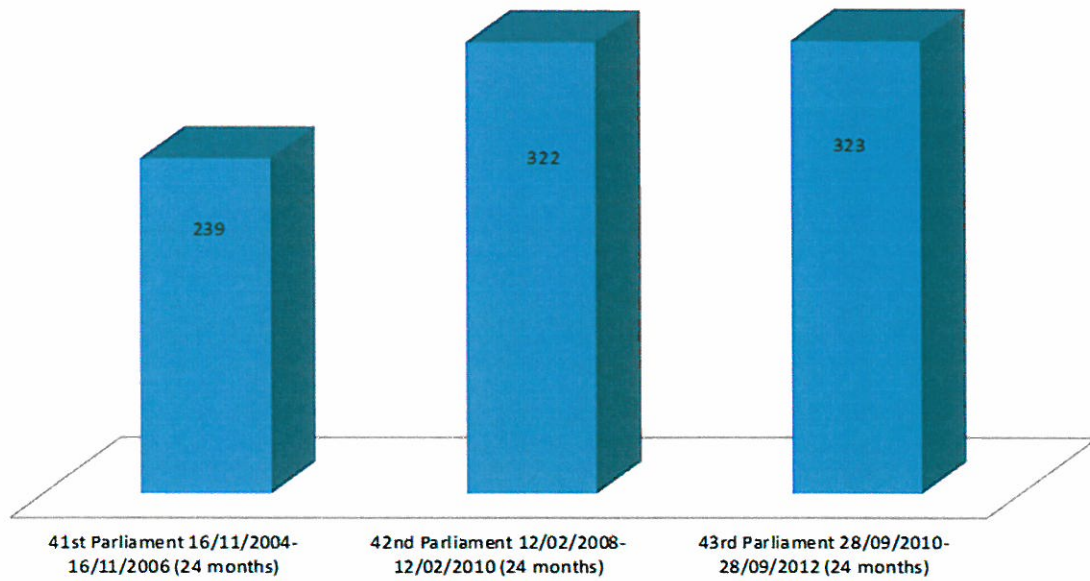


GRAPH 2



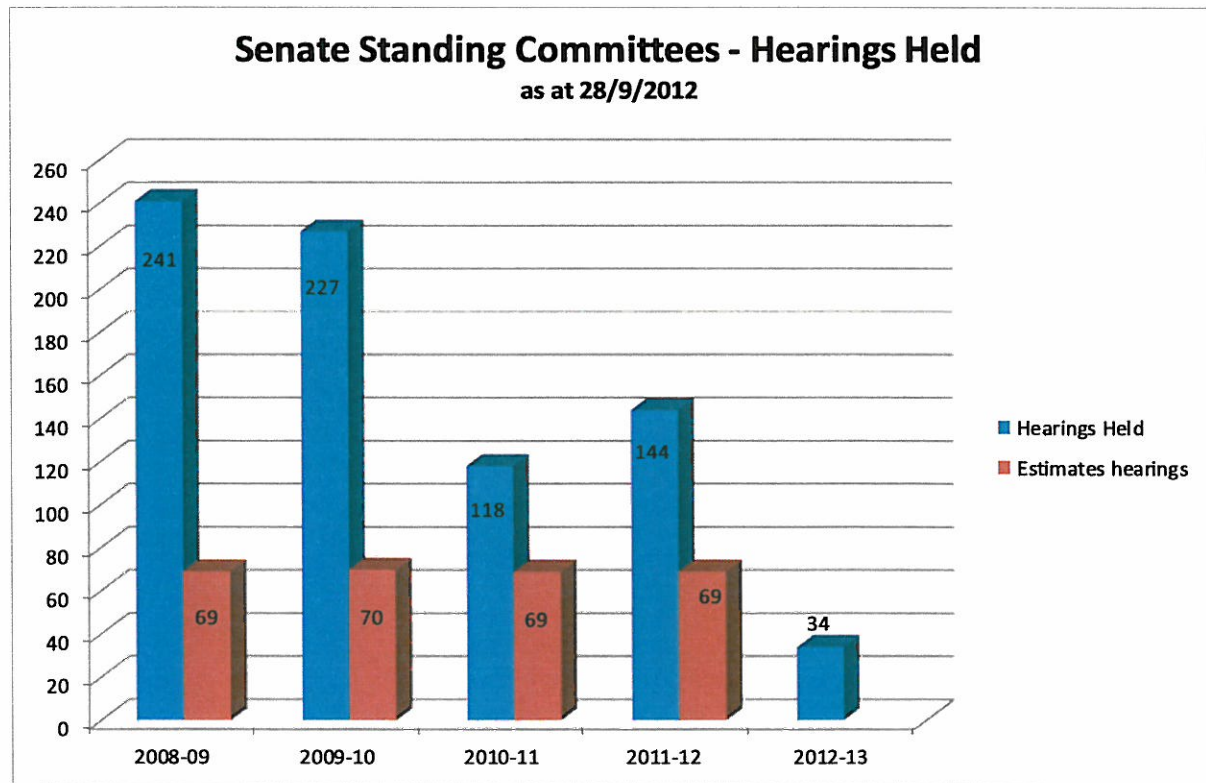
GRAPH 3

**Senate Standing Committees-Comparison of Committee Reports
in the 41st, 42nd and 43rd Parliaments**



GRAPH 4

**Senate Standing Committees - Hearings Held
as at 28/9/2012**



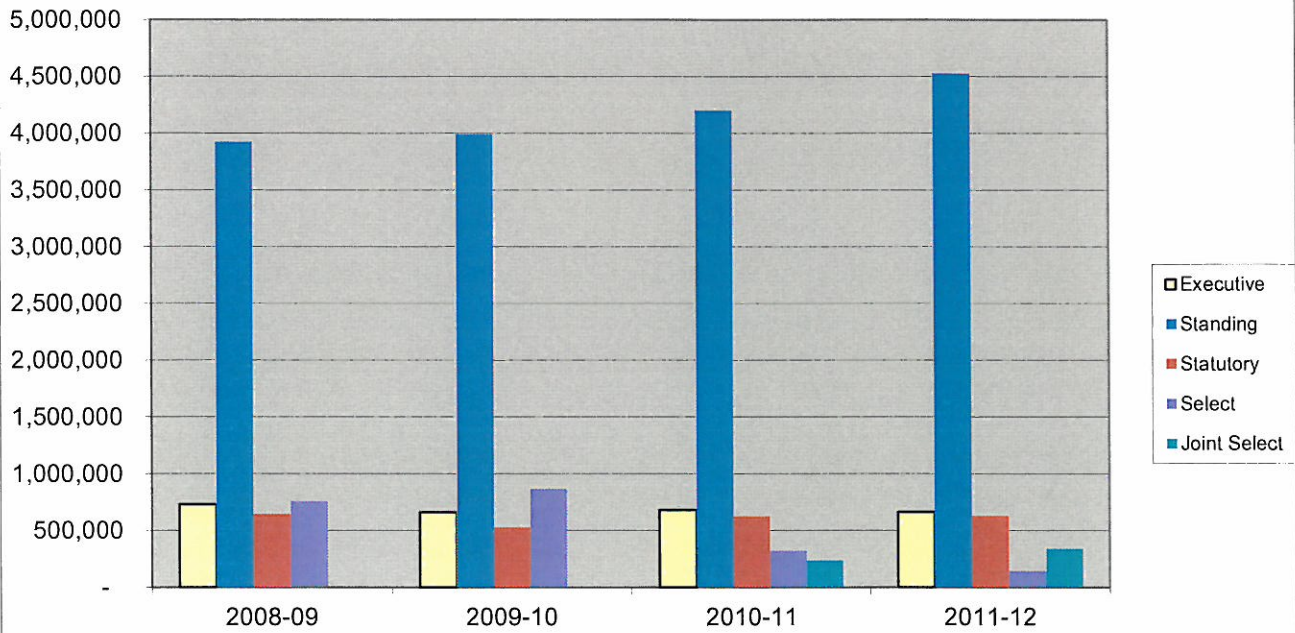
**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF APPROXIMATE COMMITTEE COSTS BY
STANDING, SELECT AND JOINT COMMITTEES – 2008-09 TO 2011-12**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>	<i>2010-11</i>	<i>2011-12</i>
<i>Executive</i>				
Staff Costs	730,947	659,811	680,982	662,744
Administrative Costs	31,330	26,418	22,767	18,944
<i>Total Expenses</i>	762,277	686,228	703,749	681,688
<i>Standing</i>				
Staff Costs	3,923,416	3,992,496	4,202,414	4,528,798
Administrative Costs	668,702	669,917	390,730	501,025
<i>Total Expenses</i>	4,592,119	4,662,413	4,593,144	5,029,823
<i>Statutory</i>				
Staff Costs	644,454	525,235	621,590	627,266
Administrative Costs	99,420	100,171	77,507	117,289
<i>Total Expenses</i>	743,874	625,407	699,097	744,555
<i>Select</i>				
Staff Costs	758,461	867,248	321,079	144,071
Administrative Costs	269,857	167,829	64,469	44,869
<i>Total Expenses</i>	1,028,318	1,035,077	385,549	188,940
<i>Joint Select</i>				
Staff Costs	-	-	238,050	339,533
Administrative Costs	-	-	49,769	110,244
<i>Total Expenses</i>	-	-	287,818	449,777
<i>Total Program Expense</i>	<u>7,126,588</u>	<u>7,009,125</u>	<u>6,669,357</u>	<u>7,094,783</u>

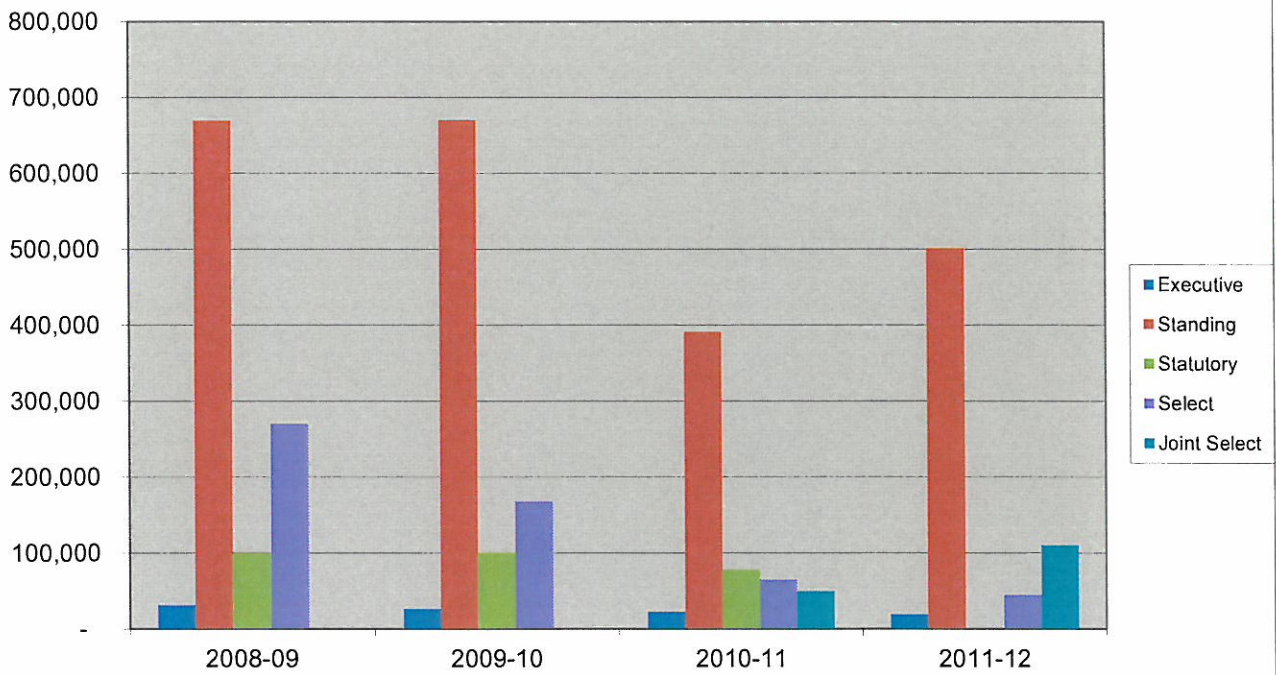
Staff costs - the salaries of Senate staff working within the secretariat.

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

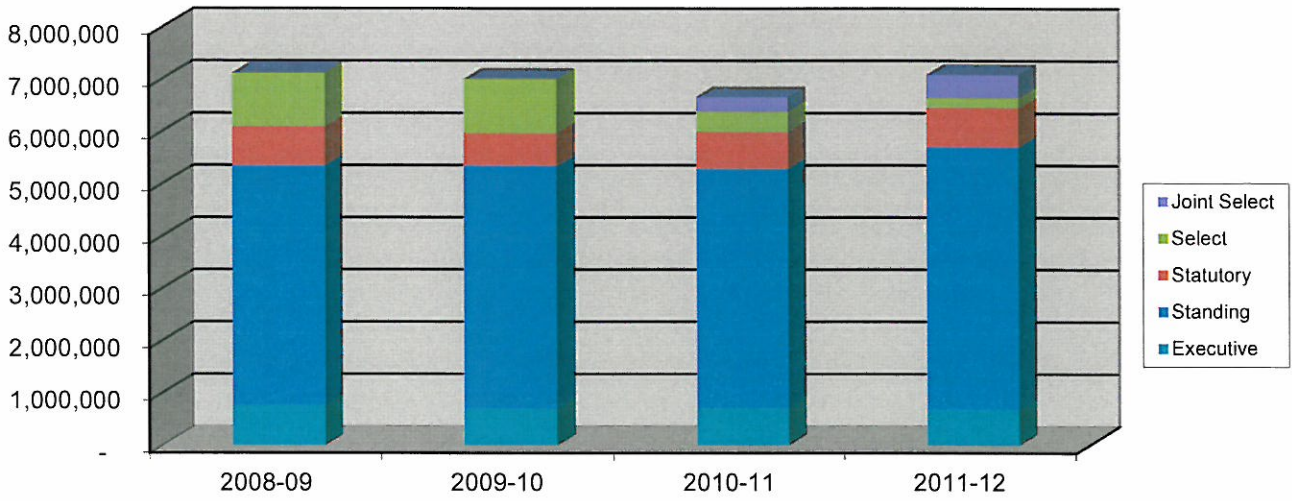
Committee Office - Staff Costs



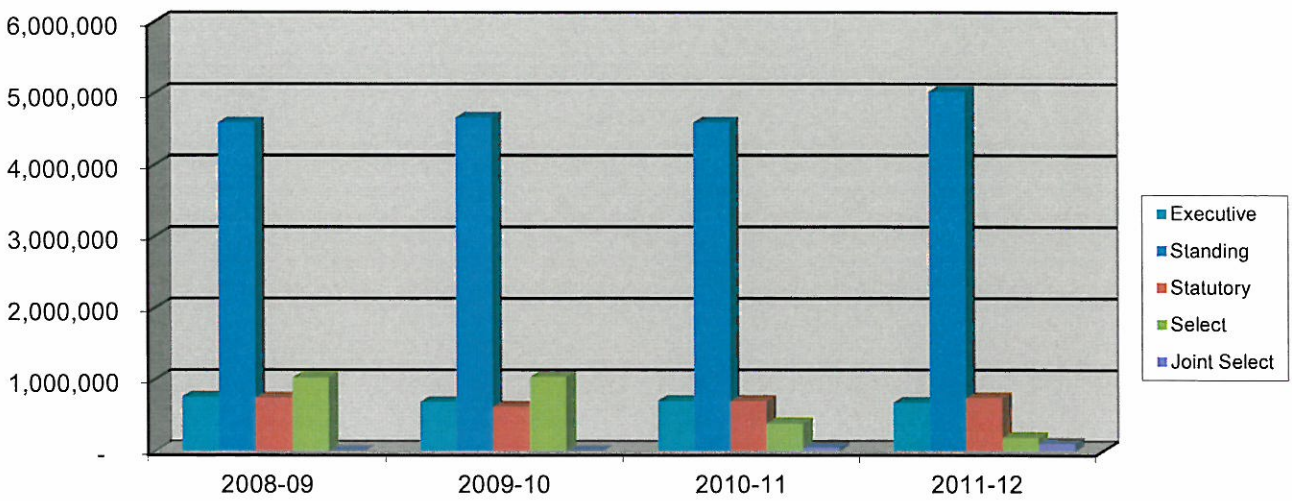
Committee Office - Administrative Costs



Committee Office - Total Expenditure



Committee Office - Total Expenditure



Committee Office FTE 2000/01 to 2011/12

