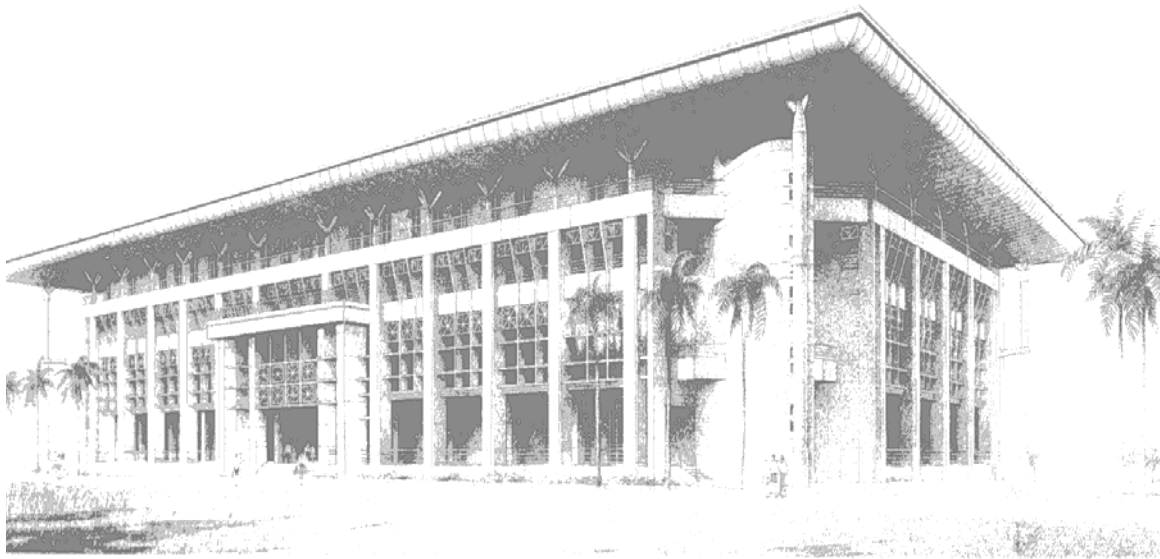


DEPARTMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Annual Report **2006-07**



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

GPO Box 3721, Darwin NT 0801 Australia

The Honourable Jane Aagaard MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
DARWIN NT 0800

Dear Madam Speaker,

In accordance with the provisions of section 28 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, I am pleased to submit this annual report of the Department of the Legislative Assembly for the year ended 30 June 2007.

In respect of my duties as the department's Accountable Officer pursuant to section 13 of the *Financial Management Act*, I advise that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that, at 30 June 2007:

- (a) proper records of all transactions affecting the agency are kept and the employees under my control observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, Regulations and the Treasurer's Directions; and
- (b) procedures within the agency afford proper control over expenditure, receipts and public property and a current description of such procedures is recorded in the Accounting and Property Manual prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act*.

I am not aware of any fraud, malpractice, material breach of legislation or delegation, or major error in or omission from the accounts and records of the agency.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS) has advised me that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, proper records are kept of transactions undertaken by DCIS on behalf of this agency, and that the employees under his control observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, the Financial Management Regulations and the Treasurer's Directions.

Further, the Chief Executive Officer of DCIS has advised that financial statements prepared by DCIS and included in this annual report have been prepared from proper accounts and records and are in accordance with Treasurer's Directions Part 2 Section 5 and Part 2 Section 6 where appropriate.

All Employment Instructions issued by the Commissioner for Public Employment have been satisfied in the reporting year and an accurate account of the agency's compliance is contained in this report.

Yours sincerely,

IAN McNEILL
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

30 September 2007



THE AGENCY

In 1978, the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act* established the Legislative Assembly as a unicameral Parliament. The Department of the Legislative Assembly was established in 1980 to provide a wide range of services to Assembly Members and other clients.

Services

An increasing number of client services previously provided directly by the Department are now provided by outside agencies, however the Department has the overall responsibility to monitor and manage those services.

For example, some financial and human resource management services are provided by the Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS), while information management services are purchased from private sector providers.

However, the Department has a major role to ensure that the services provided to its clients are of a high standard and meet the clients' specific demands and requirements.

The Department's key result areas are:

- Chamber and Committee Support
- Building Management
- Members' and Client Services
- Parliamentary Awareness, Knowledge and Relationships.

Operating environment

The department's major clients are the 25 elected Members of the Legislative Assembly. Irrespective of their status as government, opposition or independent, elected Members have two broad roles:

- to represent their constituents generally; and
- to participate in the parliamentary process.

The nature of the work of elected Members, and of the Parliament as a whole, is one that attracts significant attention and scrutiny, and the involvement of diverse groups and interests outside the department itself. Therefore, while the department is strongly focused on supporting Members, and their staff, in their two broad roles, it must also serve the interests of diverse external clients. These include:

- other Parliamentary Jurisdictions;
- other NT Government agencies;
- general public;
- students;
- the media; and
- the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association



CLERK'S REVIEW - HIGHLIGHTS AND PRIORITIES

Introduction

The second full year of the 10th Assembly continued to provide increased activity and further challenges for the agency.

It is pleasing to report again that the commitment of officers, by virtue of their continued professional development and knowledge, assisted the Department in fulfilling its role in support of the Assembly and its Committees in performing its role as a democratic representative legislative body.

However, in meeting its objective of supporting Members in undertaking their duties efficiently and effectively officers of this department are very much reliant on a range of other agencies and departments. In particular, the support and professional advice of the following agencies is acknowledged—Department of Information and Corporate Services for a range of corporate and information technology and communication services, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, Department of Justice and Solicitor for the Northern Territory for professional legal advice, the Department of the Northern Territory Treasury, Department of the Chief Minister and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

Partnerships and Inter-Departmental Relationships

A range of statutory officers, some of whom report directly to the Parliament, also provide essential support to the agency. These include the Electoral Commissioner, the Remuneration Tribunal, Auditor-General, Parliamentary Counsel, Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Superannuation. I record our sincere appreciation for their contribution to our work.

The Department is also supported by strategic partnerships which have been strengthened in the last 12 months with the Department of Employment, Education and Training in respect of parliamentary education and outreach programs and the Charles Darwin University in supporting the work of the Statehood Steering Committee and the parliamentary internship program, and in particular a successful Charles Darwin Symposium on Statehood and a Bill of Rights in 2007. This partnership is coordinated with the assistance of officers of the Department of the Chief Minister.

On behalf of Members and officers I also acknowledge the continued support given to the Department by the Parliamentary Library Service of the Northern Territory Library whose officers have performed again with professionalism in providing information and research materials to Members, their staff and officers of the Assembly and its Committees.

Agency Goals

The primary goal of the Department is that the Legislative Assembly and its Committees meet their objectives and that Members are able to perform their duties efficiently and effectively.



The Department, because of the nature of its work, frequently operates in an unpredictable work environment but has remained flexible and responsive to the varying needs of Members and Committees. While much of this requirement is demand driven and variable it is often difficult to quantify in measured outputs. However, the agency continues to develop performance measures to validate its outcomes.

Our Services to Members

The Department commissioned Mulherin Consulting Pty Ltd to conduct a survey of Members and Electorate Officers to ascertain whether the agency achieved the performance measures that were detailed in Budget Paper 3. The respondents were requested to complete a comprehensive client survey questionnaire that covered the basic elements of the performance measures associated with the delivery of services to them –

- Quantity;
- Quality; and
- Timeliness

In addition, a random selection of Members and Electorate Officers were interviewed via telephone to discuss their perceptions of the levels of service received from the agency.

In the summary of their report the consultants noted that, in general, Members and Electorate Officers participating in the survey were “extremely happy with the levels of services provided by the agency”. Areas of operations and services that were identified as requiring improvement related to information technology and related support services. The report noted that “*the provision of improved IT support is an area that would warrant further investigation as it was mentioned by a number of participants.*”

The consultant also suggested that “consideration be given to an overall promotion of the range of services provided by the Department at regular intervals to accommodate new staff. This could be achieved by way of general publicity and/or regular information training sessions.” We have acknowledged this suggestion and will be increasing its focus on providing the necessary information and training programs.

Parliamentary Committees

A continuing challenge is to maintain a viable and effective parliamentary committee system in a small parliament and with a limited access to committee membership. It is pleasing to note that, while this is a problem with other small Australian legislatures the committee system has proved to be relatively effective. It is worthwhile to note the growing acceptance of the Estimates Committee process which with further fine tuning has become an accepted part of the accountability framework for the governance of the Northern Territory.

Parliamentary Education Programs

Parliamentary education and information has again been a key focus of the agency during the year and has further broadened the scope of its activities with the active support of Madam Speaker.



The small but energetic and innovative Parliamentary Relations and Educations Unit has made significant progress in the development of Outreach Education programs embarking on the largest outreach program undertaken in the Northern Territory. Students from remote areas of the Territory have travelled long distances to participate in the programs. In the coming year the Unit will increase its focus on schools in regional and remote communities with an increased focus on the Tiwi Islands.

Parliament House

There is a heightened focus on maintenance and management of the Parliament House building following technical audits conducted over the last three years. During 06/07 a consultant funded through the Capital Works Sub-Committee reported on a State Square Asset Management Plan which will be a major contribution and prioritisation of capital and minor works in the forthcoming years for the building.

Conclusion

The reporting period has again been busy and demanding with staff tested in meeting priorities within available resources. Often goals have been met by refining and improving existing systems. The improvement of procedures and documentation remains a high priority.

Strategic Plan

A significant step in this direction was the finalisation following extensive consultation of the Strategic Plan for the next 3 years. The development of the Strategic Plan which now incorporates a Communication Policy, regular staff forums, together with Management Board and Weekly Planning Meetings, the PDP program for all staff members cross referencing to the Performance Agreement by Clerk with the Speaker and Chief Minister provides a comprehensive framework for setting objectives and monitoring performance. This still requires the continued dedication by a skilled and committed staff.

Highlights of the year and the challenges ahead

Achievements

While the following items are described in detail in the Report's review of outputs and achievements during 2006-2007 I wish to draw attention to the following achievements which were the result of the dedicated efforts of officers of the Legislative Assembly to whom thanks are due.

- The successful conduct of the Third Regional Sittings of the Assembly in Alice Springs.
- The increased activity in the Outreach Program and the Parliamentary Road Show, the success of which is due in part to the support and participation of the Speaker and her colleagues.



- The successful conduct of the APEC Energy Ministers' Meeting and the logistical and security support coordinated by this Department.
- The continued development and acceptance of the Estimates Committee process.
- The further development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan for the Parliament House building and precincts.
- The continued successful comprehensive review of the Assembly Standing Orders by the Standing Orders Committee and a working group of Assembly officers.

Future priorities and issues

During 2007–2008 the following matters will present a new range of challenges for officers of the Legislative Assembly in an environment of financial restraint and economy:

- The implementation of the ICT Cabling Project and related works approved as a budget measure for 2007–2008 which will be undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Department of Corporate and Information Services and Department of the Chief Minister.
- Further development of the Strategic Asset Management Plan for the Parliament House building.
- A review of the framework for Remuneration Tribunal operations and the possible development of a draft Cabinet submission for a *Parliamentary Service Act* and a separate Parliamentary appropriation.
- The involvement of the agency as a contributor to the *Darwin Development Plan*.
- The conduct of the Swearing-In of a new Administrator for the Northern Territory in November 2007.
- Addressing the various budget challenges issued by the Treasurer during the consideration of the 2007–2008 Budget.
- The further development of the Member survey on client satisfaction and the further expansion of the information and awareness programs initiated by the Speaker including the Territorian Senior's Art Award, 'Pink Parliament' and the Parliamentary tour program.

An overriding challenge for 2007-2008 and successive years is the requirement for developing an appropriate succession planning and recruitment plan.

Attracting and keeping a good staff with competitive terms and conditions of employment and opportunities for professional development is one response to the current challenge of generational change. From one perspective the loss of corporate memory can be addressed by recording important procedural practices,



precedents and principles in a form that will be accessible to future officers of the Assembly.

This Report outlines ongoing work in the compilation of updated procedural information resources including manuals for committee staff and computer based information and retrieval systems that will contribute to procedural expertise. This work will have benefits that extend beyond its immediate purpose because it will form the basis of the department's work in promoting public knowledge and awareness of the parliamentary process and the role of the Assembly and its committees—a matter which has been enthusiastically supported by the Speaker.

Like all public institutions this Parliament belongs to the Territory's public who should be able to appreciate its operations. This is a significant challenge which is met in small part by encouraging visitors and Territorians to come and look at the Assembly and talk about what they see. Similarly, the Outreach Program in embracing Territory students and the work of the Statehood Steering Committee serve this purpose. It is hoped to continue to extend this work into the future.

In the meantime the functioning of the Assembly and access to its proceedings continues to depend on a small group of dedicated and professional people to whom sincere thanks is extended.



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Agency's strategic direction is set out in a strategic plan which sets the direction for the agency for the next three years.

The outcomes and outputs for the agency are outlined in Budget Paper No. 3. The outputs and performance measures form the basis for reporting to Treasury through accounting for delivery of outputs in terms of quantity, quality and cost.

The agency continues to produce a Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) each financial year, which provides performance information down to sub-output level and is a key resource for information required for the Annual Report. The PBS is sent to all Members prior to the Estimates Committee hearings and provides valuable information for assessing the agency's performance against its objectives and financial allocation.

The objectives set down in the Clerk's performance agreement form the link between the Strategic Plan and Unit Business Plans. These objectives are reported against on a quarterly basis.

Late in 2006-07 a strategic planning workshop was held and all staff were invited to attend. The workshop produced the Strategic Plan 2007-10, along with a Values Statement which is aimed at underpinning the values to which management and staff aspire.

Management Board

Unit Heads meet weekly to review the past week and to identify key tasks and issues for the ensuing week. These meetings in a small agency serving the parliament are a valuable means of ensuring that management and planning issues are coordinated effectively. Management Board meetings are held quarterly and include updating of progress against business plans and specific higher level management issues not addressed in the weekly meetings.

Audit

Internal Audit Committee

The Agency's internal Audit Committee met on three occasions during the reporting period, meeting the requirements of its Charter.

Once again, the Committee Chairman wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Mr Bruce West, Risk Management Services, Department of the Chief Minister. Mr West's advice and guidance has been of great value to the Committee for both general meetings and those external from the Committee.

Audit of Member' Travel and Mobile/Satellite Telephone Entitlements

Clauses 5.18 to 5.20 of the Remuneration Tribunal Determination (RTD) No. 1 of 2006 prescribe accountability requirements in respect of Member travel as follows:



- 5.18 Government expense for Member travel, and for associated Travelling Allowance or expenses reimbursement, may not be incurred unless accountability requirements and procedures established by the Accountable Officer, including certification that conditions set out in this Determination are met, are followed.
- 5.19 Where Government expense has been incurred for Member travel as well as for Travelling Allowance or expenses reimbursement, the Member must confirm the application of such expense under procedures established by the Accountable Officer. Where a Member is paid Travelling Allowance at a Capital City rate in Schedule 1 the Member must specifically confirm that the relevant overnight stays were in the Capital City concerned.
- 5.20 The Speaker shall table an "Annual Schedule of Member travel at Government expense" during the first Sittings of the Assembly each year. For each occasion of Member travel, including travel using frequent flier points under subclause 3.11, this Schedule is to contain the following particulars:
- (a) the name and home base of the respective Member;
 - (b) the subclause of this Determination covering the entitlement to travel;
 - (c) the primary purpose of the travel;
 - (d) a brief form itinerary;
 - (e) the dates of the travel;
 - (f) the category of accompanying person (if any);
 - (g) the number of overnight stays Travelling Allowance or expenses reimbursement paid;
 - (h) Government expense incurred.

To ensure compliance with the RTD and the tabling in the Assembly of the correct information, and audit of Member travel for the 2006 year was undertaken by Stanton Partners under the auspices of Risk Management Services.

The overall objective of the review was to determine whether Member travel was undertaken in accordance with the relevant Remuneration Tribunal Determination (RTD), and whether the *Annual Schedule of Member travel at Government Expense* prepared by the Department of the Legislative Assembly provided a complete and accurate representation of travel entitlements utilised during the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006.

The specific objectives of the audit were to:

1. Determine whether travel entitlements utilised by Members during the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006 were in accordance with relevant Remuneration Tribunal Determinations;



2. Determine whether the 'Annual Schedule of Member Travel at Government Expense' prepared by the Department of the Legislative Assembly provides a complete and accurate representation of travel entitlements utilised during the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006;
3. Determine whether the format and content of the "Annual Schedule of Members' Travel at Government Expense" reflects the requirement outlined in the Remuneration Tribunal Determinations;
4. Report to the Department of the Legislative Assembly on any procedural or control matters noted during the audit that need to be addressed, together with information about any errors that need to be rectified before the Schedule is finalised;
5. Evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the annual reconciliation process between the Department of the Legislative Assembly and the Department of the Chief Minister, designed to ensure that there is no duplication of payments; and
6. Prepare a report expressing a formal opinion on Objective 1, for the purpose of being tabled in Parliament.

The key findings of the report were:

1. The audit reviewed all travel entitlements utilised by Members during the period 1 January 2006 –31 December 2006 inclusive. During the audit the data contained in the draft schedule was compared to that held on METS and to supporting documentation. METS was reviewed to ensure that all travel recorded on the system had been included in the schedule. The travel entitlements utilised in that period were checked against the Member entitlements specified in RTD Number 1 of 2005 and 2006;
2. Based on the results of the testing carried out, all travel entitlements utilised by Members during the period 1 January –31 December 2006 inclusive were in accordance with the requirements of RTD No. 1 of 2005 and RTD Number 1 of 2006, and have been fully and accurately reported in the schedule.

Pursuant to clause 8.8 (c) of the RTD an annual schedule containing the respective totals of Government payments on behalf of each Member for satellite telephones and for mobile telephones is to be tabled by the Speaker during the first Sittings of the Assembly each year.

Accordingly, a schedule of expenditure was prepared and subjected to an internal audit prior to tabling by the Speaker in the February 2007 Sittings.

Internal Audit Programs and Plans for 2006-07 and beyond

The agency's Audit Committee has commenced the development of an Internal Audit Program for the period 2007-10 and this will be presented to the Clerk for his endorsement by 31 December 2007.

Customer survey

A customer survey was conducted for all of the agency's services to Members and Electorate Officers, undertaken by Mulherin Consulting. The survey consisted of a written survey to all Members and Electorate Officers and telephone interviews conducted with a sample of both Members and Electorate Officers.



The survey has been covered in greater detail under the Clerk's Review Highlights and Priorities.

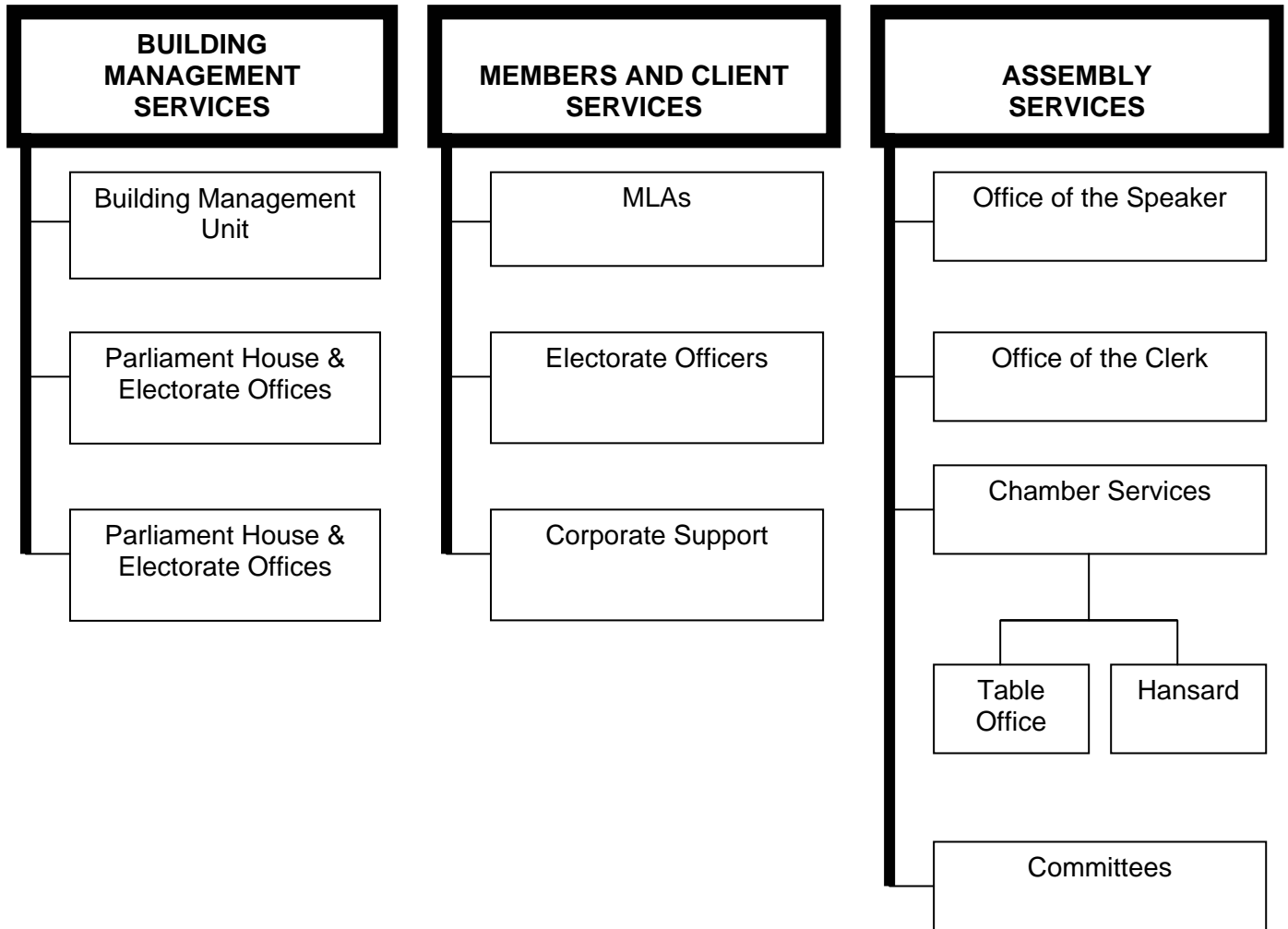
Compliance with Part 9 of the Information Act

The agency complies with section 134(a) Part 9 of the *Information Act* in keeping full and accurate records of activities and operations through the electronic Tower Records International Management (TRIM) system. All transfers and maintenance of hard copy files are undertaken through TRIM.

The agency has complied with section 134(b) of the Act by developing a records management policy, records management procedures for all staff as users of the system and record management procedures for Office Services staff as administrators of the system.



ORGANISATION STRUCTURE BY OUTPUT GROUPS



HUMAN RESOURCES

Equal Employment Opportunity

This agency has an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEOP) in place and has complied with its requirements. The Plan will be reviewed in the 2007-08 financial year. The agency has an Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy (IECDS) in place.

The plan identified four key outcomes, namely:

- increase the number of indigenous employees within the agency;
- provide opportunities to indigenous staff to access training and career development activities;
- effective evaluation and reporting systems developed to assist in the implementation of the strategy;
- deliver services/undertake activities to facilitate effective communication with indigenous communities.

Strategies undertaken pursuant to the IECDS include the secondment of an indigenous employee from the Indigenous Education Division of the Department of Employment Education and Training to work as a Community Engagement Officer with the Statehood Steering Committee. The key role of this officer has been to facilitate dialogue with indigenous communities in relation to the issues surrounding statehood for the Northern Territory. This contract has been extended for the 2007-08 year.

One indigenous employee was given temporary promotion for a period of 10 months to develop his skills in the parliamentary area. He has since won a temporary promotion in his own work area.

The Legislative Assembly Education program has highlighted the role of parliament with a range of schools throughout the community. Workshops have been conducted in remote communities to provide awareness and understanding of representative parliamentary democracy.

To enhance service delivery to indigenous clients, cross-cultural training for agency staff is planned for the 2007-08 financial year.

Management Training

- Management training has been identified as a significant component of the Department's focus in developing staff.
- Management training undertaken by staff during 2006-07 included: various staff attending a Developing Policy program; two staff attending a course in Developing Specifications and Tender Documents; two managers completing a Managing Multiple Projects, Objectives and Deadlines workshop; one staff member attending the "Our History" Seminar; and a mentoring forum attended by one staff member.



- In addition, one staff member was supported in undertaking the Foundations in Human Resources program, which was of five days duration with written assignments. In addition, staff are encouraged to belong to a relevant professional association and to maintain their links and skills by attending professional development seminars and workshops.
- During the reporting period, the Director of Security undertook the 'Developing Specifications and Tender Documents' course and 'Debriefing Tenders' course. This reporting year she has undertaken the Diploma of Contract Management and Public Sector Management Program.

Employee Development Activities

Employee Development Framework

The Department's Strategic Human Resource Plan has as a key objective, 'Develop current staff's knowledge and skills to support current and future needs of the agency'. This objective is undertaken through learning needs being identified through the Performance Development Plan (PDP) process, and training undertaken through external courses, formal study and informal sessions. These information sessions include Pre- and Post-Sittings Briefing Sessions which enable staff to gain an understanding of parliamentary practice and procedure.

Electorate Officer Development

The agency supports 25 Electorate Officers, including nine from remote localities (Alice Springs, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Tennant Creek). An Electorate Officer training framework identifies training needs and provides a co-ordinated approach to ensure Electorate Officers are provided with appropriate and targeted training. Electorate Officers attended induction programs held in December 2006 and February 2007, and undertook a range of training seminars mostly focusing on information technology software.

Other Employee Development Activities

- As in previous years the agency employed a trainee in 2007 as part of the mid-year intake.
- A major employee development activity during the course of the year was the introduction of staff forums. These forums are held monthly and are chaired and hosted by a different Work Unit on each occasion. The Forums provide the opportunity for staff to be briefed across a range of organisational issues and policy developments, as well as providing a forum for staff to exchange views across a range of topics.
- The Pre- and Post-Sittings Briefings conducted by the Clerk were commenced three years ago and have continued throughout 2006-07 with a high uptake of staff interested in attending. These sessions enable staff who



may not have a direct involvement in the sittings to gain a better understanding of parliamentary practice and procedures, and to better understand the agency's core business.

- Three departmental officers attended the 2007 Australian and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the Table (ANZACATT) in Perth WA. The theme of the seminar was Committee Administration Issues. Attendance at this conference has proven to be an excellent professional development tool for parliamentary officers. The Speaker and the Clerk attended the Presiding Officers Conference in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. A paper was written on Commonwealth Intervention, and was made available to all staff members.
- Two departmental officers attended a Queensland University of Technology to complete a Parliamentary Law, Practices and Procedures course which counts as one unit towards a Graduation Certificate in Law. This course was established by the Clerk of Australian Parliaments in recognition of the unique requirement to train and develop people aspiring to maintain career in parliamentary procedures and law. The course is conducted annually with one week residential component.
- Two departmental officers attended the Parliamentary Officers Information Technology program held at the South Australian parliament. In its third year, this two-day forum provides an opportunity for IT personnel from all parliaments to share information, ideas and common concerns.
- In November 2006 the Director of Security attended the Australian National Security Summit in Sydney which was focussed on developing public-private sector partnerships to support homeland security and protect critical infrastructure. The Director also visited the NSW Parliament and the Australian Parliament in Canberra to conduct security liaison and benchmarking.
- Finally, two officers attended the inaugural National Parliamentary Entitlements Conference hosted by the Department of Finance and Administration in Canberra. Also attending was the Remuneration Tribunal for the Northern Territory and a senior officer from the Department of the Chief Minister. The conference provided a platform for officers from Australia and New Zealand from which they could exchange information and ideas relating to the administration of the entitlements provided to Members of Parliament. Each jurisdiction was required to present a paper at the conference for discussion, analysis and feedback. It is proposed for the conference to be held on a regular basis with the opportunity for other jurisdictions to be the host state or territory.

Occupational Health and Safety

- The Department of the Legislative Assembly has an Occupational Health and Safety Committee that meets on a quarterly basis. The Committee comprises a core group including the Human Resource Manager, the Director Parliamentary Services, the Technical Services Manager and the Building Services Manager. In addition, representatives from the Office of the Clerk and other building



occupants such as Office of the Chief Minister and the Northern Territory Library are invited to participate. The committee is responsible for reviewing and implementing policies and action plans to ensure the safety of staff and building users.

- Finalisation of the photographic identification system for building users was a priority, with photos for all building occupants and key visitors completed.
- Occupational Health and safety inspections of electorate offices in urban centres were completed on behalf of the agency by the Department of Corporate and Information Services, with the remote offices to be completed in 2007-08.
- At the time of reporting, ergonomic and workplace assessment training for individual work units was being organised along with manual handling training for relevant staff responsible for functions set-up.
- During May 2006 comprehensive training was conducted in relation to a variety of emergency procedures relating to Parliament House. Warden training was conducted for all security staff, designated wardens and deputy wardens. A number of emergency procedures were tested including: a full building evacuation; chemical biological radiological and nuclear (CBRN) response; and response to a suspect parcel. Mail handling procedures were reviewed and a number of staff trained in handling telephone threats. The Director of Security also attended the Chemical Biological and Radiological Incident and Emergency Course.

Future development challenges

- The agency faces the same challenges as most other employers - an ageing workforce and a declining labour market. These factors are exacerbated by the small size of the agency which provides limited opportunities for career paths and hence succession planning from within.
- Major challenges over the next few years will be in the area of knowledge management and retention, and in developing and retaining staff. The capacity to attract new staff, particularly those who are able to take on parliamentary roles, will also be a key factor.
- Briefings on parliamentary procedures will be a focus, to enhance staff development in this key area of core business.
- Another emphasis will be on staff rotation and mentoring to develop skills and knowledge.



Summary of Training Expenditure

During the reporting period, total agency expenditure on training activities was:

	\$
Courses	26 017
Accommodation	2 520
Travel	1 129
Total	29 656

Please note: figures refer to activities undertaken by agency staff and Electorate Officers

The total hours spent in training activities for all employees in 2006-2007 was 622.10 hours.



UNIT REPORTS

CHAMBER SERVICES

Unit Overview

The Chamber Services Unit, comprising the Table Office and Hansard, continued to provide support services to enable the Assembly to meet and transact its business in accordance with Standing Orders, statutory requirements and resolutions of the Assembly and services to provide and maintain an accurate record of business and debate conducted in the Assembly and Committees.

The Unit also played a fundamental role in the effective operations of the regional sittings held in Alice Springs.

Unit Objectives

The Objectives of the Unit include the provision of advice in relation to the proceedings of the House; to process correspondence and documentation relating to the Assembly; the production and secure retention of accurate Parliamentary Records; and the production of the Daily Hansard, Question Papers, the Parliamentary Record and Committee records and transcripts.

Key Achievements

Table Office

A major function for the unit this year, besides the routine maintenance of the department's internet site, was undertaken by our webmaster to construct, develop, map and create templates to facilitate the live production of the department's intranet site in May 2007;

Binding of Assent copies of Acts 2006, Parliamentary Record volumes 68, 69 and 70 and Printed Parliamentary Papers of 2006;

Hansard Unit

The Hansard Unit again managed to produce the Daily Hansard of parliamentary proceedings of the Alice Springs sittings in a timely manner without relocating from Darwin.

Hansard recorded and transcribed meetings of:

- Environment Committee Public Inquiry hearings on 16 November 06, September 06 and October 06;
- Public Accounts Committee hearings, September 06;
- the Arafura Games Heads of Delegation Conference on 16 May 07;
- The Unit is technologically ready to satisfy any request to generate a web stream of parliamentary proceedings to the internet.

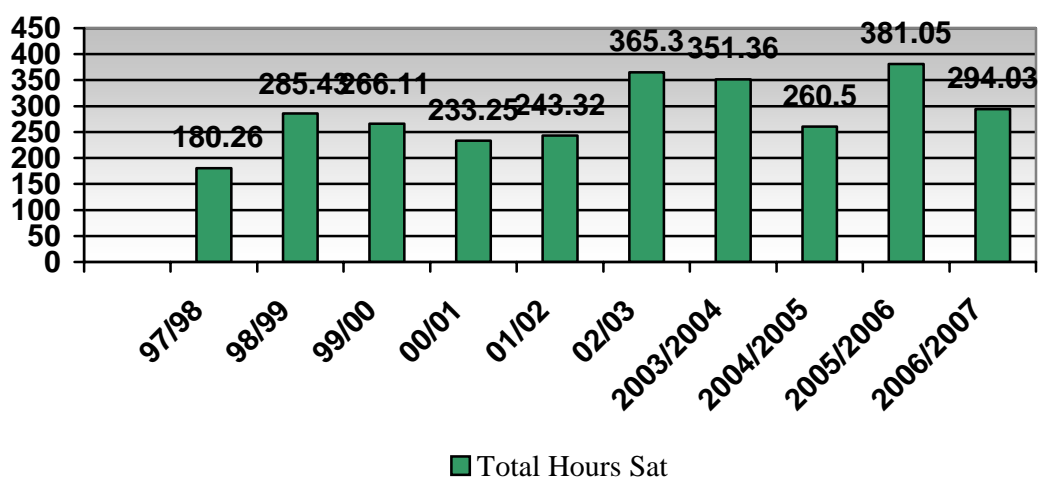


The year was a busy year for the Unit although not as extreme as the previous year as there was only one set of Estimates and Government Owned Corporations Committees' hearings this reporting period. In relative terms this accounts for approximately 50 hours so for comparison purposes in regard to hours sat, last years total can be reduced accordingly to 330 hours.

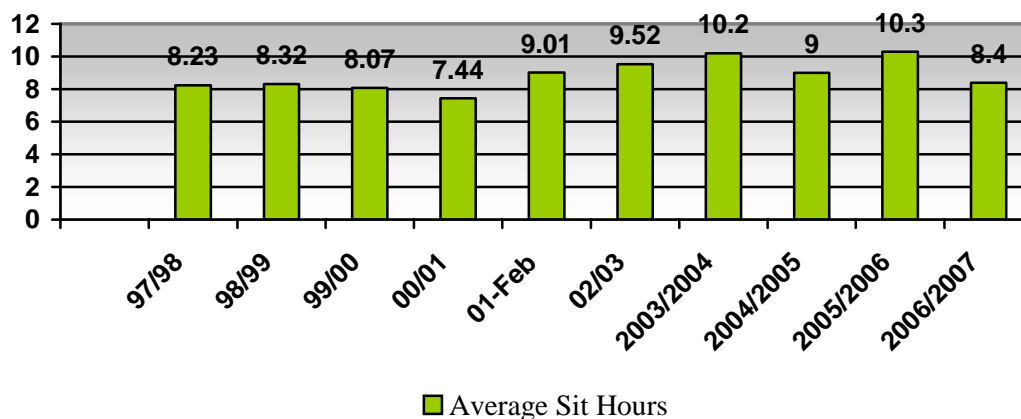
Accordingly, in relative terms, the Assembly sat 36 hours less than the previous year in adjusted terms. This reduction can largely be attributed to the fact that the Government's legislative program was approximately a third less and the average number of sitting hours per day was accordingly reduced by a little in excess of one hour.

The Government has maintained its policy of attending to the brevity of their answers to questions at Question Time and the total questions for the year was 521, three more than last reporting period.

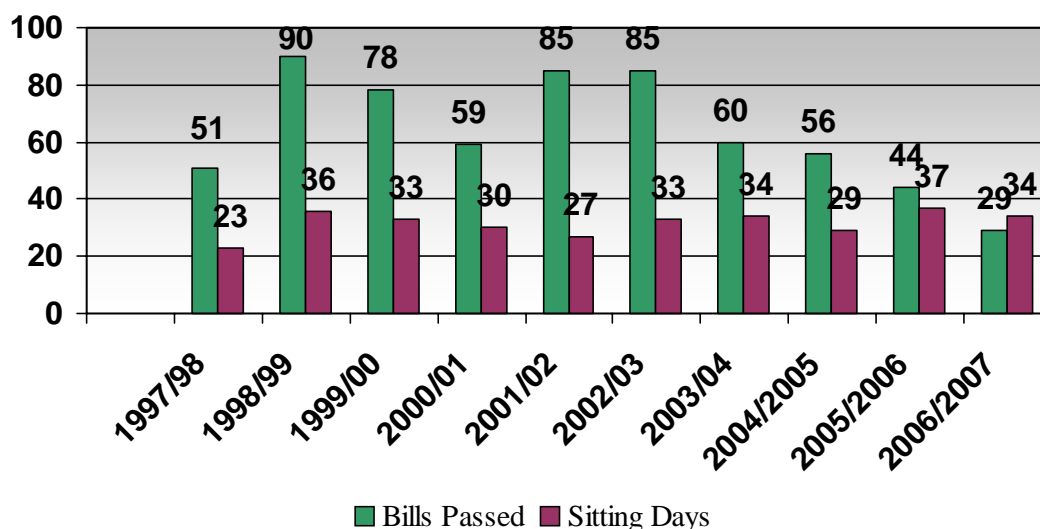
Graph 1: Annual Sitting Hours—Ten-Year Comparison



Graph 2: Average Sitting Hours per Sitting Day—Ten-Year Comparison

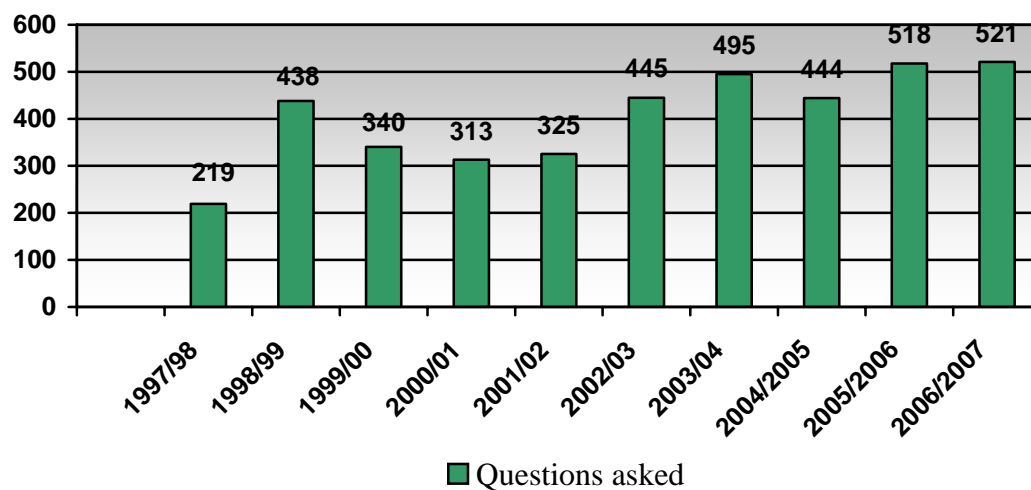


Graph 3: Bills Passed and Sitting Days — Ten-Year Comparison



The number of Bills dealt with has been on the decline since 2002/2003. Sitting days include days for Estimates Committee and Government Owned Corporations Scrutiny Committee hearings.

Graph 4: Questions Asked—Ten-Year Comparison



The current policy of the Government keeping answers to questions concise has allowed the quantity of questions asked during question time to remain high.



Graph 5: Papers Tabled Ten-Year Comparison

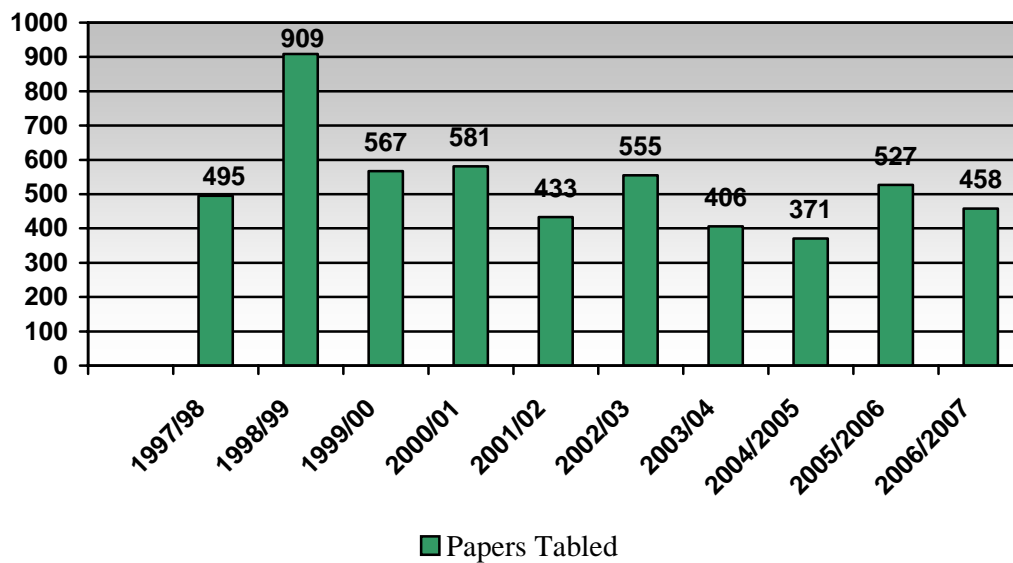


Table 1: Parliamentary Legislation Statistics

	Government	Opposition	Independent	Total
Brought forward 1 July 2006	8	1	-	9
Introduced	27	11	3	41
Discharged	-	-	-	-
Withdrawn	-	-	-	-
Negatived	0	9	2	11
Lapsed	-	-	-	-
Passed	29	-	-	29
Acts Assented to	29	-	-	29
Carried forward 30 June 2007	6	3	1	10



Table 2: Other parliamentary business processed.

The following table summarises other parliamentary business processed 2006-07

Other Business	Total
Matters of Public Importance	2
Papers Tabled	58
Petitions Presented	25
Questions	521
Written Questions	11
Statements	27

Hansard

The performance target for production of the Daily *Hansard* is that the document is completed within three hours of the Assembly rising on each sitting day.

2005-06 Daily Hansard production times

< 1 hr of the Assembly rising	2
1-2 hrs of the Assembly rising	11
2-3 hrs of the Assembly rising	23
>3 hrs of the Assembly rising	2

2006-07 Daily Hansard production times

< 1 hr of the Assembly rising	2
1-2 hrs of the Assembly rising	29
2-3 hrs of the Assembly rising	3
>3 hrs of the Assembly rising	Nil

An eight-fold improvement in production finishing times was achieved in the 2 to 3 hours and 1 to 2 hour finishing production times this financial year. This is due to a number of factors - Earlier adjournment of the Assembly on average this financial year, stabilisation of our casual pool of keyboard transcription personnel and a determined effort was made to train and engage quality keyboard operators; and on three occasions when our casual staff cancelled at the last minute the Editors typed and edited turns.

These times represent completion of the *Daily Hansard* for sittings of the Assembly and Estimates and Government Owned Corporations Scrutiny Committee hearings, during the reporting period.

Commentary on Statistics

This year there were less sittings hours to transcribe due to there being only one Estimates and Government Owned Corporations Scrutiny Committees' hearings falling into this reporting period. Unlike last year when there were two sets of



hearings. Sitting hours for the year were thus reduced by approximately 50 hours due to this occurrence.

The *Parliamentary Record*, a fully edited, indexed and merged document of all parliamentary debate of each sitting day during each sittings period, was produced within four weeks of the rising of the Assembly after a two-week sitting period. The *Parliamentary Record* also contains Minutes of Proceedings, Questions Without Notice, Written Questions and associated indices.

Once the *Parliamentary Record* was completed, the *Daily Hansard* was replaced, both in hard copy and electronic form. Where a sitting period was of one week's duration, the *Parliamentary Record* was completed within two weeks of the Assembly's rising.

Future Priorities

- Encourage other employees within the department to train as sub-editors to improve their skills and provide the department with a human resource pool. *Transfers of at least 6 months are required to allow an employee to be sufficiently trained and demonstrate their abilities.*
- Reconstruct the Department's internet site with a new template format and restructure layouts to facilitate easier access.



PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

Unit overview

The Parliamentary Services Unit provides advice, services and support for Members, electorate and departmental staff. Its activities include:

- management of the payment of salaries and allowances through the DCIS salaries unit;
- processing and payment of Members' travel and associated entitlements;
- acquisition and maintenance of Members' vehicles;
- establishment, management and administration of electorate office premises, including security systems, furniture and equipment, Minor New Works and Repairs and Maintenance; information technology and telecommunication services for Parliament House and electorate offices;
- office services including supply of furniture, equipment, stationery and general supplies;
- upkeep of accommodation and furniture, and provision of cleaning services in Parliament House; and
- provision of security advice, systems and services, including overseeing security contractors and administration of access to Parliament House including electronic access cards, office keys and remote car park gate activators.

The Unit also provides a full range of corporate services to the agency, Members and Electorate Officers, including human resource management and development, financial management and office services. The Unit manages Occupational Health and Safety and Equal Employment Opportunity programs within the agency; and manages the agency's records management systems.

Unit objective

The Unit's objective is to provide a high level of service to the Legislative Assembly to allow Members and staff to fulfil their parliamentary duties in a safe and secure environment.

Key achievements

Connectivity to Electorate Offices

The ongoing issue of multiple and simultaneous internet and email connectivity for Members and Electorate Officers in their electorate offices was a focus during the reporting period. The Department is continuing to work with DCIS officers and contract service providers to achieve a satisfactory resolution to these problems.

ICT Cabling in Parliament House

The issue of the IT cabling infrastructure within Parliament House was given considerable focus during the 2006-07 financial year. A report in 2005-06 confirmed



the advice that the existing cabling would not support new and emerging technologies and ever-increasing load requirements.

The report on the scope of works required to implement the recommendations of the initial report on the existing infrastructure was completed, and a risk assessment completed under the auspices of Risk Management Services within the Department of Chief Minister.

A submission for funding for this key project was made as part of the 2007-08 Capital Works program, and funding of \$3.75M was approved by Cabinet. A Steering Committee was established to oversee the course of the project. At the time of reporting the tender specifications for the project were in the process of being drafted.

LA Staff and Members' Intranet Site

An Intranet site for LA Staff, Members and Electorate Officers was established during the financial year. The main objective of the site is to provide a central and easily accessible depository for the storage and dissemination of key information, including information papers, policies and procedures.

Desktop Support

An ongoing focus during the financial year was the bedding down of the new Desktop support contract to ensure that it met the needs of Members.

IT Services for Members

The Speaker's Determination for Information and Communications Technology was thoroughly revised to ensure that it reflects changes in technology and the needs of Members. Key changes were the addition of networked colour photocopiers (multi-functional devices) and, in line with the increasing merging of telecommunications and information technology, inclusion of mobile phones and specification of responsibility for payment of enhanced data services on these devices.

Support for Regional Sittings in Alice Springs

Considerable effort went into the provision of information and communications technology requirements for the Alice Springs sittings, with the result that feedback from Members and Ministerial staff indicated a high level of satisfaction with the service provided.

Future Priorities

Induction

A major review of the Department's induction policy and program is planned, with a group of interested staff from across the Department taking part in the review.

Relocation of Electorate Offices

Two electorate offices will be relocated during the 2007-08 financial year due to changes in demographics and to provide improved accessibility for constituents.



ICT Cabling Project

Implementation of the ICT cabling project and a phased relocation of the occupants of Parliament House for the different stages of the project will be a key focus in the coming financial year.

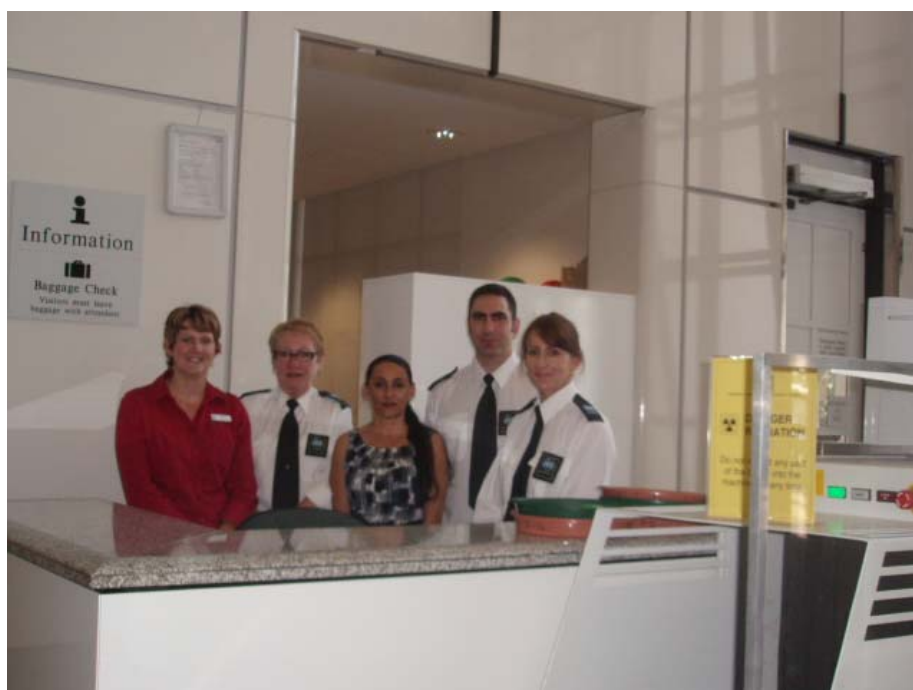


SECURITY SERVICES

Unit Overview

Events of the past few years have resulted in increased emphasis being placed on security management. The agency has maintained high priority and commitment to security by restructuring the organisation to create a dedicated Security Services Unit. The unit was formed utilising existing departmental resources and is headed by the Director of Security. The Director is supported by a Security Supervisor and contracted uniform security staff.

The Security Services Unit has assumed overall responsibility for security and emergency management functions and tasks previously administered by the agency's Parliamentary Services Unit.



The Director of Security (Samantha Day-Johnston) and Security Supervisor (Esther Pesti) with ISS Security officers (Vaughan, Miltos and Cathy) ensure that Parliament House is a safe environment.

Unit Objectives

The Security Services Unit coordinates and manages the security activities of the Department including:

- The delivery of security services to Parliament House;
- Preparation and implementation of security policy, practices and procedures;
- The provision of security advice to Members, electorate officers, staff and Parliament House building occupants;
- Liaison with security, law enforcement and intelligence agencies on security threats and measures;



- Provision of security education and awareness training; and
- The conduct of emergency management including provision of policy, procedures, training and response to incidents.



ISS Security officer, Cathy, tests the hand scanner on Spotless contract cleaner, Lodya, to ensure it's in good working order.

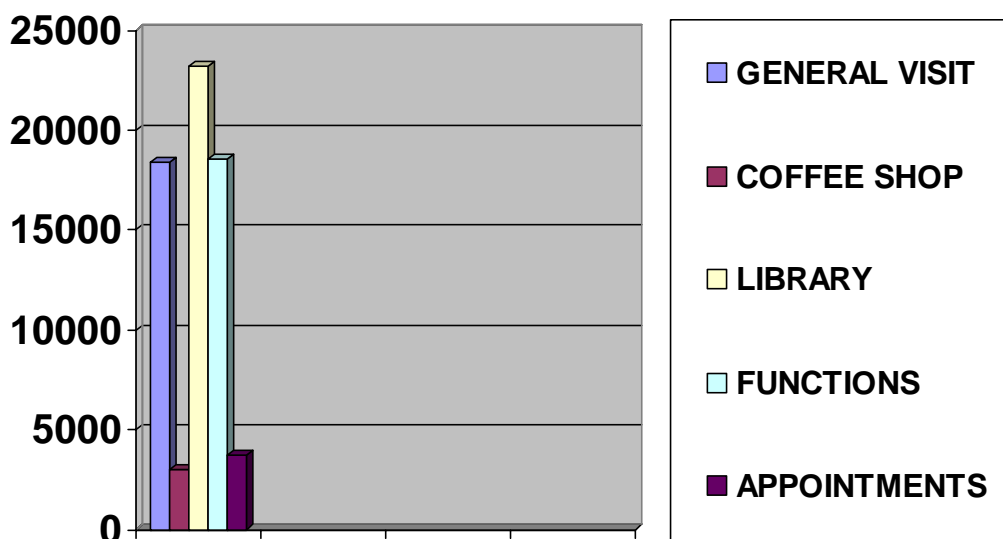
Key Achievements

- In May, Parliament House became the principal venue and international stage for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 8th Energy Minister's Meeting. Ministers and delegates from all 21 member nations participated in the event, bringing with it the highest levels of security ever seen at Parliament House. Legislative Assembly Officers worked closely with the Department of Prime Minister's APEC Taskforce and many other federal, state and territory agencies to deliver what was deemed to be a highly successful event. The Security Services unit played a key role in the planning and coordination of security and logistical support arrangements for the APEC events held at Parliament House. The unit conducted significant liaison with Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies. It provided briefings for Members and Parliament House building occupants, and provided a high level of security services, coordination and support during on-site events. Feedback from event organisers was very positive
- With regional sittings held in Alice Springs, the Security Services Unit had the challenge of establishing a security environment in the Alice Springs Convention Centre, equivalent to that of Parliament House in Darwin. A significant amount of work was done to provide security personnel, screening and response procedures for the event. The security environment established was such that a number of public rallies were able to be conducted, without any



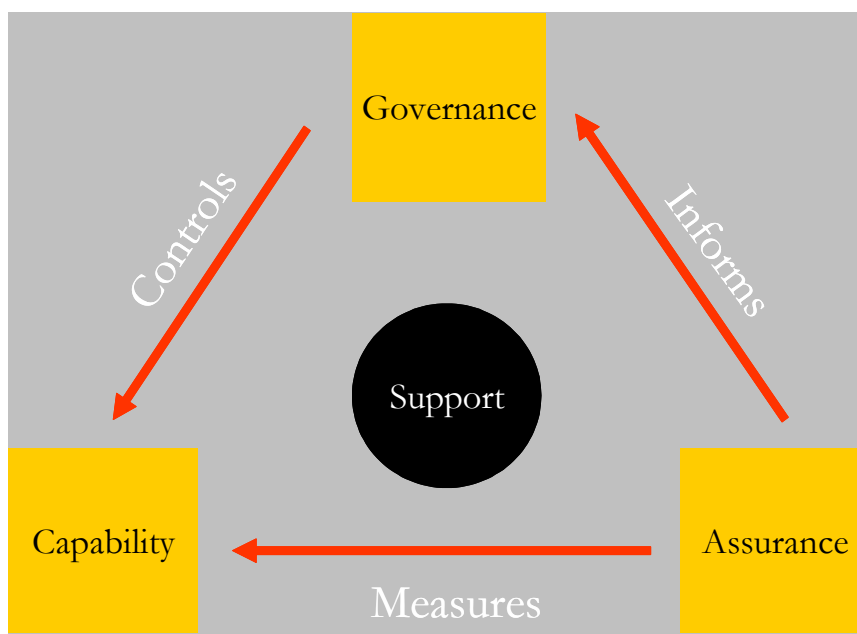
disruption to the Sittings.

- The lead up to APEC provided the perfect opportunity to review Parliament House emergency procedures and conduct associated refresher training. On completion of the training a number of emergency procedures and drills involving police, fire and emergency services, were practised including: fire and evacuation; suspect package; and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) response;
- Following on from last year’s review of the Connley Walker report of Parliament House’s electronic security systems, significant market research has been conducted and a project to upgrade components of the access control, alarm and closed circuit television (CCTV) systems will be developed and is being considered for implementation concurrent with the ICT Cabling Project;
- Security screening of visitors to Parliament House is an important role conducted by the Security Services unit. During FY 06-07 a total of 66, 839 visitors were recorded entering the front entrance of Parliament House. The breakdown of visitors and their reason for entry to the building is shown in the following graph;



- Complementing the Security Management Model is the adoption of a Security Risk Management approach to all security planning and activities. With a limited budget and unpredictable security environment, resources are effectively managed to ensure the highest level of security available is provided.
- The Security Services unit uses a management model comprising of ‘governance’, ‘assurance’ and ‘capability’. With good governance, security is built into the core business of the department. Assurance gives confidence in the security systems used and seeks to identify areas that need improvement. Capability ensures we understand our environment and identify security requirements specific to our needs. These elements are bought together through the provision of high level support to our clients and staff.





Future Priorities

- As a new Unit, much work is still to be done. Reviewing existing security arrangements and designing and implementing a new and comprehensive security program. This will take a considerable amount of time and effort, and will remain among the Units priorities for the foreseeable future.
- The Parliament House Security Contract is central to security operations at Parliament House. This three year Contract expires in December 2007, at which time the Department will invite tenders and hope to award a new contract.
- The upgrade of ICT cabling to Parliament House is a major project involving significant building works and a large number of contractors. The Security Services Unit will manage the project security requirements to ensure security standards are maintained throughout.
- Earlier reviews have identified the requirement to upgrade Parliament House's electronic security systems. The ICT cabling project has provision to include new cabling to support an upgrade of electronic security systems. Significant market research is being conducted with a view to developing a project to upgrade components of the access control, alarm and closed circuit television (CCTV) systems concurrent with the ICT Cabling Project.
- A review of Electorate Office security by both the Security Services and Parliamentary Services Units is planned to commence this reporting period. The review will include a full protective security assessment of each office and review of associated security procedures.



PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS AND EDUCATION UNIT

Unit overview

The Parliamentary Relations and Education Unit has continued to develop a range of educational and information programs to increase public awareness of the Parliament, its role and effect on the community. Specific targets areas have included Territory schools and remote communities.

The Unit also has facilitated various programs for visiting delegations as well as providing assistance to Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory who are required to participate in inter-Parliamentary activities.

The Unit acknowledges the cooperation of the Department of Education, Employment and Training in providing a Parliamentary Education Coordinator to work with Unit officers in delivering a wide range of educational programs.

Unit objectives

- to provide services and support to promote community awareness of the constitutional role and significance of the Parliament; and
- to facilitate the process of inter-parliamentary relations for Members, including participation in Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and other conference/seminar activities.

Key achievements

Key achievements of the unit during the reporting period include:

- Development of educational resources and coordination of educational activities for the Alice Springs sittings. Approximately 1250 students from 21 schools attended the 3 day Alice Springs regional sittings.
- The Parliamentary Relations and Education Unit coordinated the YMCA Youth Parliament in Alice Springs 2007 in conjunction with YMCA Darwin and YMCA Alice Springs. It is the first time that the Youth Parliament was coordinated by both YMCA branches and the Legislative Assembly. This year, grade seven students were able to participate because of the implementation of the middle schools initiative.
- PREU conducted a series of activities for Celebrating Democracy Week including "Parliament of the Wizards" programs in Parliament House and school programs in the Gove Peninsula area.
- In February 2007 the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly launched a road show as part of the Outreach Education program in remote communities at Nyangatjatjara College situated 10 kms from the township of Yulara in Uluru.
- The Speaker, assisted by officers from the Parliamentary Relations and Education unit, conducted role plays with over 60 students from Yulara and Mutijulu schools and Nyangatjatjara College. Students from Docker River



situated 4 kilometres from the Western Australian border, and Imanpa School travelled long distances to participate in the role plays.

- It was a history making event as it was the first time a Speaker and officers of the Legislative Assembly have conducted an education program in Uluru. Madam Speaker and a PREU officer conducted a similar program at St Philips College in Alice Springs.
- The Parliamentary Relations and Education Unit visited 25 schools and conducted education programs with 1450 students over a period of a week visiting schools in Tennant Creek, Neutral Junction, Hermannsberg, Wallace Rock Hole and Alice Springs.

It was the largest outreach program ever undertaken by the unit.



The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Jane Aagaard MLA and the Member for MacDonnell, Ms Alison Anderson MLA with students at Nyangatjatjara College

- In response to popular demand, PREU has increased the frequency of public tours of Parliament House having introduced a guided tour held on Wednesday from May to September in addition to the 9am and 11 am tours held every Saturday in Parliament House. The unit has engaged the services of noted author and historian, Pearl Ogden as a tour guide.
- Feedback from the public, both local and tourist, indicates that the tours are exceptionally well received which augurs well for the expansion of this service to the community.
- Hosted the Australasian Parliamentary Educators' Conference. Parliamentary Educators from the Commonwealth, New Zealand, New South Wales, Norfolk Island, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory attended the conference coordinated by the Parliamentary Relations and Education Unit.





Parliamentary Educators attending the Australasian Parliamentary Educators' Conference in Darwin, August 2006

In addition the unit –

- conducted additional professional development activities for teachers;
- further developed legal studies and mini-constitutional forums;
- co-ordinated the Electorate Officers Seminar, Public Sector, Members and media Induction Programmes;
- co-ordinated a two day oral history project

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Alice Springs Sittings – Parliamentary Road Show

	2005	2007
No. of Schools	14	25
No. of Students	600	1450

Alice Springs Sittings – Visit to the Alice Springs Convention Centre

	2005	2007
No. of Schools	27	21
No. of Students	1300	1230

School Visits to Parliament House 2006/2007

	2005 / 2006	2006 / 2007
No. of Schools	75	68
No. of Students	2740	3013



Guided Tours Saturday

	2005 / 2006	2006 / 2007
No. of Tours - Saturday	52	52
No. of Attendees - Saturday	2764	2250
Self-Guided	700 (3 months)	7655
Guided Tours Wednesday	991	1231

Tour Operators Groups

	2005 / 2006	2006 / 2007
No. of Groups	Not recorded-	65
No. of People	-	3263

Future priorities

The Parliamentary Relations and Education Unit will conduct educational programs aimed at primary and middle school students in an area adjacent to Parliament House. The new location will be a permanent “mock chamber” with increased numbers of schools able to access parliamentary educational programs.

In addition, PREU will:

- co-ordinate Youth Parliament 2007 in Darwin;
- further develop educational road shows;
- conduct outreach programs in regional and remote communities, particularly within schools in the Tiwi Islands;
- increase week day public tours;
- further develop student forums;
- increase *Celebrating Democracy* programs;
- revamp the Parliamentary Education Handbook;
- further develop educational resources and materials for schools;
- conduct additional professional development activities for teachers;
- co-ordinate the Electorate Officers Seminar, Public Sector, Members and Media Induction Programmes; and
- develop educational programs on the “For Schools” website.



TECHNICAL SERVICES

Unit Overview

The Technical Services Unit has the responsibility for the electrical, mechanical and structural maintenance of Parliament House to ensure that it maintains its status as the Northern Territory's premier public building. This responsibility extends to the parliamentary precincts.

In doing so the Unit is responsible for ensuring that the occupants and users of the building carry out their business in a safe and secure environment

Unit Objectives

The Unit's primary objective is to continue to provide a premier facility for the conduct of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and to present a public asset of which all Territorians can be proud.

Key Achievements

Sound System Management in the Chamber

The development of a high level maintenance regime of the Chamber sound system has been achieved by:

- Continued upgrade and development of technical, physical and logistical elements of sound systems;
- Monitoring of re-programmed software and audio systems in the Chamber; and
- Implementation of a programme of regular testing and inspections.

The quality of sound in the Speaker's Gallery has been enhanced with the installation of four speciality speakers mounted in the ceiling to improve sound dispersion for patrons utilising this area.

Audio-visual Facilities in Parliament House

The Unit has continued to review and develop audio-visual facilities and, where appropriate, enhanced those facilities including video-conferencing.

Two high quality Sony PTZ (pan tilt zoom) cameras and sixteen channels of wireless micro phone have been installed in the Bio box in the Litchfield Room to coincide with Estimates hearings. This has significantly improved the sound and vision quality required for Hansard and viewing patrons.

The audio-visual facilities in Parliament House were of value during the meeting of Energy Ministers as part of the APEC conference

Building Structure and Envelope Refurbishing Plan

It is important that Parliament House is maintained to a standard worthy of the Northern Territory's premier public building. Accordingly, a range of restorative and preventative measures has been applied to exposed surfaces and to the external envelope of the building.



Painting of all external handrails has been completed and the replacing of seals and expansion joints on all of the building terraces and balconies with more versatile and long-lasting materials has commenced.

Parliament House Strategic Asset Maintenance and Management Plan

Consultants GHD were contracted by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to carry out a comprehensive review of the State Square precinct including the Parliamentary precinct. GHD were commissioned also to provide an in depth analysis report on their review.

The consultant's report was received late in 2006-07 and is currently being considered. The report will provide a sound basis for the further development of the Parliament House Strategic Asset Maintenance and Management Plan and will be utilised during the formulation of future maintenance programmes.

Energy Management

- In accordance with the Northern Territory Government Energy Smart Buildings Policy an energy smart upgrade funding report, for inclusion in a Cabinet Submission, was completed and referred to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for consideration and for that agency's input to the project;
- In addition to the redesigning of the cooling towers and the installation of a Low Load Chiller in 2004-05 financial year other energy saving projects have been successfully implemented in Parliament House with significant improvement in the operating efficiency of the building's plant and equipment. They include:
 - modifications to the building's air conditioning systems; and
 - ensuring that the agency's office machines are equipped with appropriate energy saving facilities.
- The Technical Services Manager was nominated as the agency's representative for Greenhouse Action 2006 incorporating the Northern Territory Strategy for Greenhouse Action.

Parliament House Information and Communications Technology – Re-cabling Project

Cabinet has approved an upgrade of the Parliament House cabling infrastructure to improve information and communications capacity. The project scope is focussed on the replacement and technology-protocol upgrade of the communications IT cabling infrastructure from the existing mix of IBM-Type 1, Token Ring, Category 3 and Category 5 networks to a fully integrated Category 7 network throughout the building.

The project also has presented an opportunity for implementing upgrades of infrastructure cabling associated with the security systems (access control system), security system (CCTV system) and BMS system.

The project is expected to be completed mid-2008.



Future Priorities

The major focus of the Technical Services Unit is maintaining the Parliament House building and its precincts at the highest possible level. Tasks aimed at achieving this include:

- Completion of the Information and Communications Technology and BMS Re-cabling Project;
- Further development and implementation of the Parliament House Asset Strategic Maintenance and Management Plan;
- Advancement towards direct “live” sound and vision broadcast options in the Chamber;
- Maintaining and, where necessary, enhancement of audio-visual facilities;
- Continued implementation of the building structure and envelope refurbishing programme; and
- Continued participation in the Developing Darwin programme;
- Installation of appropriate shade structures on Speaker’s Green; and
- Development of a Strategic Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Plan for the Parliamentary precinct.



PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Unit Overview

The staffing arrangements in the Unit were reviewed during the year to assess the adequacy of resourcing of all Committees. In view of the workload of the two senior officers, each with three committees to oversee, the duties and responsibilities of the two permanent Research Officer positions were adjusted to give them greater responsibility for a committee's inquiry process. Recruitment processes were underway to fill the upgraded positions at the end of the year.

Unit Objectives

Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

- The Committee received a reference from the Attorney-General in February with a request that it investigate the issue of recognition of customary law as a source of law, a recommendation from the 2003 Northern Territory Law Reform Committee inquiry into Aboriginal Customary Law. This matter was referred to the former Standing Committee but the reference lapsed at prorogation of the 9th Assembly.
- The Committee continued to oversee the operation of the Statehood Steering Committee and was instrumental in the development of protocols for providing information on the work of that body to the newly established portfolio position of Minister for Statehood and Shadow Minister. The Terms of Reference for the Statehood Steering Committee were subsequently amended by the Assembly to provide for this.

Select Committee on Substance Abuse in the Community

- The Substance Abuse Committee continued its inquiry into the abuse of alcohol, cannabis and petrol in remote communities, especially an investigation of the factors which mitigate against substance use, or strengthen a community to deal with it if it does appear.
- Official briefings were sought with seven expert witnesses during this time.
- The report will be tabled during 2007-08.
- The Chair gave two progress reports to the Assembly during the year, in February and again in April.
- The Committee provided input to the development of the Katherine Regional Alcohol Management Plan

Sessional Committee on Sport and Youth

- Four of the seven meetings held during the year were official briefing meetings with a total of 13 expert witnesses giving evidence.



- The Chair provided a progress report to the Legislative Assembly on the work of the Committee in November.
- In June an officer was seconded from the Department of Health to assist in the research, development implementation of the public consultation program to be undertaken during 2007-08.
- The Committee intends to provide its initial report addressing Terms of Reference one and two in February.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

- At its first meeting of 22 August 06, Mr James Burke MLA, Member for Brennan replaced Mr Len Kiely MLA, Member for Sanderson. Mr Burke was elected as Chair of the Committee.
- At its meeting of 10 October 2006, Ms Kerry Sacilotto MLA, Member for Port Darwin replaced Mr Chris Natt MLA, Member for Drysdale.
- Throughout the year the Committee continued to interrogate issues surrounding the Terms of Reference into Special Purpose Payments.
- Further specific advice was sought from individual agencies and upon receipt the Committee was in a position to arrange for NT Treasury to compare information obtained to that which sat within their own departmental records. It is anticipated that a report back to Government will be tabled in early 2008.
- The Committee held a number of briefings with senior public servants of various agencies as well as the Auditor-General. It is through the reports tabled by the Auditor-General that the Committee is in a position to investigate matters raised within those reports.
- The Committee was consulted in the overall process of the triennial review of the Office of the Auditor-General from the preparation of the Terms of Reference to the completion and tabling of the final report.
- Members of the PAC continue to comprise the core membership of both the estimates committee and the government owned corporations scrutiny committees.
- Prior to the estimates process in June 2007, the Committee received a letter from the Chair of the Standing Orders Committee confirming that Ministers would be restricted to a 5 minutes timeline in delivering their opening address. It was also suggested that the Committee should consider prioritising the order of appearance of agencies that through various reasons had not been given the opportunity to appear before previous estimates committee's. In considering this matter, Members took the decision that the Darwin Port Corporation was the only agency that should received this priority attention.



- Throughout the year the Chair of the Committee was approached by the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) to facilitate an increased involvement by the Public Accounts Committee in the Public Sector Annual Report Awards. The chairman accepted a position on the Adjudication Panel, presented an award on the night itself and took the opportunity to speak on the expanded involvement of the Committee in the whole process.

Subordinate Legislation and Publications Committee

- The Committee is charged with responsibility of examining and reporting upon all instruments of a legislative or administrative character and other papers which are required to be laid on the table.
- As mentioned in last year's Annual Report, the Committee was able to acquire the services of Prof. Ned Aughterson to provide Members with appropriate legal support. Professor Aughterson has agreed to a further 12 months contract and Members are now in a position where they are assured of a level of service that enables them to understand and consider with greater clarity, the complexity of the regulations that are tabled in the Assembly.
- As a result of the briefs provided by Prof. Aughterson, Members have written to a number of Chief Executive Officers seeking further and better particulars of regulations tabled in the Assembly.
- Under the Committees Terms of Reference there is no requirement to provide an annual report to the Assembly. The Chairman has requested that the Secretariat undertake a review of all papers presented to the Committee. From this review, it is proposed that a report process be implemented that will provide the Committee with the opportunity to table a précis of their work over the previous 12 months.

Sessional Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

- The Committee met deliberatively on eleven (11) occasions during current Assembly and it received one official briefing from officers of the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and the Department of Primary Industry Fisheries and Mines. In addition, the Chair received two private briefings; one from officers of the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts; the other from an officer of the World Wide Fund for Nature Northern Landscapes branch and an Aquatic and Mangrove Scientist from James Cook University's Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research.
- During the 10th Assembly the Secretariat prepared nine (9) research papers to assist the Committee with its inquiry. These papers along with other evidence collected will be incorporated into the final report on the inquiry.



- The Committee held public hearings in Katherine, Jabiru, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, the Litchfield Shire and Darwin from September to November 2006.
- In line with the Terms of Reference of its inquiry, the Committee held an Invasive Species Round Table (the Round Table) on the 15th November 2006. The Round Table brought together invasive species experts from Australian States and Territories to discuss the various issues regarding invasive species management in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- With the collection of information at a conclusion the task of consolidating that data into a final report has been ongoing. It is anticipated that a final report will be table late 2007/ early 2008.
- The Secretariat prepared speech notes for the Chair's contribution to the debate in the House on the issue of illegal fishing boats in Northern Territory as it referred to the Committee's current inquiry into invasive species and management programs.



OFFICE OF THE STATEHOOD STEERING COMMITTEE

Unit Overview

The Office of the Chairman of the Statehood Steering Committee is comprised of three staff; an Executive Officer, a Community Liaison Officer (seconded from the Department of Employment Education and Training) and an Administration Officer. The Unit occupies a small office located on level four of the Legislative Assembly building.

As at 30 June 2007 the unit supports a Committee which has 18 members, three of whom are Members of the Legislative Assembly with the other 15 representing the Northern Territory Community coming from a range of diverse locations and backgrounds.

Unit Objectives

The project objective is to bring about Statehood for the Northern Territory with the support of a majority of Territorians in a timely, cost effective and efficient manner.

It is stated Northern Territory Government policy as well as the policy of the Opposition Party to progress Statehood for the Northern Territory.

The Unit supports the Statehood Steering Committee in raising awareness and discussing Statehood issues with Territorians and provides advice and assistance to the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on matters concerning ongoing constitutional development that may lead to a future grant of Statehood for the Northern Territory.

During the reporting period, the Office of the Chairman also assumed responsibility for liaising with and assisting the offices of the both the Minister for Statehood and Shadow Minister for Statehood. These new portfolio responsibilities came about during September 2006. The Office of the Chairman provides advice and support to these offices through an arrangement involving the oversight of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

Key Achievements

Steering Committee Meetings

During the reporting period the Committee undertook four Committee meetings. Meetings were conducted in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs. The Executive Group also met during the reporting period on three occasions.

Committee Publications

- Constitutional Paths to Statehood - a Statehood Steering Committee Community Discussion Paper. This 35 000 word paper was released in May 2007 for consultation until 31 December 2007.
- *Summary of Key Issues: Constitutional Paths to Statehood* - an illustrated companion paper to assist understanding of the Discussion Paper and



encourage deeper involvement and interest in the content of the Discussion Paper was published in July 2007.

- Statehood Steering Committee Newsletter No 2 January 2007
- *Statehood Steering Committee Newsletter No 3 - produced June 2007 for publication in July 2007.* Newsletters are distributed electronically and in hard copy to over 1000 people on the Statehood database.
- *Walking Together: A Historical Timeline* - work commenced during early 2007 on an educational picture booklet for release later in the 2007 calendar year.
- *Together Toward Statehood* - A series of story boards were produced in flip chart and booklet format as well as on the Statehood website to assist with Statehood community presentations. These were launched in August 2006.

Collaborative Arrangements

- **Department of Employment Education and Training** – A two day workshop was auspiced by DEET and the Committee in February 2007 for Darwin based SOSE teachers to brief them on resources and materials on Statehood. The Committee also provided a seminar at a History Workshop for teachers held at Charles Darwin University during June 2007.
- **Australian Electoral Commission** – The Committee entered into an arrangement with the AEC to undertake a Mock Referendum on Statehood on the 2007 Show Circuit commencing with Fred's Pass Show in May and concluding at Borroloola in August 2007.
- **Territory Proud** – The Committee signed an MOU with community based organisation Territory Proud to market Statehood merchandise through their stalls and website.
- **Charles Darwin University 2007 Symposium** - The Committee's Executive Officer devised the theme of the 2007 Symposia series (*Statehood and a Northern Territory Bill of Rights?*) and was involved in the content Committee for a successful Symposia held in Darwin at the University on 10 and 11 May 2007.

Consultative Visits, Education and Community Meetings

The 2006 Show Circuit surveyed over 1000 people on their support for Statehood and found 82% indicated general support for the overall concept.

Community visits were undertaken to Katherine, Alice Springs, Santa Theresa, Amoonguna, Wallace Rock Hole, Hermannsburg, Bulman, Weemol, Manyallaluk, Beswick, Barunga, and throughout the Darwin area. Displays and stalls were held at the Garma Festival in East Arnhem during August 2006 and at retail shopping Centres in Darwin during February and March 2007 as well as at the Alice Business Expo in March 2007.



Two workshops on community engagement and constitutional development were held with individuals and organisations in Alice Springs during February and May 2007.

61 information sessions and presentations on Statehood were provided to organisations including workplaces, community groups and schools during the reporting period.

The Statehood Teachers Advisory Group met once during the period.

Media

The Committee commenced a radio advertising awareness campaign on commercial radio over eight weeks in March 2007 directing listeners to log on to the website for more information.

Media liaison was undertaken with 20 media releases being issued during the period and an increased media presence achieved on radio and television with broadcasting of interviews with the Chair, Co-Chair and the Executive Officer taking place.

The Committee's website was enhanced with increased content and more links. Work commenced on refurbishing the site with easier access to more content and provision of discussion forums. This will be launched in late 2007.

Comparison to Previous Years

The Committee increased its outreach in terms of overall education and presentation sessions from the previous year from 54 such sessions last year to 61 this year.

The Number of Committee meetings was one less than last year.

The Committee undertook a new program of publication and collaborative arrangements not undertaken in previous years.

Outcomes and Future Priorities

Funding

The Committee's budget is \$600 000 pa. Staffing consumes approximately 55% of the budget, publications produced took another 15% and advertising and promotions just over 10%. Committee meetings including travel and associated costs take up around another 10% of the budget with the remaining approximately 10% for operating and other expenses.

The funding of the Committee produced the outcomes of increased reach and awareness across the Territory during the reporting period with a range of strategies including used media advertising, community visits and consultation and the dissemination of the committee's publications through direct mail, website, displays an shows and other networks.



Ongoing Education

The education component of the Committee's work remains the same for each year of the Committee's existence. The Committee has achieved outcomes of reaching school students and school teachers through collaboration with the Department of Education and outreach to individual institutions.

Education projects of the Committee involve outreach to schools, community groups and individuals as required providing a solid grounding of understanding of what Statehood means right across the Northern Territory.

Consultation

As part of the consultation process the Committee will continue to promote the *Constitutional Paths to Statehood* Discussion Paper through consultation with groups, individuals and organisations throughout the Territory and will undertake an advertising campaign in September or October to further awareness of the existence of the Paper and the need for submission by 31 December 2007.

The Committee is also developing a further Discussion Paper on the Terms and Conditions of Statehood for release early in 2008.

Timeframes for a Referendum and Eventual Statehood

The Committee's Executive Officer accompanied the Minister for Statehood and Shadow Minister for Statehood to meet the Commonwealth Attorney General and Minister for Territories during February 2007. The Office of the Chairman is likely to play a role in assisting with the development of the framework for a Memorandum of Agreement on the Terms and Conditions of Statehood.

The Statehood Steering Committee is likely to publish a suggested timeframe toward a Territory Statehood Referendum before the end of 2007. This Timeframe will outline the future priorities of the Committee at different stages including a Constitutional Convention and referendum.

