



# ACT Legislative Assembly Secretariat

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
2005 – 2006







ACT Legislative Assembly Secretariat

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**annual report**

**2005-2006**

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Mr Wayne Berry MLA  
Speaker  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
Civic Square  
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Dear Mr Speaker,

I am pleased to submit to you this report on the activities of the ACT Legislative Assembly Secretariat for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

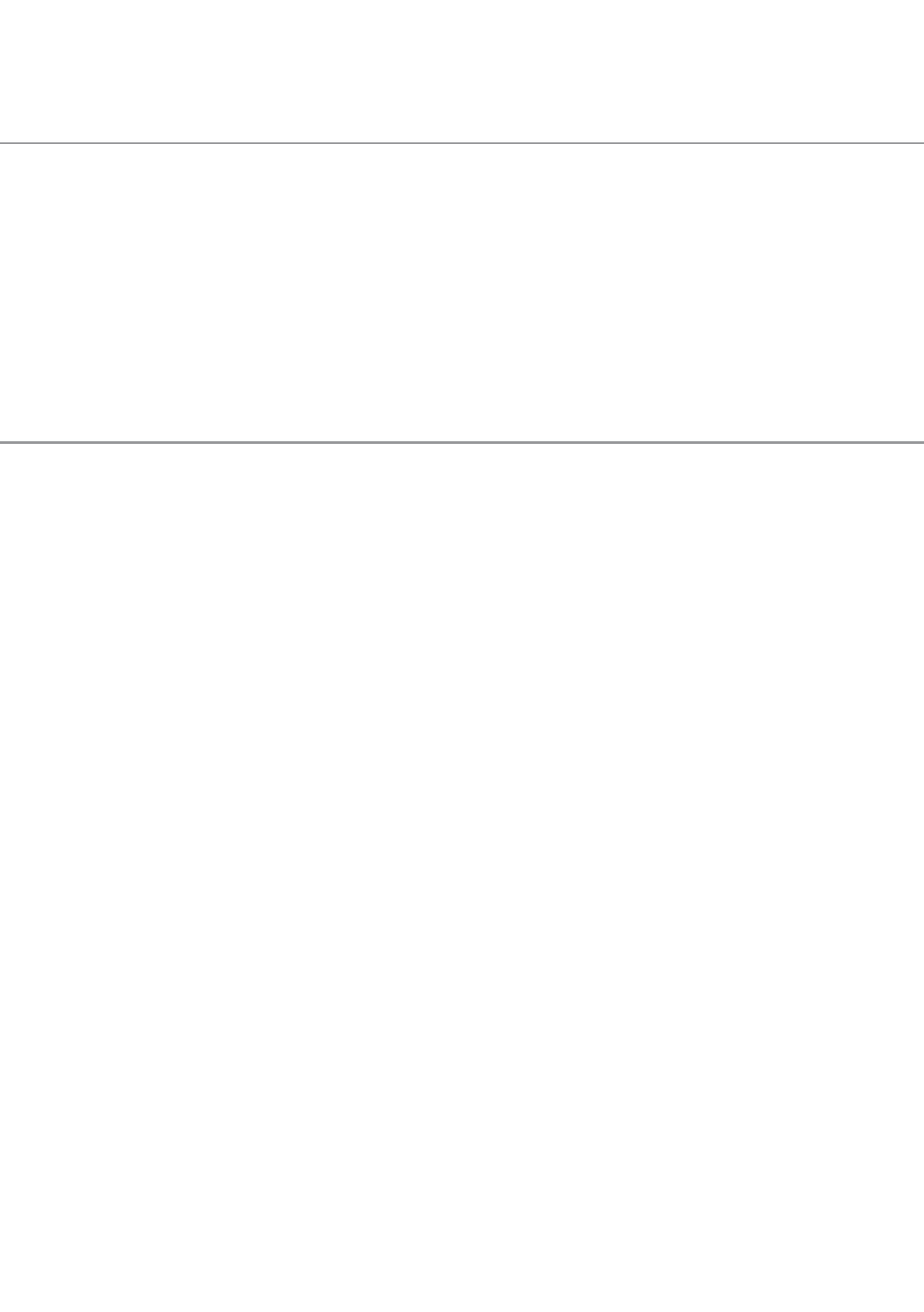
While the Secretariat is not required to produce an annual report, nor to adhere to the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions, as is its custom, the Secretariat has attempted to follow these directions where they are relevant and it is appropriate to do so.

I hereby certify that the attached annual report is an honest and accurate account of the operations of the Legislative Assembly Secretariat.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Duncan", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Tom Duncan  
Clerk

September 2006





## Table of contents

### **Part A: Clerk's Summary**

Overview of the agency .....	1
Clerk's overview – major achievements for the reporting year .....	5

### **Part B: Agency performance**

Key Strategic objectives.....	9
Human Rights Act.....	33
Community access and engagement .....	34

### **Part C: Management of the organisation**

Managing our people.....	35
Governance.....	41
Organisational structure of the Secretariat .....	42

### **Part D: Analysis of financial performance**

Agency financial results and analysis.....	51
Asset management .....	51
Capital works management .....	52
Procurement.....	53

<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>55</b>
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# Part A: Clerk's Summary

## Overview of the agency

The Assembly Secretariat, headed by the statutory office of Clerk, provides procedural, policy and administrative services to the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory, including administrative support to non-Executive members and their staff. The Office of Clerk of the Legislative Assembly is established by section 46 of Division 3.8 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (the Act). By virtue of section 54 of the Act, the staff required to assist the Clerk in the exercise of the Clerk's powers and the performance of the Clerk's functions are officers and employees employed under the Act. Under section 53A of the Act, those staff and the Clerk are specified as the Legislative Assembly Secretariat. The Clerk is not subject to the direction of the Executive.

Although not formally responsible under the administrative arrangements for administering particular legislation, the Secretariat has various levels of responsibility in relation to relevant provisions of the following Acts:

- *Legislative Assembly Precincts Act 2001*;
- *Legislative Assembly (Broadcasting) Act 2001*;
- *Legislative Assembly (Members' Staff) Act 1989* (associated subordinate legislation); and
- *Australian Capital Territory Self-Government Act 1988* (Commonwealth).

The Secretariat produces an annual report aligned with the reporting directions issued by the Chief Minister's Department, but does report against particular elements of government policy. This ensures that transparency and integrity is maintained in the reporting process and demonstrates to the ACT community that the Secretariat is not aligned with any particular policy agenda or political philosophy.

## **Mission**

The Secretariat's mission is to enrich and promote a living democracy in the ACT by providing services of excellence to the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory.

## **Vision**

The Secretariat's vision is that by 2009 it will be a leader in the provision of parliamentary services in Australia.

## **Values**

The values of the Secretariat are:

1. honesty and integrity;
2. impartiality;
3. respect for parliamentary processes, practices and procedures;
4. professionalism;
5. commitment to a fair, flexible, safe and rewarding workplace;
6. client focus;
7. a performance culture – continuously improving what we do and how we do it; and
8. good governance.

## **Strategic objectives and outcomes**

The Secretariat achieves its vision by pursuing the following five key strategies:

1. reading the strategic environment and strengthening our leadership;
2. enhancing governance arrangements;
3. becoming an employer of choice, increasing opportunities for professional development and building and maintaining a safe, fair, flexible and rewarding workplace;
4. improving our processes, procedures and systems and capitalising on emerging and existing technologies; and
5. enhancing our relationships with key client groups.

To achieve these objectives the Secretariat reports against the following outcomes:

1. the provision of high quality procedural advice, research, and business services leading to the effective functioning of the Assembly and its committees;
2. timely, accurate records of the business of the Assembly and its committees;
3. widespread knowledge in the ACT community and ACT Government agencies about the roles and functions of the Assembly and its committees; and
4. strong, collegiate relationships with other parliaments.

## Structure

The Secretariat consists of five key sections:

1. The **Chamber Support Office**, which is responsible for:
  - servicing the Assembly Chamber including the programming of business;
  - providing procedural advice to members and their staff;
  - processing legislation which has passed through the Assembly for publication and notification on the Legislation Register as laws of the ACT;
  - providing messenger and security services for the Assembly;
  - servicing of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the servicing of the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs when performing its duties as a Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee; and
  - building and strengthening parliamentary relations.
2. The **Committee Office**, which is responsible for supporting the general purpose standing committees and any select committees established by the Assembly, by:
  - assisting committees to undertake inquiries, principally by researching and analysing issues that are the subject of an inquiry, co-ordinating public consultation and drafting committee reports;
  - providing procedural advice to committees; and
  - providing administrative support.
3. The **Hansard and Communications Office**, which is responsible for providing recording and transcription services, IT support and advice, and broadcasting services by:
  - producing and publishing accurate and timely transcripts of Assembly debates and evidence given before Assembly committees;

- managing information technology for Assembly non-Executive members and the Secretariat;
  - managing the Assembly's web site and the Hansard database service; and
  - providing broadcasting and related technical services, and the development of broadcasting policy for the Assembly and its committees.
4. The **Corporate Services Office**, which is responsible for providing business services and policy advice including:
- financial and budgetary management;
  - facility management;
  - employment arrangements;
  - workplace management;
  - payroll;
  - records management; and
  - aspects of corporate governance.
5. The **Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office** which is responsible for strategic governance activities and promotion of the Assembly by:
- developing and updating a strategic plan and an annual report;
  - conducting an ongoing review of risk management strategies;
  - implementing a business continuity plan and related actions;
  - preparing advice for the Clerk and Speaker; and
  - developing programs to explain the role and workings of the Assembly and its members to the ACT community.

## **Clients**

The Secretariat has key relationships with:

- non-executive members;
- members' staff;
- ACT Government agencies;
- the Executive;

- media;
- other parliaments;
- Secretariat staff;
- the ACT community; and
- businesses and contractors.

## **Clerk's overview – major highlights for the reporting year**

The year outlined in this annual report saw a year of many achievements for the Secretariat. These included:

- the launch of the Assembly's new web site in June 2006;
- the completion of a members' survey which provided positive feedback on the overall operation of the Secretariat;
- the reduction in time taken to produce Hansard;
- the finalisation of a business continuity plan and the participation of staff in formal training on security.

More information about these activities is provided later in the report.

### **Business continuity plan**

The Assembly's business continuity plan was finalised in March 2006. The business continuity plan contains a planning framework and actions to be undertaken by sections within the Secretariat. Future actions that will strengthen the Secretariat's business resumption capacity in the event of a critical incident include the development of a contacts list for critical vendors, clients and employees and the identification of appropriate alternate venues for the Assembly.

### **Electronic communication improvements**

During 2005-06, a number of significant changes and improvements occurred across the Secretariat's electronic communication infrastructure, including:

- the redevelopment of the Legislative Assembly's internet site, with the upgraded Assembly Intranet coming on line in June 2006;
- the establishment of the Assembly's IT systems as a separate "organisational unit" on

the ACTGOV network to ensure greater privacy and security of the Assembly's electronic information;

- the commencement of delayed radio broadcasts of the Assembly's question time and adjournment debate proceedings on Community Radio Station 2XX, arising from successful pilot broadcasts that commenced in late 2004; and
- the migration of the analogue telephone and facsimile systems to an internet protocol digital system.

## Member's survey

A survey, conducted in March/April 2006 to seek members responses on the services provided by the different sections of the Secretariat, provided pleasing feedback on the overall operation of the Secretariat. The survey also highlighted some areas that require fine-tuning. A summary of the survey results is listed below.

### *Survey of Members and Ministers 2006*

#### Response Rate

	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Members	6	50
Ministers	4	80
TOTAL	10	59

#### Results

SECTION	% Satisfied or highly satisfied
Clerk	100
Chamber Support Office	99
Attendants	91
Hansard	96
Information Technology	80
Broadcasting	89
Strategy and Parliamentary Education	98
Committees	86
Finance	91
Human Resources	100
Building Management	87
OVERALL	92

## **Installation of audio-visual equipment**

A digital wide-screen television was installed in the Public Entrance foyer to assist staff, members and visitors to view the proceedings in the chamber and the committee rooms. The demand for increased access to a projector in the Reception Room was addressed with the permanent installation of a projector, DVD and video player.

## **Records management**

The Secretariat made significant progress with its records management program by disposing of a number of old records and relocating others into more secure off-site storage. More information about the number of records retained and disposed is located in Part C – Territory Records.

## **Staff training**

All security staff upgraded their qualifications by completing a Certificate II Security course.

## **Pamphlet in other languages**

A pamphlet, which provides an overview of the ACT electoral system and the roles and functions of the Assembly, was translated into three different languages and placed on the web site to increase access to information for the ACT community. The pamphlet will be translated into six other languages in the coming year.

## **Challenges**

The main challenge facing the Secretariat is ongoing funding restrictions. They continue to impact on the Secretariat's ability to improve services to members and other clients, to undertake initiatives to improve IT systems and security arrangements, and to conduct adequate building maintenance and human resource planning.

The much-awaited security upgrades including the re-development of the Public Entrance and the installation of additional security equipment were delayed. Recent finalisation of the procurement process will see the work completed during the coming financial year.

## Overview of agency performance and financial results

The Secretariat's operating result for 2005-06 was a \$357,000 deficit and this compared to a budgeted deficit of \$34,000. The higher than budgeted deficit occurred due to a conscious management decision, taken during the course of the year, to reduce the level of funds held in investment that, at the commencement of the financial year, amounted to \$635,000. This objective was achieved by targeting items of non-recurrent expenditure that would assist the Secretariat in delivering and, in many cases, improving its delivery of services. By focussing on one off expenditure items, Secretariat management were able to ensure that future recurrent costs could be contained within the Secretariat's budget.

## Outlook for the coming year

A number of key projects are scheduled for completion during 2006-07. These initiatives include:

- development of a companion to the Assembly Standing Orders;
- redevelopment of the Public Entrance of the Assembly building, including upgrades to the security system;
- migration of Assembly computer systems and applications to a Microsoft XP platform;
- a six-month trial of web-streaming of Assembly and committee proceedings on the Internet;
- development of two replacement certified agreements for Secretariat staff and members' staff;
- development of an art catalogue and a range of postcards to promote specific works of the Assembly art collection; and
- development of a number of informative display panels for the Assembly Public Entrance.

The Secretariat will continue to pursue its key objective of providing services of excellence to the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory by continually reviewing its practices and processes and striving for improvement in all areas.



Tom Duncan  
Clerk  
Legislative Assembly for the ACT



## Part B: Agency performance

As the Secretariat does not have an ownership agreement, the following part of the report details the key performance achievements and activities undertaken by the Legislative Assembly Secretariat against the four outcomes identified in its strategic plan. Each section within the Secretariat contributes to one or more of these outcomes.

### Key Strategic objectives

#### Outcome 1

**The provision of high quality procedural advice, research, and business services leading to the effective functioning of the Assembly and its committees.**

### Chamber Support Office

#### Procedural services

In 2005-2006, the Chamber Support Office provided procedural services to members and their staff, facilitating the efficient functioning of the business of the Assembly on 41 sitting days, including:

- 58 bills introduced;
- 23 bills amended;
- 63 Acts passed and notified on the Legislation Register;
- 344 pieces of subordinate legislation tabled;
- 712 questions placed on the Notice Paper;
- 13 petitions presented; and
- timely production of procedural documents for each sitting.

The appendices section of the report includes a full range of statistics and trends in relation to the business of the Assembly for 2005-2006 and previous years.

### **Secretariat support to Assembly standing committees**

The Chamber Support Office provides secretariat support for the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs in its capacity as the Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee. The Office, together with the Clerk of the Assembly, also provides the secretariat support for the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure.

#### *Standing Committee on Legal Affairs (performing the duties of a Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee)*

The Standing Committee on Legal Affairs Committee (performing the duties of a Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee) met on 16 occasions, issued 15 reports and made 1 statement pursuant to standing order 246A. The Committee also considered 71 bills, 344 pieces of subordinate legislation, 86 Government responses, 2 regulatory impact statements and 1 Private Member's response.

During the year the Committee slightly restructured its reporting format. Previously, reports had contained a cumulative listing of all responses to comments the Committee had made on bills and subordinate legislation. This listing is now separately viewable on the web site, and in its place, in the hardcopy of each report, is a concise listing showing bills and subordinate legislation for which responses are outstanding. This change saves paper and draws greater attention to tardy responses. By year's end relatively few responses were outstanding.

Also during the year the Administration (Interstate Agreements) Act was repealed, removing the requirement for the Committee to be consulted when interstate agreements are being negotiated between the ACT and other jurisdictions. As very few interstate agreements have been referred to the Committee, the change had a negligible impact on the Committee's workload.

#### *Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure*

The Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure met on 18 occasions to set the program of private members business, to discuss a range of matters and to inquire into a review of the standing orders.

The Committee considered guidelines for the use of Assembly facilities, for condolence motions, for travel by non-Executive Members on Assembly business, for non-Executive Members salary

packaging and for the selling of goods for charities. In addition, the Committee also considered procedures dealing with compostable waste, broadcasting and web streaming of Assembly proceedings, security upgrade projects at the Assembly, Members entitlements and the results of a survey of Members.

Further details of the work of the two committees supported by the Chamber Support Office are contained in Appendix 6.

### **Training to Secretariat staff on parliamentary practice and procedure**

During the reporting period Assembly secretariat staff participated in a range of training on parliamentary practice and procedure.

In July 2005, a secretariat member from the Committee Office attended the second Australian and New Zealand Society of Clerks at the Table (ANZACATT) professional development course in Brisbane. The course, *Parliamentary Law, Practice and Procedure*, was run by the Faculty of Law at the Queensland University of Technology. Topics included the legal framework and history behind parliaments, governments and constitutions; the structure and function of parliament; and parliamentary practice and procedure. The course can be used as credit towards a Graduate Certificate in Law.

In January 2006, ANZACATT also conducted its seventh professional development seminar for parliamentary staff in Brisbane at the Queensland Legislative Assembly. The focus for the seminar was parliamentary management and administration. The participants at the seminar consisted of a much broader range of parliamentary officers including library staff, IT support, human resources, committee officers and Hansard in addition to the usual Table Office and procedural staff. Staff from all the Australian parliaments attended, as did parliamentary staff from Canada, Scotland, North Carolina and the United Kingdom (the House of Commons and the House of Lords). The Assembly's attendees included the Clerk and two secretariat staff (an officer from the Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office and one from the Chamber Support Office).

### **Procedural database**

A procedural database developed during the previous Assembly continues to operate smoothly. The database provides a central cataloguing location for procedural extracts and the Secretariat's library and reference collections, as well as information on legal opinions received by the Secretariat and opinions produced by the Clerk for the Speaker and Members. By the end of 2005-2006 entries for the 5th and 6th Assemblies had been entered into the database.

### **Implementation of physical security review recommendations**

In October 2004, a report commissioned by the Secretariat to review physical security arrangements of the Legislative Assembly, was received from the T4 Protective Security Group of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. The report made 76 recommendations, ranging from policy and procedural improvements to infrastructure acquisitions and systems replacements.

The Secretariat considered the recommendations and gave priority to implementing a better access and control system and commissioning an up-to-date closed circuit television (CCTV) system for the building. A procurement process to engage a consultant to assist in this task was completed in August 2005. In May 2006, tenders were called to scope the access control and CCTV works. These works are expected to be completed by late 2006. Progress on the works has been affected by the need to dovetail in with the front entrance re-design project and delays in the procurement process.

### **Security training of attendants**

All Legislative Assembly attendant staff successfully completed accredited training at the Certificate II level in security operations, and in operational safety and defensive tactics over two separate weeks in December 2005 and January 2006.

A number of hand-held radios were also provided to attendants to enhance their response capability and to increase their safety. Protocols are being developed for their use.

### **Emergency Planning Committee**

An Emergency Planning Committee, established in July 2005, to oversee the development of procedures for a range of incident scenarios, drafted a set of emergency response procedures during the year. Emergency control personnel were issued with additional equipment (including bright, labelled vests and torches) and work commenced on creating clearer emergency signage throughout the building.

### **Review of mailroom safety and security procedures**

A review of mail handling practices and procedures, received in August 2005, recommended that all incoming mail be security scanned off-site before being distributed to Assembly occupants. Subsequently, ACT Record Services was engaged to undertake this task. This change has

resulted in only a minor delay before mail is delivered to the Assembly for distribution but has increased the safety of building occupants.

## **Committee Office**

Committees contribute to the work of the ACT Legislative Assembly by inquiring into and reporting on a broad range of issues. In doing so the committee system provides an important mechanism for accountability of the executive and also for direct community participation in the governance of the Territory. References to committees result from direct referral by the Assembly, as a result of statutory requirements, or by self-referral, i.e. a process whereby committees themselves may decide to inquire into a matter.

The Committee Office currently supports the following standing and select committees:

### *Standing Committees established on 7 December 2004*

- Education, Training and Young People;
- Health and Disability;
- Legal Affairs, which also sits as a Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee (the Scrutiny Committee is supported by the Chamber Support Office);
- Planning and Environment; and
- Public Accounts.

### *Select committees*

- The Select Committee on Estimates 2006-2007 [*Appropriation Bill 2006-2007*] [established 6 June 2006]; and
- The Select Committee on Working Families [established 5 May 2005].

There were no privileges committees established during the year. The membership and chairmanship of each committee is listed at Appendix 6.

## **Statutory responsibilities of committees**

The Planning and Environment Committee, the Public Accounts Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee (in relation to its duties as a scrutiny of bills and subordinate legislation committee) have significant statutory workloads in addition to their inquiry workload. The Planning and Environment Committee is required to examine all draft variations to the Territory Plan. The Public

Accounts Committee is required to review all reports of the Auditor General. The Legal Affairs Committee is required to examine all bills and proposed subordinate legislation to ensure that the legislation complies with the Territory's *Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)* and does not unduly trespass on individual rights and liberties.

### **Activity**

In the period to 30 June 2006, standing and select committees managed by the Committee Office met on 231 occasions, held 61 public hearings and tabled 18 reports.

<b>Table 1 – Committee statistics for 2005-06* (Sixth Assembly)</b>	
Number of meetings	231
Hours met	359 hours 50 minutes
Number of public hearings	61
Hours of public hearings	192 hours 46 minutes
Number of site visits/study tours	19
Hours of site visits/study tours	62 hours 9 minutes
Number of reports presented	18
Number of statutory appointments considered	177
Number of S0246A statements made	7

\* excludes statistics for the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs (performing the duties of a Scrutiny of Bills and Subordinate Legislation Committee)

More detailed statistical details for all committee activity for the year are listed at Appendix 7.

### **Support provided to committees**

To meet the administrative and research demands for this reporting year additional assistance was received through the following programs:

- the ANU College of Law's Internship Program;
- the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service's vocational rehabilitation program; and
- the Graduate Administrative Assistant Program.

Details outlining the support provided is at Appendix 8.

#### *Report on the Terrorism (Extraordinary Temporary Powers) Bill 2006*

In December 2005, the ACT Government referred an exposure draft of the *Terrorism (Extraordinary*

*Temporary Powers) Bill 2006* to the Legal Affairs Committee for inquiry and report prior to its introduction into the Legislative Assembly. Other jurisdictions implementing the September 2005 Council of Australian Governments' agreement to toughen anti-terror laws had limited parliamentary scrutiny by legislation committees. Only the Federal, ACT, and Victorian bills were subjected to open parliamentary inquiries.

The committee reported on the bill in late February 2006 following a very intense and compressed submission and public hearing process. The committee's report considered 20 detailed submissions from stakeholders, evidence from three days of public hearings, and included substantial additional analysis. The ACT's *Human Rights Act 2004* was an important influence on the committee's inquiry.

The ACT Government made some significant amendments to its proposed anti-terror legislation as a result of the Assembly's report to the Assembly.

The Committee's report is accessible at <http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees>

### **Estimates Committee 2006**

The Select Committee on Estimates 2006–2007 was established on 6 June 2005, as a six-person committee, with a Government Chair. This was the first time in the Assembly that a committee had been established with a requirement that the Chair be from the Government, although it is common in other jurisdictions.

The Committee scheduled an extensive program of public hearings, including consultations with a large number of community groups, including those concerned about school closures. Due to the late introduction of the Appropriation Bill to the Assembly the Committee is not due to report until the first sitting week in August, which is also a departure from practice in earlier years.

### **Consideration of statutory appointments by committees**

Under the *Legislation Act 2001*, Ministers are required to consult with Assembly committees on proposed appointments to statutory positions, i.e. appointments to boards and certain other bodies. Committees are able to make recommendations about proposed appointments. Ministers are not able to make appointments until the Committee to which the appointment has been referred has made a recommendation or until 30 days have elapsed, whichever occurs first.

This financial year, committees considered 177 proposed statutory appointments notified by Ministers under the provisions of the Legislation Act. This compares with 125 considered in the previous year.

### **Interstate agreements**

The *Administration (Interstate Agreements) Act 1997* previously required a Minister to consult with Assembly committees prior to entering into interstate agreements in relation to issues to be considered in negotiations. Ministers were required to consult with a standing committee nominated by the Speaker for the purpose and also with the Legal Affairs Committee performing its role as a scrutiny of bills and subordinate legislation committee.

As noted above, the requirement for a Minister to consult in this way with Assembly committees has now ceased and the legislation was repealed on 13 December 2005.

### **Hansard and Communications Office**

The information technology and broadcasting-related services provided by the Hansard and Communications Office contribute significantly to the smooth and effective functioning of the Assembly and its committees.

In conformity with the Secretariat's strategic and action plans, several major initiatives were undertaken during the year to enhance the functioning of the Assembly's business processes and to improve its performance against Outcome 1. These included:

- Redeveloping the Legislative Assembly's internet site, which is the principal mechanism by which the Assembly disseminates information on the work it performs as the ACT's legislature. Due to its age and lack of external support, the old site was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain and upgrade. The new site is designed to provide easier access to key information and, importantly, much of its management and modification can be done by Secretariat staff.
- Significantly improving the privacy and security of electronic information generated by non-executive members and the Secretariat by establishing the Assembly's IT systems as a separate "organisational unit" on the ACTGOV network. This separation of the Assembly's electronic information and IT systems complements work undertaken during 2004-05 to localise user account administration and implement Assembly-specific IT acceptable use policies.

Two areas of concern were addressed during the year, the first being to improve coordination of InTACT's scheduling of IT systems maintenance with the often unusual working hours of the Assembly. Closer liaison and cooperation is occurring between the Secretariat and InTACT technical staff to ensure that systems downtime occurs at mutually agreed out-of-hours periods.

The second concern relates to the age and obsolescence of the Assembly's broadcasting infrastructure and the absence of external emergency support arrangements. An independent assessment was sought from the company that installed the infrastructure in 1993, and its conclusions have been used as the basis for framing risk management strategies and, potentially, submissions for budget supplementation to replace key obsolete components. A Canberra-based company has also been engaged to provide emergency on-site support should the Assembly's technical officer be unavailable.

In conjunction with InTACT—the Assembly's outsourced information technology and telephony provider—and TransACT, Hansard and Communications staff completed a major project to migrate the Assembly's analogue telephone and facsimile systems to an internet protocol digital system. This was a challenging project, the goal of which was to replace like-with-like functionality wherever possible and to mirror existing office configurations. At the time of reporting, the new system is bedding down well with generally high acceptance of and praise for its enhanced functionality and features.

## **Corporate Services Office**

The Corporate Services Office contributed to the achievement of Outcome 1 by providing high quality business services to support the effective functioning of the Assembly and its committees.

Specific actions undertaken during the year in accordance with the strategic plan were as follows:

- In July 2005, the Secretariat began operating a new financial management system (Microsoft Great Plains). Considerable work was undertaken during 2004-05 to evaluate alternative systems, to identify the most suitable and to prepare for switching to that system from July 2005-06. The new system has contributed to improved efficiency by eliminating some duplication in the processing of financial transactions and providing a more user-friendly interface. In the early months of the financial year, staff and the appointed contractors worked through a log of issues that had been identified in implementation. All were progressively resolved, with one significant exception – concerning the system's financial reporting functionality. At year's end, a temporary solution to those functionality problems had been identified, tested and implemented, pending a more durable solution that requires

resolution by Microsoft and the appointed contractor. The Secretariat will continue to pursue resolution of this issue during 2006-07.

- A taxation management plan was developed to comply, to the greatest extent practicable, with the Department of Treasury requirements for such plans (in this regard, Treasury policy is that agencies the size of the Secretariat are encouraged, but not required, to develop a taxation management plan).

In accordance with the plan, a taxation compliance audit was conducted during the year; although, due to the timing of the audit, the results had not been communicated to Secretariat management by 30 June 2006. Results of the audit will be reported next year.

- With the assistance of a student placement from the ANU's Greensteps Program, the office implemented the "Watch your Waste" program, which was designed to build on earlier work undertaken to understand waste management practices and to re-direct waste from within the Assembly Building to recycling streams rather than to landfill. The development of the program followed earlier audits which identified that up to 70% of the Assembly's waste going to landfill, could be directed to recycled waste streams. The revised arrangements were undertaken in partnership with the Assembly's cleaning contractor, Berkeley Challenge and with the cooperation and support of the Assembly building's occupants.
- The office undertook an extensive data collection exercise that contributed to a review of working hours and related matters (including overtime) in respect of MLAs' staff. The review was undertaken under the auspices of the Joint Union Management Consultative Committee for MLAs' staff, and in accordance with the requirements of the certified agreement applicable to those staff.

The review, completed during 2005-06, concluded that existing arrangements were adequately catering for the working requirements and attendance patterns of MLAs' staff. The review did highlight that the requirements for maintaining attendance records were not being universally complied with and MLAs were reminded during the year of their obligations in respect of such records.

- Two significant human resource management plans were reviewed during the year, leading to a new equity and diversity plan and a revised performance and development scheme. A more detailed discussion of the process undertaken in conducting these reviews and of the findings and action taken is contained in Part C of the report.
- The office provided secretariat and policy support to the Assembly's Occupational Health and Safety Committee (which, as reported in 2004-05, was only formally established in May 2005). Details of the work of the committee are outlined in greater detail in Part C of this report.

- Superannuation choice arrangements were introduced for MLAs' staff in July 2005 and for affected Secretariat staff in June 2006.
- A significant issue for the office was the progression and coordination of further redesign options for the public entrance of the Assembly building, which was highlighted in last year's annual report.

Procurement processes were undertaken to engage a project superintendent (Guida Moseley Brown Architects) and to appoint a lead contractor for the project. As at 30 June 2006, the engagement of the lead contractor had not been finalised but was imminent. The important and long awaited redesign work is expected to be finalised by November 2006.

- Significant progress was made on the examination and sentencing of records of the Assembly that had been created since the introduction of self-government in 1989. Given their clear connection to the governance of the Territory, a much higher proportion of the Assembly's records are retained permanently as Territory archive material, compared to the records of other agencies. The Secretariat has found that approximately two thirds of its records are in this category, with the remaining one third being eligible for destruction after a period of time. The Secretariat understands that, across other agencies, the proportions of records retained permanently and destroyed are more or less inverse. The following table summarises the sentencing activity undertaken during the year and the resultant action taken:

Records sentenced	Records identified as "Retain as Territory Archives"	Records Sentenced for Destruction
1740	1036	436

The balance of 268 records was still under review at 30 June 2006 or had been sentenced to destruction at some time beyond 2008.

The sentencing program highlighted the need for more appropriate records storage arrangements, particularly for those records being retained permanently. Consequently, a significant proportion of those records were moved to professionally managed "off site" storage during the year and this has led to a rationalisation of records and other storage facilities and arrangements within the Assembly building, which will continue during 2006-07.

During 2006-07, it is also intended that the Secretariat will conduct a survey of a significant quantity of records that are currently stored off site that pre-date the Legislative Assembly and relate, instead, to the former House of Assembly and the (Advisory) Legislative Assembly. The objective of the survey will be to create a better understanding of the nature, format and form of these records to allow informed decisions to be made about the sentencing of these records.

## **Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office**

The Strategy and Parliamentary Education office contributed to the achievement of Outcome 1 by developing strategic policy and providing advice in relation to a range of organisational planning, governance and management issues. The significant areas of action undertaken by the office, in line with the strategic plan, include:

- revision of the Secretariat's 2005-06 action plan and drafting of the action plan for 2006-07;
- completion of the Business Continuity Plan;
- preparation of a range of policy advice and position papers for the Clerk and the Speaker;
- review and redevelopment of the Secretariat's legislative compliance framework;
- revision of the Secretariat's high-risk register (more under risk management section of report);
- development and coordination of seminars for the newly appointed Minister and his staff in 2006;
- production of a quarterly newsletter for all building occupants;
- provision of secretariat support to the Assembly Art Advisory Committee; and
- revision of the Secretariat's quarterly and annual reporting framework.

## Outcome 2

**Timely, accurate records of the business of the Assembly and its committees.**

### Chamber Support Office

The Chamber Support Office is responsible for producing the official record of Assembly proceedings, the *Minutes of Proceedings*. The following is a table showing the historical record of workload, measured by the number of pages produced, in relation to the *Minutes of Proceedings*.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of pages</b>	<b>Number of sittings</b>	<b>Average number of pages per sitting</b>
1988-1989	40	10	4
1989-1990	226	54	4
1990-1991	215	49	4
1991-1992	292	48	6
1992-1993	295	51	6
1993-1994	389	46	9
1994-1995	269	34	8
1995-1996	302	45	7
1996-1997	322	39	8
1997-1998	342	34	10
1998-1999	342	40	9
1999-2000	480	41	12
2000-2001	590	37	16
2001-2002	606	34	18
2002-2003	575	40	14
2003-2004	704	43	16
2004-2005	463	36	13
2005-2006	471	41	12

### Incorporation of links in electronic documents

Work on an electronic copy of the *Bound Volumes of Bills for the 6th Assembly* has begun and is expected to be available on the Assembly web site early in 2007. The electronic copy will include links to all bills presented, explanatory statements including revised explanatory statements,

amendments moved and supplementary explanatory statements to those amendments and Acts. The document will also include a link to Hansard so that the transcript of a debate on a bill can be viewed.

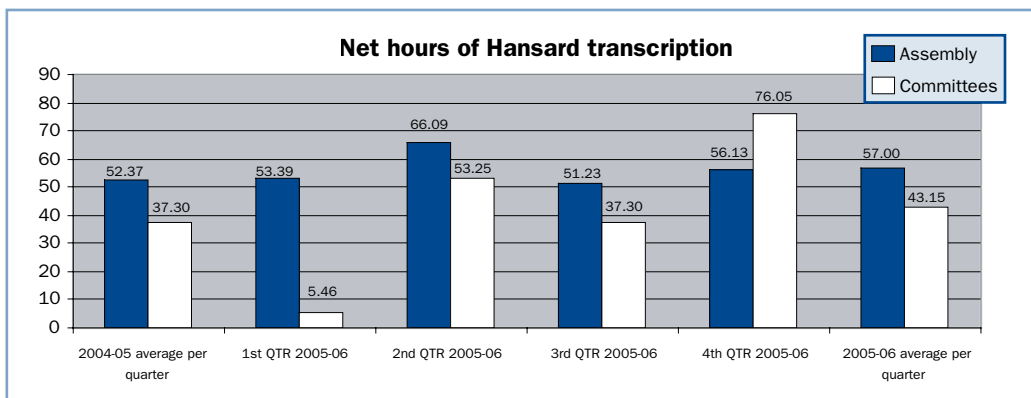
## Hansard and Communications Office

The Hansard and Communications Office contributed to the achievement of Outcome 2 by producing and publishing timely and accurate transcripts of Assembly debates and evidence presented to committees.

Clients consistently emphasise the importance of the timely availability of transcripts. Refinement of its production process over the last two years has yielded significant improvements in service delivery. Initiatives undertaken to maintain the momentum during the year under review, include:

- revising key manuals and production documentation, including the *Hansard Style Manual*;
- improving the formatting of committee transcripts by indexing witness information and enhancing search functionality;
- negotiating and implementing a new external transcription contract for the recording and production of draft transcripts; and
- cross-training staff to perform key production and publishing tasks.

Despite the tightened transcript production, Hansard continued to meet its timeliness goals—which are to publish in accordance with the relevant performance deadline on 95 per cent of occasions—for seven of its nine transcript types. It met its timeliness performance measure for six transcript types, including the proof transcript of question time, the *Proof Daily Hansard* and the *Official Weekly Hansard*, on 100 per cent of occasions.



### Outcome 3

**Widespread knowledge in the ACT community and ACT Government agencies about the roles and functions of their Assembly and its committees.**

## Chamber Support Office

### Seminars and presentations

In 2005, the Secretariat recommenced a series of seminars on the Assembly for ACT public servants. The Chamber Support Office presented a seminar on the legislative process in November 2005, and a segment of the introductory seminar to the 2006 series in March 2006.

The Chamber Support Office also provided speakers and logistical support to a number of functions during the year, including the ACT Schools Constitutional Convention, the Assembly Open Day, an inservice for members of the University of the Third Age (U3A), the Speaker's Citizenship Evenings and to a number of delegations and other visitors.

### Use of Reception Room and Exhibition Room

The Exhibition and Reception Rooms received a great deal of use during the year. The range of functions held in these two key public spaces included citizenship ceremonies, Government functions, and community and media events. Supporting such functions is time consuming and impacts significantly on staff.

As can be seen from the table at Appendix 9, the requests for the use of the rooms has continued to steadily increase. During the year, doubts expressed about the process used to grant licences to non-Territory bodies to use the rooms culminated with an amendment being made to the *Legislative Assembly (Precincts) Act* in May 2006. This amendment gives the Speaker the power to grant such licences.

The adequacy of the level of charges for the use of Assembly facilities was also considered by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and resulted in the Speaker issuing a determination setting out a revised schedule of fees in June 2006.

## **Hansard and Communications Office**

The Hansard and Communications Office contributed to the achievement of Outcome 3 by providing system administration and support for the Assembly web site [www.parliament.act.gov.au](http://www.parliament.act.gov.au), which is the principal means for disseminating the work of the legislature, including *Hansard*, to the ACT community. The office is also introducing innovative new services to broadcast the proceedings of the legislature.

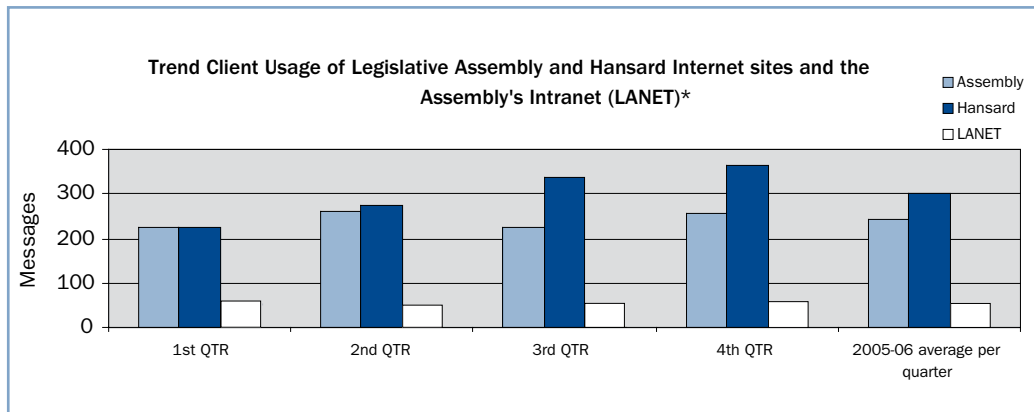
Re-development of the Assembly's web site was undertaken during the year, with the new site commissioned during the May budget sitting week. The former Assembly web site, which was developed in 2001, had become increasingly difficult to maintain and update, due principally to its age and lack of external support. The new site is designed to provide easier, more logical access to information and, importantly, much of its management and modification can be done by Secretariat staff.

The pilot broadcasts of Assembly question time proceedings on Community Radio Station 2XX, which commenced in 2004, became a regular programming feature during the year. These delayed broadcasts now also include adjournment debates.

The Assembly's innovative web-based audio-visual replay service, which provides access to question time proceedings, has received favourable feedback. The replay of question time is available on the internet within 30 minutes after question time finishes. It also has a database of recent question times for replay and it can be accessed at: <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2005/audio/default.htm>.

To ensure that Assembly and committee proceedings are more widely available to the ACT community and to ACT government agencies, the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure has given in-principle approval to conduct a pilot project to web stream Assembly and committee proceedings. Web streaming is seen as a more effective way to disseminate important information about issues affecting government and the community than the dedicated telephone lines currently installed in some ACT government agencies.

The Secretariat has allocated sufficient funding to conduct a six-month web streaming pilot. Subject to the satisfactory resolution of technical issues, the aim is to commence the pilot project in August 2006. The continued use of this technology to broadcast Assembly proceedings will depend on an assessment of its effectiveness and on funding availability for an ongoing production system.



\*NOTE: For performance measurement purposes, the Hansard and Communications Office maintains trend statistics relating to client usage of three Legislative Assembly web sites: the Assembly's web site <http://www.parliament.act.gov.au>, the Hansard site <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/start.htm> and the Assembly's Intranet site <http://lanet/secretariat>.

The purpose of these statistics is to provide a longitudinal indicator of client usage of these web sites. Due to the widely varying and complex ways that web site "hits" are recorded (page hits, file uploads, unique visitors, reloads, et cetera), and because these statistics represent an amalgam of records, they do not purport to provide an accurate measure of individual client use of the sites. The figures in the left hand column are based on file sizes-expressed in megabytes-taken from the web logs. The more client usage, the bigger the file sizes will be.

## Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office

### 2005 ACT Schools Constitutional Convention

The aim of the ACT Schools Constitutional Convention is to promote understanding and informed discussion amongst young Australians about the Australian Constitution and system of government. During this event a small group of students are also selected to participate in the National Schools Constitutional Convention held at Parliament House the following year.

This year's Constitutional Convention was a result of joint planning between staff from Old Parliament House (OPH), the Department of Education and Training (DET), the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), the Electoral Education Office (EEO) and the Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office of the ACT Legislative Assembly. Staff from the ANU Faculty of Law – Dr Fiona Wheeler, Professor John Williams and three law students - also assisted to make this an informative and realistic exercise.

The topic for the convention was:- *Let the Rivers Run...*, which explored Section 100 of the Constitution – *Nor abridge right to use water* – which states that the Commonwealth cannot

restrict the States' right to reasonable use of its waters or rivers for conservation or irrigation. This section of the constitution was tested during the Franklin River dispute which resulted in the High Court ruling that the Commonwealth could make the decision about whether the dam should proceed in line with its commitment to an international treaty.

Day one of the program was held at Old Parliament House where students gained an understanding of the Constitution and participated in a scripted role play of the Franklin River debate. On day two at the Assembly, students took on the role of constituents from all Australian States and Territories. Students listened to two Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) present the "yes" and "no" case for the proposed change and questioned the members in detail about their views before breaking into State/Territory groups to discuss the issues in greater detail. A soapbox session was a highlight of the afternoon with many well thought out speeches being presented. Officials from the AEC explained the referendum process prior to the "citizens" voting in the referendum. For the first time in the history of the ACT Schools Constitutional Convention the referendum returned a YES vote, which, had it been a real referendum, would have resulted in a change to the Australian Constitution.

Approximately 70 Year 11 students from government and non-government schools and colleges participated in the convention.

### **Assembly open day**

An Assembly open day was held on 17 September 2005. A series of interactive displays were set up and staffed by the Committee Office, Hansard and Communications Office, Chamber Support Office, the Speaker's Office and the Office of Parliamentary Counsel (PCO). Members volunteered to conduct tours with small groups of visitors. Refreshments included provision of tea and coffee and a sausage sizzle. Approximately 100 people participated in the program.

### **University of the Third Age**

A one-day parliamentary education course was offered through the University of the Third Age (U3A) in Semester One 2006.

### **Presentations to Government Agencies**

Five seminars were held for ACT Public Servants during 2005-06. Topics covered included the Role of the Assembly, About Assembly Committees, the Budget Process and the Legislative Process. A total of 171 public servants attended these sessions.

A presentation was delivered in February 2006 to approximately 25 Graduate Administrative Assistants (GAAs) who were entering the ACT Public Service for the first time.

### **Speaker's citizenship evening**

The Speaker hosted four Speaker's Citizenship evenings for approximately 140 new Australian citizens who received their citizenship certificates at functions held in the main Reception Room of the Assembly. The aim of the evening is to provide new citizens with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the workings of the Territory government and to enable them to meet some of their local members. Participants also viewed a captioned film on the Assembly, undertook a tour of the building and participated in a question/answer session with the Speaker in the Chamber. Feedback continues to be very positive.

### **Inter-school parliamentary debates**

The Interschool Parliamentary Debates program aims to provide students in Years 8 and 9 with practice in public speaking in a formal setting as well as assist them to develop a greater understanding of the practices used in the Assembly. The program was extended to include Year 10 students in 2006. Three programs were conducted during 2005-06.

The themes for the debates were Ecotourism, Sport Matters and Scientific Dilemmas. Approximately 125 students from 14 high schools participated in the 2005-06 debates programs. The Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Temporary Deputy Speakers presided over the debates.

### **Internship Program**

An intern from the University of Canberra completed an internship in a member's office.

### **Work experience students**

Six secondary students undertook a one-week placement in members' offices during 2005-06.

### **Student and teacher visits**

More than one thousand students in Years 4 to 12 participated in a program at the Assembly. Students engaged in a mock election, met available members and visited the Chamber for a role-play or to see the Assembly in session.

The Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office hosted an afternoon visit for teachers from government and non-government schools as part of *Celebrating Democracy Week* and also provided information and resources on the Assembly to local teachers by hosting a stall at a promotional afternoon - *Keys to Canberra's Cultural Attractions*.

### **Community groups**

Presentations on the Assembly were made to various community groups including adults from the Canberra Institute of Technology's (CIT) Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), Calwell Scouts and the Christian Lobby Group.

### **Resources/Information**

Assembly publications were updated to reflect changes to the Ministry and the Opposition. An Assembly pamphlet was translated into three other languages - Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese – to promote a greater understanding of the workings of the Assembly to people with a first language other than English. The pamphlet is accessible from the Assembly web site.

The office continues to provide a range of publications on the operation of the Assembly to school students, public servants, parliamentary delegations and members of the ACT community.

### **Secretariat support to the Legislative Assembly Art Advisory Committee**

The office provided secretariat support to the Legislative Assembly Art Advisory Committee (LAAAC) on four occasions in 2005-06. The Art Advisory Committee:

- purchased *Wollongong Street* by Richard Larter (1994) and *Lamentation: terracotta* (2005) by Ruth Waller, for display in members' offices;
- contracted to develop an art catalogue of 13 selected works, a series of 8 postcards in a two-fold wallet and agreed to place photos of these works on the Assembly web site; and
- continued as a patron in the Emerging Artists' Support Scheme (EASS), which is run by the ANU's School of Art, and supports graduating students. A number of works were selected from the scheme in November 2005 for display in members' offices.

## Outcome 4

### **Strong, collegiate relationships with other parliaments.**

#### **Chamber Support Office**

##### **Administrative Support for the Australasian Study of Parliament Group**

The Legislative Assembly continued to provide administrative support for the ACT Chapter of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group (ASPG). A member of the Secretariat staff is the Honorary Secretary/Treasurer for the Chapter.

The Chapter Secretary, a Secretariat staff member and Mrs Mary Porter AM MLA attended the ASPG annual conference in Sydney in October 2005. The conference, with a theme of “Parliament and accountability in the 21st century: The role of parliamentary oversight committees” included speakers from academia, politics, and staff from Federal, State and Territory parliaments.

##### **Assistance to annual conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

An officer of the Secretariat, along with an officer of the Queensland Parliament, provided delegation secretariat assistance to the Australian State and Territory Parliaments’ delegation to the 51st annual conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Nadi, Fiji, in September 2005.

##### **Australian Region representative of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Group of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

During the year, Ms Karin MacDonald MLA, commenced a term as the Australian Region representative of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Group of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Chamber Support Office will provide support for Ms MacDonald’s attendance at meetings.

##### **Participation in the activities of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table**

In January 2006, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly concluded his term as President of the Australia and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT). The Association has members from each House of Parliament in Australia, Norfolk Island and New Zealand

and publishes a half yearly bulletin - *Parliament Matters*, and a regular newsletter - *Table Talk*. ANZACATT also organises an annual professional development seminar for parliamentary officers of the Association, and two secretariat staff members participated in the seminar held in Brisbane in January 2006.

In his role as President, the Clerk represented ANZACATT at the 2005 Professional Development Seminar of the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Ottawa, Canada, from 2-5 August 2005. During the seminar, the Clerk presented a paper on recent developments in training parliamentary staff in Australia and New Zealand.

### **CPA Education Trust Fund – Assistance to Pacific nations**

The CPA Education Trust Fund, administered from within the Federal Parliament, enables Pacific nations to apply for funding to assist in their training and equipment needs. Under that program, an officer from the Secretariat will travel to the Cook Islands in July 2006, to provide training for staff of the Parliament.

## **Committee Office**

Committees and committee office staff participated in a number of conferences; hosted a study visit on parliamentary financial scrutiny and the role of public accounts committees for developing countries in conjunction with La Trobe University, the World Bank Institute and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA); and also organised a major conference with a focus on sustainability and bushfire recovery.

### **Conferences**

The Planning and Environment Committee hosted the Tenth Annual Conference of Parliamentary Environment and Public Works Committees from 28 to 30 September 2005. This conference is discussed further below. Other committees participated in a number of inter-parliamentary and other conferences related to inquiries or committee terms of reference. Participation in these inter-parliamentary conferences assists committees to keep up-to-date with policy issues Australia wide and procedural matters as they relate to committees.

### **Visit by World Bank/CPA delegation**

The workshop delegates visited Canberra on Monday 13 February 2006 and met with the Standing Committee on Public Accounts [PAC] and the ACT Auditor General.

The delegation comprised 44 parliamentarians, senior public servants and senior parliamentary committee staff from African, Asian and Pacific countries including Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Solomon Islands.

The group was accompanied by staff from the Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research Center at La Trobe University, the CPA and the World Bank Institute. The Committee found the visit an invaluable opportunity to explore and discuss matters of common interest.

In addition to meeting with the Committee, various members of the Legislative Assembly Secretariat contributed to the delivery of an informative program highlighting the Assembly's history, its significance as a unicameral parliament, the appropriation bill processes and procedures and operations of the committee system in the ACT.

### **Public accounts committees study**

The Public Accounts Committee also participated in a baseline study of parliamentary public accounts committees, which was finalised during the early part of 2006. La Trobe University's Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research Centre [PSGARC] conducted the study, which identified the range of structures, responsibilities and working practices adopted by public accounts committees across Australia and New Zealand.

### **Tenth Annual Parliamentary Environment and Public Works Committees conference**

The Planning and Environment Committee hosted a very successful Tenth Annual Parliamentary Environment and Public Works Committees conference in September 2005, themed "Sustainability and Bushfire Recovery".

The three-day conference, opened with a keynote presentation by the Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope MLA, focused on the impact of the 2003 bushfires on the ACT community and the Government's environmental contribution to the recovery effort. Other speakers included the Chair of the COAG National Bushfire Inquiry, Mr Stuart Ellis AM, the Chair of the Shaping Our Territory Working Group, Mr Sandy Hollway, and the CEO of ACTEW-AGL, Mr John Mackay. Delegates later enjoyed a function hosted by the Speaker, Wayne Berry MLA, with guided walks at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the Speaker's welcome, and a performance by Wiradjuri Echo.

The conference included a field visit, where delegates learnt about recovery initiatives on Mount Stromlo, and planted a significant number of trees in bitterly cold conditions. The delegates also heard from a wide range of eminent speakers, including each of the Standing Committee

members and visiting Committee Chairs (or their delegate). For the duration of the conference delegates also enjoyed access to a “Sustainability and Bushfire Recovery Display” at University House.

The committee was grateful for the support and assistance provided by (and arranged through) a range of stakeholders including the Chief Minister’s Department, Environment ACT, ACTION buses, Greening Australia, ACTEW-AGL, the Australian Native Plant Society and the Australian National University, amongst many others.

The conference report is accessible at <http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees>.

The Planning and Environment Committee was pleased to host the conference, particularly with such a nationally applicable and topical theme.



*Delegates of the 10th Annual Conference of Parliamentary Environment and Public Works Committees.*

## **Hansard and Communications Office**

Hansard maintains close links with other parliamentary reporting organisations through its membership of the Commonwealth Hansard Editors Association (CHEA) and the Australasian and Pacific Hansard Editors Association.

The Manager, Hansard and Communications, attended CHEA’s Eighth Triennial Conference in August 2005. The association represents the largest single body of expertise in parliamentary reporting in the world with over 50 Hansard organisations represented. The conference, which was held in Edmonton, Canada, was hosted by the Alberta legislature.

Areas of particular interest were the latest developments in Hansard reporting and publishing,

together with the associated technologies. It also provided an opportunity to evaluate at first hand the Assembly's Hansard operations against those of similar-size Hansards and to learn how our services and operations can be improved.

On the first day of the conference, the Assembly's Hansard Manager convened a presentation to conference delegates by Australian representatives. This opening session provided a snapshot of contemporary Australian Hansard reporting methods, publishing technologies and business practices. It also proved to be a useful yardstick for many of the subsequent conference presentations and discussions.

The conference sessions and delegate exchanges confirmed that in important Hansard operational practices such as recording and transcription technology, publishing formats, reporting methods, publication timeliness, and performance management and reporting, the Legislative Assembly Hansard is closely aligned with best practice.

On 1 and 2 September 2005, Hansard and Communications officers attended the second Australia and New Zealand Parliamentary Information Technology Forum, which was hosted by the Parliament of New South Wales. The forum is a very useful and practical way for parliamentary IT service providers to share information and developments on parliament-related IT systems, services and developments.

The Assembly also hosts the web site pages for the local chapter of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, which are available at: <http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/aspg/default.htm>.

## **Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office**

The Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office conducted presentations or tours for visiting officials from India, China, Japan, Fiji, Britain, Pakistan and Ghana. Further details are contained in Appendix 17.

## **Human Rights Act**

Through the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs, operating in its capacity as a Scrutiny of Bills Committee, the Legislative Assembly plays an important role in the operation of the *Human Rights Act 2004*. Under s38(1) of the Act, the committee is responsible for reporting to the Assembly on any human rights issues arising from particular bills presented to it. In particular, the committee reports on any inconsistencies between proposed legislation and the Human Rights Act.

## Community access and engagement

A major outcome of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan 2004-2009 is "widespread knowledge in the ACT community and ACT Government agencies about the roles and functions of the Assembly and its committees".

To achieve this outcome, the Secretariat promoted knowledge about the function and role of the Assembly and its committees to local schools, public servants and the wider ACT community by hosting a range of programs tailored to meet their specific needs. Groups chose from a range of activities including:

- participating in a mock Hare-Clark election;
- viewing a captioned film and/or a PowerPoint presentation;
- participating in a discussion with available members on topics of interest;
- visiting the chamber on a sitting day to see the Assembly in action; and/or
- participating in a role play in the chamber.

On booking a visit, an information folder with fact sheets on the electoral process and the role of the Assembly, is sent to the organiser.

A selection of postcards and pamphlets on aspects of the Assembly are available from the Members' Entrance and the Public Entrance.

New citizens who receive their Australian Citizenship certificate at a ceremony at the Assembly, hosted by the Speaker, are invited to attend a citizenship evening at the Assembly in an effort to increase their familiarity with and knowledge of the Assembly, its members and our system of democracy.

The re-designed web site was launched in June 2006. The new format is geared to be more user friendly.



# PART C: Management of the organisation

## Managing our people

### HR Performance and analysis

The staff of the Legislative Assembly Secretariat provide an extensive range of support services to its elected members, to ensure the efficient functioning of the parliament. The Secretariat has identified eight key values for staff in its strategic plan and actively strives to achieve its vision of:

*Becoming an employer of choice, increasing opportunities for professional development and building and maintaining a safe, fair, flexible and rewarding workplace.*

The Secretariat's human resource (HR) capability and performance are influenced by:

- the small size of the agency and the diverse nature of the functions performed;
- the need to employ staff with prior parliamentary experience (while the Assembly is in close proximity to the Federal Parliament, the Secretariat has difficulty in competing with Federal salary rates and other employment conditions); and
- the seasonal demand for casual staff during Assembly sitting weeks.

For some years, the Secretariat has reported that its achievement in key areas of HR policy and planning has been limited due to ongoing funding constraints and, as a consequence, has reported instances where it did not comply with certain ACTPS wide requirements, policies and/or programs. To address some of the more acute issues in this regard, internal funding was allocated during 2005-06 to allow the engagement of a temporary staff member to assist with the undertaking of several reviews including reviews of:

- working hours and overtime for LAMS Act staff which was required under the relevant staff certified agreement ;
- the Secretariat's equity and diversity plan (discussed in more detail below); and
- the Secretariat Performance and Development Scheme (discussed in more detail below).

The process of identifying specific human resource management strategies and the development of an associated action plan commenced in 2005-2006 and will continue to be a priority for 2006-07.

## **Staffing profile**

A staffing profile of the Assembly Secretariat is provided at Appendix 10.

## **Culture and values**

Secretariat staff, as employees of the ACT Public Service, are bound by the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and its code of conduct provisions. The Secretariat also actively promotes its own code of conduct as well as eight core values identified in its Strategic Plan 2005-09, to all new staff. Specific values are also regularly reinforced to all staff through newsletters and internal communication. (These values are listed in Part A.)

## **Workplace diversity**

The Secretariat values, and seeks to promote, equity and diversity in its workplace. An important achievement in 2005-06 that supported this objective was the undertaking of a review of the Secretariat's Equity and Diversity Plan. This review led to the development and adoption of a new plan. The new plan provides a strategic focus to ensure that the benefits of an equitable and diverse organisation are realised, using the values, talents, abilities, and contributions of all people in the workplace. The Plan aims to develop an organisational culture that recognises and values each individual and their contribution to achieving the goals of the Secretariat.

The plan identifies strategies to achieve the following five principles:

1. Commitment to equity and diversity is valued and embraced through demonstrated leadership;
2. Incorporation of equity and diversity into strategic planning including business planning and human resource planning;

3. Diversity across the workplace;
4. Equity in employment; and
5. Work/life balance in employment.

These strategies were addressed in accordance with the action plan by:

- including equity and diversity responsibilities for managers in their performance and development plans;
- including articles to raise awareness on equity and diversity, and harassment, discrimination and bullying in the Assembly quarterly newsletter;
- reflecting the commitment to a fair, flexible, safe and rewarding workplace in the Secretariat's Strategic Plan;
- ensuring that the Secretariat responds to the cultural, educational and social needs of target groups within the Assembly and externally, especially in relation to its education programs and committee hearings. The Secretariat participates in community events, with community groups accessing the Assembly for a diverse range of functions;
- incorporating a commitment to an equitable and diverse workplace into the revised Performance and Development guidelines and Staff Selection guidelines;
- providing all staff with equitable access to training and development activities;
- promoting work/life balance initiatives that are available to staff via articles in the staff newsletter, and the Assembly's Intranet; and
- creating a Carer's room in the Assembly building, with the final fit out and guidelines for usage being finalised in early 2006-2007.

In the forthcoming year, the Secretariat will continue to further develop the capacity of the workforce to understand and respond to the cultural, educational and social needs of target groups.

### **Workplace health and safety**

The Secretariat is committed to promoting and maintaining a high standard of health and safety and wellbeing for all staff, members, contractors and visitors. Consistent with that commitment, the Secretariat maintained mechanisms and workplace arrangements in accordance with the occupational health and safety principles set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989* (the OH&S Act), as modified by the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (PSMA).

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee for the Assembly's workplace, established in

2005, met quarterly during 2005-06. The committee promotes cooperation between management (including MLAs) and employees and their unions by raising awareness of issues about health and safety and the prevention of injury and disease within the workplace. The committee facilitated the introduction of an Injury Prevention Policy and Agreement for the Assembly, and considered a range of ACTPS occupational health and safety policies for application across the broader Assembly workplace. Staff are advised of the policies endorsed by the Committee and the information and links are placed on the Assembly intranet. Several committee members completed training on occupational health and safety committee responsibilities.

The Assembly has one designated work group for the purposes of the OH&S Act. Both the health and safety representative and the deputy have completed relevant training to perform this function.

During 2005-06, a number of targeted training activities were delivered to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees and contractors. This included:

- membership training for representatives of an OH&S Committee;
- security training for the Assembly's Attendants;
- basic first aid and CPR training, including how to use the Assembly's defibrillator;
- OH&S awareness training;
- refresher training for first aid officers;
- advanced resuscitation training for first aid officers;
- anaphylaxis and epipen training for the first aid officers; and
- planning and design of new security arrangements in the Assembly.



*OH&S Committee – Greg Friedewald (Management representative, Executive), Ian Duckworth (Management representative, Chair), Alys Graham (Members' staff representative), Anne Shannon (Secretariat Staff representative), Janice Rafferty (Health and Safety representative), Sandra Viney (Secretary) and Michael White (Union representative), Keith Old (Members' staff representative - absent)*

In addition, the following injury prevention activities were also undertaken during the year:

- the purchase and installation of a short video “An Introduction to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace” on the Assembly Intranet. The video was promoted via email and the newsletter;
- provision of individual induction for new staff to provide information about injury prevention, harassment and bullying;
- workstation assessments for all new staff, and any employee who requested assessment due to discomfort;
- the promotion of articles on OH&S and injury prevention in the Assembly Newsletter, which is published quarterly;
- reimbursement of the cost of the influenza vaccination;
- provision of access to regular eyesight testing for staff engaged in visually demanding work; and
- the display of contact details for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The Secretariat’s maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace is also supported by a range of scheduled building maintenance activities. These included chemical dosing of the cooling towers, scheduled testing of fire safety systems and thermal testing of switchboards as well as tag-testing of electrical appliances and equipment.

Given the small size of the Assembly, there were very few, and no serious, incidents or accidents reported in 2005-06

## **Learning and development**

A review of the Secretariat’s Performance and Development Scheme was undertaken in 2005-06, taking into consideration the ACT Public Service Learning and Development Framework.

Secretariat staff participated in the third year of the Performance and Development Scheme, with the 2005-06 plans structured around the Strategic Plan, its action plan, and section work plans.

Learning and development underpins and affirms the Secretariat’s commitment to attracting and retaining skilled employees. Learning and development is generally undertaken at the business unit level, utilising individual performance management feedback opportunities against the strategic plan, job descriptions and career aspirations.

The training and development activities undertaken during the year were diverse, as illustrated by the list below:

### **Parliamentary**

- ANZACATT parliamentary conferences;
- Australia and New Zealand Parliamentary IT Forum;
- Parliamentary Education Conference;
- Presiding Officers and Clerks Conferences;
- various committee conferences (Public Works, Public Accounts).

### **Corporate Governance**

- Business Continuity seminar;
- Trust in the Public Sector Symposium;
- Risk Management training;
- Constitutional Law Conference;
- Administrative Law Forum.

### **OH&S**

- Security operations;
- Mailroom safety – Operation of Powder Safe container;
- Security awareness;
- Defensive tactics; and
- OH&S Committee training.

### **Workplace relations**

There was little workplace relations activity in 2005-06; however, the expectation is that this will change in 2006-07 with the negotiation and implementation of certified agreements for the Secretariat and for Members' staff.

The Secretariat does not have any staff covered by Australian Workplace Agreements or special employment arrangements.

## Governance

### Internal accountability structures and processes

A bill was passed by the Assembly in August 2005 which amended the Public Sector Management Act to provide a formal legislative basis to the Secretariat. The Secretariat is managed by the Clerk and five managers. Regular management meetings are held to review the organisation's progress against its annual action plan.

All managers are subject to performance agreements with the Clerk setting out their responsibilities and key work objectives. Agreements are reviewed on a six-monthly basis to examine how each manager has performed against their areas of responsibility.

The Senior Management group is made up of (as at 30 June 2006):

- Tom Duncan, Clerk;
- Max Kiermaier, Deputy Clerk and Serjeant-at-Arms;
- Robina Jaffray, Manager, Committee Office;
- Russell Lutton, Manager, Hansard and Communications Office;
- Ian Duckworth, Manager, Corporate Services Office; and
- Margaret Jones, Acting Manager, Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office.

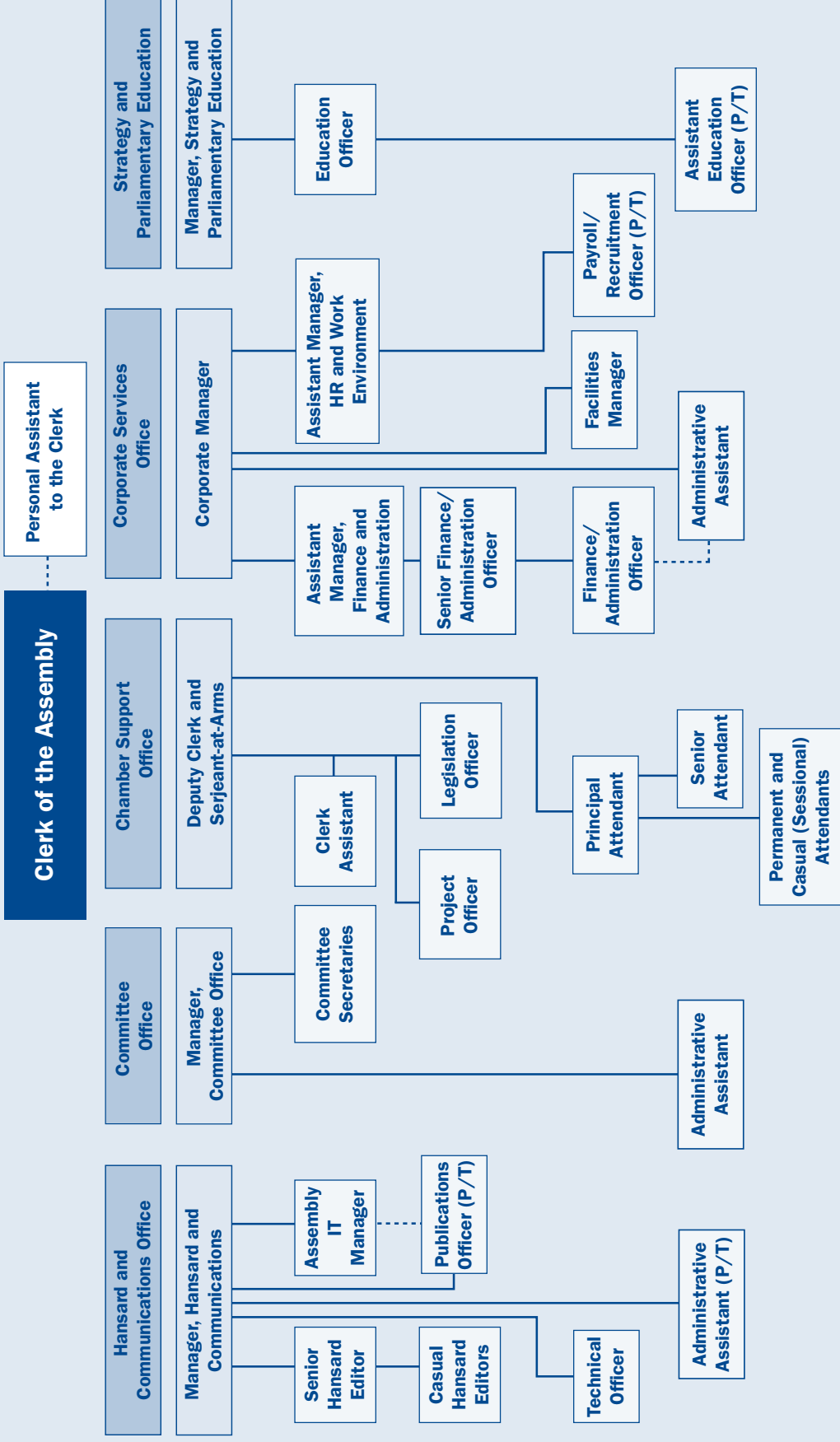
### Fraud prevention

No reports or allegations of fraud or corruption were received during the year. In 2002-03, a fraud risk assessment identified no significant areas of risk for the Secretariat but did highlight some issues that need to be addressed as part of a fraud control plan. This item remains a priority for the Secretariat; however, progress on the development of such a plan depends on securing the required resources.

### Risk management and internal audit arrangements

In 2006, a major review of risks to the organisation was conducted. Some of the risk treatments implemented during the financial year have resulted in a reduction of risk level since the last review was conducted in June 2004. Risks assessed as high were discussed with the appropriate manager as part of the performance and development review process.

# Organisational structure of the Secretariat



Of particular significance was the finalisation of a business continuity plan. Some actions outlined in this plan need to be finalised to ensure that in the event of a major outage resumption of business can occur within an optimal timeframe. Further action required includes the development of a critical vendors template and the development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with an alternate venue.

Significant advances were made in progressing the agency's record management program. Some key business records were reviewed with some items disposed of and others relocated to more secure off-site storage.

The establishment of the Assembly's IT systems as a separate organisational unit within the ACTGOV network will provide greater security and privacy for the Assembly's electronic data.

A tender process was conducted to undertake the re-development of the Assembly's Public Entrance. This initiative together with the installation of other security systems will also increase the safety of all building occupants in the coming year.

### **Internal audit**

As outlined in last year's annual report, the Secretariat recognises the need to develop a formalised, ongoing internal audit program; however, ongoing resource constraints has again resulted in little progress on this matter during 2005-06.

In spite of the lack of a formalised program, the Secretariat did engage a firm to undertake a taxation compliance audit during the year. The audit was undertaken late in the financial year and the results had not been reported to Secretariat management by 30 June 2006. These results will be reported in the Secretariat's 2006-07 annual report.

### **External scrutiny**

The Secretariat was not the subject of any reports from Assembly committees, the Auditor General or the Ombudsman. One recommendation from Report No.5 of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts relating to surveying of members was implemented (see Part A).

## **Freedom of information**

### **FOI procedures and contact points**

All freedom of information (FOI) requests relating to the Legislative Assembly Secretariat should be directed to:

Clerk  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
Canberra ACT 2601

Requests can be delivered to the public entrance of the Assembly building between the hours of 8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday. Telephone inquiries should be directed to the Secretariat's general inquiries number on (02) 6205 0439. People seeking access to documents are encouraged to seek details through existing avenues, before resorting to the more formal FOI procedures.

### **Arrangements for public participation**

Avenues for public participation include submissions to inquiries, access to public hearings of committee inquiries and Assembly meetings, citizen's right of reply, petitions and access to administrative records and general files through FOI requests.

### **Documents**

The Secretariat has a broad responsibility for providing advice to Government agencies and the public regarding the business of the Assembly and its committees. To facilitate the provision of information the following documents are published by the Secretariat:

- *A Brief Overview of the Business of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory* – contains concise information on the proceedings and practices used in the Assembly as well as a glossary of terms.
- *Annual Reports*\*<sup>1</sup>
- *Bookmark* – an Assembly bookmark which details contact numbers and the web site address is available from the Members' and Public Entrance.

<sup>1</sup> NOTE: Documents identified with an (\*) are available on the Internet.  
The Web address is: [www.parliament.act.gov.au](http://www.parliament.act.gov.au).

- *Bills List* – an alphabetical listing, by short title, of Bills considered by the Assembly. The list details the date of introduction and, where relevant, the date of passage, the Act number and particulars of the Legislation Register. Bills discharged, negated at the agreement in principle stage, declared urgent and referred to committees are also listed. Published on a regular basis.\*
- *Bills Volumes* – bound volumes of all Bills presented to the Assembly. The volumes include Bills, explanatory memoranda and amendments that have been circulated within the Chamber. Available for inspection at the Assembly and Territory libraries. The volumes are published each Assembly and, from 2006, will be available online.
- *Business of the Assembly* – a synopsis of the business undertaken by the Assembly each calendar year. Published on an annual basis and now available only online.
- *Committee Reports* – reports presented to the Assembly by standing and select committees are listed in Committees of the Sixth Assembly
- *Committees of the Sixth Assembly 2004-2005* – a list of the committees of the Sixth Assembly giving details of membership, terms of reference, current inquiries and reports presented by each committee. Updated regularly.\*
- *Daily Program* – the Daily Program is a guide to members indicating the items of business which the Assembly is expected to consider that day. It is published each sitting day.\*
- *Debates of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory (Hansard)* – a record of Assembly debates commonly referred to as *Hansard*. The official *Weekly Hansards* are produced approximately three weeks after each sitting week of the Assembly. Proof draft Daily Hansards are produced the day following a sitting of the Assembly. \*
- *Digest of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory* – A booklet containing subjects and speeches indexes to Hansard, and lists of sitting days, members and their official positions and party affiliations, bills, matters of public importance, ministerial statements, petitions and votes. Published annually.
- *Fact Sheets* – a total of 13 Fact Sheets are produced by the Strategy and Parliamentary Education Office providing a variety of historical, administrative and procedural information in relation to the ACT Legislative Assembly.\*
- *Get to Know Your ACT Legislative Assembly* – a pamphlet that provides a concise overview of the history of the Assembly, the ACT electoral process and general information on the Assembly's sitting days and papers. This pamphlet has been translated into three languages – Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese - and is available at the Public Entrance and the Assembly web site.\*

- *Information for persons making submissions to, or appearing as witnesses before, committees of the Legislative Assembly* – a pamphlet providing information to persons involved with the committees of the Assembly.\*
- *Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory Strategic Plan 2004-2009\**.
- *Members of the Sixth Assembly* – a booklet listing the members of the Assembly and giving details of their Assembly service, committee service, party positions, and biographical details. Published each Assembly.
- *Minutes of Proceedings* – the official record of the proceedings of the Assembly. Pamphlet copies are published in proof form immediately following each sitting of the Assembly, with final copies published later. A proof index to the Minutes and a proof index to papers tabled in the Assembly are published internally, as are proof bound volumes of the *Minutes of Proceedings*.\*
- *Notice Paper* – official list of all business outstanding before the Assembly setting out the order of business to be followed. The *Notice Paper* also lists notices of questions (a full list of unanswered questions appears on the first *Notice Paper* each sitting week or fortnight) and contains an information section on Assembly committees. The *Notice Paper* is published each sitting day of the Assembly with the exception of the first sitting day of an Assembly.\*
- *Postcards* – a series of five postcards featuring the Canberra flag, the ACT Coat-of-Arms, the Mace and the faunal and floral emblems of the ACT are available at the Member's and Public Entrances.
- *Sitting Pattern* – a calendar highlighting Assembly sitting days. A copy of the 2006 Sitting Pattern is available from the Member's and Public Entrances, while in stock. It is always available on the Assembly web site.\*
- *Summary of Bills* – the document includes a summary of each bill introduced into the Assembly for the current Assembly to date, the Minister or member who introduced the Bill and the date of introduction. The summary is published on a regular basis.\*
- *Transcripts of public hearings* of committees of the Assembly are produced following committee hearings. Unedited proofs of committee transcripts are available for inspection at the Committee Office. Proof transcripts are published on the Assembly's web site as soon as they are verified by Hansard editors; the finals are published within 20 working days from the date of the hearing.
- *Standing and Temporary Orders of the Assembly\**

Copies of the documents listed above are available from the Assembly Secretariat and, where indicated, are available for inspection on the Internet. Copies of *Weekly Hansards*, committee reports and *Minutes of Proceedings* are placed in Territory Libraries.

The Assembly also provides copies of a range of publications on various aspects of its history, role and functions to the public, community groups and schools free of charge.

Copies of ACT legislation (Bills and Acts) and delegated legislation (eg. regulations and determinations) are available for purchase at the ACT Government Bookshop, Ground Floor, FAI Building, Corner Akuna Street and London Circuit, Canberra City (telephone: 620 50268). They are also available at [www.legislation.act.gov.au](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au).

Other types of documents that may be available under the *Freedom of Information Act* are general files and administrative records; however, it should be noted that documents are exempt documents if their disclosure would infringe the privileges of the Legislative Assembly or other Australian parliaments.

### **Access and Location**

Location: London Circuit, Canberra City, ACT, 2601.

Business hours: 8.30 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

Postal address: GPO Box 1020, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

General inquiries: (02) 620 50439

Committee inquiries: (02) 620 50127

Hansard inquiries: (02) 620 50422

Legislation inquiries: (02) 620 50440

### **Public interest disclosure**

The Secretariat received no public interest disclosures during the financial year.

The contact officer for public interest disclosures is the Deputy Clerk who can be contacted on (02) 6205 0171. The Secretariat makes pamphlets available at each of the two entrances of the Assembly building detailing how to make a disclosure and the process that operates in relation to public interest disclosures.

## **Territory records**

During 2005-06, the Secretariat continued to operate its records management policy and program in accordance with the *Territory Records Act 2002*.

Records management activities within the Secretariat are undertaken in accordance with the Secretariat's:

- Records Management Policy approved by the Clerk (who is the Secretariat's Principal Officer for the purposes of the Territory Records Act); and
- Records Management Procedures, including an agency specific thesaurus and classification guide.

The following agency specific records disposal schedule is the authority under which Secretariat specific records are sentenced (i.e. a formal process of determining the period of time for which records need to be retained):

Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule - Legislative Assembly Secretariat Records) Approval 2004 (No 1) [Notifiable Instrument NI2004-177].

The Secretariat has adopted the acronym SORDS (Secretariat Operational Records Disposal Schedule) to identify this disposal schedule and this schedule complements the Territory Administrative Records Disposal Schedule (TARDIS), which is the authority for sentencing records relating to the common administrative functions carried out by most Territory agencies.

During the year, the Secretariat engaged an external contractor with expertise in records management to provide:

- training of key staff in the sentencing of records; and
- advice and assistance to Secretariat staff and management in relation to their records management responsibilities.

During the year, significant progress was made in examining and sentencing older Assembly records to determine what disposal or retention action was required. Many records required to be retained as Territory archive material were transferred to more appropriate off-site storage. This process will continue during 2006-07.

## **Ecologically sustainable development**

The Secretariat recognises the importance of pursuing, implementing and evaluating strategies and actions that continue to improve environmental outcomes. While the Secretariat has previously reported that securing and committing the resources for work in this area has been problematic, it has continued to take advantage of available opportunities to source expertise and to implement improvements in some key areas.

### **Watch your waste program**

As in 2004-05, the Secretariat again funded a placement from the Australian National University's Greensteps Program in 2005-06. This program provides practical experience to students undertaking studies in the field of environmental management. This recent placement built on the initiatives implemented in the previous year which led to a detailed understanding of the composition of waste being sent to land fill. It involved the student working with cleaning contractors and with all building occupants to implement the *Watch your Waste* Program.

A key feature of the program has been the changing nature of the partnership with the Assembly's cleaning contractor, Berkeley Challenge. Under a newly negotiated contract, they took over responsibility for the cost of removing landfill waste and revised their processes to collect waste deposited around the building in a "three bin system", that separates co-mingled recyclable waste and compost from landfill waste. The cleaning contractors are responsible for depositing this waste into separate waste bins and, in return for transferring costs of landfill waste to the cleaning contractor, the Secretariat has met the additional costs associated with increased volumes of co-mingled recyclable material.

A formal evaluation of the program is expected in 2006-07.

### **Energy efficiency**

Although the project has been delayed and will not now be commenced until early 2006-07, the redesign of the public entrance has included design elements that will improve the energy efficiency of the building. The redesigned entrance will include air lobbies, an air-conditioning configuration and design that will significantly reduce the incidence and impact of heat loss and heat gain that have been occurring in winter and summer respectively, through this part of the building. In addition, in-slab heating will be installed in the new entrance vestibule and will be insulated below the slab to prevent heat loss to the subsoil. Finally, the design includes use of

double-glazing for external windows which has an “e-coat” that limits heat transmittance whilst retaining good visibility.

During 2005-06, the Assembly building’s cooling tower was replaced as part of scheduled replacement program. A dual tower was installed to replace the previous single tower. This follows, and complements, the installation in 2004-05 of a new low load chiller in the building to ease the demand on the main chiller that was ageing and less energy efficient. The change in chiller configuration alone was expected to make significant improvements in energy use and this, together with the introduction of a dual cooling tower will result in energy and water consumption being reduced.



# Part D: Analysis of financial performance

## Agency financial results and analysis

See Appendix 20.

### Asset management

During 2005-06, the Secretariat concluded its development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for the Assembly building. The gradual, and delayed, development of the SAMP had been the subject of reporting over previous years. The requirement for agencies to develop a SAMP in relation to their major assets is a requirement of the Department of Treasury, with the aim being that the SAMP becomes the basis for an agreed level of funding to support the operation of the asset over future years.

Despite its finalisation and its intended purpose, the SAMP did not appear to be used as the basis for providing capital upgrade funding for the building. The Secretariat maintains that the SAMP properly highlights the future impact and consequences of not adequately maintaining the Assembly building as a significant Territory owned asset. The following extract from the plan highlights this issue:

*“Funding limitations that have existed from time to time have had an impact on the current state of the Assembly Building. It is generally accepted that the extensive refurbishment undertaken in 1993 was subject to a limited budget and, consequently, many aspects of the current condition of the building can be linked to certain decisions made at that time in relation to the scope of refurbishment and the construction materials and methods used.*”

*In recent years, as the building has continued to show the wear and tear associated with its age – including the internal fitout that is approaching 15 years of age – funding for the building's maintenance has not kept pace with the increased failures of equipment and building elements that have occurred. For the first 10 years or so from 1993, much of the internal fitout required only preventative maintenance but some aspects of it are now failing or showing signs of failure. Funding requests that have been made to address these issues have been scaled back and this has compounded the current asset maintenance requirements and associated budget requirements.*

*During the period over which this plan has been developed, considerable public and media discussion has occurred about the possible construction of a new building to house the Legislative Assembly (including a possible increase in size of the Assembly). The discussion on this issue highlights that there are a range of views and options to be considered and that it is likely to be some time after this plan is finalised that any concrete decisions are in place.*

*Whatever decisions may be made in the future that may result in the Assembly re-locating from the Assembly (South) Building, this plan emphasises that, as a Territory owned asset, it is imperative that the building be maintained to an appropriate standard so that, should occupancy change, the condition of the asset remains suitable for future use."*

As reported in previous years, a project to redesign the public entrance of the Assembly building to address physical security, energy efficiency and identity/appearance issues, has been subject to several delays and revised approaches, due in the main to changing security requirements and attempts to secure funding and remain within available budget. The project was subject to further delays during 2005-06 although, by 30 June, designs had been finalised, tenders for a lead contractor had been advertised and evaluation was nearing completion. The project is expected to be completed by November 2006.

A new cooling tower was installed in the Assembly building in May and June of 2006

## **Capital works management**

The Secretariat received capital works (capital upgrade) funding in the 2005-06 budget totalling \$200,000.

As reported last year, capital works funding totalling \$668,000 – predominantly for the redesigned public entrance and security upgrade project – was received in 2004-05 and only \$14,000 of those funds were expended on preliminary design works associated with those projects. Both projects are very closely linked and have been managed concurrently. All remaining expenditure from the \$668,000 provided in 2004-05 was committed and paid at 30 June 2006.

In addition, \$49,000 of the 2005-06 capital upgrade funding was committed and paid at 30 June 2006. A further \$51,000 of these funds was committed and paid by 30 June 2006 in connection with the acquisition and installation of a new cooling tower

## **Procurement**

A number of consultants and contractors were engaged in 2005-06, to provide expertise, skills or technical capacity that were not available within the Secretariat. The Secretariat adheres to the Territory's procurement guidelines and policies when engaging and managing contractors and consultants.

During 2005-06, a significant procurement exercise for the Secretariat was the conduct of a public tender for recording and transcription of meetings of the Assembly and the public hearings of its committees.

A detailed breakdown of contractors and consultants is at Appendix 11.

