

Our year in review

Annexe Critical Infrastructure and Refurbishment Program

The Parliamentary Annexe was constructed in the late 1970s and continues to provide a working environment for Members and staff. In 2019, the Parliamentary Service commenced a major three-year program to address a range of high-priority risk areas by delivering modernisation and upgrades of various foundation building services including:

- fire services
- mechanical services (e.g. air conditioning infrastructure/units)
- electrical services (e.g. power distribution systems to support security and building management needs).

As the second stage of the upgrade program, in 2021 planning work commenced to upgrade and repair the exterior façade of the Annexe to address a safety risk and refurbish ageing interior office and overnight accommodation rooms.

The planned works include the replacement of over 300 custom windows and fittings damaged by the gradual deterioration of the external façade. The project also provides the opportunity to increase the number of overnight rooms and deliver a number of equitable access offices and bedrooms to accommodate Members with specific needs.

Work commenced in 2022 and is due for completion in late 2023.

Parliamentary Education Program

In 2021-22 a suite of new education materials were also added to the Parliament's website. The materials, aligned with the national curriculum, were designed by the Parliamentary Education Team, in consultation with the Queensland Parliament Teacher Advisory Group.

The Queensland Department of Education is now linking to these resources through 'The Learning Place', which provides standardised curriculum resources direct to classroom teachers. Our Parliamentary education resources are also now available on ClickView, an education platform widely used by Australian secondary school students, from where teachers can collate video resources with direct links to the Australian Curriculum.

Parliamentary Service Workforce Strategy

In May 2022, the Speaker approved the Parliamentary Service's first formal Workforce Strategy. The Strategy highlights our objective of continuing to build a diverse, knowledgeable, skilled and agile workforce capable of delivering our vision and purpose.

The new Strategy will guide a number of specific workforce engagement reforms over coming years designed to build a modern workforce that needs to be:

- highly engaged and committed to client service
- high-performing in a digital environment, and
- strategically focused on our future.

The Strategy will focus on three key areas of action including:

- attracting and retaining the best talent
- supporting our people to develop their capabilities
- creating and maintaining a positive, productive and safe work environment.

100th anniversary of the abolition of the Queensland Legislative Council

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the abolition of the Queensland Legislative Council a seminar, co-hosted by the Queensland Parliament and The Royal Historical Society of Queensland, was held on 19 March 2022.

Parliamentary Services supported the event with informative Library displays and biographical database presentations. A range of speakers provided insights into the Council's establishment, its operations, final demise, and parliamentary life since 1922.

Video recordings from the event have been published on the Queensland Parliament website, and the historical essays will be published in a special edition of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland Journal.

Review of IT Services

In 2021 the Clerk commissioned a review into IT Services to seek independent external advice on how the service area could be structured and resourced more effectively to implement the Parliamentary Service's Digital Strategy, IT Operational Plan and associated portfolio of projects.

The intent of the review was to ensure IT Services had the capability and capacity to better support the organisation's current and future business needs.

The scope of the review examined whether the structure and operating model of the unit was fit-for-purpose, and whether some functions could be provided more effectively, over time, on an as-a-service basis by a managed service provider.

The review also sought to forge stronger strategic and operational planning linked to business and customer needs, improve IT program and project management, enhance customer experiences, and promote the development of a positive team culture within IT Services that supports outcomes.

The outcomes of the review included a revised structure for the team with a number of positions upgraded, and three new positions with additional responsibilities added to the ITS leadership team to support the Head of IT Services.

The new IT leadership team supports three streams:

- Portfolio, Policy and Architecture team – responsible for strategy and planning
- Program and Solutions development and Delivery team – responsible for building and implementing changes
- IT Operations team – responsible for running, operating and optimising technology platforms and applications.

Following the review, the Clerk formed the new Technical Needs and Solutions Group (TN&SG), a sub-committee of the Executive Management Group to be chaired by the Head of IT Services to bring the organisation's business owners and IT Services' staff together to identify business needs and improve the planning and implementation of technical solutions.

A key focus of the TN&SG is to accelerate the development and roll-out of digital forms across the organisation, including embedding digital workflows into existing IT systems and optimising the use of these systems where appropriate.

As well, IT Services staff now meet with electorate office staff representatives on the EO Reference Group on a quarterly basis.

In hindsight the timing of the review has not been ideal, as it unexpectedly coincided with a downturn in the IT labour market. The current shortages of qualified IT professionals in Australia has resulted in strong competition for the limited pool of available IT professionals.

For the Parliamentary Service, this scenario has meant longer than expected delays in the recruitment of new or upgraded positions.

In response, the Parliamentary Service is now pivoting sooner than expected to change the IT operating environment over the next 12 months by examining the possible appointment of managed service providers to supplement internal staffing resources, and considering ways to accelerate the replacement of the Parliament's fleet of legacy inhouse-built bespoke IT systems with sustainable off-the-shelf IT systems.