



ESTIMATES COMMITTEE E

2000

REPORT NO. 1 TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCTION

The Sessional Orders adopted by the Legislative Assembly on 22 June 2000 referred the proposed expenditure contained in the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2000* to Estimates Committee E for examination and report. The Bill is in accordance with the established practice under which funds for the annual budget of the Legislative Assembly and the Parliamentary Service are requested.

The committee considered the estimates referred to it using information contained in the Budget Papers and the Speaker's Portfolio Statement. The committee also conducted a public hearing on Tuesday 8 August 2000 to take evidence from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Minutes of the committee's meetings are included in a volume of additional information which the committee will table in the Parliament.

OVERVIEW

The Legislative Assembly of Queensland consists of 89 Members who discharge a range of legislative and constituency responsibilities. The Parliamentary Service provides administrative and support services to the Legislative Assembly and administers Members' entitlements pursuant to the Members' Handbooks.

The Parliament delivers a single output called "Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service". The 2000-01 appropriation is \$49.952M which is an increase of \$1.050M or just over 2% on the previous year's budget. An equity adjustment of \$1.150M is included in the appropriation. An operating surplus of \$0.491M is projected. This will go towards funding the replacement of electorate office computer equipment over the next few years.

KEY INITIATIVES FOR 2000-01

Improvements to Accommodation Within the Precinct and Electorate Offices

- ◆ 1999-2000 has seen the continuation of the ongoing refurbishment of buildings within the parliamentary precinct. The committee notes that \$2.4M is provided for the completion of the Parliamentary Annexe interior refurbishment. The Speaker advised the committee that members' accommodation on levels 9, 19 and 20 of the Annexe has been fully refurbished, as has part of the Library on level 6. It is anticipated that the Annexe refurbishment on levels 4 to 6 will be completed this year in addition to a range of minor upgrades on other levels.
- ◆ The committee also notes that the Parliament House Stonework Restoration Program continues, with Stage E already completed and Stage F currently underway. The Speaker advised the committee that the restoration of the George Street facade would be completed by the end of the year.
- ◆ During the previous year the general standard of electorate office accommodation was improved. A total of ten offices were relocated to provide improved constituent access and better security for members and their electorate staff.

Greater Access to Emergent Technology

- ◆ The Speakers Technology Advisory Group (STAG) examines how emerging technologies can be used to provide more effective services to Members and their constituents. A number of initiatives have been achieved including:
- ◆ improvements to the data network to support significantly more users and applications
- ◆ development of the Parliamentary Service Intranet and Internet site with access delivered to all electorate offices

- ◆ launch of the Members' Multimedia Project to provide Members with improved access to the parliamentary video network, including electronic access to the Library research information and archived media databases
- ◆ This year, the Parliamentary Service will continue to review and develop the content of its Internet and Intranet sites to expand the scope of information readily accessible to Members and Electorate Offices.

Improved Use of Human Resources

- ◆ The Speaker advised the committee of a recent internal review of security and attendants. He went on to inform the committee of a proposed trial amalgamation of the attendant and security services sub-outputs. It is anticipated that the amalgamation will enable the management of these service units to be streamlined and allow for multi-skilling opportunities for attendant and security officers. The new sub-output will be known as "Chamber and Security Services" and will encompass attendants, security and the Legislative procedure and archiving service.
- ◆ The Speaker advised the committee that he anticipates a reduction in the number of security personnel over the years through natural attrition. The committee notes the assurance of the Speaker that the Parliamentary precinct will continue to be adequately monitored.

Reduced Energy Costs

- ◆ The committee was pleased to note a reduction in energy costs of \$0.220M, almost 25%, over the past five years as a result of the new building and energy management systems in place at Parliament House. The Speaker advised that these savings have funded a range of other initiatives within the Parliamentary Service.

Community Awareness and Understanding of the Role of Parliament

- ◆ The Parliamentary Service has continued to promote public awareness of the role of the Parliament and ensure the Parliament is a respected and active member of the community. The committee acknowledges the positive initiatives planned for 2000-01. These include:

- ◆ a review and update of the content of school tours to better reflect modern curriculum
- ◆ opening the Parliamentary precinct to the public and educational activities to celebrate Queensland Day
- ◆ maintenance of the Centenary of Federation Study Centre.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as stated in the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2000*, be agreed to without amendment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The committee thanks the Speaker and officers of the Parliamentary Service for their cooperation during the estimates process. The committee acknowledges the support and assistance of the staff from Hansard and the committee's secretariat.

Desley Boyle MLA

Chairman

August 2000

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ms Desley Boyle MLA (Chairman)
 Hon Robert Borbidge MLA (Deputy Chairman)
 Mrs Nita Cunningham MLA
 Mr Mike Kaiser MLA
 Mr Doug Slack MLA
 Dr David Watson MLA

SECRETARIAT

Ms Leanne Clare (Research Director)
 Ms Gillian Keir (Research Officer)
 Ms Sandy Musch (Executive Assistant)

The transcript from the public hearing is available on the internet via the Hansard site at www.parliament.qld.gov.au

