

# **2016-17 Budget Estimates Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016**

**Report No. 26, 55<sup>th</sup> Parliament**  
**Finance and Administration Committee**  
August 2016



## Finance and Administration Committee

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### Acknowledgements

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the assistance provided by officers from the Speaker's Office and the Parliamentary Service during the course of the Committee's consideration of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016.



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## Chair's Foreword

This report presents a summary of the Committee's examination of the Budget Estimates for the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016*.

Consideration of the Budget Estimates allows for the public examination of both the responsible Minister and Chief Executive Officers of agencies within the Committee's portfolio area. This was undertaken through the questions on notice and the Estimates public hearing process.

The Committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016*, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the Committee, I also wish to thank the Speaker and the officers from the Parliamentary Service for their cooperation in providing information to the Committee throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the other Members of the Committee for their hard work and valuable contributions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Russo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Peter Russo MP  
Chair

August 2016





## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Role of the Committee

The Finance and Administration Committee (Committee) is a portfolio committee established by the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly on 27 March 2015.<sup>1</sup> The Committee's primary areas of responsibility are:

- Premier, Cabinet and the Arts
- Treasury, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Sport, and
- Employment, Industrial Relations, Racing and Multicultural Affairs.

Standing Orders require that each portfolio committee shall consider the Appropriation Bills and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility.<sup>2</sup> A portfolio committee must make a report at the end of its deliberations of the estimates of its portfolio area, and that report must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.2 Referral

On 21 April 2016, the Legislative Assembly suspended the Standing Orders relating to the examination of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016 and resolved that the Finance and Administration Committee will examine the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill with the examination being conducted in accordance with the procedures in part 6 of the standing orders; and

- i. the portfolio committee's area of responsibility applying to the Legislative Assembly;
- ii. the responsibility of a minister applying to the Speaker; and
- iii. the responsibility of a director-general applying to the Clerk.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, on 17 June 2016, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016 and the Estimates for the Committee's area of responsibility were referred to the Committee for investigation and report.

The Committee conducted a public hearing on 19 July 2016 and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from Mr Speaker and officers from the Parliamentary Service.

The transcript of the Committee's hearing can be accessed on the Committee's web page.<sup>5</sup>

### 1.3 Aim of this report

The Committee considered the Estimates referred to it by using information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing, and
- additional information provided after the hearing.

This report summarises the Estimates referred to the Committee and highlights some of the issues the Committee examined.

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s88 and Standing Order 194

<sup>2</sup> Standing Order 177(3)

<sup>3</sup> Standing Orders 186(1); 187(1)

<sup>4</sup> Queensland Legislative Assembly, *Record of Proceedings*, 21 April 2016, at 1322-1323

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2016/Estimates2016/Est-trns-ph19July2016.pdf>

Prior to the public hearing, the Committee provided Hon Peter Wellington MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, with questions on notice in relation to the Estimates.

Mr Speaker's answers to the Committee's pre-hearing questions on notice; additional information provided by the Clerk of the Parliament after the hearing; and minutes of the Committee's meetings are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report and report no 27.

#### 1.4 Other Members' participation

The Committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing in accordance with Standing Order 181(e). Mr Tim Nicholls MP, Leader of the Opposition and Member for Clayfield, attended the hearing and asked questions.

## 2 Recommendation

Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the Committee must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

### Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

## 3 Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service

The Legislative Assembly of Queensland consists of 89 Members who discharge a range of important legislative and constituency responsibilities. The *Parliamentary Service Act 1988* establishes the Parliamentary Service to provide administrative and support services to the Legislative Assembly. The Parliamentary Service's purpose is to support, promote and strengthen the Legislative Assembly to fulfil its role in the institution of Parliament which is fundamental to Queensland's democratic system of Government. The Parliamentary Service seeks to achieve that purpose by meeting four strategic objectives:

- *Supporting the Legislative Assembly (and its committees and Members) in fulfilling its functions within the institution of Parliament to:*
  - *make law (and supervise delegated law making)*
  - *approve and scrutinise the State's finances*
  - *scrutinise the actions of executive government (and oversight independent bodies)*
  - *provide a forum for debate and grievance.*
- *Supporting Members of the Legislative Assembly in their communication with and representation of constituents.*
- *Providing information, corporate and facility management services that better enable Members and parliamentary service officers to achieve their objectives*
- *Safeguarding, promoting and strengthening the important institution of Parliament by improving awareness of the Parliament's fundamental role in our democratic system of government and accessibility to information about the Parliament's activities.*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Queensland Government, 2016-17 Queensland State Budget Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 2

The following table, in Schedule 1 of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016, sets out the proposed appropriation 2016-17.

<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>Budget 2015-16 \$'000</b>	<b>Est. actual 2015-16 \$'000</b>	<b>Vote 2016-17 \$'000</b>
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
Departmental services	84,086	86,279	87,379
equity adjustment	3,188	44	5
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>87,274</b>	<b>86,323</b>	<b>87,384</b>

**Source:** Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016, Schedule 1, p6

### **3.1 Service area 1 – Members’ Salaries, Entitlements and Electorate Office Services**

This service area represents the direct cost of Members’ salaries and entitlements and maintaining and supporting electorate offices across the State.

The Members' Remuneration Handbook outlines the salaries and other entitlements of Members of the Legislative Assembly, as well as the entitlements of former Members.

The Members’ Remuneration Handbook notes that each Member is provided with an electorate office to support activities in servicing their electorate. Those Members representing an electoral district of 100,000 square kilometres or more in area may elect to be provided with an additional electorate office. The Handbook also provides for a range of other resources to support the operation of each electorate office including staffing and certain equipment. All of these resources provide support to Members to enable them to fulfil their constituency responsibilities.<sup>7</sup>

#### **3.1.1 Service area highlights**

In 2016-17, the Parliamentary Service will implement recommendations arising from a comprehensive review of electorate office security conducted in 2015-16. The review examined changes in security risks, security monitoring tools and techniques, and security awareness.

Service standards for Member's Salaries, Entitlements and Electorate Office Services are not provided. Each electorate office operates independently under the direction of each Member. Individual Members assess the performance of their office(s) based upon the needs of that Member in servicing local constituents.<sup>8</sup>

### **3.2 Service area 2 – Parliamentary Precinct Support Services**

This service area provides:

- advisory, information and support services to assist the Parliament, its committees and Members to fulfil their constitutional and parliamentary responsibilities; these services include Chamber, Education & Communication Services; the Committee Office; the Parliamentary Library; and Parliamentary Reporting Services;
- services to promote the institution of Parliament and raise community awareness and understanding of its important role and functions;

<sup>7</sup> Queensland Government, 2016-17 Queensland State Budget Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 3

<sup>8</sup> Queensland Government, 2016-17 Queensland State Budget Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 3

- services to provide a safe and secure Parliamentary precinct including Security and Attendant Services;
- accommodation and hospitality services that provide Members, staff and guests of the Parliament with an appropriate working environment; and
- organisational services that support the activities of Members and their staff; deliver and administer a range of entitlements afforded to Members pursuant to the Members' Remuneration Handbook; and maintain Parliament House building and its contents; these include Information Technology Services, Human Resource Services, Property Services, and Financial and Administrative Services.<sup>9</sup>

### **3.1.2 Service area highlights**

In 2016 – 17, Parliamentary Precinct Support Services will:

- continue to improve and strengthen the support provided to the portfolio committee system through the implementation of the recommendations of the internal management review of the Committee Office conducted in 2016
- continue installation of a fire protection (suppression) system in Parliament House (a recommendation of the bipartisan Committee of the Legislative Assembly)
- continue an ongoing program to improve security infrastructure and systems within the parliamentary precinct
- continue an ongoing program to replace audio-visual infrastructure equipment within the parliamentary precinct
- complete a program to install fibre data cabling infrastructure in Parliament House to accommodate security infrastructure and establish a platform for future desktop data cabling upgrades for Members and staff
- complete implementation of a corporate electronic document records management system
- continue a regional education program designed to reach key regional centres.<sup>10</sup>

### **3.3 Departmental capital program**

Each year the Parliamentary Service develops a broad capital program which includes capital works to improve the functionality of the Parliamentary precinct, as well as the upgrade or replacement of major items of plant and equipment associated with building infrastructure and systems within the precinct. For 2016-17, the capital program will focus on:

- continuation of a major program to restore the stonework exterior of Parliament House;
- commencing installation of a fire protection (suppression) system in Parliament House (a recommendation of the bipartisan Committee of the Legislative Assembly);
- improvements to security surveillance infrastructure within the precinct.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Queensland Government, 2016-17 Queensland State Budget Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 4

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government, 2016-17 Queensland State Budget Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 4

<sup>11</sup> Queensland Government, Queensland Budget 2016-17 Service Delivery Statements, Legislative Assembly of Queensland 2016-17: 7

### **3.4 Issues raised at the public hearing**

Issues raised by the Committee in relation to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016 include:

- the Queensland Parliament portfolio committee system
- the new strategic plan and organisation structure for the Parliamentary Service
- restoration of the external stonework of Parliament House
- the provision of office accommodation in Parliament House for the Member for Cook
- alleged unaccompanied union officials within the Parliamentary Annexe
- maintenance work undertaken on level 7 of the Parliamentary Annexe
- backfilling electorate officer and assistant electorate officer positions during leave
- \$1500 annual allowance for cleaning of electorate offices
- the Parliamentary Friendship initiative regarding the placement of native bees within the parliamentary precinct
- whether there has been any budgetary consideration for a possible introduction of 'family friendly' sitting hours of the Queensland Parliament
- the outcomes and associated actions from a review of electorate office security undertaken in 2015-16, and
- security incidents during 2015-16.

Subsequent to the public hearing, the Clerk of the Parliament provided additional information to the Committee (attached at Appendix A).

### **3.5 Committee comments**

The Committee thanks the Speaker for his continued judicious stewardship of the Office of the Speaker and of the Parliament.

**Appendix A – Copy of correspondence from the Clerk of the Parliament**



Your Ref: IC.13.11

Our Ref: 11.4 Estimates Process

19 July 2016

Mr Peter Russo MP  
Chair  
Finance and Administration Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Russo

**Estimates Hearing 19 July 2016**

I refer to the estimates hearing this morning and the following question and answers:

*Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, in April this year CFMEU members marched out the front of Parliament House. Following this rally, numerous CFMEU members were reportedly seen wandering around the halls unaccompanied by either a member or a staff member. Mr Speaker, at any time did you commission a report into these allegations that were reported on? Were you satisfied with the outcome of that report in terms of access to the precinct and that no breach of security occurred?*

*Mr SPEAKER: I do not know that I commissioned a formal report. The matter was raised. I investigated it and the matter was resolved.*

*Mr Laurie: I am not aware of there being reports of CFMEU members wandering unaccompanied.*

*Mr NICHOLLS: There were media reports and the matter was raised in the House I think.*

*Mr Laurie: I have no recollection of that. There was one incident which related to a person who had entered the precinct with a member wearing a CFMEU T-shirt who was challenged by security and later that person was made to cover that, but I am unaware and the Sergeant-at-Arms has advised me that he is unaware of other reports of CFMEU members wandering unaccompanied.*

*Mr NICHOLLS: I think there was a very large rally—*

*Mr Laurie: Yes, I can recall the rally.*

*Mr NICHOLLS:—in front of the parliament and then there were reports afterwards, amongst other things, of CFMEU members hanging over the balcony of the Port Office Hotel. There was also a report that a number of people had entered the precinct and there were concerns that were reported on about whether security had been properly followed in those circumstances.*

*Mr Laurie: I can recall no report to us of unaccompanied CFMEU members in the corridors of the House. The Sergeant-at-Arms has no recollection of it. As I said, there was one incident of a person wearing a CFMEU T-shirt and that was dealt with by both the Speaker and me.*

Following the hearing, I caused a search of our records regarding incidents in the precinct and reports of unattended persons in the precinct and the rally referred to in the question.

There is confusion between two separate rallies by CFMEU members.

The rally by the CFMEU outside Parliament House referred to in the question by the Leader of the Opposition and answered by the Speaker and myself occurred on 20 April 2016. The only incident arising from that rally was the matter I referenced in my answer regarding a person who had entered the precinct with a member wearing a CFMEU T-shirt, subsequently dealt with by both the Speaker and myself.

I understand, however, that there was another separate rally involving the CFMEU “in the city” on Wednesday 2 December 2016. Following that rally it was alleged that there was a function held by a Member on the precinct attended by CFMEU members. This earlier rally was the subject of the following comments by the Member for Kawana in the Assembly on 3 December 2015:

...

*The article states that after the rally they went to the pub. After the pub they came to parliament. They came here on the invitation of the member for Mirani, Jim Pearce, the sponsoring MP. CFMEU union officials were walking around here unassisted and unguided by a member of parliament. I am advised that in this photo from today's Courier-Mail, which I table for honourable members, there are union members who were present in the parliament last night.*

....

*I am advised that some were so intoxicated they fell out of level 3, they were kicked out of the Stranger's Dining Room after trying to force their way in and they were on the level 12 balcony without any member of parliament with them. I raise it as a serious matter. As you, Mr Speaker, are respectfully responsible for security in this place, I am going to write to you about this, particularly because the member for Mirani left the CFMEU officials, after rallying in the street, unassisted and unaided in the parliamentary precinct last night.*

[Emphasis added]

Later that evening the Member for Kawana rose on a matter of privilege:

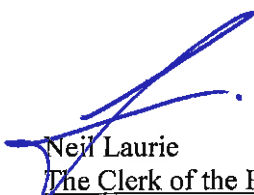
*I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Earlier I had indicated that the Labor affiliated CFMEU union thugs, after rallying in support of an alleged woman abuser, were on the level 12 balcony. I have been advised that these union thugs were, in fact, more concerningly, in a more public place—the level 5 balcony. I correct the record accordingly.*

There were also press reports following the Member's speech in the Assembly.

However, neither my Office nor the Office of the Speaker has any written record of complaint beyond the statements made by the Member for Kawana in the Assembly.

The best recollection of myself and other parliamentary officers is that shortly following the Member for Kawana's statements in the Assembly, senior management made inquiries of security officers (through the Sergeant at Arms) and Parliamentary Catering Service (PCS) staff (through the Manager PCS) on duty at the relevant time. Staff on duty were unable to confirm or corroborate that persons had been “kicked out of the Stranger's Dining Room”. Furthermore, security had received no complaint about persons on the balcony on Level 5.

Yours sincerely



Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament

Enc