



DEPARTMENT OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**ANNUAL REPORT
2019-20**



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019–20



Legislative Assembly *of Victoria*

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26 October 2020

Hon Colin Brooks MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Speaker

I have pleasure in forwarding to you the Annual Report for the Department of Legislative Assembly for the year 2019–20.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Noonan".

Bridget Noonan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly



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Clerk's overview

“ The COVID-19 pandemic has altered virtually every aspect of parliamentary work.

I am pleased to present this report on the Assembly's operations, and I hope it is of interest to members, the public and other parliamentary officers. The Department welcomes feedback on the delivery of its services and I encourage readers to contact me at bridget.noonan@parliament.vic.gov.au with any comments or queries.

Like many people, I reflect on my work schedule from this time last year with incredulity about how straightforward it now seems. The COVID-19 pandemic has altered virtually every aspect of parliamentary work. After a brief period in March where the Department contemplated putting various projects on hold, we chose instead to find ways to keep delivering services and supporting members and the community, rather than waiting for life to return to normal.

With much effort behind the scenes, committees quickly moved to online or hybrid meetings and hearings; the tours team reworked its school tours and role play program to be delivered online; and Table staff adapted Chamber processes for the COVID-19 environment. Our move to digital service delivery would have been impossible without the hard work and diligence of our colleagues in the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) who have provided the necessary infrastructure and training to enable a relatively seamless transition. I also acknowledge the value in being able to share information with clerks from Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions, as that network has been of great practical and morale benefit throughout the pandemic.

Before the year was transformed by COVID-19, the Department had worked with DPS and the Council to implement the changes to the members' allowances regime brought about by the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*. Members will by now be familiar with the requirements of the legislation, and the public reporting duties of the three department heads.

Following our colleagues in the Council, Assembly staff all attended cultural awareness training in October and November. Delivered by renowned filmmaker, musician and educator Richard Frankland, the training sought to prepare the Department for better engagement with First Nations people. Many staff reported that it was the best professional development of their careers. We are keenly aware that there is much about our institution that is alienating for many First Nations people, and we need to do better. I hope that the Parliament's Reconciliation Action Plan moves us further along this path.

The Parliament has a valuable opportunity in the year ahead as we implement a Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). The Emerging Leaders Program for parliamentary officers has involved two Assembly staff, with colleagues from the Council and DPS, developing a DAIP for the parliamentary departments. The Plan was initially scoped as a tool to promote the Parliament of Victoria as a disability friendly and inclusive organisation. The final product identifies four priorities to assist the Parliament in becoming more accessible to people with disability. This project is important and I look forward to working with my team to implement it.

Another Departmental objective for the year ahead is to come up with more meaningful measures to assess our services to members and the community. The early stages of this work began last year when we informally surveyed Assembly members on their experiences of Departmental services. This revealed some areas where we were not providing what members needed, or had committed resources to provide services that members were not using.

As I look to the year ahead, it is clear that the challenges of COVID-19 will be with us for some time to come. If members require the House to do its business differently in response to the challenges of COVID-19, there are options available. Hybrid sittings to allow limited remote participation have occurred in comparable jurisdictions, and our committees have already demonstrated how effectively they can meet remotely using technology. The work of Parliament can continue in some way during the pandemic, even if the prospect of all members gathering in one venue for a traditional long sitting day is unlikely in the near future.

Finally, none of the achievements outlined in this report would be possible without the hard work and creativity of the Assembly's staff. It is rewarding for me to work with people who are always prepared to look at problems from different angles, challenge my assumptions about issues, and be open to new ideas. We have spent time in the last year considering what sort of department we want to be and we are keen to demonstrate that every day.

Bridget Noonan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Departmental objectives and functions

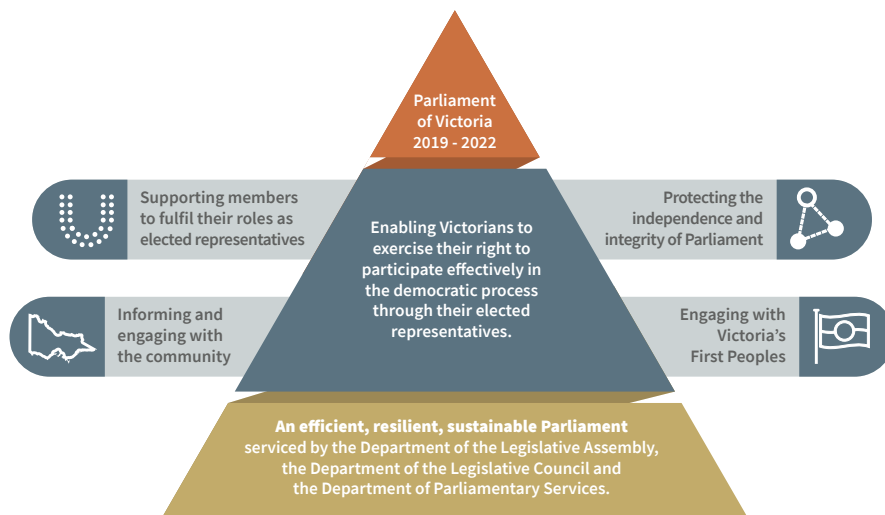
DEPARTMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Department of the Legislative Assembly supports members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives and enables Victorians to participate effectively in the parliamentary process. In support of this purpose we deliver apolitical, professional and innovative services to the Legislative Assembly and inform and engage with all Victorians. Headed by the Clerk, officers of the Department support the Speaker and the work of the Chamber, the operations of committees, and in the provision of information and community engagement services.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

The Parliament of Victoria, through its elected representatives, is accountable to the Victorian community for the provision and conduct of representative government in the interests of Victorians. The objective of all of the departments of the Parliament is to deliver apolitical, professional and innovative services to support our elected representatives and the Parliament as an institution.

In fulfilling its constitutional purpose, the strategic direction of Parliament for 2019–2022 prioritises four roles and focuses the parliamentary departments on improving Parliament’s resilience and efficiency. The primary functions of parliamentary departments are to assist members to represent the people of Victoria and to ensure the independence and integrity of Parliament as an institution.



The strategic priorities of Parliament for 2019-2022.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

Impact of and response to COVID-19

The first half of 2020 has been unlike any other year. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on all aspects of life across Victoria, Australia and the world. We have been fortunate that the work of the Assembly and its committees has been able to continue with only minor interruptions. We are very proud that staff across the Department and the Parliament have come together and quickly adopted new ways of working, rapidly adapted to new technology and come up with innovative approaches to +make this happen.

As an immediate response to COVID-19, the Parliament of Victoria activated its Incident Management Team (IMT) under our Disaster Recovery Plan. The IMT comprises the Presiding Officers, Department Heads, senior management representatives and the Manager, Communication and Public Engagement for communications support. The group has continued to meet regularly to adjust Parliament's response to the pandemic in response to Government directions and health advice.

The first challenge of COVID-19 was transitioning most staff to working from home. We were fortunate that Parliament was well placed from a technology perspective to make this adjustment, and we thank the Information Technology team in the Department of Parliamentary Services for their quick response and continued support. We were not able to immediately transition all staff to work from home, and we appreciated the resilience of staff who were asked to stand down and put their work on hold while appropriate arrangements were put in place.

A continued focus of our response has been staff wellbeing. It has been a very challenging time for our staff, and we recognise that for many people, it is not easy to work from home. This is particularly the case for parents who are trying to assist their children to learn from home at the same time. Although staff in our department have a secure job, many have partners, family members and friends who have not been as fortunate. Managers have continued to have conversations with their staff about how we can best support them during this time and how we can personalise working arrangements to their needs. All staff also have access to our employee assistance program.

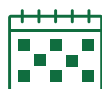
Following the initial response, we have progressively adapted our services and projects to a remote working environment. The House has met with reduced numbers of members and staff in the Chamber. Staff who normally support the Chamber in person are continuing that support from home and delivering those services electronically. Committees have quickly adapted to witnesses giving evidence remotely, and even fully online hearings, which would not have even been imagined before COVID-19. The Tours and Customer Service Unit are now delivering online incursions, a program we now plan to continue permanently to better service remote and regional schools.

This report outlines a range of unplanned initiatives and projects undertaken to adapt to circumstances caused by COVID-19. Some of these adjustments are likely to be needed for some time to come. However, we also hope we can use this disruption as an opportunity to innovate and improve our service delivery and programs, which will continue to be beneficial well into the post-COVID-19 future.

“ A continued focus of our response has been staff wellbeing.

Chamber operations

AT A GLANCE



40
sitting days



340
sitting hours



8hrs 30mins
average sitting day



13hrs 33mins
longest sitting day



54
bills initiated in the Assembly



53
bills passed in the Assembly



53
bills passed in both houses



190
questions without notice



1,004
questions in writing



1,372
documents tabled



70
petitions presented



56,652
signatures on petitions



777
statements by members



40
divisions

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON ASSEMBLY SITTINGS

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the Assembly's sitting schedule and how the Chamber operates. For over 160 years, Assembly sittings have involved all members being physically present in the same room, usually for long days. With the need for physical distancing in response to COVID-19, this was no longer possible.

On Monday 16 March 2020, a state of emergency was declared in Victoria, restricting public gatherings in Victoria to fewer than 500 people. The Presiding Officers closed the precinct to the public and non-passholders. At that stage, requirements for physical distancing had not been implemented, the focus being on large gatherings and controlling infections related to overseas travel.

Tuesday 17 March 2020 was a scheduled sitting day. The Government sought leave to move altered arrangements for the sitting, but leave was refused and the sitting continued as usual. On Wednesday, the House agreed to a Government motion which set earlier finish times for Wednesday and Thursday and removed some debates entirely. After amendment, the motion allowed members statements and adjournment debates to be incorporated in Hansard. On Thursday 19 March 2020, the House adjourned until a day and hour to be fixed by the Speaker.

The Speaker set the day for the next sitting as Thursday 23 April 2020. Prior to this, the next sitting day had been scheduled for 5 May 2020, Budget Day. However, as events unfolded, the Victorian Government prepared omnibus legislation to manage various aspects of the COVID-19 emergency.

Arrangements were put in place so that the Chamber could continue to operate while keeping the members and staff safe. Measures agreed to by the House included:

- changes to the order of business and earlier adjournment of the House to shorten sitting days;
- limits on the number of members allowed in the Chamber at any one time;
- more discretion for the Chair in ringing the bells to form a quorum;
- the ability for members statements, constituency questions and adjournment matters to be submitted in writing and published in Hansard;
- certain bills related to COVID-19 to be second read immediately after the first reading and debated concurrently; and
- the ability for members to incorporate second reading debate speeches into Hansard.

Other practical measures that we implemented included:

- water bottles instead of jugs of water and glasses for members;
- allowing members to speak from any seat in the Chamber;
- blocking off seats so that there was adequate distance between members in the Chamber;
- fewer parliamentary staff in the Chamber; and
- no public allowed in the galleries.

The sitting on 23 April 2020 saw some unusual procedures in relation to bills before the House. Interim appropriations were approved for the State and the Parliament, each for a period ending 31 December, rather than the full financial year. As it was not certain when the House would next sit, the Assembly waited for the COVID-19 Omnibus

(Emergency Measures) Bill 2020 to be returned from the Council before it adjourned, in case any amendments needed to be considered. The Legislative Assembly suspended for an unusually long time—from 1.09 pm to 11.22 pm—and reconvened to adjourn when the Council passed the bill without amendment.

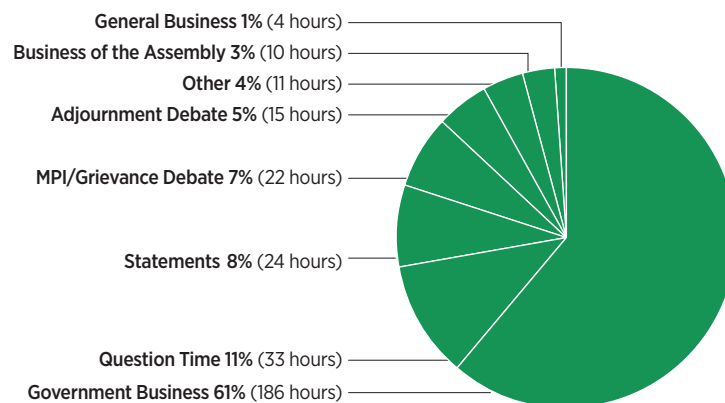
Between April and June 2020, the Assembly authorised a range of activities that usually only happen in the House to take place on non-sitting days:

- documents were released at the end of each week while the House was not sitting;
- questions on notice were published at the end of each week while the House was not sitting; and
- members could resign from and/or be appointed to committees.

Fortunately, by June 2020, the number of COVID-19 cases in Victoria was dropping. The two June sitting weeks proceeded as scheduled, but with physical distancing and the number of members in the Chamber reduced.

BUSINESS OF THE ASSEMBLY

The figure below shows the breakdown of time the Assembly spent on different types of business. Most of the House’s time was spent debating government business. This includes bills and motions introduced by ministers. The next largest amount of time was spent on question time, including questions without notice, ministers’ statements and constituency questions.



A breakdown of time spent in the Chamber on different types of business in 2019–20.

This year the Assembly debated general business for the first time in more than a decade. General business consists of motions and bills moved by any member other than ministers. In the last sitting day this year, the Assembly had finished debating the bills it planned to deal with that week, but was expecting to receive amendments from the Council which the Government wished to pass that day. The Assembly spent around 4 hours debating a motion about reforms to three-year old kinder, while it waited for the Council to send amendments.

CHANGES TO STANDING, SESSIONAL AND JOINT STANDING ORDERS

The Assembly made a range of changes to its standing and sessional orders, following a review by the Standing Orders Committee. Apart from some minor amendments, the standing orders remained largely the same as those adopted when the Committee undertook its last comprehensive review in 2004. The Committee decided it was timely to undertake a review to address areas where procedures are unclear, ambiguous or need to be updated to reflect technology or legislative changes. They also took the opportunity to suggest some improvements to Assembly practice.

Key changes to the standing orders included:

- The procedures for a contested election for Speaker were clarified.
- In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker now takes the Chair without an announcement being made.
- If a petition remains on the notice paper for 30 sitting days without debate, it will be removed from the notice paper on the next sitting day.
- To reduce confusion, a member now simply moves a motion to introduce a bill, taking out the previous reference 'leave'.
- Tabling proclamations of the Governor in Council fixing dates for the coming into operation of Acts is now a standing order instead of a sessional order.
- Several standing orders relating to the procedures of standing committees and select committees were clarified.

The House also made other minor changes for clarification and deleted two obsolete standing orders.

The Assembly also agreed to a new sessional order empowering the Standing Orders Committee to authorise redactions on Assembly documents, Hansard and official broadcasts on safety or security grounds. Any person, not just a member, can request such a redaction by writing to the Clerk and including details of the nature of the safety or security risk. The Clerk then refers the request to the Committee for a decision. This measure came about after the Committee was made aware of a small number of instances where members have inadvertently disclosed information during debate in the Chamber or a committee, or in documents tabled in the House that were later discovered to create safety or security risks. The only other way to remove information from the record is a motion in the House. It is hoped this new process will better address such security concerns by not drawing further attention to the information. For transparency, the number of redactions made is included in this annual report at Appendix N. There were no redactions approved during 2019–20.

Finally, both Houses adopted a new joint standing order setting out the rules for joint sittings under the *Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation Act 2011*.

APOLOGY TO PUFFING BILLY VICTIMS

In November 2019, the Legislative Assembly gave an apology to victims of sexual abuse in connection with the Puffing Billy railway. The apology was in response to a 2018 Ombudsman's report on the *Investigation into child sex offender Robert Whitehead's involvement with Puffing Billy and other railway bodies*. The day before the apology, the Leader of the House moved a motion suspending standing and sessional orders to put in place the necessary arrangements. This included guidelines for how long members could speak, when the apology would happen and when the House would return to the business listed on the notice paper.

The Premier and the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events made the apology and the Minister tabled it. Five other members then made statements on the apology, including the Members for Monbulk and Gembrook—Puffing Billy runs through their electorates. The last speaker on the apology was the Member for Lara, who gave a powerful speech where he acknowledged victims in the gallery. The Member for Lara was the Minister for Tourism and Major Events at the time that the allegations of abuse came to light and he requested that the Ombudsman investigate. The apology ended with members standing in silence to show their support.

“ we are sorry—so very, deeply sorry

Premier, Hansard, 27 November 2019

“ so many let you down, and for that we are so sorry as a Parliament

Leader of the Opposition, Hansard, 27 November 2019

INTERRUPTIONS TO PROCEEDINGS

The Assembly sittings were disrupted at times over the past year. On Tuesday 13 August 2019, proceedings in the House were interrupted by a group in the upper public gallery. They interrupted proceedings by unfurling a banner and chanting, and one of them used superglue to attach her hand to a wooden panel in the gallery. Proceedings in the House were suspended for 17 minutes, and Protective Services Officers (PSOs) and parliamentary officers removed the protestors. Later that week, proceedings were again interrupted for 15 minutes by the group, with another banner unfurled and two members of the group supergluing themselves to the gallery. Three people were charged with criminal damage resulting from damage to the Legislative Assembly Chamber. The Speaker wrote to them, directing them not to enter the parliamentary precinct for a period of six months, using his powers under the *Parliamentary Precincts Act 2001*.

On Wednesday 19 February 2020, proceedings in the House were disrupted twice. On the first occasion, at the beginning of question time, gallery members unfurled a banner and sang until they were escorted from the precinct. Proceedings were suspended for six minutes. On the second occasion, around half an hour later, a separate group was removed. The sitting was suspended for nine minutes while they were escorted from the precinct. All were directed by parliamentary officers or PSOs not to enter the parliamentary precinct for seven days, under the *Parliamentary Precincts Act 2001*.

On Thursday 5 March 2020, both the Houses were interrupted by an emergency evacuation, although in this case the alarm appeared to be triggered by unusual weather conditions and was not connected to a fire or other emergency event. The House was suspended for 13 minutes on this occasion.

CONDOLENCE MOTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

During the first sitting week of 2020, members contributed to two separate condolence motions. The first marked the death of the Hon John Cain, Premier of Victoria from 1982 to 1990. The second marked the summer's bushfires. It extended condolences to the families and loved ones of the five people who lost their lives in Victoria, Bill Slade, David Moresi, Mat Kavanagh, Mick Roberts and Fred Becker, and the people lost in the New South Wales, South Australia and Australian Capital Territory fires. In addition, the motion thanked all those who had assisted and vowed to stand by those affected.

This year, the Assembly also paid tribute to the four Victoria Police officers who were struck and killed in the Eastern Freeway incident on 22 April 2020—Leading Senior Constable Lynette Taylor, Constable Glen Humphris, Senior Constable Kevin King and Constable Josh Prestney. In accordance with the Assembly's custom, the Speaker also advised the House of the deaths of two former members, Carl William Dunn Kirkwood and Keith Henry Remington.

The House has changed how it will deal with condolence motions in future. Any current or former member who does not want a condolence motion moved in the event of their death can now notify the Clerk. The Clerk will then advise the Speaker, Premier and Leader of the House of their wishes when they die. This change allows members greater control and choice over how they are remembered in the House.

LEGISLATION TO DISMISS LOCAL COUNCILS

During the last financial year, two local councils were dismissed following the tabling of Municipal Monitor Reports on their governance, functioning, processes and practices.

“ Thank you, John Cain, for all that you did, all that you represented and all that you were, every day for every Victorian.

Premier, Hansard, 4 February 2020

In both cases, legislation dismissed the council, provided for the appointment of an administrator or panel of administrators, and provided for a future general election of the council. Within three sitting weeks, two local councils were dismissed.

Both the Local Government (Casey City Council) Bill 2020 and Local Government (Whittlesea City Council) Bill 2020 were introduced and the second reading moved immediately on the Tuesday. After two speakers, each bill was passed without division and sent to the Legislative Council without amendment. The Casey Council bill was passed by the Council the same day as the Assembly and assented to by the Governor the following day. From the tabling of the report to royal assent, the parliamentary process took only two days. The Whittlesea City Council bill spent a slightly longer period of time in the Council. It received royal assent on the Friday. From tabling of the report to royal assent, the parliamentary process took four days.

SPEAKER'S RULINGS

From time to time, the Speaker needs to make a new and significant interpretation of the rules and practice of the House, where a situation has arisen for the first time or the House's rules are unclear. Clerk's Office and Procedure Office staff look at the practice of other jurisdictions and consider democratic principles and long-term implications and provide advice to assist the Speaker. They work ahead where they can, trying to anticipate issues that might arise. If the issue does not arise, the research is kept, ready to be called on in the future. At other times, this work needs to be done quickly to respond to an unforeseen issue.

This year, the Speaker made notable rulings that:

- matters before the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) should be treated in the same way as other matters before quasi-judicial bodies and subject to sub judice conventions where relevant;
- the Chair can only warn a member for tedious repetition under Standing Order 110 while a member is actually speaking, and not later in the day; and
- where a member has made a commitment to the House to provide information to the questioner, when responding to a question without notice, the timing of that response is not within the purview of the Chair.

The Speaker also asked several members to remove props from the Chamber. Props and exhibits are not allowed because they cannot be recorded in the written record of the debate. Anything can be considered a prop, it depends on how it is used. Props displayed, and subsequently ordered to be removed this year in the Assembly, included:

- sample train tickets;
- an apple; and
- political badges.

“ The member ... knows not to bring props into the chamber whether they be apples or not.

Deputy Speaker, Hansard,
3 March 2020

NEW NOTICE PAPER FORMAT

The notice paper is the House's meeting agenda but it can be hard to make sense of. It includes all potential business before the House without any indication of the items likely to be debated, or in which order. To overcome the notice paper's shortcomings as a reliable guide to proceedings, the Clerk's Office has for many years produced the less formal and more user friendly 'Clerk's running sheet' to circulate to members and staff in hard copy each sitting day. Increasingly, we have put more explanatory text on our website to help people navigate and predict the day's proceedings in the House. However, none of this addressed the underlying problem that the notice paper was not fit for its purpose as a clear meeting agenda.

During our feedback interviews with members in 2018 and 2019, there was a clear theme that members wanted clearer information about the House's schedule. Taking those views into account, the Clerk's Office surveyed the approaches in other jurisdictions. At the start of 2020, we began a trial of a new notice paper format. The key changes are:

- publishing the day's order of business in the notice paper;
- including hyperlinks to the online version of bills under discussion and to standing orders that govern the order of business;
- specifying which bills are subject to special motions such as the government business program;
- listing a table of contents to help readers understand the different sections of the notice paper; and
- including the subject of the Matter of Public Importance.

As a consequence, we have been able to reduce the detail on the Clerk's daily running sheet and circulate that document to members earlier than has been the case in the past. We welcome feedback on the new notice paper format from members, staff and the public, and will review the notice paper format at the end of 2020.

CHAMBER SUPPORT SERVICES TO MEMBERS

One of Parliament's strategic directions is supporting members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives. This is the primary focus of staff in the Clerk's Office, Procedure Office and Tours and Customer Service Unit, who support the operations of the Chamber. Several committee staff also assist in the Chamber on a rostered basis.

The support we provide is wide-ranging. We provide all the documents required for the running of the Chamber, such as running sheets, notice papers, copies of bills and call lists. We provide procedural advice to members, the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Acting Speakers. We assist with the drafting of motions, amendments and readers and coordinate the tabling of documents and petitions. We process questions on notice and provide visitor management, mail and printing services and manage security within the Chamber.

We were forced to modify our approach to most of these services in response to COVID-19. This involved greater use of electronic delivery of Chamber documents to avoid paper handling. We also reduced the number of hard copies of bills and made them available for collection, instead of staff circulating them in the Chamber.

In order to assess the views of members on these altered approaches to service delivery, we surveyed them to find out which changes they supported as an ongoing practice, which ones they believed were appropriate for the COVID-19 situation but not ongoing, and which made their job harder. We will use the results of the survey to inform how we deliver these services in future.

“ The support we provide is wide-ranging.

Committee operations

AT A GLANCE



96
meetings held



361
public hearings held



955
submissions received



28
inspections undertaken



22
reports tabled

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the operations of committees. From the middle of March all committee staff have been required to work from home whenever possible.

Fortunately, new Standing Order 209(3), agreed to by the House in March 2019, provided Assembly standing committees with the option of using '...an audio link or audio visual link to allow a member to participate in a meeting of the committee ... A member attending by audio link or audio visual link may be counted for the purposes of a quorum and may vote'. Amendments made to the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* by the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Bill 2020 also allowed members of joint investigatory committees to be counted for the purposes of a quorum and vote if participating remotely. This opportunity is available until the end of October 2020.

We established new guidelines and protocols to assist committees to conduct their meetings remotely and safely. Taking into consideration IT security advice, we decided to use Microsoft Teams for all private committee meetings and to use Zoom for all public hearings. Several meetings and hearings have since been held with all members and witnesses appearing remotely or a combination of some members and witnesses appearing in person and some remotely. These changes have been well received by members and have been especially important in assisting committees to continue their inquiry work during the period of COVID-19 restrictions.

The three Assembly standing committees all had inquiry reports due to be tabled by 30 June 2020. On 23 April 2020 the House agreed to a motion that temporarily altered existing sitting arrangements due to the circumstances created by COVID-19. One of the provisions of the motion allowed a committee to extend the reporting date of any inquiry referred to it by the House, so long as the committee informed the Speaker of this extension. The Speaker would, in turn, advise the House of any extension. As some time was lost as committees and staff adjusted to online hearings and working from home, all three Assembly standing committees used these new arrangements and extended the reporting dates of their inquiries.

JOINT INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEES

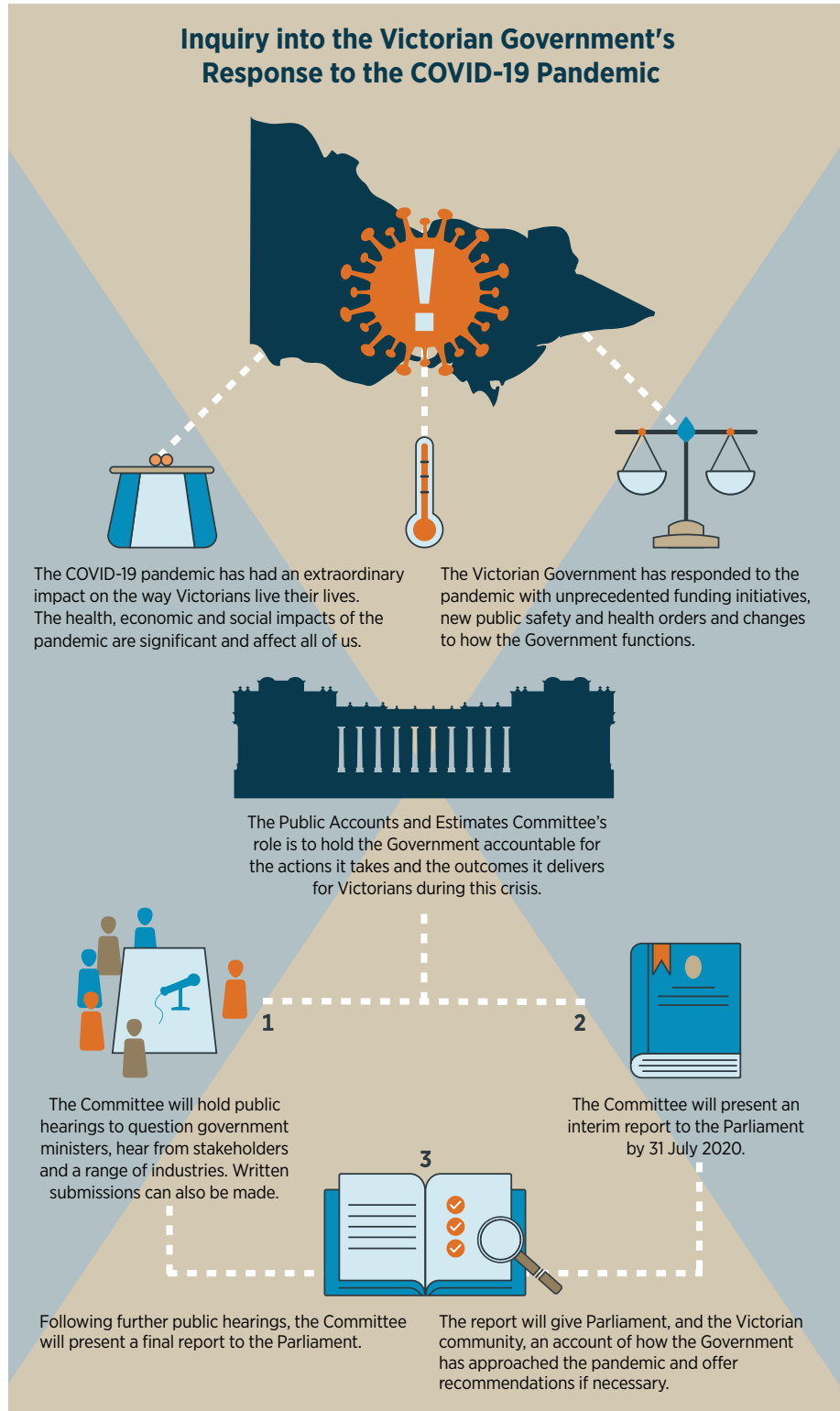
Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee continued its important work promoting public sector reform and accountability in 2019–20.

There were two membership changes during the year. The Committee Chair—Hon Philip Dalidakis MLC—resigned from the Victorian Parliament and was replaced by Lizzie Blandthorn MP at the start of the financial year. A tenth member joined the Committee in April 2020—David Limbrick MLC.

The Premier wrote to the Committee asking it to undertake an inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee commenced its own motion inquiry at the end of April. Six days of public hearings were held in May with the Premier, Treasurer, ministers and key stakeholders giving evidence.

The summer bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic meant the Committee could not hold its hearings in relation to financial and performance outcomes. Instead, the Committee prepared a report on the 2017–18 and 2018–19 outcomes.



The process undertaken for the Inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic also delayed the handing down of the State Budget. Accordingly, the Committee's scrutiny of the budget estimates has been delayed until later in 2020.

One of the important functions of the Committee is to follow up on recommendations made by the Victorian Auditor-General in his performance audits. The Committee commenced two such inquiries this financial year—one into the management of Victorian Ramsar wetland sites and another into the management of school

infrastructure. The Committee tabled its report on Ramsar wetlands, of which Victoria has 12 such sites, described by some as ‘Crown jewels’, in June.

The Committee commenced an own motion inquiry into gender responsive budgeting in 2019–20. Public hearings have been held with further hearings expected to be scheduled with international experts next financial year.



Key themes underpinning the Inquiry into gender responsive budgeting.

The Committee also has oversight responsibilities in relation to the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office (VAGO) and Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). A performance audit of VAGO was commissioned this financial year and undertaken by Allen and Clarke. The Auditor-General accepted 30 of the independent auditor’s 31 recommendations. A new financial auditor of VAGO was also appointed by Parliament at the recommendation of the Committee. The Committee consulted with VAGO and PBO regarding their work plans for the 2020–21 financial year.

The Committee remains actively engaged with the network of Public Accounts Committees (PACs) in Australasia. The Chair delivered a paper to the biannual conference of PACs in Canberra in September on measuring the effectiveness of public accounts committees.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee (SARC) plays an important role reviewing all bills introduced into Parliament and reporting to both Houses. SARC does not make comment on the policy aspects of legislation, but focuses on the use of certain legislative practices and allows the Parliament to consider whether the use of these practices is necessary, appropriate or desirable in all the circumstances.

In deciding whether to comment on a bill, SARC is guided by the terms of reference set out in the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*. These scrutiny principles allow SARC to look for such things as trespasses to rights and freedoms and inappropriate delegation of legislative powers. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* also requires the Committee to consider whether the bill is incompatible with Human Rights. SARC also has a role to examine all regulations, and certain legislative instruments against terms of reference in like terms for the scrutiny of bills.

During the reporting period, the Committee tabled 13 Alert Digests, reviewing and reporting on a total of 66 bills, eight Acts, seven regulations and one legislative instrument. The Committee, through its Regulation Review Subcommittee, reviewed 160 statutory rules (including three South Australian national law regulations) and 28 legislative instruments. The Committee tabled the *Annual Review 2018, Regulations and Legislative Instruments* in August.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES

Environment and Planning Committee

Inquiry into tackling climate change in Victorian communities

In May 2019, the Committee received a reference from the Legislative Assembly to inquire into 'what urban, rural and regional communities in Victoria are doing to tackle climate change and how the Victorian Government could support these communities', with a reporting date of 30 June 2020. The inquiry commenced in July 2019 with a call for submissions and extensive advertising of the terms of reference. The Committee received 162 submissions from a diverse range of experts, stakeholders and individual members of the community.

Left: Site visit during the climate change inquiry to the Violet Town Community Forest. Pictured from left: Mr David Arnold, Chair, Shadforth Reserve Committee of Management, Mr Will Fowles MP, Ms Danielle Green MP, Mr Darren Cheeseman MP (Chair), Mr Paul Hamer MP and Mr David Morris MP (Deputy Chair).



Right: Promotional image for the Inquiry into tackling climate change in Victorian communities.

The Committee held 15 days of public hearings, comprising five hearings in Melbourne and 10 regional hearings in Ballarat, Bendigo, Traralgon, Bairnsdale, Mornington, Geelong, Warrnambool, Mooroopna, Wangaratta and Mildura. The Committee also conducted site visits in combination with each of its regional hearings. On 2 June 2020, the Speaker advised the House that the Committee had extended its reporting date to 3 December 2020. This extension was agreed to by the Committee under the resolution of the House on 23 April 2020.

Inquiry into environmental infrastructure for growing populations

The Committee also received a reference from the Legislative Assembly to inquire into 'the current and future arrangements to secure environmental infrastructure, particularly parks and open space, for a growing population in Melbourne and across regional centres', with a reporting date of 31 December 2020. On 2 June 2020, the Speaker advised the House that the Committee had extended its reporting date to 30 June 2021.

Economy and Infrastructure Committee

The Economy and Infrastructure Committee worked on two inquiries during the reporting period, both referred by the Legislative Assembly on 1 May 2019.

Inquiry into sustainable employment for disadvantaged jobseekers

The terms of reference asked the Committee to consider the social and economic benefits of placing jobseekers facing disadvantage into sustainable employment. The Committee chose to expand the inquiry's scope to also look at the employment barriers these jobseekers face and how they can be addressed.

The Committee received 101 submissions to the inquiry and conducted eight days of public hearings from September 2019 to December 2019, including hearings in Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong, Shepparton and Warragul. The Committee cast its net wide, hearing

from a diverse range of disadvantaged jobseekers including young people, older jobseekers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, family violence survivors, and ex-offenders.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the Committee's final report, which will be tabled early in the next reporting period. The economic fallout from the pandemic has significantly intensified the barriers faced by disadvantaged jobseekers, increasing the importance of the Committee's work.

Inquiry into access to TAFE for learners with disability

The terms of reference ask the Committee to inquire into disabled learners' access to TAFE. The Committee commenced preliminary scoping and research for this inquiry and will call for submissions early in the next reporting period.

Legal and Social Issues Committee

Inquiry into early childhood engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities

On 28 May 2019, the Committee received from the House an inquiry into early childhood engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, with a tabling date of 30 June 2020. Early childhood was defined by the Committee as the period from birth to eight years, and engagement involves access to and participation in programs and services relating to health, learning, childcare, playgroups, family centres, sport and recreation, and local libraries.

In commencing the inquiry, the Committee made a commitment to encourage participation and seek the views of people from culturally diverse communities. It developed a number of strategies to promote the inquiry, including:

- an Easy English guide written in plain English with infographics to explain the role of the Committee, the inquiry's scope and how to make a submission;
- a poster that promoted the inquiry and how to make a submission (translated into 13 languages, including Arabic, Chin, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Dari, Dinka, Karen, Khmer, Punjabi, Persian, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese);
- creation of videos to promote the inquiry and how to make a submission in the languages of Dari, Chin, Karen and Somali; and
- consultation workshops with two multicultural playgroups to develop group submissions on their behalf with the assistance of interpreters and note takers.

The Committee also promoted the inquiry through a stakeholder mailout, a video featuring the Chair and Deputy Chair, newspaper advertisements and on Parliament's social media. The inquiry received 39 submissions from a broad range of stakeholders, including members of the community, local councils, and government and non-government organisations. The Committee held nine days of public hearings from October to December 2019 and attended site visits in greater metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Due to the circumstances arising in March 2020 around COVID-19, the reporting date was extended to 31 August 2020.

ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ (CALD) ਭਾਈਚਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤੀ ਬਚਪਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਮੂਲੀਅਤ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਂਚ-ਪੜਤਾਲ



ਵਿਕਟੋਰੀਆ ਦੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤੀ ਬਚਪਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਮੂਲੀਅਤ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਂਚ-ਪੜਤਾਲ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤੀ ਬਚਪਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਮੂਲੀਅਤ 0 ਤੋਂ 8 ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਉਮਰ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿਹਤ, ਸਿੱਖਿਆ, ਚਾਇਲਡਡੇਵਲਪਮੈਂਟ, ਪਲੇ ਗਰੁਪਸ, ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਕੇਂਦਰ, ਖੇਡਕੁਦ ਅਤੇ ਮਨੋਰੰਜਨ, ਅਤੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਅਸੀਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਤਜਰਬੇ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਜਾਣਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ:

- ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ? (ਕੁੱਝ ਉਦਾਹਰਨਾਂ ਹਨ: ਹੈਲਥ ਨਰਸਾਂ, ਕਿਡਰ, ਪਲੇਗਰੁਪ)
- ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ?
- ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ?
- ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ?

- ਕਿਹੜੀ ਚੀਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਗ ਲੈਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਦੀ ਹੈ?
- ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ?
- ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਬੱਚਾ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ?

ਨਿਵੇਦਨ (ਸਬਮਿਸ਼ਨ) ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਵਾਲ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਨਿਵੇਦਨ ਦੇਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਧੇਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ, ਇਹ ਵੈੱਬਸਾਈਟ ਵੇਖੋ:
parliament.vic.gov.au/caldchildinquiry

ਨਿਵੇਦਨ 11 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ 2019 ਤਕ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਲਿੱਖਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਸਵਾਲ ਹਨ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ **caldchildinquiry@parliament.vic.gov.au** ਤੇ ਈਮੇਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਂ **(03) 8682 2846** ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

ਸਾਰੇ ਨਿਵੇਦਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਨਤਕ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਬਸ਼ਰਤ ਕਿ ਗੋਪਨੀਯਤਾ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਦੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੋਵੇ।

Posters promoting the Inquiry into early childhood engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities were translated into 13 languages, including Punjabi (pictured).

Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoption in Victoria

The Committee also received from the House an inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria, with a tabling date of 31 December 2020.

A call for submissions was made on 6 November 2019 with a stakeholder mailout and advertisements placed in regional newspapers and on Parliament’s social media. Submissions were initially due on 3 February 2020, although numerous extensions were granted on request. Further, due to delays caused by COVID-19, the Committee extended the due date to 26 June 2020. As of 30 June 2020, the inquiry had received 73 submissions.

The Committee intended to commence public hearings in July 2020 in the traditional capacity (face-to-face), however, they were postponed due to social distancing restrictions. The Committee agreed that remote hearings would not be appropriate for this inquiry and that they would commence hearings once safe to do so.

Inquiry into anti-vilification protections

On 12 September 2019, the Committee received from the Legislative Assembly an inquiry into anti-vilification protections, with a tabling date of 1 September 2020. The main purpose of the inquiry is to examine the effectiveness of the operation and enforcement of the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)*, including whether to extend the protections beyond existing classes, and consider the role of the State in addressing online vilification.

The call for submissions was widely promoted through a stakeholder mailout, a video featuring the Chair and Deputy Chair, newspaper advertisements and on Parliament's social media. As of 30 June 2020, 59 submissions had been received from a range of government and non-government organisations, academics and members of the public.

In May, the Committee requested supplementary evidence from existing stakeholders regarding acts of vilification relating to COVID-19. The Committee received 12 additional submissions. Public hearings took place from February to June 2020, with hearings on 27 and 28 May, and 24 and 25 June conducted via Zoom as a result of COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.

DOMESTIC COMMITTEES

Privileges Committee

The Legislative Assembly Privileges Committee tabled three reports during the year. The first report, *Appointment of a Parliamentary Integrity Adviser*, was tabled on 29 August 2019. The details of this report and recommendation are detailed in the section on the Parliamentary Integrity Adviser later in this report.

On 31 October 2019, the Committee tabled its report *Dealing with alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct and the Register of Interests*. The Committee has a new role in considering allegations regarding Parts 3 and 4 of the *Members of Parliament (Standards) Act 1978* (the Act), following changes made to the Act in 2019. Part 3 of the Act relates to the Code of Conduct and Part 4 relates to the Register of Interests. Any member of Parliament, who considers that an Assembly member has contravened a requirement under Part 3 or 4 of the Act, may refer the alleged contravention to the Speaker. The Speaker must then determine whether to refer the alleged contravention to the Privileges Committee. The Act offers no guidance to the Committee on how it should deal with such a referral. Therefore, the Committee decided to develop guidelines to assist this Committee, and future Privileges Committees, to deal with referrals under s 30 of the Act.

On 14 November 2019, the Committee tabled its report *Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Cr Peter Clarke*. The report published Cr Peter Clarke's submission to statements referring to him made by the Member for Yan Yean, Danielle Green MP, during the grievance debate on 20 February 2019.

Standing Orders Committee

The Standing Orders Committee tabled its *Report on a review of the Standing Orders* on 14 November 2019. The report recommended a number of changes to standing orders, sessional orders and joint standing orders. The House agreed to and adopted the recommendations of the report on 27 November 2019. The detail of the changes is discussed earlier in this report.

Community engagement

AT A GLANCE



16,001
visitors on
public tours



380
visitors on
specialist tours



99.39%
satisfaction with
public tours



50
schools visited



16,762
school students
visited Parliament



99.97%
satisfaction with
school tours



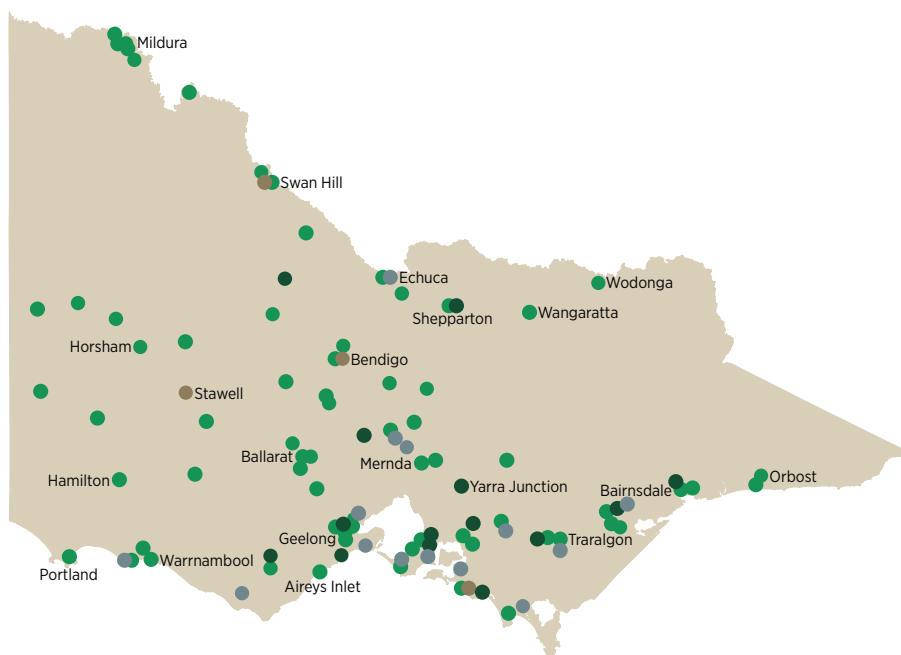
1,575
online incursion
participants

TOURS AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Our Tours and Customer Service Unit (TCSU) delivers a high standard tours program for the public and school groups. In person tour programs continued up to 23 March 2020, before they had to be halted due to COVID-19 restrictions. Up until then, 16,001 people had attended walk up public tours of the building. Visitors came from 89 countries with the top five countries of origin (aside from Australia) being China, USA, India, UK and Germany. One visitor was registered from each of the following countries: Morocco, Honduras, Isle of Man, Tanzania and Qatar.

The Unit also delivers a range of booked tours and school programs:

- 11,558 students came to Parliament House for a booked standard tour;
- 2,760 people from community organisations, adult learning, government departments or tertiary institutions came to Parliament House for a booked standard tour;
- 4,691 students attended role plays in the Legislative Assembly Chamber;
- 513 students and 202 visitors attended Question Time tours;
- TCSU staff conducted 50 visits to metropolitan schools, engaging with 1,475 students;
- TCSU staff visited Bendigo, Swan Hill, Stawell and Wonthaggi as part of its regional outreach program. The program delivered 37 role plays to 906 students. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, visits to Warrnambool and Wodonga were cancelled.



Map showing the locations of regional schools which participated in our school programs.

● School group tours ● Role plays ● Online incursions ● Regional visits

“ We were so happy with the presentation. The children got so much out of it and were really energised and full of questions once the session finished.

Teacher whose class participated in our online incursion

“ The guide was well informed and very intelligent—loved learning about her favourite parts of the building, it really added to the tour!

Participant on a Behind the Scenes Tour

ONLINE INCURSIONS

Due to COVID-19, we were forced to cancel all in person tours and education programs from 23 March 2020. Like most organisations, we quickly looked at ways to continue to deliver our programs in a remote format. The TCSU developed a 30-minute incursion designed for year 5 and 6 students titled *How a law is made in Victoria*. The incursion program was launched in the last week of May and 43 incursions were delivered to 1,575 year 5 and 6 students via the Webex platform by 30 June 2020. The online incursion program will be expanded to secondary schools in the second half of 2020.

SPECIALIST TOURS

We have added a new Behind the Scenes Tour to our specialist tour calendar, which also includes an Architecture Tour, Art Tour and Gardens Tour. Up until the end of March, the following number of visitors had attended these tours:

- Architecture Tour—77;
- Art Tour—48;
- Behind the Scenes Tour—58; and
- Gardens Tour—197.

We made a submission to the 2019 Victorian Tourism Award and Parliament House was announced as a finalist in the Cultural Tourism category. The award was judged on five criteria; tourism excellence, business planning, marketing, customer service and sustainability. A minimum score of 75 per cent was required to be a finalist.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION UNIT ACTIVITIES

This year was the first full year of implementing our latest four-year community engagement strategy. As community engagement is one of Parliament’s four strategic priorities, business units across the three parliamentary departments worked to deliver a range of experiences for the community, along with learning initiatives, news and information services, and community-based activities through partnerships.

A number of events held at Parliament House attracted a diverse audience, with a significant number of people indicating that it was their first visit to the building.

‘Extrasensory’ was one of the highlights, held in partnership with the Royal Society of Victoria, in August 2019, as part of National Science Week. It involved more than 200 scientists and other exhibitors showcasing their work in various rooms throughout Parliament House. The event attracted just over 1,000 people. More than 200 people completed an event feedback survey and of those, 99 per cent said they had never visited Parliament House before, 94 per cent said they would recommend the event to a friend, and 97 per cent said they learnt something new. The Royal Society of Victoria reported that a ‘vibrant, educational and successful event was achieved’.

Other events that connected with a diversity of people included the Deakin Oration for senior high school students, the Community Achiever awards for people working in social enterprises, and an International Women’s Day event for women participating in sport. Each of these events achieved the objective of bringing people of various backgrounds to Parliament to inform, involve and inspire them.

In our education work a highlight was the Parliament Prize competition for Victorian students. Previously offered to students in years 7 to 12, this year it was expanded to include students in years 5 and 6. The competition attracted a record number of entries, with 589 students participating from 113 schools across Victoria.



Left: 'Extrasensory' exhibits in Queens Hall.



Right: Promotional image for the 2020 Parliament Prize competition.

We also commenced a review of our education resources, working with our education advisory panel to assess how well the resources are meeting the curriculum, which resources need updating, and future resource needs. This resources review is due to be completed by December 2020.

Our social media following increased significantly during the year, as shown in the table below as at 30 June 2020. We exceeded our target of 10 per cent annual growth in social media following on all the platforms we use.

Channel	Following		Increase	
	30 June 2020	30 June 2019		
Facebook	70,027	52,150	17,877	34%
Instagram	4,766	2,674	2,092	78%
LinkedIn	7,903	5,755	2,148	37%
Twitter	6,964	6,139	825	13%
YouTube	1,315	1,024	291	28%

The increase in our social media following for each platform in 2019-20.

We used Facebook Live to stream events and, for the first time, a community forum discussing the outcomes from a committee inquiry report. The success of these initiatives has led us to plan for more Facebook Live events as an ongoing element of our community engagement program.

There was a 35 per cent increase in subscribers to our news alert service, growing to 2,356 subscribers. In addition, we had many hundreds of subscribers to news alerts covering specific committee inquiry topics.

We also focused on the accessibility of parliamentary information, working with a group of young Victorians who are deaf to produce a regular news bulletin in Auslan. Each edition of the bulletin has attracted several thousand views on our social media. Through this and other initiatives we maintained an emphasis on youth-led programs to build on our youth engagement work from previous years.

The State of the Future project saw a group of young Victorians undertake a consultation process with youth across Victoria on the issues of most concern to them. The report from that consultation was presented to a roundtable meeting with members and will inform future youth-focused activities for us. We also employed two youth associates to deliver youth-focused programs, including a leadership and mentoring

forum for young women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The two-day Women Engaged in Leadership forum (WE Lead), conducted in partnership with the Centre for Multicultural Youth, involved 60 young women who engaged with members and community leaders. It was rated 9.7 out of 10 by the 46 delegates (85 per cent) who completed evaluations.

Partnerships with regional leaders, tertiary institutions and multicultural groups were also developed further. A new partnership was established with the Eastern Community Legal Centre that saw the creation of our first community advisory panel to inform us on ways to more effectively engage with diverse communities. One of the initial outcomes of this ongoing project was a community consultation arranged for one of our parliamentary committees to help fill gaps in the information needed for a public inquiry on the conduct of elections.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the delivery of our face-to-face programs, including the cancellation of our Open Day scheduled for April 2020. We responded by developing a new online youth engagement initiative to be released in July 2020. We also developed a series of online tours of Parliament House that attracted thousands of views on social media. To ensure members could maintain their connections with schools during the pandemic, we also established the 'Ask an MP' program involving question and answer sessions between students and their local member of Parliament. Initial feedback from members and schools has been extremely positive, with the sessions continuing in the second half of 2020.

PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES

Our department provides a range of services to the public, including public tours, visitor management services, community engagement programs and information through our website. The Procedure Office also receives many of the calls through the Parliament switchboard that ask for general information about the government, tricky questions about Parliament, and the unusual questions that the switchboard is otherwise unsure about. Some of these questions are directly relevant to the Procedure Office's work. We have callers who want to know more about why an Act was made, and we guide them through sources such as second reading speeches, explanatory memoranda and SARC Alert Digests. We talk to people who are looking for a specific Act, or a speech, or to understand who is responsible for a particular area of government administration by navigating unfamiliar documents like the General Order.

Usually, we don't receive many calls about Government announcements, but that changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many Victorians had questions and a good number of them called the Parliament. We did our best to help people find the information they needed on government websites.

We also receive many calls that have nothing to do with our work, like how to nominate someone for an Australian honour. If we can answer it with a quick search, we will—in this case, with directions to the Governor-General's helpful 'nominate someone for honours' online form. The Procedure Office's work is not outreach in the traditional sense, but we approach every call with the attitude that if we can give someone a positive, helpful interaction with Parliament, then we will—regardless of whether or not it is something that is usually part of our jobs.

TWINNING PROGRAM

The Australian region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the professional body for parliamentarians, auspices a 'twinning' program in which Australian branches of the CPA are linked with Pacific parliaments. The twinning program aims to provide professional development for members and staff, work on matters of common concern, and promote shared interests. Twinning activities are largely funded through a trust fund maintained by the Australian branches, with some funding for some specific projects provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Victorian branch of the CPA is twinned with the parliaments of Fiji, Nauru and Tuvalu. The Speaker and Clerk met with their counterparts from those jurisdictions at the July 2019 Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference held in Brisbane and discussed areas of interest. With Nauru and Tuvalu both due to have elections in late 2019, new member orientation was top of mind.

Left: Hon Ros Spence MP, Hon Veena Bhatnagar, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, Ms Christine Couzens MP and Hon John Eren MP.



Right: Speaker of the Nauru Parliament, Mr Marcus Stephen (second from right) and a delegation from the Nauru Parliament.



FUNCTIONS, EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS HELD AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

We aim to make Parliament House as open to the public as possible, so all Victorians feel that it is their building. To achieve this, we facilitate the use of the building for a range of activities including community exhibitions and displays, public awareness campaigns, receptions and award ceremonies. We support the film friendly principles, and host a number of film projects that showcase our building and our state to a wider audience. The Assembly Chamber is also used for forums, mock parliamentary debates and education programs.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' Office plays a key role coordinating the logistics for these activities. This includes coordination with catering, buildings and grounds staff and the tours program to ensure these events can be held with minimal impact on other building users. All event organisers and visitors must also comply with Parliament's security requirements. Due to COVID-19, public access to Parliament House was not available from March 2020.

A full list of the events, exhibitions and filming projects coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office over the past year is in Appendix H.

“ I always imagined Parliament House as simply a group of politicians debating issues and relevant topics, but I never realised how many people worked behind the scenes to make Parliament run smoothly.

Jacob Cramer, Belgrave Heights Christian School

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The Parliament offers a work experience program for secondary students wishing to obtain knowledge and skills associated with parliamentary practice and procedure. The program, which attracts much interest from year 10 students, offers participants the opportunity to undertake a week’s work experience across a range of parliamentary work units.

In 2019–20, students spent time with their local member of Parliament and at the member’s electorate office, attended Question Time in both Houses and met with Chamber officers and staff. Four students were accommodated during the reporting year in various business units, including the Parliamentary Library, Hansard, and Security and Electorate Properties. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place during the reporting period, further programs were cancelled, including the placement of one student after only one day at Parliament House.

Students’ reflections on their week at Parliament House are featured in *On Notice*, Parliament’s staff newsletter. Students were particularly appreciative of the structured work experience program and the amount of time devoted by parliamentary staff to assist them during their week at Parliament.

Departmental initiatives

PARLIAMENT'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE 59TH PARLIAMENT

The Department works closely with the Department of the Legislative Council and Department of Parliamentary Services in achieving the Parliament's strategic directions. The directions are established early in each Parliament and reflect the objectives of the Presiding Officers and the Departments, and seek to be responsive to the needs of members and the Victorian community. For the life of the 59th Parliament, the strategic directions are:

- Supporting members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives
- Protecting the independence and integrity of Parliament
- Informing and engaging with the community
- Engaging with Victoria's First Peoples.

The Department sought to partner with members where practical in the design and delivery of projects in support of the strategic directions, which brought a different focus to our service delivery approach. Work towards the strategic directions is covered throughout this report.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS TO FULFIL THEIR ROLES AS ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Member induction and training resources

The key function of our Department is to support members in their roles in the House and on committees. As part of this, Chamber staff provide induction programs for new committee members and chairs when the committees are established. During the last 12 months, a project team has been working on the development of ongoing training resources and programs for members, particularly for when they change roles during a Parliament. We have always provided this service on request, but some members are not always aware of this, or are busy adapting to their new role and do not think to ask. We therefore intend to change our approach. We are developing a range of training options to cover each of the different parliamentary positions and we will proactively reach out to the member and discuss the possible training options when they take on the role.

The initial focus has been in the committee space. First time committee chairs, deputy chairs and members were interviewed about their experiences and the information, training and support they thought would be useful to those taking on a committee role. An audit of training and resources provided by each committee secretariat at the start of the Parliament was also undertaken. Based on this work, we developed a detailed training framework setting out the training options we would like to offer to new committee chairs, deputy chairs and members. The plan also identifies training we can provide to electorate officers to support their members in these roles. The project team has identified a number of additional resources we will progressively create, and we aim to have them in place prior to the start of the next parliament.

The next step will be to develop similar training options and resources for roles in the Houses, including ministers, shadow ministers, whips and independent members. We have also updated the guide we provide to acting speakers to focus more on the issues and points of order they are likely to deal with when they are in that role.

“ The key function of our Department is to support members in their roles in the House and on committees. ”

Procedure Guide

The Procedure Guide is an online resource available to members and their staff. It provides a practical overview of the main procedures for each House and for parliamentary committees. Assembly staff continually update the Procedure Guide as the rules of the House change throughout the 59th Parliament. This includes obtaining new example videos that help explain how processes play out in the House and in committees. Staff also identify technical improvements to make the Procedure Guide more user-friendly and periodically add new content.

Support for electorate officers

Once members were appointed to committees for the 59th Parliament, we initiated a program of electorate office visits. These visits aimed to provide electorate officers with information and advice to assist them to support their member in their role on a committee. To maximise the benefit of this opportunity, Procedure Office staff accompanied committee staff and provided information about the role of that Office.

During the visits, the following topics were discussed:

- who to contact for any questions regarding committees or parliamentary procedure;
- the role of committees and the function of the committee on which their member works; and
- the obligations of staff regarding confidentiality of committee and House documents.

Electorate office staff were also given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss any other matters of which they may be unsure. The visits were a great opportunity for both electorate office staff and Legislative Assembly staff to get to know each other's roles, and understand who to contact with queries and for support.

A project team also conducted an audit of resources and activities currently offered by the Department to electorate officers, including printed materials and online and phone information services.

Evaluation of member services

Last year's annual report noted that the Department had begun a program of asking members for short face-to-face feedback interviews. The questions covered various elements of the Assembly's services. These interviews continued through the reporting period, with members providing valuable and frank feedback. One of the themes emerging from the interviews was the members were not always aware of the services provided by the Department and, consequently, did not make effective use of them.

Realising that we needed to be clearer about the services the Department offers, rather than simply listing our operational teams and assuming members would access us if needed, a project team worked to describe the Department's key service areas:

- Member induction and continuous professional development
- 'Concierge' chamber services
- Front of house/front desk services
- Corporate and compliance advice
- Committee secretariat support
- Procedural advice.

The next steps will be to develop targeted questions about the services provided by each and use that data to define some new and more meaningful performance metrics. We will seek to continue this work in the next reporting period.

PROTECTING THE INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF PARLIAMENT

Implementation of changes to the committee system

In our 2018–19 annual report, we reported on significant changes to the committee system, which resulted in the number of joint investigatory committees reducing from nine to four and the establishment of three new Legislative Assembly standing committees.

The changes to the committee system meant that many staff who had been working for a joint committee needed to be reassigned to work on one of the new standing committees. After consultation with committee staff, we decided that the staffing structure for Assembly standing committees would mirror that of the abolished joint committees: one Committee Manager, one Research Officer and one Committee Administrative Officer. Affected staff were given the opportunity to nominate the committees that they would prefer to work on, and every effort was made to ensure they were allocated to one of their preferred committees. The reassignment process was completed by early July 2019 and committee staff immediately began their inquiry work.

Parliamentary Integrity Adviser

We reported in our last annual report that the two Houses had passed resolutions to establish a new role of Parliamentary Integrity Adviser (PIA). The PIA is responsible for providing independent, confidential and non-binding advice to members on personal matters and ethical issues concerning the exercise of their role as a member of Parliament.

The resolutions required the privileges committees of both Houses, to recruit and recommend a person for appointment as PIA. After meeting jointly, the two committees agreed that Ray Purdey, a former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and Clerk of the Parliaments, would be their recommendation. This was confirmed in reports tabled in the Assembly and Council on 29 August 2019. Later that day, the Assembly passed a motion to appoint Ray Purdey to the role from 1 September 2019. A message was immediately sent to the Council, and they agreed to the appointment the same day.

Every 12 months, the PIA must meet jointly with the two privileges committees and table a report in both Houses on his advisory and education functions and activities. The first of these reports is due to be tabled in August 2020.

New members' allowances system

As reported in last year's annual report, in March 2019 the Parliament passed legislation establishing the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal. In September 2019, the Tribunal handed down its first Determination relating to members' salaries and allowances. The making of this Determination triggered the commencement of a completely new framework for member entitlements. Implementing the new system was a significant task for the Parliament.

The key change under the new system was legislating the role of Relevant Officers. The framework moves responsibility for providing guidance about, and ensuring compliance with, the use of work-related allowances and the Budget from the Presiding Officers

“ The Parliamentary Integrity Adviser is responsible for providing independent, confidential and non-binding advice to members

to the three parliamentary department heads as Relevant Officers. It also establishes Compliance Officers attached to the Tribunal. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly is now the Relevant Officer in relation to work-related allowances paid to members of the Legislative Assembly. The role of the Relevant Officer is to determine whether a claim submitted by a member complies with the Act, the regulations, the Tribunal Guidelines and any other prescribed document.

The first Determination and related Guidelines adjusted the eligibility criteria for the travel allowance, commercial transport allowance and parliamentary accommodation sitting allowance. It also introduced a new international travel allowance, which replaced claims members could previously make against their Electorate Office and Communications Budget. This means administration of members' international travel claims has moved from the Department of Parliamentary Services to the House Departments. The new legislative scheme also introduced quarterly public reporting of members' work-related allowances and expenditure against the Budget.

We worked collaboratively with the Department of the Legislative Council and the Department of Parliamentary Services to put in place systems and processes to administer these new arrangements and communicate these changes to members. We have created new claim forms and established internal systems to assess and approve claims. With the other departments, we have also established a workflow to produce quarterly reports for review by members, and then to publish those reports on the Parliament of Victoria website.

Further information about the number of determinations made, and amounts paid in respect of each allowance, is published in the Department of Parliamentary Services annual report in accordance with the legislative requirements.

Disability Action and Inclusion Plan

The Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) began as a project for Parliament's 2018 emerging leaders program cohort. The plan aims to meet Parliament's obligations under existing legislation, be practical and achievable and promote Parliament as a disability friendly and inclusive organisation. The DAIP also identifies a range of actions to assist Parliament in becoming more accessible to people with a disability.

A working group made up of two members of the Parliamentary Management Group and nine staff across departments and work units was established in early 2019. Its role is to refine and finalise the plan and then implement the actions. The working group contacted peak disability resource organisations across the state to find experts to be part of an external reference panel. The panel is refining the DAIP, providing feedback and is a resource of information and experience for the working group. Representatives from the following organisations are part of the reference panel:

- Australian Network on Disability;
- Disability Advocacy Resource Unit;
- Office for Disability;
- Scope;
- Victorian Public Sector Commission (Disability Workforce and Engagement Branch);
- Voice at the Table.

The plan is almost finalised, and members of the internal working group have already started working on many of the actions and projects it includes. They have made a commitment to promote the DAIP and the importance of disability access to their units and departments at every opportunity.

Improved reporting on the Department's activities

Over the last 12 months, a project team has been working on ways we can be more transparent and accountable about the activities of the Department and how we allocate our resources. Currently, we are required to report quarterly to the Department of Treasury and Finance on certain output measures determined by the Government. These are also reported in this report in Appendix A. However, the Parliament is an independent branch of government and should not be accountable to the Executive. It is more appropriate that we report back to the people to whom we provide services and support—members of Parliament and the public—and to our own staff.

Our key method of reporting back to members and the public is this annual report, which is tabled in the House. We have therefore explored ways we can improve the content of this report. There are two main areas of focus—being more open and transparent about how we spend the money provided to us by the Parliament through the annual parliamentary appropriation bill, and improved performance measures to demonstrate what we have achieved and the levels of satisfaction with the services we provide.

As a step towards the first aim, we have restructured our internal cost centres for 2020–21, to break down our expenditure under the key service delivery areas of the Department—the Clerk's Office, the Procedure Office and the Tours and Customer Service Unit. This will enable us to report in next year's annual report how much we spend on each of these areas. Prior to this year, we already provided a breakdown of expenditure by each of the joint investigatory committees. We have continued this practice for the newly established Assembly Standing Committees, and Appendix F provides a breakdown of expenditure by each of these committees, which are funded from the Department of the Legislative Assembly's budget.

We are still in the process of developing improved performance measures to achieve the second aim. We have a number of systems in place to seek feedback from members on the services we provide, including surveys and one-on-one interviews with members. To close the feedback loop, we will look at ways to report these results back to members and the actions we are taking to address areas for improvement. The Tours and Customer Service Unit has a range of systems in place to monitor the quantity and quality of services it delivers. Some of these results, and quotes from the verbatim feedback from participants, are captured on pages 19 and 20.

INFORMING AND ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Engaging members in our community engagement activities

We continue to explore ways to involve members in our engagement with the community. A project team held a series of face-to-face 'drop-in' sessions on sitting days to seek input from members about how we could include them in our programs or assist them to provide information about Parliament to groups in their communities. The sessions were well attended and received positively by members. Based on their feedback, we have prepared simplified key points on features of Parliament House for members to refer to while hosting visitors at the precinct, and we have started examining and reviewing school and classroom resources with a view to preparing resources for members.

Expanding our community outreach

Maximise the Impact of your Submissions workshop

A team of staff across committees developed a workshop to provide information and training to the community sector about writing effective submissions. The Maximise the Impact of your Submissions workshop was designed to be practical and highly interactive, covering:

- the inquiry process;
- the value of making a submission;
- the dos and don'ts of submission writing; and
- how to maximise the impact of submissions.

Following a social media campaign by the Parliament and the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS), the first workshop, scheduled for March 2020, was quickly booked out. Unfortunately, the workshop was unable to proceed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The workshop will be run face-to-face as soon as practicable, but in the meantime, committee staff will focus on designing and delivering an engaging and interactive online alternative to complement the in-person workshop.

Customised information and engagement activities for community groups

As part of our business plan, we established project teams to look at ways we can provide customised information and engagement activities for community groups. The teams initially audited the resources and information services we currently offer to community groups and through public inquiries. They will continue to explore the best way to provide tailored services to these groups and promote our community engagement services to them. We are also looking at ways we can collaborate with local councils.

Community engagement with regional communities

Two of the Environment and Planning Committee's regional public hearings provided an opportunity to increase our community engagement with regional communities. On the evenings of 11 and 12 February in Mooroopna and Wangaratta, committees and Tours and Customer Service Unit staff delivered information sessions on the Parliament and the role of committees. Audience members asked a range of insightful questions and they also had the opportunity to take their own photographs with a replica of the mace and wear a reproduction of the ceremonial robes formerly worn by the Serjeant-at-Arms.

During the Committee's Mooroopna public hearing on 12 February, Tours and Customer Service Unit staff delivered information sessions to approximately 100 Grade 5 and 6 students from Bouchier Street Primary School. The session was held in a hall in the same facility as the Committee's public hearing so that the students could then go into the public gallery in groups of 25 to 30 at a time to observe part of the hearing. The students were well engaged throughout both the presentation and their time in the public gallery.

Parliament of Victoria website redevelopment

The Parliament of Victoria is redeveloping its website to make it easier to navigate, simple to understand and more relevant and engaging. Our aim is to build a website that meets the diverse information needs of all Victorians. The Information Technology Unit in the Department of Parliamentary Services is leading the project, with input from members, the public and parliamentary staff.

Legislative Assembly staff have participated in a range of working group and planning sessions that have looked at customer journey mapping, developing new information architecture (site navigation) as well as the look and feel of the new site. Once the planning stage is complete, work will commence on building the new website, which will hopefully go live in the first half of 2021.

Social media improvements

Parliament has a significant social media presence, which we use to inform, educate and engage with all Victorians about the Parliament's role and activities. With the Parliament House building closed to the public since March 2020, informing the public about parliamentary sittings and committee work through social media has been particularly important. Parliament's social media following continues to grow, and we hope to continue that growth across all sections of the Victorian community.

We are currently reviewing our social media strategy to look at the best way we can use the different platforms to engage with the public. This work has included the identification of audiences we are hoping to engage with through each platform, so we can tailor our posts to that audience's needs. We are also using strategies to target posts at sections of the community who may be interested in them. This has proved particularly effective for committees, where we can target specific stakeholder groups to increase their awareness of, and engagement with, inquiries that may be of interest to them.

ENGAGING WITH VICTORIA'S FIRST PEOPLES

Reconciliation Action Plan

The 2019–20 parliamentary officer emerging leaders group was tasked with initiating work toward a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the departments of the Parliament of Victoria. Following guidelines issued by Reconciliation Action Australia, the development of a RAP occurs in a number of stages progressively over time, usually taking a number of years. The first stage of development is the 'Reflect' RAP. As part of this process, the emerging leaders group made contact with Reconciliation Action Australia and registered the parliamentary departments' participation in the program. Initial work on development of the Reflect RAP has commenced, and the departments have participated in a RAP 'barometer' or survey to obtain baseline data that will inform RAP stages going forward. Progress on the Reflect RAP will continue into the 2020–21 reporting period.

“ The first stage of development is the 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan.

Cultural awareness training for staff

To ensure all Assembly staff had a level of cultural competence in understanding issues affecting and important to indigenous Victorians, the Department engaged renowned filmmaker, musician and educator, Richard Frankland, to provide cultural awareness training for all Assembly employees in October and November 2019. Mr Frankland had previously provided the same training workshops for Council staff. The Speaker also attended the training. In reflecting on what they had learnt during the workshops, many staff commented that it was the most useful and meaningful professional development of their careers.

Commemorative wreath on display

From 2006 until 2019 Aunty Dot Peters, who passed away in September 2019, created a wreath made of gum leaves to commemorate, honour and remember the Aboriginal service men and women who served and continue to serve in the Australian Defence Force. To honour Aunty Dot's memory, Wayne McGinness, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander man, created a unique steel sculpture that is currently on display in the Vestibule at Parliament House. The sculpture respects the original design of the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee logo, with Wayne also adding his own creativity to the design elements. This sculpture was a collaborative project with Aboriginal Victoria and Dreamtime Art, trusted advisors for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and Culture.



The Wreath sculpture was commissioned by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, created by Mr Wayne 'Liwingu' McGinness under the management of Dreamtime Art and based on the artwork of Ms Nina Kelabora.

Photography credit: Dreamtime Art

An efficient, resilient, sustainable Parliament

TECHNOLOGY

New legislation website

In early 2020, the new Victorian legislation website went live. It is still at www.legislation.vic.gov.au but has a fresh new look. The website was updated as part of the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Single Digital Presence project. Assembly and Council staff were closely involved with the project as we have a role in publishing bill information on the site. We release the bills to the site as soon as they are public, upload amendments and update the status of bills.

The refreshed site was the result of many months' work. We helped the developers understand how the old site worked and the requirements of its many and varied users. We then spent much of January and February testing the new system and checking the migrated data. Bills and their history back to 1996 were migrated to the new site. We are still working on some improvements and minor fixes.

Parliamentary Information Management System

The Parliamentary Information Management System (PIMS) is a custom-designed information management software developed specifically for parliaments. PIMS is already in use in several other Australian parliaments and the Victorian Parliament is progressively implementing various modules for our business processes. This year, the Assembly and Council departments jointly commenced work on two modules.

Questions and responses database

The parliamentary questions module will replace our existing questions and responses database. It will include questions on notice, constituency questions, and adjournment matters, together with the corresponding responses. We will be able to use the new database to draft and track questions behind the scenes and then publish them to the Parliament's website. Once published, members, their staff and the public will be able to track and search questions and responses online.

We started the project by documenting our existing processes and identifying areas for improvement. This built on work from last year, when we surveyed and interviewed our customers about their requirements. We then met with the developers to complete a gap analysis. The developers had already worked extensively with the New South Wales Parliament on this module, so this analysis involved identifying how the Victorian requirements were different from New South Wales and what changes were required.

The developers are building the new database in a series of 'sprints', which we are progressively testing. We are also creating new website pages for publishing the content online. The new database will go live in 2020–21.

Committees module

The committees module will enable us to easily manage information about committees and their inquiries. Public information will be immediately uploaded onto the committees' pages on the Parliament website, enabling us to publish this information more quickly and efficiently. It will also be a valuable record keeping tool, allowing us to keep an ongoing record of information on all committees including membership, meetings, submissions and inquiries.

A team of committee staff has been working on the project with Parliament’s IT team. The group consulted with New South Wales on the pros and cons of the New South Wales module and continue to meet with the developers to discuss our business processes and tailor the product for our needs. We anticipate that it will be ready for use by the end of 2020.

Records management

One of the key responsibilities of the Department is to safely and securely store the House’s original records in conditions suitable for their long-term preservation. As a result of changes to the use of Parliament House over time, we are currently without a permanent storage area for the Assembly’s original papers and they are temporarily being stored at 55 St Andrews Place. We are working with the Department of Parliamentary Services to identify a permanent home for these records within Parliament House and hope to progress this soon.

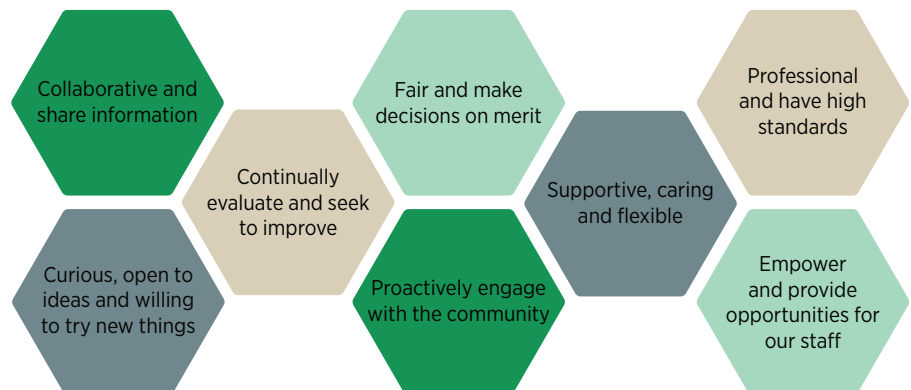
In addition to the House’s original records, the Department also keeps a range of administrative records related to its day-to-day functions. Over the past 12 months, we have reviewed the Department’s business classification system and streamlined and simplified it. We have also reorganised our records, so more records are kept centrally rather than by individual staff or business units. The move to remote working in response to COVID-19 has also accelerated our progression towards almost exclusively digital record keeping for new records, noting the Clerk also retains a significant number of hard copy procedural records, some of which date back over 100 years. These changes are helping us find records quicker and reduce duplication.

CAPABILITY AND CULTURE

Strengthening our culture

A key focus for the Department over the past 12 months has been defining the Department’s identity and strengthening our culture.

One of the first steps was a discussion at the Department’s business planning day about the Department’s values and what we want to achieve. From that discussion, we developed a shared commitment to the basis on which we work together and interact with others. We agreed we want to be:



The values the Department is committed to model when working together and interacting with others.

To work out how to do this effectively, and to track our progress, we needed to work out where our starting point is. We therefore undertook a baseline survey of all staff to rate the Department against each of these statements. We also asked staff for input into what actions we could take as a department to improve, and suggest things we should stop doing, keep doing and start doing.

“ A key focus for the Department over the past 12 months has been defining the Department’s identity and strengthening our culture.

We shared the results of the survey with all staff and formed a project team of staff across the Department to discuss improvement activities. The team prioritised the areas where the Department rated lowest. Some of the actions coming out of these discussions included:

- offering one-on-one discussions with senior managers to discuss feedback;
- asking for staff input into items for the agenda of senior management meetings and sharing summaries of those meetings with all staff;
- greater use of expressions of interest for project teams and professional development opportunities; and
- more regular but shorter departmental staff meetings.

We also encouraged teams to regularly discuss these values at team meetings and to call out staff and managers if they are not applying the Department’s values when making decisions.

In May, we conducted a follow-up survey to assess the views of staff in the Department on our progress and to determine the impact of the actions taken. The response rate for the follow up survey was higher, with 30 respondents in May 2020 compared to 21 respondents in August 2019, which hopefully showed increased staff engagement in the process. The results showed progress had been made in six areas and stayed roughly the same in two.

Staff were again asked to provide specific feedback about things we should stop doing, keep doing and start doing. The project team discussed these suggestions and prepared responses to all of the comments, stating what action the Department would take or giving reasons why action would not be taken. The results and feedback were again shared with all Assembly staff.

The Department of the Legislative Assembly



Comparison of staff survey results rating the Department on key values in 2020 and 2019.

■ May 2020 average ■ August 2019 average

We view this as a continual improvement project. We will continue to monitor our progress and explore further opportunities for change and improvement as part of our 2020–21 business plan.

Engaging members in assessing and revitalising our service approach

The strategic directions have a focus on member-centric services. For the Assembly, this has involved a greater level of engaging with members on the design and delivery of Departmental services than in the past. In reviewing the data from the earlier member feedback interviews, it was apparent to the project team working on this issue that while the Department provided many services to members and electorate officers, there was a lack of awareness amongst those groups of the services provided, and how to make good use of them. For example, unless a member had prior experience with the Procedure Office staff drafting a motion for them, members were generally unaware they could ask the staff to do this for them.

The project team concluded that the first step to revitalising the Assembly's service approach was to promote awareness of the Department's services so that their usefulness to members could be assessed properly. This meant some very basic changes such as updating and refocussing intranet information; liaising with colleagues in the Department of Parliamentary Services team; and using electorate officer induction sessions to connect with staff who support members in their work.

The Department sought input from Assembly members in the design of the 2020–21 business plan and will explore ways to report back to members on progress against the targets members identified as of most value to them.

Leadership and professional development programs

Leadership programs

We have continued our commitment to and investment in professional development programs for our staff. A number of these programs have focussed on strengthening the leadership skills within our department.

At a senior management level, the Clerk's Office participated in a series of team dynamics workshops. The workshops focused on learning more about each other's personality and communication styles, to enhance the team's working relationships. For our business unit managers, we initiated a Legislative Assembly Leadership Program titled *Leading Innovation, Engagement and Positive Impact*. This program is focussing on leadership capabilities and skills that are critical within a highly challenging and complex environment. Topics have included leading for innovation, looking at moving beyond engaging our internal stakeholders to also engage externally with the Victorian community, and exploring some effective strategies and approaches to fostering positive impact. The program comprises workshops, one-on-one coaching and peer-to-peer learning.

Two staff from the Department also participated in an emerging leaders program with two staff from the Department of the Legislative Council and four staff from the Department of Parliamentary Services. In addition to a series of workshops and coaching sessions, the emerging leaders group was also given a project to develop Parliament's Reconciliation Action Plan, which is discussed earlier in this report.

“ We have continued our commitment to and investment in professional development programs for our staff.

Professional development programs

We aim to offer professional development opportunities for all staff in our Department. Given parliamentary staff work in a unique environment, we decided to offer a customised program where staff across the business units could come together, discuss their experiences and learn from each other. After consultation with the Parliament's Learning and Development team, we engaged a provider to facilitate a series of workshops, which we named *Extending Yourself, Building Relationships and Strengthening Culture*.

The workshops comprise four half-day sessions, the first of which was held in May 2020 and the final session will be conducted in August 2020. There are 17 Assembly staff participating in the program, which covers topics such as creating a positive culture, understanding and managing behaviour and leading and managing yourself. It was originally intended that the sessions would be conducted in person but due to COVID-19 restrictions, all the sessions have been provided online via Zoom. The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. In particular, they have appreciated the opportunity to work with staff across the Department with whom they may not usually interact.

Project teams

Following a review of our business planning process, we took a different approach to delivering on items in the Assembly business plan this year. Rather than allocate projects to particular people or teams, we decided to put together cross-departmental teams to work on them. Staff were invited to nominate for projects that they wanted to contribute to. Rather than limiting staff to projects that directly related to their day-to-day work, staff could nominate for projects in an area they wanted to learn more about, or where they had skills they thought could contribute to the success of the project. It was also an opportunity to meet and collaborate with staff from other business units that they may not otherwise interact with. The model achieved most of its aims, although it worked better for some projects than for others. We will make some modifications to the process and continue it for the Assembly's 2020–21 business plan.

Graduate program

The parliamentary departments engaged a graduate at the start of 2020 as part of the Victorian Government graduate program. This was the first time since 2005 that we have participated in the program. The scheme provides an entry point for graduates into the public service and includes a structured learning and development and mentoring program. The program usually involves graduates rotating between three different government departments, but we have instead decided to rotate our graduate between the three parliamentary departments. The first placement was in the Legislative Assembly Procedure Office, second in the People Services Unit of the Department of Parliamentary Services, and the third placement will be in the Department of the Legislative Council.

SAFETY, RISK AND GOVERNANCE

Parliament House building works

A number of significant building projects continue throughout the parliamentary precinct. The most obvious to the public is the final stages of the stonework restoration project, with scaffolding covering one side of Parliament House. After years of planning and design, construction has also commenced on the final stage of the east wing

renovation of Parliament House. This project will provide safer and more accessible facilities that meet contemporary health and safety standards for visitors to Parliament House, members and parliamentary staff.

A significant refurbishment of Assembly ministerial offices was completed during the 2019–20 year, with four ministerial offices completed along with a new meeting room. This involved the reallocation of meeting rooms to accommodate the displaced ministers, and measures to ensure that safety in staff workplaces was maintained while the works were underway. Minor works were also completed on the Premier's suite and the Speaker's Adviser's office and windows were replaced in the Procedure Office.

Arrangements for committee public hearings

We usually use the Legislative Council Committee Room (LCCR) and Federation Room, two of the largest rooms at Parliament House, for committee public hearings with a high public profile. However, these rooms have become unavailable due to the impact of building works. Smaller hearing rooms remain available at 55 St Andrews Place for public hearings, but they are not as suitable for hearings needing large public galleries.

To address this situation, in early 2020 we constructed a new purpose-built committee hearing room at 55 St Andrews Place. The new room combines meeting rooms G1 and G2 into one large room capable of seating committees with large memberships and a large public gallery. Hansard broadcasting have installed all necessary cabling and cameras to allow video broadcasting of hearings and committees to conduct meetings by video conference. The room is permanently set up for hearings to be broadcast, eliminating the need for Hansard to spend many hours setting up a room such as the LCCR with portable equipment.

We have also improved security arrangements now that more hearings are being held at 55 St Andrews Place.

Committees work area refurbishment

We have completed the refurbishment of the committee staff work area on Level 3 at 55 St Andrews Place. The project commenced in 2017 with the aim of providing a more modern, user-friendly and occupational health and safety compliant work environment for our committee staff.

The project has involved:

- providing all committee staff with a sit-stand desk;
- new carpet throughout Level 3;
- improved offices for committee managers with glass panels for more natural light and better sound proofing;
- a new breakout area for staff;
- improved quiet rooms with better facilities and sound proofing; and
- improved meeting room facilities.

We commenced planning for the fourth and final stage of the refurbishment, which included most of the western side of the floor, in August 2019. Construction was completed in March 2020. This final stage included upgrading facilities and workspaces of four committee secretariats and five offices. We also built a new meeting room with video conferencing facilities to provide another option for committee meetings on the parliamentary precinct. The meeting room can also be converted into office space for an additional committee secretariat if required.

Visitor management improvements

We continually review visitor management procedures in Parliament House. We made changes to procedures for issuing visitor identification and made adjustments around the building works at the vestibule entrance. Toward the end of the year, the introduction of COVID-19 requirements resulted in a number of changes to the control of movement through Parliament House by all building users.

Emergency management

In collaboration with the other parliamentary departments, an external company conducted an update of emergency evacuation plans and diagrams throughout Parliament House and the annex, and a revision of the emergency management manual was completed toward the end of 2019–20. We also made temporary adjustments to emergency management procedures in response to building works and reviewed the emergency warden structure. Work will continue on the new warden structure in 2020–21.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

REPORTS ON OUTPUT MEASURES

Department of the Legislative Assembly

Output/Deliverable	Target	Actual
Quantity		
Procedural references updated biannually	2	2
Regional visits to schools to conduct parliamentary role plays	5	4 ¹
Quality		
Bills and amendments processed accurately through all relevant stages in compliance with constitutional requirements and standing orders	100%	100%
Member satisfaction that advice is responsive, prompt, clear and objective	80%	95% ²
Teacher satisfaction with tours of Parliament for school groups	95%	100%
Timeliness		
Documents tabled within time guidelines	90%	100%
House documents available one day after sitting day	100%	100%
Online information relating to bills updated within one day	95%	100%
Cost		
Total output cost (\$ million)	40.6	37.1

- 1 Visits to regional schools were not possible from March 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Four out of five visits were completed prior to restrictions being imposed.
- 2 We take great pride in the timeliness and accuracy of advice given to members, and we are pleased with this result. However, there may be occasions where errors are made, resulting in member dissatisfaction, though we take care to prevent this. There can be circumstances where members may not be satisfied with the advice we give, despite its accuracy and timeliness. This is particularly the case where members wish to use parliamentary procedure as part of political tactics and we need to advise that their proposal or strategy is not allowable or procedurally correct. Taking into account the subjective nature of the target, we consider 80% to be a high benchmark.

Joint Investigatory Committees

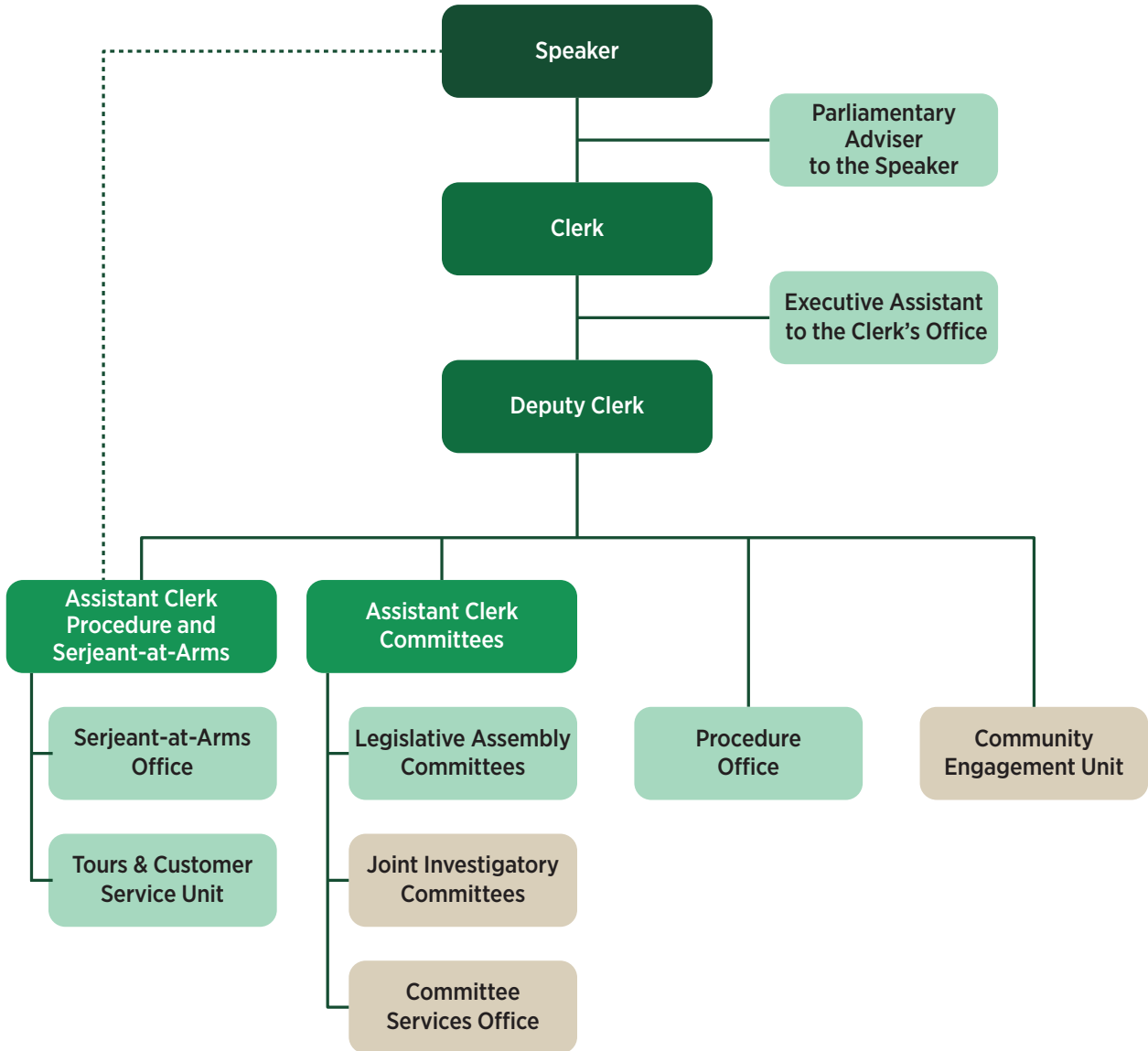
Output/Deliverable	Target	Actual
Quantity		
Reports tabled per annum	28	18 ¹
Quality		
Committee members satisfied that advice about procedure, research and administration is responsive, clear, objective and prompt	80%	100% ²
Inquiries conducted and reports produced in compliance with procedural and legislative requirements	95%	100% ³
Timeliness		
Reports tabled in compliance with procedural and legislative deadlines	95%	100% ⁴
Cost		
Total output cost (\$ million)	5.7	5.7

- 1 This figure is due to a reduction in the number of joint investigatory committees from nine in the 58th Parliament to four in the current Parliament. The COVID-19 pandemic also resulted in some changes to reporting dates.
- 2 This measure was based on a confidential survey in May 2020 of joint investigatory committee members. Due to the sometimes political nature of committee work, members may not always be satisfied with advice even when it is accurate. For 2019–20 members' satisfaction with the quality and responsiveness of committees advice has exceeded our expectations.
- 3 This figure is a credit to the procedural knowledge of our committees' staff.
- 4 This figure is a credit to the business processes in the committee office.

APPENDIX B

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Department of the Legislative Assembly organisational chart



The Speaker

The Speaker is the principal office holder in the Legislative Assembly. The main elements of the role are chairing meetings of the Legislative Assembly, representing the Assembly at State and other official occasions, responsibility as the administrative head of the Department and, jointly with the President, of the Department of Parliamentary Services.

The current Speaker, the Hon Colin Brooks MP, was elected on 7 March 2017, having represented the Electorate of Bundoora since 2006. He was re-elected on 19 December 2018.

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Bridget Noonan joined the Department in 1999 to work in the Procedure Office, and subsequently worked in a number of roles within the Office. She was appointed Assistant-Clerk Committees in 2006, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Sergeant-at-Arms in 2011 and became Deputy Clerk in 2013. In September 2017, Bridget was appointed as Acting Clerk and became Clerk in January 2019. Bridget has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from Melbourne University.

Chamber Officers

Robert McDonald, Deputy Clerk

Robert re-joined the Department in August 2013 as Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms, having previously worked in the Procedure Office from 2004 to 2007. Robert was Manager, Chamber Support in the Legislative Council from 2007 to 2011 and Secretary to the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Economy and Infrastructure from 2011 to 2013. In November 2017, Robert was appointed Deputy Clerk. Robert has a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Science from Melbourne University.

Vaughn Koops, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms

Vaughn joined the joint investigatory committees as a research officer in 2003, and from 2005, worked as executive officer to five joint committees prior to his appointment as Assistant Clerk Committees in 2014. He was appointed Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms in July 2016. Vaughn has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts (1st class Hons) from Auckland University and a Doctor of Philosophy from Melbourne University.

Paul Groenewegen, Assistant Clerk Committees

Paul joined the Department in 2009 in the newly created position of Manager, Tours and Customer Service Unit. In January 2018, Paul was appointed Assistant Clerk Committees. Paul has a Bachelor of Arts from La Trobe University and a Graduate Certificate in Management from Swinburne University of Technology.

APPENDIX C

BRANCH ROLES

Clerk's Office

The Clerk's Office is responsible for the general management of the Legislative Assembly. This includes the provision of expert policy, procedural and corporate management advice to the Speaker. In addition, the Office is responsible for advising members on matters relating to the operation of the Legislative Assembly and its committees.

Separate to the advisory role is the requirement of the Clerk and the Office to record the decisions and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, and to ensure the passage of legislation is in accordance with legislative and procedural requirements. The Office also coordinates the arrangements for visiting parliamentary delegations.

Committee Office

The Legislative Assembly has established three new standing committees for the 59th Parliament:

- Economy and Infrastructure Committee;
- Environment and Planning Committee; and
- Legal and Social Issues Committee.

The *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* sets out the functions and powers of joint investigatory committees. Joint investigatory committees comprise members of both Houses and are administered by one House or the other. There are currently four joint investigatory committees, two of which are administered by the Department of the Legislative Assembly:

- Public Accounts and Estimates Committee; and
- Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee.

The Assembly also has two domestic select committees appointed by resolution for the duration of the Parliament that work on domestic matters or procedures of the House:

- Privileges Committee; and
- Standing Orders Committee.

Committee secretariat staff provide administrative, procedural and research support to the parliamentary committees administered by the Legislative Assembly. This includes coordinating public hearings and submissions, and writing briefing papers and reports. The Committee Services Office provides centralised administrative and corporate support to all committees. The Assistant Clerk Committees oversees this work, briefs the Speaker on committee operations, ensures compliance with relevant Acts, standing orders, Presiding Officers' directives and accepted practices and procedures, and monitors committee expenditure.

Serjeant-at-Arms' Office

The Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms is, by custom, a long-established high profile position recognised in Westminster-style Parliaments. The position has existed in Victoria since the establishment of the first Legislative Assembly in 1856. As Principal Executive Officer to the Speaker, the role includes responsibility for ceremonial events; member services including Parliament House accommodation, allowances and travel; and the security of the Chamber. In addition, the Office provides accreditation for all media representatives operating within Parliament.

The Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms also undertakes procedural research and project management, and assists at the Table on sitting days and with the production of House documents.

Tours and Customer Service Unit

Reporting to the Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms, the Unit conducts community engagement programs such as public tours and presentations to school groups. With a major focus on programs for school children, including at VCE level, staff give presentations and deliver role plays both at Parliament House and by attending schools in metropolitan and regional Victoria. Staff also deliver specialist tours at Parliament House, including an architecture tour, an art tour, and an express photographic tour. In addition, the Unit provides mail and other support services including support to the Chamber on sitting days.

Procedure Office

The Procedure Office provides administrative and research support to the Chamber and senior officers within the Department. The Office is responsible for answering inquiries from the Department's customers, including members, the media, government departments and the public. In addition, staff are responsible for the publication and distribution of House documents. This role includes ordering and proofreading the various prints of bills, preparing Acts of Parliament for royal assent, processing reports submitted for tabling and archiving parliamentary documents.

Staff undertake research and produce general reference material for the use of parliamentary staff and the Speaker on the various authorities, practices and procedures of the Legislative Assembly. One of the Department's major procedural authorities, Legislative Assembly Practice Manual, is also produced by Procedure Office staff, in consultation with the clerks. More specific research is undertaken to provide procedural solutions where precedents are lacking.

Community Engagement and Education Unit

The Community Engagement and Education Unit coordinates the delivery of community engagement activities across the Parliament in accordance with the community engagement strategy, provides communications services across the Parliament and delivers education resources in the community. The Unit is supported by staff from across the parliamentary departments.

APPENDIX D

COMPARATIVE WORKFORCE DATA

The following tables disclose the head count and full-time staff equivalent (FTE) of all active employees of the Department, employed in the last full pay period in June of the current reporting period, and in the last full pay period in June of the previous reporting period.

Head count and full-time staff equivalent—all active employees (2020 and 2019)¹

	All active employees (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)	
	June 2020	June 2019	June 2020	June 2019
Gender				
Male	21	18	20.6	17.6
Female	37	32	32.6	30.4
Self-described	0	0	0	0
Age group				
Under 25	2	1	1.2	0.6
25-34	21	14	19.6	14
35-44	12	12	11.2	11.6
45-54	16	16	14.6	15.2
55-64	6	6	5.6	5.6
Over 64	1	1	1	1
Classification				
VPS 1	0	0	0	0
VPS 2	4	11	3.6	10.2
VPS 3	25	14	21.2	13
VPS 4	5	3	5	3
VPS 5	15	12	14.4	12
VPS 6	7	8	7	7.8
Executives	2	2	2	2
TOTAL	58	50	53.2	48

¹ The table excludes staff on leave without pay and staff seconded to other departments.

Head count and full-time staff equivalent—breakdown for ongoing employees and fixed term and casual employees (2020 and 2019)¹

	Ongoing employees ²						Fixed term and casual employees				
	Full-time (head count)		Part-time (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)		Number (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)		
	June 2020	June 2019	June 2020	June 2019	June 2020	June 2019	June 2020	June 2019	June 2020	June 2019	
Gender											
Male	17	16	1	1	17.6	16.6	3	1	3	1	
Female	25	23	7	5	29	26.4	5	4	3.6	4	
Self-described	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Age group											
Under 25	0	0	1	1	0.6	0.6	1	0	0.6	0	
25-34	14	10	3	0	15.6	10	4	4	4	4	
35-44	9	10	1	2	9.6	11.6	2	0	1.6	0	
45-54	13	13	2	2	14.2	14.2	1	1	0.4	1	
55-64	5	5	1	1	5.6	5.6	0	0	0	0	
Over 64	1	1	0	0	1	1.0	0	0	0	0	
Classification											
VPS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
VPS 2	3	9	1	2	3.6	10.2	0	0	0	0	
VPS 3	15	8	6	3	18.6	10	4	3	2.6	3	
VPS 4	4	3	0	0	4	3	1	0	1	0	
VPS 5	11	10	1	0	11.4	10	3	2	3	2	
VPS 6	7	7	0	1	7	7.8	0	0	0	0	
Executives	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL	42	39	8	6	46.6	43	8	5	6.6	5	

1 The table excludes staff on leave without pay and staff seconded to other departments.

2 Ongoing employees means people engaged on an open ended contract of employment who were active in the last full pay period of June 2020.

APPENDIX E

STAFF LISTING AS AT 30 JUNE 2020¹

Clerk's Office

Bridget Noonan, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Robert McDonald, Deputy Clerk
Paul Groenewegen, Assistant Clerk Committees
Natalie Osborne, Executive Assistant, Clerk's Office

Serjeant-at-Arms' Office

Vaughn Koops, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms
Sarah Cox, Assistant Chamber Officer
Helen Dorian, Personal Assistant to the Serjeant-at-Arms

Tours and Customer Service Unit

Pablo Diaz, Manager	Jane Flanagan, Tours and Outreach Officer
Bronwyn Gray, Tours and Outreach Coordinator	Craig Foster, Tours and Outreach Officer
Mark Smith, Tours and Outreach Coordinator	Michael Gigliotti, Mail and Printing Officer
Steph Blackshaw, Tours and Outreach Officer	Michael Gruschel, Tours Booking Officer
Baron Campbell-Tennant, Tours and Outreach Officer	Amy MacKintosh, Tours and Outreach Officer
Rosie Cobb, Tours and Outreach Officer	David Robertson, Tours and Outreach Officer
Michael Cutrupi, Tours and Outreach Officer	Jeremy Walsh, Personal Assistant to the Speaker

Speaker's Office

Jason McDonald, Parliamentary Adviser to the Speaker

Procedure Office

Kate Murray, Manager

Papers Section

Liesel Dumenden, Parliamentary Officer
Danielle Broadhurst, Customer Service Officer
Megan Rocke, Customer Service Officer

Table Section

Stefanie Tardif, Senior Parliamentary Officer
Liam Moran, Parliamentary Officer
Serah Balasuriya, Administrative Officer

Community Engagement and Education Unit

Glenn Jeffrey, Assistant Manager
Gaya Subramaniam, Community Partnerships Coordinator

¹ Includes staff on leave and being backfilled, such as parental leave, but does not include staff seconded to other departments.

Committee Office

Committee Services Office

Penelope Amy, Desktop Publisher

Michelle Summerhill, Committee Services Officer

Larissa Volpe, Manager

Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee

Kerryn Riseley, Committee Manager

Anna Scott, Committee Administrative Officer

Janelle Spielvogel, Committee Administrative Officer

Marianna Stylianou, Research Officer

Environment and Planning Standing Committee

Christianne Andonovski, Research Assistant

Ben Beccari, Research Officer

Nathan Bunt, Committee Manager

Helen Ross-Soden, Committee Administrative Officer

Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee

Raylene D'Cruz, Research Officer

Rachel Macreadie, Research Officer

Yuki Simmonds, Committee Manager

Richard Slade, Research Officer

Cat Smith, Committee Administrative Officer

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Jacqueline Coleman, Committee Administrative Officer

Igor Dosen, Analyst

Iain Gatley, Lead Analyst

Krystle Gatt Rapa, Analyst

Charlotte Lever, Research Assistant

Janithri Wickramaratne, Lead Analyst

Caroline Williams, Executive Officer

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

Sonya Caruana, Committee Administrative Officer

Lauren Cook, Senior Research Officer

Simon Dinsbergs, Business Support Officer

Helen Mason, Executive Officer

APPENDIX F

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Expenditure	2019-20		2018-19
	Budget	Actual	Actual
	\$	\$	\$
Departmental			
Staff salaries, overtime, allowances and training expenses	3,168,500	2,906,934	2,772,889
Salary oncosts ¹	1,137,600	1,099,813	931,585
Cleaning expenses	400,000	468,623	387,911
General expenses	1,078,150	535,840	570,772
Auditor-General's Office audits	12,500	12,500	19,000
Departmental total	5,796,750	5,023,710	4,682,157
Standing Committees			
Economy and Infrastructure	465,400	376,114	-
Environment and Planning	510,050	382,985	-
Legal and Social Issues	588,300	403,706	-
General expenses	120,000	76,396	-
Standing Committees total	1,683,750	1,239,200	-
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	7,480,500²	6,262,911	4,682,157
Assembly Members—special appropriations			
Members' salaries, allowances and on costs	30,115,190	27,148,141	25,906,059
Members' superannuation	6,394,000	2,439,273	2,118,289
Total Members' salaries and related special appropriations	36,509,190	29,587,415	28,024,348
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	43,989,690	35,850,325	32,706,505

1 Salary oncosts include long service leave and recreation leave provisions, payroll tax, employer superannuation, WorkCover contributions and fringe benefits tax.

2 This figure includes the following sources of funds:

- \$6.826m—*Appropriation (Parliament 2019-20) Act 2019*
- \$0.092m—Treasurer's Advance
- \$0.013m—Special Appropriation pursuant to *Audit Act 1994*
- \$0.550m—Special Appropriation under s 94 of the *Constitution Act 1975*

Note: This information is provided for the benefit of members. A complete set of financial statements of the Parliament of Victoria, including for joint investigatory committees, is provided in the Department of Parliamentary Services Annual Report for 2019-20.

APPENDIX G

JOINT INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEES EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Joint Investigatory Committee	2019-20		2018-19
	Budget	Actual	Actual
	\$	\$	\$
Accountability and Oversight ¹	-	-	314,420
Auditor-General's Office performance audit	350,000	271,475	-
Committee Services Office ²	2,474,140	1,090,378	1,223,168
Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills ¹	-	-	308,457
Electoral Matters ³	418,886	331,281	443,790
Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development ¹	-	321	206,881
Family and Community Development ¹	-	130	242,046
Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission ¹	-	-	499,801
Integrity and Oversight ³	683,324	529,591	228
Law Reform, Road and Community Safety ¹	-	-	264,586
Public Accounts and Estimates ⁴	1,133,300	990,289	984,280
Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations ⁴	686,350	569,159	543,554
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,746,000	3,782,624	5,031,211

1 The following committees were not reappointed for the 59th Parliament: Accountability and Oversight; Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills; Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development; Family and Community Development; Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission; and Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee.

2 Both House Departments jointly administer the Committee Services Office. Its budget includes rental payments for committee accommodation and various other administrative overheads for whole of committee operations.

3 The Legislative Council currently administers the Electoral Matters and Integrity and Oversight Committees.

4 The Legislative Assembly currently administers the Public Accounts and Estimates and Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committees.

APPENDIX H

FUNCTIONS, EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS HELD AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place during the reporting period, some programs, functions and events were cancelled or postponed.

Front Steps

The following groups, coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office, used the front steps for various activities, including launches, performances and community awareness campaigns:

- Old Colonists Association of Victoria's installation of 450 Jenga wooden blocks to raise awareness about homelessness in Victoria
- Lyneham High School (Canberra) Year 9 concert band performance
- Debutantes' group photograph
- Kids Under Cover media event with Hon Richard Wynne MP
- Multi-faith Leaders' event
- Leader Newspapers' event with 30 student leaders
- North Melbourne Women's Football team photoshoot with Hon Natalie Hutchins MP.

Queen's Hall (launches, receptions and conferences)

The Department also provided assistance with the coordination of the following events held in Queen's Hall:

- Australian British Chamber of Commerce reception
- Australian Catholic University's parliamentary interfaith breakfast
- Australian India Institute formal opening dinner of the Australian India Leadership Dialogue
- Cbus Property event
- Chabad of Melbourne Chanukah at Parliament celebration
- Department of Health and Human Services' Child Protection Vacation employment program graduation ceremony
- Department of Health and Human Services' Frances Penington and Molly Hadfield awards ceremony
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' inaugural dinner for volunteer members who contribute to the Metropolitan Partnerships program
- Jobs Victoria Youth Cadetship Scheme graduation ceremony
- Department of Premier and Cabinet's launch of the 2020 Victorian Honour Roll of Women
- In Schools Music performance by the Hills Concert Band
- Victoria Police 40 year service morning tea
- National Council of Women Victoria's annual student event, *My Vote My Voice*
- Planning Institute of Australia's annual Kemsley Oration
- Project Respect's Patron's lunch to celebrate its 20th anniversary
- Road Trauma Support Services Victoria annual Time for Remembering Ceremony for people affected by road trauma
- Supreme Sikh Council of Australia's event to celebrate the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak
- Volunteering Victoria's annual Volunteering Awards ceremony and reception
- Victorian Labor's life members' lunch
- Australian Assyrian Arts and Literature Foundation Incorporated celebration to mark the Assyrian New Year

- Aboriginal Victoria's inaugural Aunty Dot Peters Award presentation and morning tea
- Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia (Victorian Branch) International Women's Day breakfast
- Department of Health and Human Services' launch of the Victorian Aboriginal House and Homelessness Framework
- General Sir John Monash Foundation's presentation ceremony for John Monash Scholars
- Melbourne Boomers Foundation (Melbourne Boomers) club presentation night to honour the 2019–20 season and host the annual Michele Timms Medal Dinner
- Launch of report by UN Youth Ambassador, Kareem El-Ansary.

Queen's Hall (exhibitions and displays)

The following exhibitions and displays, coordinated by the Legislative Assembly, were also held in Queen's Hall during the reporting period:

- BAPS Diwali-Annakut exhibition
- Diabetes Victoria display and SISU machine health checks
- Youth Achievement exhibition
- Polish Community Council of Victoria exhibition to mark the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War
- Respect Victoria exhibition
- Casey Tamil Manram Incorporated Tamil Festival 2020 exhibition.

Legislative Assembly Chamber

The following events, including debates and forums, were coordinated by the staff of the Legislative Assembly:

- Department of Education and Training—Primary Schools' Parliamentary Convention and Secondary Schools' Parliamentary Convention
- The Federal National Party of Australia's re-enactment as part of its centenary celebrations
- The University of Melbourne's Pathways to Politics Program for Women session
- Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria) Policy Leadership course, *Gain the Policy Edge*
- The Spirit of Australia Foundation's General Sir John Monash Commemorative Service
- UN Youth Australia (Victoria)—Model United Nations session as part of UN Youth's National Conference 2019
- The National Association of Australian University Colleges Incorporated Parliamentary Debating sessions.

Filming at Parliament House

The following applications for filming were coordinated by the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office:

- Balloon Tree Productions' filming for competition submission
- Media studies student filming
- *A Current Affair* interview
- Scene for a short film
- International TV crew from an Indian/Punjabi channel filming
- Swinburne University student filming for a short production
- Filming Anna Skarbek, CEO of Climate Works
- Taking Shape fashion shoot (using cropped shots)
- Private fashion shoot
- Filming participants of The University of Melbourne's Pathways to Politics for Women Program
- *60 Minutes* filming for archival footage.

APPENDIX I

OVERSEAS TRAVEL UNDERTAKEN BY THE SPEAKER

Speaker Brooks led a small cross-party parliamentary delegation to Jiangsu, China, from 19 to 23 August 2019. The delegation was part of a range of commemorative events to recognise the 40th year of the signing of the sister-state relationship with Jiangsu (signed in 1979 by the then Premier of Victoria, Hon Rupert Hamer). The travel costs to the Legislative Assembly for the Speaker's delegation of three members were \$3,138.31.

APPENDIX J

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS STATISTICS

		2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
House related documents produced ¹		137	150	228
Reports tabled by Command		7	2	5
Annual reports tabled		312	317	298
Reports tabled by leave		23	21	23
Other documents tabled		1,008	1,025	1,215
Messages presented		104	94	148
Reports presented by parliamentary committees		22	26	34
Questions asked	In writing	1,004	4,186	6,754
	Without notice	190	235	265
	Constituency questions	380	470	530
Government Bills	Initiated in the Assembly	54	76	90
	Amended in the Assembly	7	5	4
	Passed both Houses	53	64	85
	Reasoned amendments moved	12	9	2
Divisions		40	66	85
Petitions presented		70	101	124
Petitions listed for debate		52	67	105
General business notices of motion		40	65	14
Grievance debates		3	5	6
Matters of public importance		8	7	11
Statements by members		777	781	1,026
Statements on parliamentary committee reports		62	41	103
Pages of bills proofread		3,685	6,463	6,666
Sitting days		40	39	52
Hours including meal breaks		340:06	324:55	453:33

¹ Question Papers were discontinued at the start of the 59th Parliament.

APPENDIX K

COMMITTEE STATISTICS

Committees under the administration of the Legislative Assembly

		Deliberative meetings	Public hearings	Inspections	Reports tabled
Legislative Assembly Standing Committees	Economy and Infrastructure	7	111	0	0
	Environment and Planning	13	65	23	0
	Legal and Social Issues	14	86	3	0
Joint Investigatory Committees	Public Accounts and Estimates	29	99	2	4
	Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations	23	0	0	14
Domestic Committees	Privileges	6	0	0	3
	Standing Orders	4	0	0	1

1 Includes subcommittee meetings.

2 Number of public hearings held is the number of witness groups appearing before the committee. For instance, one day of committee hearings with five witness groups appearing would equate to five different public hearings for the purposes of the statistics.

Committee reports tabled 2019–20

Joint Investigatory Committees

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

- Inquiry into Auditor-General's report No. 202: Meeting Obligations to Protect Ramsar Wetlands (2016)
- Inquiry into the 2019–20 Budget Estimates
- Recommendation on the appointment of a person to conduct the performance audit of the Auditor-General and the Victorian Auditor-General's Office
- Report on the appointment of a person to conduct the financial audit of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

- Alert Digest Nos. 9–15 of 2019
- Alert Digest Nos. 1–6 of 2020
- Annual Review 2018, Regulations and Legislative Instruments

Domestic Committees

Privileges Committee

- Appointment of a Parliamentary Integrity Adviser
- Dealing with alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct and the Register of Interests
- Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Cr Peter Clarke

Standing Orders Committee

- Report on a review of the Standing Orders

APPENDIX L

DISCLOSURES MADE UNDER THE *PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES ACT 2012*

The Speaker did not notify any disclosures to the IBAC under s 21(2) of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The Parliament of Victoria's Procedures for Making a Disclosure about a Member of Parliament can be downloaded at: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/publications/public-interest-disclosures

The Integrity and Oversight Committee did not notify any disclosures to the IBAC under s 21(2) of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The Integrity and Oversight Committee's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures can be downloaded at: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/ioc/contact-iao

APPENDIX M

DOCUMENTS AND EVIDENCE DISCLOSED UNDER STANDING ORDER 231(3) AND JOINT STANDING ORDER 16(4)

For the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, no disclosures were made.

APPENDIX N

REDACTIONS AUTHORISED BY THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE UNDER SESSIONAL ORDER 16

For the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, no redactions were made.



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