

From the Speaker

The 2023–24 parliamentary year was a busy period for both Members of Parliament and the Queensland Parliamentary Service. As the entity supporting the work of the Legislative Assembly and its committees, the Parliamentary Service is responsible for delivering a range of services:

- Providing the IT, corporate and business services required for the successful operation of 93 Members of Parliament both within the parliamentary precinct and their electorates. This includes the provision of office facilities and supplies, travel support, accommodation and staffing to support their roles.
- Supporting 72 portfolio and select committee inquiries, as well as 631 committee meetings, hearings, and briefings with the collation of submissions, provision of secretariat support and preparation of reports to parliament.
- Engaging with the community and organising activities, including parliamentary education programs and youth parliaments (including Junior Indigenous Youth Parliaments), operation and maintenance of the parliamentary website, social media channels and Parliament TV, production of records of proceeding with written and archived footage, coordination of functions and events, and parliamentary precinct access and tours.

The digital transformation of Queensland Parliament, which began with the e-Democracy initiative in 2003 through the audio broadcast of parliamentary sessions, continued into 2023–24. During this period, the Parliamentary Service launched a significant program spanning all business areas and established five strategic project governance boards to oversee key ICT projects:

- Digital Transformation Project funded by Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC).
- Introduction of the new Parliamentary Information Management System (PIMS).
- Replacement of key audio-visual systems.
- Major upgrades including the Legislative Assembly Chamber's audio systems, with further audio visual equipment (AV) enhancements planned for committee rooms.
- Implemented Automated Speech Recognition (ASR) technology for live captions, improving accessibility.

This year has been marked by significant progress in digital transformation, spearheaded by the Digital Transformation Project, funded by the CBRC. We have successfully introduced a state-of-the-art PIMS and replaced outdated AV systems, ensuring our legislative processes are more efficient and accessible than ever.

Our commitment to accessibility was further demonstrated through the implementation of Automated Speech Recognition technology, providing live captions that have opened our proceedings to a wider audience. The Legislative Assembly Chamber's audio systems received major upgrades, and we have plans to extend these AV enhancements to our committee rooms.

In a landmark move, we bid farewell to our outdated in-house Video on Demand system, and welcome a modern solution that has revolutionized the way we archive and access AV recordings. Launched in June 2024, the new system boasts enhanced search functionality and user-friendly features such as subtitles and transcripts.

Significant work was undertaken on the development of our second Reconciliation Action Plan currently being implemented by the Queensland Parliamentary Service. The service continued its respectful engagement with First Nations people in 2023–24, through hosting various internal events such as a basket weaving workshop, NAIDOC week morning tea, and a Reconciliation Week movie screening. Additionally, the Service has participated in external community events, while also commencing planning and consultation for the establishment of a Reconciliation Garden and Yarning Circle within the Parliamentary Precinct.

Our dedication to education and training materialised in the form of *ParlElearn*, an online Learning Management System designed for all precinct and electorate staff. This platform is a testament to our commitment to providing cost-effective, accessible training, with a special focus on supporting our rural and remote team members. We eagerly anticipate the launch of Stage 1, focusing on induction and onboarding, this coming November.

The Committee Office has seen remarkable enhancements which have supported an impressive number of inquiries and meetings. We have introduced more concise and visually engaging reports and developed an e-submissions platform that simplifies public contributions to parliamentary inquiries.

Our infrastructure has not been overlooked; the Annexe Tower underwent significant refurbishment, receiving both structural and aesthetic upgrades. The modern, yet modest works not only enhances the working environment for our staff but also projects the image of a modern and forward-thinking institution.

Lastly, our engagement with the younger generation took a creative turn with the introduction of a statewide Minecraft competition. This initiative challenged students to construct a replica of the Legislative Assembly Chamber, engaging over a thousand participants and boosting our educational outreach by 34%. We are excited to announce that following the success of the competition plans are underway for annual civic engagement competitions.

On behalf of Members of the 57th Parliament, I thank the Executive Leadership Team, led by the Clerk of the Parliament Mr Neil Laurie, and all of the Parliamentary Service staff for their commitment to ensuring the successful delivery of the Parliamentary Service's responsibilities.

Further, I take this opportunity ahead of my retirement from politics, to personally thank each of the Parliamentary Service staff I have worked with during my two terms as Speaker, including those who worked with me and supported the Mulgrave Electorate Office since 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Curtis Pitt', written in a cursive style.

Honourable Curtis Pitt MP
Speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly