

Performance Reports

Objective 1:

Assembly and Committee Support

To support the Legislative Assembly (and its committees and Members) in fulfilling its functions within the institution of Parliament to:

- make law (and supervise delegated law making)
- approve and scrutinise the State's finances
- scrutinise the actions of executive government (and oversight independent bodies)
- provide a forum for debate and grievance.

Overview

Assembly and Committee Services

To achieve this objective, Parliamentary Service resources have been allocated to provide Members with a range of procedural, research, advisory and information services. These resources are primarily delivered through the following Parliamentary Service offices and Divisions:

- » the Office of the Speaker
- » the Office of the Clerk
- » the Office of the Deputy Clerk
- » the Assembly and Committee Services Division.

In 2023–24 the Assembly and Committee Services Division comprised the following three Service Areas:

- » Chamber and Education Services
- » Committee Office (including Office of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner)
- » Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service (Hansard).

The key performance indicators for Objective 1 relate to the extent to which the quantity, quality, timeliness and cost of specified services provided by each of the service areas meet the agreed standards and targets.

The methods of measurement include client survey, benchmarking, internal assessment through information management systems and external assessment through audit reports.

Key performance indicators for Assembly and Committee Support are available as part of the Appendix.

100%

Percentage of Hansard transcripts published on time

858.8

Total audio hours transcribed



521 hearings, briefings and meetings



4,745 submissions considered

Report on parliamentary committee activities for 2023–24

Queensland's parliamentary committee system was significantly reformed in August 2011 in order to improve openness and accountability, better connect the work of Parliament with its committees, and increase the levels of public consultation within Queensland's legislative process. The reforms have seen an increase in the volume of committee work undertaken and the public having greater input into matters that are debated by the Parliament.

The Parliament's portfolio and select committees hold hearings and conduct site visits in regional, rural and remote Queensland.

In 2023–24, hearings were held in Toowoomba, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Quilpie, Eromanga, Cairns, Townsville, Roma, Thursday Island, Winton, Muttaborra, Hervey Bay, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Yarrabah, Mount Isa, Birdsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone.

The use of video conferencing and teleconferencing has also allowed committees to hear from more people. In 2023–24, 225 people participated remotely in 78 committee proceedings hosted from Brisbane.

The volume of committee work completed and the outcomes achieved during 2023–24 continues to demonstrate that parliamentary committees are supporting parliamentary scrutiny of government activity, and contributing to an open, consultative and modern parliamentary system.

An overview of the committee work conducted during the year is detailed below.

Portfolio committees

The Parliament's portfolio committees undertook 72 formal inquiries, which comprised:

- 65 inquiries into bills that were introduced in the Parliament and then referred to committees for examination. High levels of public input were noted, including for the Body Corporate and Community Management Bill 2023, the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, and the Queensland Community Safety Bill.
- three inquiries on matters of community importance referred by the Parliament (supported accommodation for people with disability, opportunities for paleo-tourism in Queensland, and reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland).
- two inquiries as part of fulfilling public accounts and public works responsibilities (the Cairns TAFE upgrade and an inquiry into state-controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah).

- two inquiries initiated by a committee under self-referral powers (the delivery of vocational education and training in regional, rural and remote Queensland, and the impact of climate change on Queensland agriculture).

Portfolio committees held 521 hearings, briefings and meetings during the year. These comprised 205 hearings and briefings (mostly held in public) and 316 private meetings.

Committee inquiries are a key avenue for public consultation and engagement between the public and the Parliament, and support the Parliament to scrutinise government activity. Portfolio committees received and considered 4,745 submissions, and heard evidence from 1,428 persons (comprising 781 representatives of organisations, 105 individuals and 542 public servants).

A total of 73 recommendations were made in bill inquiry reports, excluding those concerning whether the bill should be passed. The public consultations outlined above significantly contributed to the formulation of these recommendations. In 2023–24, the Government responded to 27 committee bill inquiry reports within the legislated timeframe. (Government responses are not yet due in respect of all committee recommendations made in reports tabled during the year.)

One indicator of the influence of portfolio committees is the number of recommendations contained in inquiry reports that were agreed to by the government.

For the bill inquiries for which government responses were received in 2023–24:

- out of 19 proposed legislative amendments, 17 were accepted by the government (89%)
- out of 53 other recommendations, 51 were accepted (96%).

Committees tabled a total of 137 publications, mostly reports, in the Parliament during 2023–24.

The review of budget estimates for the 2023–24 appropriations was conducted by the seven portfolio committees during the financial year. Each portfolio committee is responsible for examining the proposed expenditures of the Government departments for their respective areas of responsibility, and advising the Parliament accordingly. Eight estimates hearings were held from 1 August to 10 August 2023 with each of the committees reporting back to Parliament in August 2023.

In addition, a number of inquiries were referred to or self-referred by portfolio committees during 2023–24, and are continuing. These include inquiries into:

- prehistoric, dinosaur and paleo tourism in Outback Queensland
- the strategic review of the Queensland Audit Office.

In undertaking their public accounts responsibilities, portfolio committees were referred 20 Auditor-General reports in 2023–24. A public briefing was held in respect of one of these, and two committee reports had been tabled relating to one committee's examination of three of these, as at 30 June 2024.

Several portfolio committees undertook proceedings and tabled reports in carrying out their responsibilities for parliamentary oversight of specific independent entities.

Select committees

In addition to the activities of portfolio committees mentioned above, the committee office supported the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee (YJRSC) in examining ongoing reforms to the youth justice system and support for crime victims, as well as the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee (SPSC) in its inquiry into supermarket pricing. These two select committees conducted 19 public and 10 private hearings and briefings.

The YJRSC was dissolved by order of the House on 17 April 2024. The SPSC reported to Parliament on 31 May 2024, making eight recommendations.

Public consultation by parliamentary committees

Strategies to promote Queensland's committee inquiry process and raise awareness of how Queenslanders can engage with and influence decision-making include:

- publishing details of all inquiries on the Parliament's website
- issuing media releases
- using the Parliament's social media channels, including geographically and interest-targeted posts relevant to particular inquiry topics or hearing locations
- organising media interviews with committee chairs
- identifying persons and groups who may be interested in each particular inquiry and directly contacting them with information about the inquiry and how they can participate
- sending information about committee activities to committee subscriber email alert lists, including when submissions are invited and public proceedings held
- advertising in relevant local community newspapers and through geo-targeted social media campaigns
- placing advertisements and articles in trade journals and publications relevant to a committee inquiry topic.

Committee hearings held at Parliament House are generally broadcast live on the Parliament's website, and can be viewed on demand following the hearing. The live broadcast allows people across Queensland with an interest in particular inquiries to follow hearings and events as they occur. Transcripts of public proceedings are also published. Where appropriate, the Parliament's First Peoples Liaison Officer assists in raising awareness of inquiries among First Nations people and communities, supporting consultation activities, and providing assistance to those who may wish to participate.

Key initiatives for Objective 1

Digitisation of parliamentary papers tabled between 1860 and 1989

The Table Office continued to digitise the significant volume of parliamentary papers tabled in the Legislative Assembly between 1860 and 1989. In 2023–24, papers of the 27th to 33rd Parliaments (covering the years 1935 to 1955) were digitised and published on the Parliament's website. This, together with additional papers requested by researchers, brought the total number of historical records digitised and published under the project to over 35,500.

Digital Transformation

In 2023–24, the Parliamentary Service launched a major Digital Transformation Project to modernise Queensland Parliament's digital infrastructure over three years. This project, which includes the introduction of a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf Parliamentary Information Management System (PIMS) and the upgrade of key AV systems, directly supports the Legislative Assembly, its committees, and Members in fulfilling their parliamentary functions.

The enhanced AV systems and PIMS modules improve the efficiency and accuracy of parliamentary processes, enabling the Legislative Assembly to effectively make law, scrutinise delegated legislation, and oversee executive actions. The upgraded audio and video systems provide clearer, real-time broadcasts of debates and committee hearings, ensuring transparency and accessibility. Additionally, ASR technology facilitates more inclusive participation by providing live captions for those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, further supporting the Assembly's role as a forum for debate and grievance.

The Parliamentary Service is on schedule to complete these critical AV upgrades early in the 58th Parliament.

