

# Objective 2: Member Support

To support members of the Legislative Assembly in their communication with and representation of constituents.

# Overview

To achieve this objective, Parliamentary Service resources have been allocated to support electorate offices and officers to deliver resources to Members, as determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and the Speaker. These resources and services are primarily delivered through:

- » Corporate and Electorate Services
- » Property and Facility Services
- » Parliamentary Library and Research Service.

The key performance indicators for Objective 2 relate to the extent to which the quantity, quality, timeliness and cost of specified services provided by each of the relevant service areas meet the agreed standards and targets. The methods of measurement include client surveys, benchmarking, internal self-assessment through information management systems and external assessment through audit reports.

Key performance indicators for Objective 2 are set out in the table in the Appendix.



3,210 Members' travel bookings and claims processed

27,127

Acquittals submitted via the Acquittal System

1,031

Client information briefs prepared



85,047 Research and Information requests from individual clients

## Parliamentary Library and Research Service

### Alerts on demand

This year the Parliamentary Library introduced *Alerts on Demand*. This service provides clients with customised alerts as news and AV content is created, and added to *Library Online*. This increases the timeliness of providing information to Members and Precinct staff. Previously, customised alerts were only available on a monthly or weekly basis.

### Embedded Power BI

The introduction of embedded Power BI reports on *Library Online* enhances the discoverability of statistical information and visualising of data. The newly released Queensland: election dashboard provides interactive election statistics for the 2020 Queensland State Election, 2023 Voice Referendum and 2024 By-election, including two candidate preferred (2CP) and two party preferred (2PP) percentage votes, and swings including the impact of preferences. Unemployment and labour force statistics by electorates are also displayed on an interactive dashboard.

## IT Services

### Upgrading electorate office technology

The Parliamentary Service replaced the Multi-Function Devices (MFDs) in all 97 electorate offices.

IT engaged with Members and electorate office staff to better understand their current and emerging ICT and digital needs. This engagement informed resource planning for the IT equipment refresh to be completed as part of the result of the 2024 Queensland Election.

## Corporate Services and Electorate Office Liaison

### Electorate Officer training and induction programs

During 2023–24, various formal programs were delivered to electorate staff including induction for new staff and a customised mental health and resilience program focused on electorate officers interactions with the public in the workplace.

## Financial and Administrative Services

### Supporting Members' communication and representation

Financial and Administrative Services play a crucial role in supporting Members of the Legislative Assembly by facilitating their communication with and representation of constituents. By managing the electorate and communication allowance, these services ensure that Members have the necessary resources to engage effectively with their electorates. The provision of travel services enables Members to maintain a strong presence within their constituencies, ensuring they can attend important meetings, community events, and other engagements that support their electorate. These services are integral to helping Members fulfil their parliamentary duties and maintain close, effective relationships with the communities they represent.

### Online acquittal system training program

During 2023–24, Financial and Administrative Services continued the delivery of a regular online Microsoft Teams forum, allowing electorate staff to discuss and seek advice on any current issues. This initiative helps overcome the challenge of geographical distance and provides valuable networking opportunities for electorate officers.

## Key initiatives for Objective 2

### Electorate office staff reclassifications

The Parliamentary Service Electorate Office Staff Certified Agreement 2020 included a provision to review the existing Electorate Officer and Assistant Electorate Officer Classification and remuneration structure. The Parliamentary Service established a working group to undertake the review process which included Parliamentary Service management, HR representatives, electorate officers, and union representatives.

The review commenced in 2021 with agreement on examining the following issues:

- comparison of Commonwealth and interstate jurisdiction models
- seeking feedback on Electorate Officer and Assistant Electorate Officer experiences of the current classification arrangements
- seeking feedback from regional staff versus city based staff
- experience of staff working for Ministers and senior office holders.

In May 2023, development of an Options Paper by the working group commenced to document all feedback to date and propose a range of remuneration and staffing structure options for further consideration.

In December 2023 Government approved funding to deliver a reclassification of electorate staff roles, covering over 200 employees, reflecting the changing role of electorate staff and the modern challenges in supporting Members and constituents.

### Employee self service payroll initiative

In November 2023, the Parliamentary Service introduced *Aurion Employee Self Service* (ESS) for use by Members and electorate staff. ESS allows Members and individual staff to manage various payroll functions independently through a user-friendly web portal or mobile app, eliminating the need for manual forms. Key features include:

- managing and updating personal contact details such as name, address, emergency contacts and phone numbers
- reviewing pay slips and monitoring leave balances and accessing leave history
- reviewing and changing personal payroll deductions
- submitting and approving annual leave, long service leave and sick leave requests online.

### Additional Assistant Electorate Officer Initiative

From 1 July 2024, each of Queensland's 93 electorates will receive an additional staffing resource in the form of an Assistant Electorate Officer (AEO).

The Additional Assistant Electorate Officer Initiative will cover not only the costs associated with recruiting and appointing an extra AEO in each electorate but will also provide essential office furniture and IT equipment needed to support the new employee in each main electorate office.

This is the first increase to permanent staffing numbers since 2001 when the Assistant Electorate Officer role was first introduced.

Providing additional resources for electorate offices will assist Member in managing key changes in how they support their constituents, including:

- The significant increase in email and social media use has added to the workload of electorate officers. With social media now viewed as a standard communication tool, it often requires after-hours moderation and management, further contributing to the demands placed on electorate staff.
- The news cycle operates 24/7, requiring Members to stay constantly aware of key local issues. Members are now expected to respond immediately to media requests, leaving less time to prepare considered responses
- Population growth has led to an increase in the number of constituents served by each Member and their electorate staff.
- Many constituents now expect immediate answers from electorate office staff when raising issues.
- Constituent case management has become more complex, requiring navigation across various levels of government.
- Electorate staff now play a key role in managing aspects of the electorate office budget via the *Members' Electorate and Communication Allowance*. This includes understanding reporting obligations and financial reporting tools and systems.

The Additional Assistant Electorate Officer Initiative will enhance the capacity of electorate offices to effectively serve their communities and address these challenges.