

Vote Parliamentary Service

Baseline Alignment Proposal

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Submitted by:

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

Section 1: Alignment to Government Priorities

The Parliamentary Service has major work underway to improve its systems and processes in order to enhance the level of service provided to members of Parliament and the House of Representatives. This significant investment of resource will enable the Service to improve overall productivity for the same or less costs, while positioning the Service for the future. A focussed change to business-as-usual including a large supplementary 'catch-up' programme intended to ensure that the improvements to business-as-usual are implemented prior to the next General Election is already underway.

The priorities for the Parliamentary Service are to ensure that:

- Members and their staff have better access to information that will allow them to manage their activities more effectively and to make their own decisions based on the resources allocated to them (for example member support staff training);
- The efficiency and cost effectiveness of the Service is improved; and
- The Service is better prepared for the next General Election and beyond.

The critical deliverables for the year include:

- Improving client service through better use of technology (including a new Information Systems Strategic Plan and Information and Communication Technology governance model). This includes the upgrade of computer operating systems and undertaking a joint service delivery project with the Department of Internal Affairs;
- In conjunction with the systems upgrade, processes will be aligned to ensure more efficient management of requests for assistance from members, and better decision making overall;
- Working with members to establish shared expectations and agreed measures of success;
- Improving the client outcomes and business efficiency of telecommunications services. This was an area of weakness identified at the last General Election;
- Improving the way the Service manages its assets to assist more strategic decisions on capital expenditure and asset maintenance, including sustainable practices in asset use and disposal;
- Clarifying members' entitlements within the Speaker's Directions;
- Establishing a definition of 'funding entitlements for parliamentary purposes'. The current definition is provided for in the Parliamentary Service (Continuation of Interim Meaning of Funding for Parliamentary Purposes) Act 2009 and expires on 31 December 2010; and
- Management of the Service's contribution to the smooth running of the 2011 General Election.

This work represents significant organisational change with the Service, which aims to build a culture with the member as client at the centre of all service delivery, where client satisfaction is maximised within the parameters of efficient and cost effective processes.

This longer term culture change is expected to deliver more for the same or fewer resources, and will include increased collaboration with other agencies on the precincts. These activities are consistent with Government priorities for making better use of technology, exploring innovative options for delivering services, and sharing support with other government agencies.

2010 represents a year of major organisational programmes of work with high risk factors for the Service. A number of the specific deliverables have interrelated dependencies which require careful management, and little tolerance levels for delays, to ensure the Parliamentary Service completes its programme of work in time to be well prepared for the 2011 General Election. The Service is conscious of the risks it faces and aims to minimise the impact to service delivery.

The Service also faces the risk of loss of key staff as experienced and able employees retire or move to other organisations. The Service has little flexibility to pay staff performance payments, there is no funding available for market movements within pay scales, and a reduced amount to spend on staff development. The Parliamentary Service is identifying low cost options for staff development while imposing a centralised approach to managing vacancies, allowing recruitment to proceed only if the role is pivotal to the Service's strategic objectives.

Section 2: Reprioritisation

The Parliamentary Service is not in a position to stop or decrease services, but continues to focus on the best service at the same or less cost.

Improving client service through better use of technology (including a new Information Systems Strategic Plan and Information and Communication Technology governance model)

The development and implementation of a new Information Systems Strategic Plan and Information and Communication Technology governance arrangements are expected to result in a more logical approach to system planning and processes. They should also position the Service for future precinct wide ICT shared service initiatives and strengthen its organisational management capability. At the same time the Service is undertaking a critical project to enhance its technology and data systems. It is running operating systems which are nearing the end of their useful life and proposes to upgrade them this calendar year. The systems involved in the upgrade are all due for upgrades this year or early next year and are all well past their depreciation dates. Because these upgrades are part of a cyclical programme of work, funding is within existing budgets. This upgrade, whilst critical in itself, also provides the essential platform for the concurrent financial management information system replacement (the current financial system is several years old and not supported in New Zealand, although an upgrade was undertaken during 2007 to enable a form of web based reporting for members) and upgrade to the human resource systems. As new systems are implemented, business processes will be refined to streamline and avoid duplication of effort, which should improve the quality of information and enhance access for members to staffing and financial information devolving greater decision making to members (eg staff training).

The Joint Service Delivery project that the Service is undertaking in collaboration with the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministerial Services will also be completed within the 2010/11 financial year. This project will provide a single ICT service desk to both Ministerial Services and the Parliamentary Service and enable efficiencies in service delivery to both Ministers and other members.

Business Process Improvements

Work is continuing on business process improvements to ensure alignment to the system changes outlined above. These improvements should lead to more consistent internal decision making, while supporting the shift of relevant decision making to members giving them greater control over their financial and staffing decisions.

Working with members to establish shared expectations and agreed measures

The Service will be working with members to establish shared expectations and agreed quality measures which will be reported on as part of a wider monitoring and reporting framework that the Service is developing. This will ensure that the Service continues to stay focussed on client expectations and areas for continued improvement.

Improving the client outcomes and business efficiency of telecommunications services

A project to review telecommunication services to members' will be implemented prior to the 2011 General Election. The project will ensure members receive the full telecommunications

services to which they are entitled, while processes and policies are available to provide assurance that member telecommunications spending is authorised under the Speaker's Directions. This project should have a positive impact on the provision of telecommunications services for the 2011 General Election, as this was an area identified after the 2008 General Election that needed improvement.

Improving the way the Service manages its assets to assist decisions on capital expenditure and asset maintenance, including more sustainable practices in asset use and disposal

The asset management project aims to deliver changes to asset management in the Parliamentary Service at the strategic, policy/process and operational levels. The benefits will include time and cost savings, for example reduced procurement costs through greater centralisation. Improved client satisfaction is also anticipated through greater efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of administrative actions, and greater ability to manage high volume asset acquisition, transfer and disposal during a General Election.

Clarifying members' entitlements within the Speaker's Directions

By clarifying members' entitlements the Parliamentary Service will be able to provide greater clarity around access to services and entitlements. This will also include implementing recommendations from the Fourth Triennial Review of Parliamentary Appropriations (due for release during April 2010).

Changes to the primary legislation, for example, and a new definition of funding entitlements for parliamentary purposes, (see below), will also lead to changes in systems and processes.

Establishing a definition of 'funding entitlements for parliamentary purposes'

The current interim definition is provided for in the Parliamentary Service (continuation of Interim Meaning of Funding for Parliamentary Purposes) Act 2009 which expires on 31 December 2010. Ensuring a permanent definition is in place by the end of 2010 will ensure clarity for members and parties, particularly on the meaning of 'electioneering' which is included in the definition. The Service is also seeking a consistent approach with the Ministry of Justice for the regulation of election advertising and the regulated campaign period.

Management of the Service's contribution to the smooth running of the 2011 General Election

The programmes of work identified above will enable the Parliamentary Service to undertake its role in the 2011 General Election in a more effective manner. It will reduce ambiguity and strengthen collaboration between precinct agencies for a greater level of service provided to clients.

Section 3: Summary of Financial Movements

Vote Parliamentary Service Appropriation, YTD \$000

	2009/10 Baseline	2010/11 Baseline
Departmental Output Expenses		
Operations, Information and Advisory Services MCOA	49,049	48,893
- Building and Operations Management	27,578	27,928
- Parliamentary Information Services	14,014	13,716
- Personnel and Accounting Services to Members and Other Agencies	6,321	6,413
- Policy Advice	1,136	836
Services to Members	17,696	18,122
Total Departmental Output Expenses	66,745	67,015
Non-Departmental Other Expenses		
Depreciation Expense on Parliamentary Complex	11,274	11,274
Members' Communications	2,426	2,426
Members of the House of Representatives' Salaries and Allowances PLA	17,022	17,022
Party and Member Support - ACT	631	631
Party and Member Support - Green	1,246	1,246
Party and Member Support - Labour	6,144	6,144
Party and Member Support - Maori	889	889
Party and Member Support - National	7,122	7,122
Party and Member Support - Progressive Coalition	251	251
Party and Member Support - United Future	187	187
Travel of Members and Others	11,000	11,000
Total Non-Departmental Other Expenses	58,192	58,192
Total Annual and Permanent Appropriations	124,937	125,207

There are no changes to appropriations required.