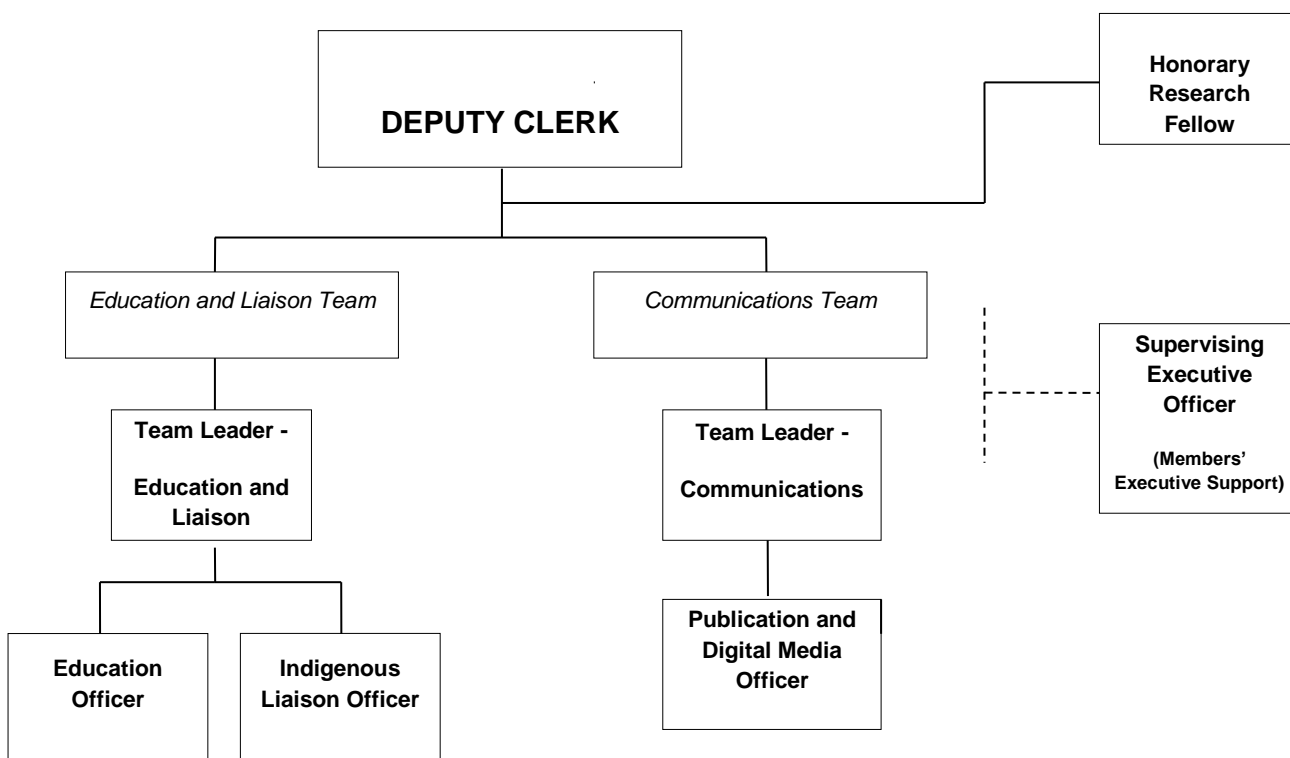




**1. PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARIAT:  
BACKGROUND**

At the time of writing of Queensland’s last jurisdiction report to an Australasian Parliamentary Educators’ Conference, (2011 for the Brisbane Conference), Queensland Parliament’s Education and Liaison team was one part of the larger service area Community Engagement Services. In July 2012, as a result of budgetary restrictions to the Parliamentary Service, the service area was restructured to form the Parliamentary Education and Communications Secretariat (PECS). The organisational structure of the secretariat is set out below.

**PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARIAT  
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**



## 2. THREE YEAR PLANNING

In order to manage workload to a level appropriate to the human resources available, PECS operates according to a three-year plan. This plan lists the maximum number of each type of activity to be conducted in any one year. The plan also sets out a regional activity program to be achieved over the three years.

## 3. PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Queensland continues its parliamentary education activities, including a fee-paying seminar programs for public servants and a free seminar program for senior secondary, TAFE and university students; free information sessions for stakeholder and community groups; youth parliaments; free teacher professional development; and a parliamentary internship program. The PECS team also contributes to zone constitutional conventions in partnership with Education Queensland.

### ***Fee-paying Seminar Program***

Registrations for our fee-paying seminar program for public servants are again growing following a significant drop in the past financial year owing to staffing cuts in the public service.

Three seminar programs are currently offered:

- Seminar 1, *Introduction to How Parliament Works* is a half day program aimed at public servants employed at levels AO2 - AO5 (State) or equivalent classifications; graduates, public sector trainees.
- Seminar 2, *The Relationship between the Parliament and the Executive*, is a full-day seminar aimed at AO6 – SO1 (State) level employees or equivalent classifications.
- *Committees at Work* is a half-day fee-paying seminar program, which explains the reforms to the parliamentary committee system in Queensland and the responsibilities of public sector officers.

### ***Free Seminar Program for senior secondary, TAFE and university students***

The content of the seminar program varies according to the level of education of the participating group and the program is developed according to the group's specific learning requirements. The seminars for senior secondary (usually Year 10-12 Legal Studies, Economics and Study of Society), TAFE (including students in the Adult Migrant English Program), Tertiary and Business College students each include some of the following elements:

- A tour of Parliament House;
- An introduction to Parliament and Government, including an explanation of the division of power and the separation of powers;
- An address by a Member of Parliament (subject to availability);
- Viewing Parliament in Action (on Parliamentary sitting days);
- DVD clips to bring the legislative process to life;
- A role play of the passage of a Bill through the Legislative Assembly;
- A mock election using the optional preferential voting method; and/or

- A role play of a parliamentary committee of inquiry.

In Queensland, school tours for primary and junior secondary students continue to be conducted by the Parliamentary Attendants using PECS-created resources, including a PowerPoint presentation, role plays for use in the Chamber and a student workbook for use by the teacher to prepare for the visit and for students to complete following the tour.

### ***Free Information Sessions for Stakeholder and Community Groups***

Understanding Parliamentary Committees information sessions are designed for individuals from community groups and the general public who wish to know more about the role of Parliament and its parliamentary committees. *Committees & You* has been developed to meet the needs of representatives of stakeholder and interest groups and includes topics such as writing an effective submission and appearing at public hearings.

### ***Youth Parliaments***

PECS conducts several Youth Parliaments annually, as well as supporting Youth Parliaments from external organisations.

- Senior Secondary Youth Parliament(s)
  - One or two conducted annually to coincide, where possible with Law Week
  - Students drawn from Year 11 and 12 Legal Studies students within reasonable driving distance from Parliament House
  - Half day activity, with one briefing held in preceding months
- Indigenous Youth Parliament
  - Age group: 18 – 25 year olds
  - Conducted in partnership with the Department of Communities and Office for Youth as part of their four-day Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.
  - Effectively this is a two-day event (a total of one full day briefing and speech preparation - spread across three days - and one day in the Chamber)
  - Participants are drawn from across the State, with transport and accommodation paid for by Department of Communities. Selection of participants is by a panel of staff from the Department of Communities and the Parliament's Indigenous Liaison Officer. This program receives substantial corporate funding.
- Regional Youth Parliaments
  - Two per year.
  - Year 6 and 7 students
  - Two briefings are conducted in the region prior to the activity.
- YMCA Youth Parliament
  - Conducted annually
  - Age group: 16 – 25 year olds
  - Support provided to the YMCA by PECS, Table Office and Hansard
  - Four day program
  - Participants drawn from across the State, organised and financed by YMCA through grant funding from the Department of Communities

### ***Teacher Professional Development (TPD)***

Teacher professional development workshops are conducted regionally in conjunction with other off-site parliamentary education activities. The TPD program usually consists of:

- An welcome and introduction by the Speaker;
- Presentations on the role of Parliament linked to classroom resources on the Parliament's website;
- A demonstration of how to conduct an optional preferential voting activity;
- An explanation of parliamentary committees and accompanying role play.

### ***Queensland Parliamentary Internship Program (QPIP)***

This year, 25 university students were enrolled in the internship program. The second-semester QPIP activity is administered by PECS. Students, usually in their final year, are linked with a participating Member of Parliament or parliamentary official. They are assessed on a paper on functions of the parliament, marked by Queensland's Honorary Research Fellow, Dr Paul Reynolds, and on a major research paper produced for the Member of Parliament on a mutually agreed topic. The research paper is marked by the student's university supervisor. Next year, the program will be renamed Queensland Parliamentary Research Internship Program (QPRIP) to avoid confusion with workplace based internships.

### ***Zone Constitutional Conventions***

In partnership with Education Queensland, CES supports Zone Constitutional Conventions for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Brisbane, Mackay, and Townsville. A Parliamentary Education Officer and the Indigenous Liaison Officer act as Master of Ceremonies, as well as conducting parliamentary education activities throughout the day.

### ***Regional Activities***

PECS conducts educational in major regional areas, with the aim being to visit six regional areas in a three-year parliamentary term. During the four-day visit, the PECS team conducts a Youth Parliament (and preparatory briefing) for Year 6 and 7 students, a teacher professional development workshop, information sessions on the parliamentary committee system for stakeholder groups and service clubs, and fee-paying public service training. This model provides for efficient and effective use of resources and a maximum return on the investment and offsetting the travel and accommodation costs associated with regional activities.

## **4. INDIGENOUS LIAISON ACTIVITIES**

### ***Indigenous Engagement***

The Indigenous Liaison Officer has been building Indigenous relationships and partnerships since his commencement in January 2008. Partnerships have been established with Government at State and Federal levels and also with Indigenous non-Government organisations across the state.

- Indigenous protocols
- The Indigenous Liaison Officer provides advice to Members and staff on Indigenous protocols. Parliamentary Committees

PECS has been working with parliamentary committees to strengthen engagement between the Queensland Parliament and the Indigenous community.

Internally, the Indigenous Liaison Officer provides the members of Parliamentary Committees with briefing papers and presentations on Indigenous protocols, history, significant local issues and important community contacts prior to visits to Indigenous communities.

A partnership has been formed with the Department of Communities to utilise their Indigenous Liaison Officers network throughout the State. This enables parliamentary committee members to access an Indigenous Liaison Officer to liaise on their behalf in each community as required.

The Team Leader Communications also works closely with Parliamentary Committee Secretariats in order to develop and implement communication strategies to engage with members of the public and stakeholder groups in relation to individual committee inquiries.

- Education programs

As outlined previously above, PECS in partnership with Education Queensland, contributes to the planning and conduct of three zone constitutional conventions for Indigenous students. In partnership with the Department of Communities, PECS conducts an Indigenous Youth Parliament run over a total of two days as part of the Department's Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.

- NAIDOC Week

In partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission, PECS hosts stalls at NAIDOC Week celebrations, either in Brisbane or in surrounding regions. Parliamentary resources are distributed and visitors to the stall are encouraged to engage with information panels and complete a competition form stating something they learned from visiting the stall.

## **5. COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES**

### ***Parliament website***

The Communications team are responsible for creating and updating content on the front page of the Parliament's website. This consists of parliamentary news and upcoming events with the aim being to inform Queenslanders about what is happening in their parliament and how they can follow parliamentary proceedings and committee inquiries.

### ***Parliamentary Oration Series***

In October 2013, the Parliamentary Oration Series was launched. The aim of this free public lecture series is to encourage the discussion of matters relevant to Queensland. The inaugural presentation delivered by Sir Leo Hielscher AC who has been a significant figure in the Queensland public sector for the past 50 years. Sir Leo spoke about Queensland's economic history and how the state's economy was transformed by Queensland Treasury from the early 1960s onwards. The event was very well received and is expected to continue in 2014.

### ***Programs for People with Disability***

To mark the National Week of Deaf People each year, the Parliament partners with Deaf Services Queensland to welcome members of the deaf community to view their Parliament in action. AUSLAN sign language interpreters operate in the public gallery to interpret Question Time. Approximately 50 members of the deaf community attend and are then welcomed at a morning tea hosted by the Speaker and attended by many other Members.

## **5. PUBLICATIONS**

A suite of factsheets and information booklets are available on the Parliament's website. Members of Parliament are able to purchase educational resources (brochures, bookmark, stickers etc) online.

In 2012, PECS partnered with the Queensland University of Technology to produce an iBook version of the Parliament's existing tertiary-level information book. The iBook, titled *Parliament and Government in Queensland*, operates on iPads and is available through the iTunes store.