



AUSTRALASIAN PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE 2017

JURISDICTION REPORT FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

UNIT OVERVIEW

Parliamentary Education Services (PES) is responsible for ensuring the provision of high quality education, engagement, public relations and information programs relating to the operations of the Northern Territory Parliament and its Committees. PES is located within the Committees and Education Division of the Department of the Legislative Assembly.

PES is staffed with three permanent education staff who are all responsible for delivering our programs, plus there are four casual guides who conduct our public tours. 2017 saw Craig Muir join the unit as Manager and Cassandra Deon-Wierda join as Education Programs Coordinator.

The 2016 – 2017 financial year saw PES maintain a high level of participation and engagement in our education programs with 10,119 participants. The previous year saw 10,382 participants.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

SCHOOL TOURS of Parliament House remain our most popular program, especially on Meeting days. Schools often choose to do our two hour program which includes a one hour tour, viewing the Meeting or a visit to the Chamber, and a presentation and mock election with the NT Electoral Commission (NTEC). NTEC provides funding for buses to those schools that include their session. PES also conducts school tours on non-Meeting days at flexible times. During 2016-17 PES conducted 157 tours to 3,454 students and teachers.



STEP UP, BE HEARD is our customised Youth Parliament program for senior students. It is designed to address the SACE Stage 1 Legal Studies curriculum and includes two assessments. *Step Up* is an election campaign and vote conducted by NTEC. *Be Heard* is a bill debate in the Chamber with Madam Speaker presiding. It is conducted over a 4-6 week period in class time at both the school and Parliament House. During 2016-17 four schools and 43 students undertook this program.

ROLE PLAYS are conducted at schools in the classroom often as a follow up to a school tour. After a PowerPoint presentation, students brainstorm bill ideas, vote as a class on which bill to debate, and then write a persuasive speech supporting or opposing the bill. The class then role play a bill debate and division with every student given a role. The length of the role play program is usually two hours. During 2016-17 we conducted 69 role plays for 1,629 students.



The **REGIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM** mirrors the role play program held in urban centres, but sometimes uses activities designed for remote indigenous students depending on the class. This program is run on request from teachers, with other schools nearby are offered a visit. PES extends an invitation to the local Member to participate in outreach programs. During 2016-17 we travelled to schools in Katherine and Nhulunbuy conducting seven sessions to 196 students and teachers.

The **REMOTE SCHOOLS OUTREACH PROGRAM** has been specifically designed for remote indigenous students and involves a series of hands on activities and visual resources leading up to a modified role play. The program aims to overcome challenges of lower literacy levels among ESL students while also taking into account the learning styles of remote indigenous students. This program is also run on request, with nearby schools also offered a visit. In 2016-17 we ran four sessions in two remote schools to 64 students.

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR SCHOOLS are conducted on an annual basis: *Bombing of Darwin Tours* are conducted over the month of February to commemorate the anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin on 19th February 1942, but can also be done in request outside of February. These tours are a joint program with the NT Library, which is located inside Parliament House. In 2016-17 we conducted three Bombing of Darwin Tours for 67 students.

In March we hold a week long program for *Commonwealth Day* where students learn about the different countries in the Commonwealth. The program is linked to the Australian Curriculum for History and Geography. Parliament House puts on an impressive display of all the flags of Commonwealth countries and this program has become very popular in recent years. In 2016-17 we ran 12 sessions with 471 students participating.

During Law Week in May PES holds a *From Cabinet to Court – Careers in Law Forum* in conjunction with the Supreme Court. There are two speakers from parliamentary positions and two speakers in judicial positions. This attracts Year 10 - 12 Legal Studies students, and we had 92 students this year.



ADULT EDUCATION

DEMOCRACY IN THE NT is aimed at new arrivals to facilitate their understanding of the democratic systems in Australia. It focuses on three important aspects of Australian democracy – voting, parliament and the judicial system. The NT Electoral Commission run a session on voting, including a mock election, PES conducts an informative tour about our parliamentary system and the Supreme Court conducts an informative tour about the judicial system. This program has become popular with AMEP (Australian Migrant English Program).

ADULT STUDENTS and COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION TOURS are run on request for a range of adult student classes, community groups, organisations and businesses. These tours of Parliament House can have increased content about certain aspects of parliament, history and/or the building to suit its audiences. The community group/organisation tours are becoming more popular, especially with local businesses and visiting groups from interstate.

KNOW YOUR ASSEMBLY seminars are designed to give attendees an improved understanding of the role and functions of the Legislative Assembly with a focus on the interaction between the executive government and parliament. These full day seminars are free and are conducted in the Chamber and the main Committee room. The seminars are structured to include:

- Session 1: Overview of the Legislative Assembly (presented by the Clerk)
- Session 2: Conduct of Proceedings (presented by the Clerk and Speaker)
- Session 3: The Legislative Process from Cabinet to Commencement (presented by the Deputy Clerk, Chief Parliamentary Counsel and Director of Cabinet Office)
- Session 4: Committees (presented by First Clerk Assistant and a Member)
- Session 5: Optional 'back-of-house' tour (presented by PES and Hansard staff)

OTHER PARLIAMENT PROMOTIONS

OPEN DAY is an annual event, held in conjunction with Government House and the Supreme Court, all located within metres of each other. Last year's Open Day was held in September with 670 people attending. The format of Open Day has changed in the past two years with less emphasis on displays and more speaking events with special guests.

PUBLIC TOURS are conducted every Saturday at 9.00 am and 11.00 am, with an extra tour at 10:30 am on Wednesdays during the Dry Season (May – September). We no longer run public tours during December and January as tourist numbers are very low. We have four casual public tour guides who rotate the shifts, with PES staff on hand for the Wednesday tours to help when busy.



There are number of **OTHER TOURS** run by PES staff on demand. These include tours and inductions for government department or ministerial staff and electorate officers. We also conduct VIP tours for visiting delegations of parliamentarians or government officials, as well as trade delegations or other guests of the Chief Minister, Ministers and Members.

CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT

1. [Social Media \(www.facebook.com/LegislativeAssemblyNT\)](http://www.facebook.com/LegislativeAssemblyNT)

The launch of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory Facebook page presents a complimentary channel of communication and will play a significant role in our public engagement strategy moving forward.

2. [Children's University \(www.childrensuniversity.com.au\)](http://www.childrensuniversity.com.au)

Parliament House was the first registered Learning Destination in the Children's University program in the Northern Territory (Charles Darwin University). Learning Destinations provide high quality learning activities and experiences. Being a Learning Destination is a great way to promote the Legislative Assembly to the local community and to engage with young people in our service delivery.

Parliament House will initially offer three learning activities:

- *Parliament in Action* - observe a Meeting of Parliament from the glassed public gallery.
- *Guided Tour* - explore a historic building and learn about our system of government.
- *Role-Play* - learn about parliamentary procedure by participating in a parliamentary role-play.

3. [Improved Visitor Experience](#)

PES is seeking to improve visitor experience at Parliament House. We are reviewing the content of our Main Hall display cases and are in the developmental stage of producing a timeline of governance in the Northern Territory. A self-guided tour of the Parliament House art works is also being developed.