

THE LEGISLATURE

OVERVIEW

| <i>Agency</i> | <i>Budget 2006-07 \$m</i> | <i>Budget 2007-08 \$m</i> | <i>Variation %</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| The Legislature | | | |
| Total Expenses | 108.7 | 116.2 | 6.9 |
| Capital Expenditure | 3.3 | 4.0 | 21.2 |

THE LEGISLATURE

The Legislature comprises the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly and the Joint House Departments. It provides procedural, administrative and support services to assist Members in their parliamentary and constituency duties at Parliament House and in 94 Legislative Assembly electorate offices (Murray Darling has two offices) throughout the State.

RESULTS AND SERVICES

Under the *Constitution Act 1902*, the Legislature supports a strong representative and democratic government in New South Wales by working towards the following results:

- ◆ The making of constitutionally sound laws, scrutiny of the executive government and debate matters of concern to the community by each House of Parliament.
- ◆ Development of public policy, and monitoring and review of independent agencies and the executive government by parliamentary committees.
- ◆ Facilitation of the representation of constituents by Members of Parliament.

Key services provided by the Legislature which contribute to these results include:

- ◆ the provision of efficient business support systems, including the preparation of business papers and official records, Hansard reporting, information technology and the efficient administration of Members' entitlements;

- ◆ the provision of authoritative advice on parliamentary law and practice, research, analysis and report writing; and
- ◆ the provision of a safe and functional working environment for members and staff ensuring that Parliament House remains an accessible and secure part of the State's heritage.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Additional expenditure in recent years has provided for:

- ◆ an upgraded computer network and internet access to the 94 electorate offices throughout the State, linking with members and staff located at Parliament House;
- ◆ improved physical and information technology security in response to world-wide events and external risk assessments;
- ◆ changes to Members' entitlements to assist them in communicating with their constituents; and
- ◆ additional staff entitlements to Members of the Legislative Assembly on sitting days as determined by the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal.

During 2006-07, the Legislature commenced downsizing of the food and beverage services to operate on a cost neutral basis as well as other efficiency measures for parliamentary support services.

Employee related expenses, including salaries of Members of Parliament account for 75 per cent of total expenses.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Legislature's primary strategic focus is on the provision of services to Members of Parliament to support them in undertaking their parliamentary and electorate duties.

Strategies planned for 2007-08 to achieve this and other goals include:

- ◆ continuation of the phased updating and upgrading of the Parliament's information technology infrastructure;
- ◆ further improvements to the operations of the Parliament's food and beverage services;

- ◆ provision of corporate and procedural support services to Members of Parliament and their staff;
- ◆ further efficiency measures in the delivery of parliamentary support services;
- ◆ continuation of the program of maintenance work on the Parliament House building to meet heritage and occupational health and safety requirements, together with essential building repairs;
- ◆ implementation of the Parliament House Water Savings Plan, involving stormwater harvesting and recycling initiatives; and
- ◆ implementation of the Parliament's Energy Savings Plan, involving the use of solar panels, energy efficient lighting and other greenhouse gas reduction strategies for completion by early 2009.

2007-08 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Estimated total expenses in 2007-08 are \$116.2 million, an increase of 6.9 per cent over budgeted 2006-07 expenses. The increase reflects salary increases granted to Members of Parliament and staff and additional Member entitlements determined by the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal.

Capital Expenditure

Total capital expenditure in 2007-08 is estimated at \$4 million. This funding will be used for:

- ◆ energy and water saving initiatives (\$2 million);
- ◆ the upgrade of Parliament's information technology systems (\$0.7 million); and
- ◆ fit out of Legislative Assembly Members' electorate offices and other minor works (\$1.3 million).