

Report by Hon Secretary/Treasurer to Annual General Meeting of the ASPG Executive 2001

2000-2001 Financial Statement

The organisation is in a very sound financial position. See Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2001. Currently the bank balance stands at \$12,877.50.

The financial position has been improved this year by:

Receipt of proceeds from publication of J R Odgers, Senate Practice (6th Edition): \$1,894;

ASPG also received \$9,292 at the behest of Alan Cumming Thom on the following terms:

\$4,292 to be used for a designated project on a parliamentary theme;

\$5,000 for the development and promotion of APR, including sponsorship of visits to Australia by distinguished speakers on parliamentary subjects;

the source of funding for both projects to be acknowledged.

Macquarie Bank contributed \$5,000.

The Department of Defence has committed \$2000 a year for three years to the production costs of the journal.

Goods and Services Tax - advice from ATO

On advice from the Australian Tax Office an ABN and GST registration were acquired. ATO advised that although our income is beneath the threshold that would require us to register, because the organisation has sought donations from organisations such as the Macquarie Bank and the Department of Defence, we should have an ABN.

This means that each quarter ASPG has to submit a Business Activity Statement and is required to submit a tax return by next February.

ATO advised that the parent body and all the Chapters require only one ABN. Auditors for the NSW Chapter however have advised that each Chapter should have its own ABN.

Discussions with the ATO are ongoing.

Membership and Subscriptions

Current membership stands at 380 individual members, 53 libraries and Parliamentary corporate members.

Subscriptions have risen to \$27.50 to include GST. \$2.50 is payable to the ATO every quarter.

In accordance with a decision reaffirmed at the 1999 AGM each Chapter is required to forward \$25 per member to the Group Secretary. This amount has been increased to \$27.50 to include GST. Chapters may set a membership fee above \$27.50 to cover expenses incurred by their own chapter activities. (alternatively charge a fee to cover each activity). The 1999 decision is not reflected in the Constitution. Executive should perhaps consider this at the AGM.

Corporate Membership

Corporate membership is set at \$165.

Each parliamentary library receives two copies of the journal. Copies are also made available to other research areas if requested.

Australasian Parliamentary Review

Since the last AGM the final edition of *Legislative Studies* under that name was published and distributed. This edition was also the last one to be published by the former editor, Clement McIntyre.

The decision to change the name of Legislative Studies was taken at the last AGM. Titles for the publication were canvassed at the AGM but it was decided that the secretary would contact all branches to determine the new title. On a straw vote, *Australasian Parliamentary Review* gained the most support.

The APR was launched at Parliament House Canberra by the Presiding Officers on 26 March 2001 at a function to celebrate the Centenary of Australia's First Commonwealth Elections. Over 100 people attended the Launch. It should be noted that the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Ian Harris, fully sponsored the function and the launch, both in the printing of invitations and refreshments. The event was organised by the Clerk's office, in particular by Mrs Laraine Brennan.

One author was paid for his article. There is a need to develop a policy on payment for articles.

Two copies of APR are included in individual annual memberships at a cost of \$27.50. Libraries have also obtained two copies per year at this price.

In view of rising production costs consideration might be given to restructuring the costs for libraries and other organisations. (The journal now has a price of \$25 per edition marked on the front cover.)

Sponsorship of Lecture by Professor Robert Hazell

Professor Robert Hazell, Professor of Government and the Constitution and Director of the Constitution Unit at University College London was invited by ASPG, at the instigation of the editor of the Australasian Parliamentary Review, John Nethercote, to participate in seminars in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Wellington in March.

Professor Hazell's topic was *Reforming Government and Parliament - the challenges facing our Parliaments: how can we improve their performance?*

In Canberra the seminar was organised in conjunction with the Parliamentary Library in the Vital Issues series.

ASPG provided support to Professor Hazell to the extent of airfares from the UK and expenses (\$3,200 + \$1,000).

ASPG Website

Not finalised.

House of Representatives Practice

The Clerk of the House of Representatives, Ian Harris, presented the ASPG with a copy of the House of Representatives Practice, 4th Edition.