



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority



Corporate Plan 2023–24



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The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to Land, Waters and Community.

We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders past, present and emerging.



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CEO's Introduction



The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority's (IPEA) Corporate Plan 2023–24 articulates our purpose, expected operating environment, and major activities and priorities for 2023–24 and beyond.

We value our role providing transparency and accountability to the Australian public on the use of public resources by parliamentarians and their staff. The resumption of expenditure reporting, through the Parliamentary Expense Management System in 2023–2024, will continue that role and function.

As always, we strive to provide our clients—parliamentarians and their staff—with outstanding customer service. IPEA supports them in the delivery of their parliamentary functions through the provision of advice, administration of travel expenses, and reporting and assurance of claims.

This year we expect to operate in an environment characterised by significant change and opportunity. In August 2022, the Government agreed in principle to the outcomes from the review of the IPEA and PBR Acts and in July 2023 confirmed functional changes for IPEA. The details of these changes culminate in a Machinery of Government change (MOG) in December 2023.

Against this backdrop, IPEA's priorities this year include:

- working with the Department of Finance (Finance) to resolve functional and technical issues with the Parliamentary Expense Management System (PEMS) and resuming Expenditure Reporting
- implementing the outcomes of the reviews into the parliamentary environment, including the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017 and the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017, which include MOG changes, expected in December 2023
- updating, if necessary, this Corporate Plan to reflect a more detailed undertaking of MOG changes
- using broad-ranging communication channels and tools to maintain awareness, increase knowledge, build trust and establish expectations about the legislative framework with our clients, and
- continuing to build capability internally, in a tight and changing labour market, across important functional areas including data analytics and service delivery.

With change comes opportunity. I expect this year to be both challenging and rewarding, however I have every confidence in the IPEA team to rise to the year ahead and make the most of opportunities to deliver operational and service excellence.

Annwyn Godwin

Chief Executive Officer

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

1 July 2023

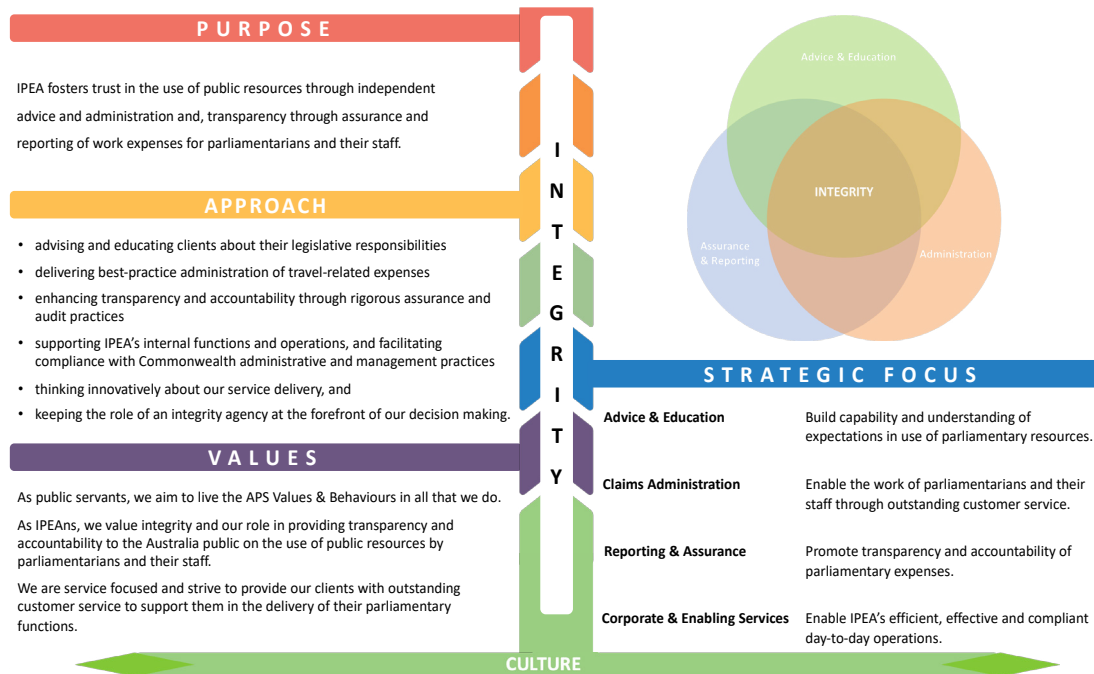


Compliance Statement:

IPEA's Corporate Plan 2023–24 is presented under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act). Consistent with the requirements under subsection 35(1)(b) of the PGPA Act, the plan covers the periods 2023–24 through to 2026–27. The plan sets out the objectives, the environment, the resources we will use and how we will track our progress as an independent statutory authority.

IPEA's Purpose and functions

IPEA is a leading integrity organisation with a clear strategic focus on accessing work expenses under the Parliamentary Business Resources framework:



IPEA was created to support parliamentarians and their staff to use parliamentary resources appropriately—according to the parliamentary business resources framework—and, importantly, to foster trust in the use of those resources by enhancing transparency and accountability.

To help build trust in the use of public resources, IPEA focuses on working with parliamentarians and their staff to create a strong understanding of how to correctly apply the parliamentary business resources framework.

IPEA's reporting and assurance functions reinforce an environment of accountability and transparency in the misuse of public resources. IPEA's integrated and tailored approach to service delivery provides parliamentarians and their staff with the awareness, knowledge and tools needed to meet the requirements of the parliamentary business resources framework and public expectations.

IPEA achieves its purpose by incorporating integrity into its actions and fulfilling its functional responsibilities to:

- provide clear, timely and accurate advice to parliamentarians and their staff on travel expenses and travel allowances
- administer parliamentarians' and their staffs' claims for travel expenses and travel allowances
- monitor parliamentarians' and their staffs' travel expenses and travel allowances
- conduct audits and assurance activities relating to:
 - work expenses, travel expenses and travel allowances claimed by parliamentarians
 - travel expenses and travel allowances claimed by parliamentarians' staff
- prepare regular reports on parliamentarians' and their staffs' work expenses, including all travel expenses and travel allowances and other work-related expenses
- enable IPEA's external service delivery and operational compliance by providing high quality corporate services that meet legislative requirements.

Operating Environment

I expect 2023–24 to be a challenging and pivotal year for IPEA, impacted by significant events and major government decisions over the last two years, including:

- recommendations from the various reviews into the parliamentary environment and parliamentary business resources (PBR) legislative framework
- Finance’s ongoing PEMS delivery and issues resolution
- the impact of changes to the make-up of parliament since the last federal election (new parliamentarians who have initial training and support needs), and
- changes to IPEA’s departmental resourcing.

All have created a complex, uncertain and potentially transformational operating environment for IPEA.

Reviews

Implementation of the outcomes of the various Reviews by government since 2021—including review of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* and Regulations, the Review of the Parliamentary Workplace: Responding to Serious Incidents, and the Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces—is still ongoing. While final implementation details are being worked through, the Reviews’ outcomes have the potential to create significant changes to IPEA’s responsibilities, service delivery and operations.

IPEA is preparing for the transfer of additional parliamentary business expenses administration to IPEA that will culminate in MOG changes expected by the end of the year. While there will be a period of transition, IPEA will apply its high-level service delivery model and expectations to the new administrative functions. Due to the significant change to its responsibilities from December 2023, IPEA may re-issue its Corporate Plan 2023–24 to reflect final MOG changes and capture new responsibilities and performance measures.

To support further major changes, as a result of the implementation of findings from the various Reviews, IPEA will continue to work with stakeholders, its staff and clients to prepare for and respond to the evolving parliamentary operating environment.

Parliamentary Expense Management System (PEMS)

IPEA will continue to advocate for its clients and address with Finance, ongoing functional and technical issues with PEMS. Changes to system functionality and ongoing system issues have disrupted IPEA’s ability to process and pay claims to desired Service Level Standards, and impacted clients’ satisfaction with IPEA’s service delivery. IPEA continues to work with Finance, the project owner, to address these issues. IPEA will continue to contribute to and support the ANAO’s audit of Finance’s PEMS delivery.

In late 2023, IPEA expects Finance to complete work on and deliver PEMS Expenditure Reporting (ER) functionality. PEMS ER functionality will enable parliamentarians to monitor their parliamentary business resource claims and expenses in ‘real’ time through a single online system. To support parliamentarians’ and staffs’ application and use of the system, IPEA will provide comprehensive education and training on this new functionality.

Against this complex IT backdrop, IPEA will remain solution and client focused, and continue to educate and advocate to better support its clients.

New parliamentarians

Since the 2022 federal election, 50 new parliamentarians—22 per cent of the current parliament—commenced. The high number of new parliamentarians and staff has required IPEA to provide increased levels of support through IPEA’s education and advice functions. IPEA expects demand for its services to continue and evolve as: parliamentarians’ roles change; there are amendments to the underlying parliamentary resources legislation; the outcomes of the various Reviews are implemented; and PEMS is fully implemented. IPEA’s role as a service provider and partner—assisting parliamentarians and their staff to meet their parliamentary business obligations—will evolve to meet clients’ needs. With this evolution comes increased demands on IPEA’s resources, which will be managed through careful workforce planning, education and support.

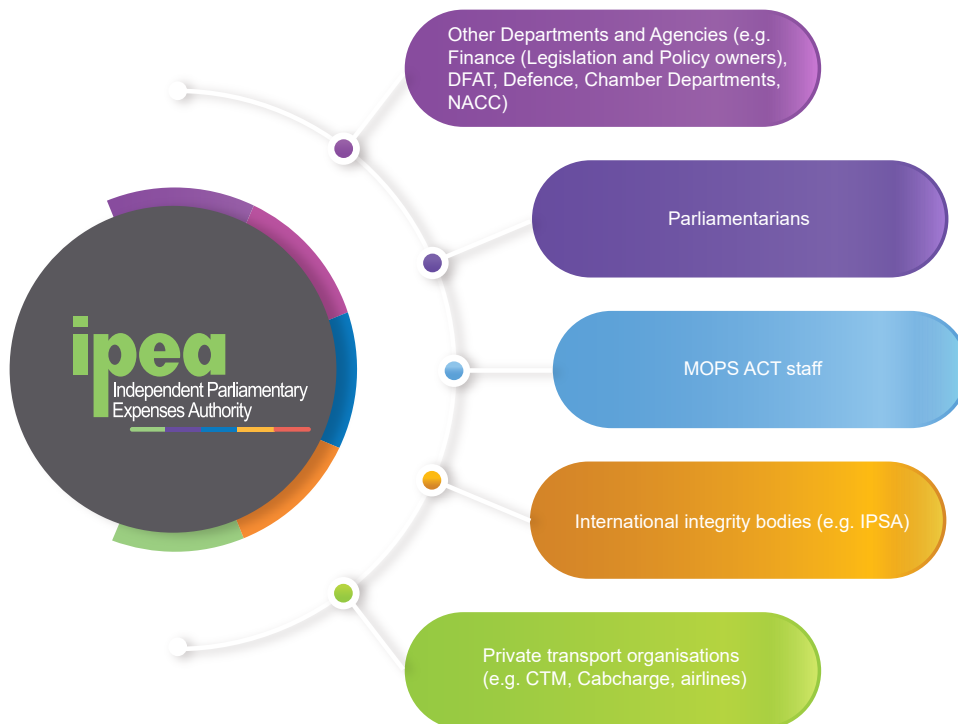
Departmental resourcing

PEMS introduction was expected to result in IPEA operating efficiencies and savings. As a result, IPEA’s 2023–24 departmental budget was reduced by \$1.3m and 13 staffing positions. To date, PEMS’ expected operating efficiencies and savings have not been realised. Indeed, PEMS has created greater operational demands and pressures requiring the creation of work-around activities to process claims and changes to Service Level Standards to reflect the current PEMS operating environment. IPEA undertakes ongoing engagement with the project owner, Finance, to assist them to resolve PEMS’ issues and deliver Expenditure Report functionality.

Together, these significant events and decisions create a complex, uncertain and potentially transformational operating environment for IPEA.

Cooperation

IPEA’s operations do not exist in isolation. IPEA relies on its strong and productive relationships with other government entities and stakeholders to meet clients’ needs.



IPEA will continue to nurture existing relationships and build new ones to support its clients and stakeholders, and continue to build on its role as a leading integrity agency.

People and Capability

IPEA's staff expertise, resilience, service mindset, diligence and professionalism are the backbone of IPEA's success. To continue IPEA's success and further develop its staff, we will focus on:



using an evidence based approach, and innovative application of our data and analytical capability to strengthen IPEA's administration, advisory, reporting and audit functions



maintaining and fostering effective relationships with parliamentarians and other stakeholders while reinforcing our independence and expertise, and



supporting a culture of collaboration, consultation and flexibility through values-based leadership that encourages resilience, inclusiveness and diversity in our workforce.



directing workforce planning to retain and develop capability, and support staff through environmental and operational changes to mitigate psychosocial risks

IPEA's approach to supporting, and building staff capability and resilience includes:

- setting clear development goals
- providing cross-functional opportunities
- exploring intelligence and data-led options relevant to IPEA's functions
- fostering a culture of collaboration, sharing and learning
- providing clear operational guidance on relevant administrative processes
- supporting flexible working arrangements
- providing access to professional development services
- identifying and equipping staff with tools to manage psychosocial risks, specifically providing team leaders with training and capability to support their staff.

IPEA will continue to nurture its staff and follow its successful capability-building approach to deliver results in what is expected to be a complex and transformational environment. IPEA will support its staff, using education and tools to promote self-care during peak times, to manage expected psychosocial risks and challenges due to anticipated changes in 2023–24.

Finance's expected final implementation of PEMS in 2023–24 will impact directly on IPEA's workforce planning and operations. PEMS' full implementation will allow IPEA to evaluate holistically the system's impact on its operations and resources, and respond accordingly.

Planned MOG changes will result in a larger and more functionally diverse organisation, which will require reviewing IPEA's operational delivery. IPEA is up for the challenge and will leverage this to provide staff with greater opportunities for skill development, job variety and career progression.

APS Workforce Planning

To help equip the APS workforce to tackle immediate and emerging challenges, an integrated strategic approach to workforce management, workforce planning resources, was developed and is available on the Australian Public Service Commission's website.

Risk Oversight and Management

IPEA is an independent Statutory Authority and a non-corporate government entity operating under several legislative instruments including the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017*, *Public Governance Performance Accountability Act 2013* and the *Public Service Act 1999*. IPEA delivers its services under the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* and its subordinate legislative instruments.

IPEA embeds its risk policy and framework to manage its risks. IPEA communicates regularly with its staff about their responsibilities under IPEA's risk policy and framework, which reinforces a positive risk culture. IPEA's pro-active approach helps its staff to understand how to identify risks and to effectively manage them.

IPEA's risk management policy and framework address four important areas: service delivery and assurance; internal operations; compliance; and people and culture. Examples of risk areas covered by these categories are:

1. Service delivery and assurance—stakeholder management, client-facing processes, administering claims, quality, timeliness, accountability and reputation
2. Internal operations—business processes, knowledge and data, systems, security, and technology
3. Compliance—legislation, regulation, policy, contracts, integrity and fraud, corporate governance, financial management and privacy
4. People and culture—resourcing, capability, workforce planning, wellbeing and leadership.

Within its operating environment, IPEA innovatively pursues opportunities, adopts new technology, achieves its objectives and fulfills its responsibilities. Integrity, security and accuracy of IPEA's information are critical to IPEA's success. As such, IPEA has a low risk tolerance for:

- dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent conduct
- the unauthorised disclosure of official information
- dangers to the health, safety and wellbeing of IPEA's Members, employees, contractors and visitors.

The Audit and Risk Committee plays an important role in supporting IPEA's effective risk management practices, providing advice to the Chief Executive Officer and senior executives on the appropriateness of IPEA's strategies to manage risks. IPEA is committed to the continuous improvement of its risk culture and capability by:

- building on its regular risk training and communicating with its staff
- promoting positive risk behaviours
- evaluating the appropriateness of its risk controls, and
- advocating that risk management remains a key area of focus in everything IPEA does.

Performance

Consistent with the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023–24, IPEA's performance targets over the next 4 years are set out in the table below.

Year	Performance criteria	Target ^(a)
2023–24 2024–25 2025–26 2026–27	<p>Travel — Advice</p> <p>Provide accurate and timely advice to parliamentarians and MOP(S) staff on travel and related expenses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice is provided in accordance with IPEA's published service level standards, which include measurements for quality and timeliness.
	<p>Travel – Education</p> <p>Provide education sessions to parliamentarians and MOP(S) staff on travel and related expenses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education sessions are provided in accordance with the published service level standards.
	<p>Travel — Claims</p> <p>Accurate and timely processing of claims for travel expenses and allowances relating to parliamentarians and MOP(S) staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claims for travel expenses and allowances are processed in accordance with IPEA's published service level standards, which include measurements for accuracy and timeliness.
	<p>Data and Reporting</p> <p>Increasing transparency through the compilation of reports detailing the work resources of current and former parliamentarians and the travel resources of MOP(S) staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports relating to work expenses for parliamentarians and their staff are prepared and provided as per IPEA's published service level standards.
	<p>Audit and Assurance</p> <p>Conducting assurance activities on the work resources of parliamentarians and the travel resources of MOP(S) staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parliamentarians' offices are subject to one or more forms of assurance activity during the financial year in accordance with IPEA's published service level standards and procedures (protocols and factsheets).

(a) IPEA's planned performance results for 2023–24, as defined by IPEA's service level standards, have been adjusted to reflect significant IT system (PEMS) performance constraints and issues.

IPEA's Service Level Standards 2023–24*

Travel Advice

Service Level Standards

All calls are acknowledged, with 90% of calls acknowledged within 1 day (a).

All requests for advice are resolved, with 90% of requests for advice resolved within 2 days (a)(b).

Quality and accuracy levels for advice are achieved, with 90% of advice provided being accurate and of a high quality.

70% of client survey respondents are satisfied with IPEA's advice as measured in the IPEA client satisfaction survey.

(a) During hours: 9am to 5pm—Monday-Friday AEST/ADST (except for public holidays).

(b) Except where IPEA is waiting on essential information from others, for example waiting for information from parliamentarians, their staff, travel providers or government stakeholders.

Travel Education

Service Level Standards

Education session requests will be responded to within 7 working days.

Education sessions are offered in all capital cities (a)(b) and virtually, twice per calendar year.

100% of new parliamentarians are offered an introductory session within 2 months of declaration of poll (c).

80% of participants are satisfied with the education session they attended (d).

(a) Dependent on room availability.

(b) Participants may be offered a virtual session where registration numbers for a capital city are low.

(c) Except where IPEA is waiting on essential contact information for new parliamentarians.

(d) As measured through the optional post-session survey and annual IPEA Client Satisfaction Survey.

Travel Claims

Service Level Standards

Travel claims are assessed weekly to verify 80% have been processed within an average of 7 working days and with a 90% degree of accuracy (a).

Requests for additional travel claim information (e.g. where the claim is incomplete) are sent within an average of 4 working days of receiving the initial claim (b).

90% of Electorate Support Budgets are disseminated by the third week of June. New parliamentarians commencing after 1 July receive their budget/s within one week of official commencement.

60% of client survey respondents are satisfied with IPEA's travel claim processing as measured in the IPEA client satisfaction survey.

- (a) Incorrect/incomplete claims are not included.
- (b) Except where IPEA is waiting on essential information from others, for example waiting for information from parliamentarians, their staff, travel providers or government stakeholders.

Reporting

Service Level Standards

95% of expenditure reports are provided on a quarterly basis in accordance with the expenditure reports schedule (a)(b).

90% of ad hoc reports are provided within 10 working days, or another timeframe as agreed.

95% of expenditure reports and associated data are published on the IPEA website and data.gov.au in line with our publication schedule (c).

50% of client survey respondents are satisfied with IPEA's reports as measured in the IPEA client satisfaction survey.

- (a) Dependent on ICT and data availability.
- (b) Does not include time waiting for 3rd party data.
- (c) IPEA website and data.gov.au website are available.

Audit and Assurance

Service Level Standards

100% of parliamentarians' offices are covered by at least one assurance activity over the financial year.

At least 10 Assurance Reviews are undertaken over the financial year in accordance with risk and/or public profile.

100% of irregularities or anomalies uncovered through assurance functions are further investigated.

Full-scale audits are undertaken where IPEA identifies the possible misuse of parliamentary work resources and it meets IPEA's Assurance and Audit Protocol – dealing with allegations of misuse of parliamentary work expenses.

100% of cases of expenses recovery action are pursued, where assurance investigations have established misuse.

*IPEA's planned performance targets for 2023–24 and in the forward estimates period, as defined by IPEA's Service Level Standards, will be lower than previous years due to significant IT system (PEMS) performance constraints and issues which are beyond IPEA's control.