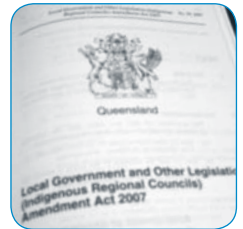
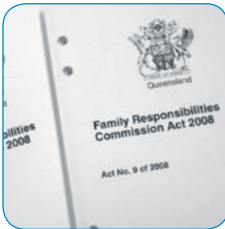




Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel

Annual Report 2007 - 2008



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Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel

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Letter of transmission

Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel

The Honourable Anna Bligh MP

Premier of Queensland

Dear Premier

I have much pleasure in presenting the annual report on the operations of the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel.

The report covers the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Drew', written in a cursive style.

Peter Drew

Parliamentary Counsel



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About us

Key roles and functions of the office

On 1 June 1992 the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (the office) was established as a statutory authority by the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*. The key roles of the office are directed at achieving the purposes set out in section 3 of that Act. These purposes include ensuring that:

- Queensland legislation is of the highest standard
- Queensland legislation is drafted effectively and efficiently
- Queensland legislation, and information about Queensland legislation, is readily available in printed and electronic form.

Subject to the Minister, the Honourable the Premier, the office is controlled by the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. However, the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is the accountable officer responsible for the financial administration of the office.

The office has a broad range of functions under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 7, including:

- drafting all government Bills
- drafting all amendments of Bills for Ministers
- drafting all subordinate legislation other than exempt subordinate legislation
- drafting, if asked:
 - proposed Bills for government entities other than departments and public service offices
 - private members' Bills
 - amendments of Bills for other members
 - all other instruments for use in, or in connection with, the Legislative Assembly
- in performing its drafting functions, providing advice to Ministers, members and government entities about alternative ways of achieving policy objectives and the application of fundamental legislative principles
- providing advice to the Governor-in-Council, Ministers, and government entities on the lawfulness of proposed subordinate legislation
- ensuring the Queensland statute book is of the highest standard
- preparing reprints of Queensland legislation and information about Queensland legislation
- making arrangements for the printing of Queensland legislation and information about Queensland legislation
- making arrangements for electronic access to Queensland legislation.

Our vision

A highly motivated, proactive and professional office that uses the best technology, skills and practices to ensure Queensland legislation is of the highest standard.

Our mission

To deliver efficiently the legislation required for State democratic processes and to support justice by ensuring legislation is effective, accessible and consistent with fundamental legislative principles.

Our values

The office's core values are:

- Commitment to client service, including honesty, objectivity, dedication and responsibility
- Commitment to quality, including a proactive approach to innovation and continuous improvement

And, to best achieve client service and quality, the office's values also include:

- Teamwork
- The contribution of staff as individuals and team players
- A supportive and professional working environment in which staff gain job satisfaction, skills development, career development and a sense of achievement.

Our clients

The office uses a team-based approach to provide its clients with the best possible service. It is structured into four groups: department groups A, B and C, and the publications and corporate services group. Each department group provides drafting and advisory services to a particular set of drafting clients, as well as publishing point-in-time reprints relating to its set of clients. Each team of non-drafting officers in the department groups, referred to in this report as legislation officers, also has a role in supporting a whole-of-office function, namely, corporate support, reprints management or legislative information and publications.

Group A departments 2007– 08	Group B departments 2007– 08	Group C departments 2007– 08
Corrective Services Employment and Industrial Relations Justice and Attorney-General Main Roads Premier and Cabinet Queensland Police Service Queensland Transport	Child Safety Communities Disability Services Queensland Education, Training and the Arts Emergency Services Housing Public Works Queensland Health Queensland Treasury Tourism, Regional Development and Industry	Environmental Protection Agency Local Government, Sport and Recreation Mines and Energy Natural Resources and Water Primary Industries and Fisheries Infrastructure and Planning

The publications and corporate services group is responsible for legislative access issues, information technology, library services and corporate governance.



Drafting and advisory clients

The office's clients for its drafting and advisory services are the people who provide instructions for drafting proposed legislation. Instructors include the Premier, Cabinet, Ministers, officers of government departments and entities, members of parliamentary committees, and members of the Legislative Assembly.

Executive government is a major client because it sponsors most Bills in the Parliament. However, under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, any member of the Legislative Assembly may ask the parliamentary counsel for drafting services. The parliamentary counsel must comply with the request unless the parliamentary counsel considers that it would not be possible to comply without significantly and adversely affecting the government's legislative program.

Publishing clients

The office's publishing clients are all those to or for whom the office provides access to legislation through its publishing activities. The office provides in-house publishing services to the Parliament, government departments and entities by:

- producing the versions of Bills required for passage through the Legislative Assembly and for assent
- preparing copies of subordinate legislation for certification by the office and providing the certified copies for making by a Minister, board, agency or the Governor-in-Council
- coordinating for departments the notification, publication and tabling processes for subordinate legislation, including publication and notification of subordinate legislation in extraordinary gazettes.

Because every member of the community is potentially affected by legislation, the office recognises the community in general as an important publishing client. The courts and legal profession are important publishing clients in view of their vital roles in interpreting and advising clients about legislation.



**The manager of each legislation officer team reports to the Manager, Publications and Corporate Services in relation to the team's whole-of-office function.*



Planning our performance

The office works towards goals in three key result areas.

Key result area 1 Legislative drafting services

Goal To provide an effective and efficient drafting service, ensuring Queensland legislation is of the highest standard

Key result area 2 Legislative publishing and information services

Goal To ensure Queensland legislation is readily available by providing responsive publication, advisory and information services

Key result area 3 Organisational capability

Goal To maximise the capacity of our skilled and diverse staff to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals

Goal To continually improve the capacity of office systems and processes to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals within established frameworks

Goal To continually improve information technology to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals within established frameworks

In conjunction with the strategic planning process, the office develops a business plan detailing operational projects and processes to enable the office to meet the performance targets. Personal plans prepared by each member of staff show, through projects and responsibilities, how each person contributes to the office meeting its goals.

Reporting on our performance

The office's performance is measured in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness and includes regular feedback from drafting clients.

The annual report provides a comprehensive overview of the office's performance on a yearly basis. In accordance with the government's Managing for Outcomes initiative, the office also provides quarterly reports on its performance. The office is included in the program of audits and evaluations performed by Audit and Evaluation Services in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

The workload in a legislative drafting office is driven by the government's legislative program and the sittings pattern of the Legislative Assembly. The work is difficult to measure with precision and may vary from year to year. Law-making is complex and involves many players. Ultimately, the office's clients must assess its performance.



Key result area 1 Legislative drafting services

Goal

To provide an effective and efficient drafting service, ensuring Queensland legislation is of the highest standard

Key issues and challenges

- Meet the high level of demand for high quality drafting and advisory services
- Continually improve the quality of legislative drafting by maintaining quality assurance systems, using plain English drafting practices and improving the presentation of legislation
- Enhance the link between high quality drafting and high quality policy
 - Improve the quality, consistency and integration of laws across the statute book
 - Refine instructed policy into written law consistent with fundamental legislative principles and provide relevant advice
- Ensure access to justice
 - Provide Parliament with the drafting services necessary to ensure there is an appropriate system of rules to govern our society
 - Make sure legislation is conceptually easy to understand
 - Protect the institution of Parliament and the rights and liberties of individuals—the fundamental legislative principles

Strategies

- Deliver the Government's legislative program
- Deliver a drafting product of the highest standard
- Review, document and communicate issues that contribute to ensuring Queensland legislation is of the highest standard

Performance measures

- Quantity of legislation drafted
 - Number of Bills provided (including page numbers)
 - Number of amendments during consideration in detail provided (including page numbers)
 - Number of instruments of subordinate legislation provided (including page numbers)
- Quantity of significant legislation drafted
- Quantity and effectiveness of support services delivered
- Quality—level of client satisfaction of direct government drafting clients (target 85%)
- Briefing note system maintained at a high level
- Quality assurance system actively promoted
- Drafting products and services reviewed
- Increased client awareness of drafting quality issues by client agencies and other external bodies



Our performance

Delivering the Government's legislative program

Quantity of legislation delivered

During 2007–2008 the office drafted all of Queensland's Bills and subordinate legislation, as defined in the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, other than exempt subordinate legislation.

In some cases, the legislation drafted followed drafts for national scheme legislation prepared under the supervision of the Parliamentary Counsel's Committee (PCC), the national committee of the parliamentary counsel from all jurisdictions. The PCC coordinates the drafting of legislation that, to some extent, requires uniformity across jurisdictions.

During the year the office also drafted 10 private members' Bills and 16 non-government amendments for Bills that were tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Queensland Acts assented to and subordinate legislation made, 2003–2008*

Year	No. of Acts	No. of Act pages	Principal Acts	No. of Acts amended	No. of instruments of SL	No. of SL pages	No. of Acts & instruments of SL	No. of Acts & SL pages
2003–2004	71	3,923	26	441	345	4,082	416	8,005
2004–2005	70	4,446	17	425	354	4,128	424	8,574
2005–2006	76	4,376	20	417	365	3,337	441	7,713
2006–2007	56	3,288	13	300	319	4,059	375	7,347
2007–2008	70	4,235	20	429	432	4,003	502	8,238

* Figures in the table are the Acts assented to and subordinate legislation made by the Governor-in-Council or departments. The number of Bills and subordinate legislation drafted, but not necessarily passed or made during the year, is indicated in the next table.

Queensland Bills and subordinate legislation drafted, 2007–2008

Year	No. of Bills	No. of Bill pages	For Principal Acts	No. of Acts amended by Bills	No. of draft instruments of SL	No. of draft SL pages	No. of Bills & draft instruments of SL	No. of Bills & draft SL pages
2007–2008	95	4,971	26	446	428	4,046	523	9,017

Exempt instruments

Under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 7, the office has a function to draft all proposed subordinate legislation, other than exempt subordinate legislation. Exempt subordinate legislation is a statutory rule, other than a regulation, declared to be exempt subordinate legislation by an Act or a regulation under the Legislative Standards Act (see section 2, Definitions).

In 2007–2008, examples of provisions that provide for exempt subordinate legislation include:

- *Central Queensland University Act 1998*, section 58
- *Griffith University Act 1998*, section 62
- *James Cook University Act 1997*, section 58
- *Queensland University of Technology Act 1998*, section 57

- *University of Queensland Act 1998*, section 53
- *University of Southern Queensland Act 1998*, section 57
- *University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998*, section 60
- *Public Trustee Act 1978*, section 17(6) [gazette notice fixing fees and charges]

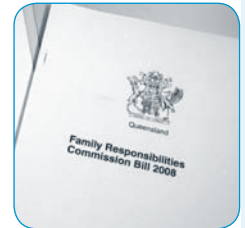
Significant legislation drafted

During 2007–2008 the office continued to draft legislation supporting the government’s priorities.

Legislation of particular significance for which drafting services were provided during the year is set out in the following pages.

Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007

- provides for the cooperative management, protection and ecologically sustainable use of land, including pastoral land, on Cape York Peninsula, allows for the continued return of homelands to traditional owners and provides opportunities for the owners to develop a sustainable economic, cultural and social future.



Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2008

- provides protection to children by allowing the Magistrates Courts to make prohibition orders against certain previously convicted child sex offenders to prohibit them from engaging in specified lawful conduct which nonetheless may pose an unacceptable risk to the lives or sexual safety of children in the community.



Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian and Another Act Amendment Act 2008

- prohibits a disqualified person (generally, a person who has been or is convicted of a child-related sexual offence, or is subject to a disqualification order made by a court) from applying for or holding a blue card, and from applying for, starting or continuing in, regulated employment within the meaning of the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. The Act also amends the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* to empower police officers to demand production of a disqualified person’s blue card for return to the children’s commissioner.

Community Services Act 2007

- helps build sustainable communities by facilitating access to community services.

Criminal Code (Double Jeopardy) Amendment Act 2007

- a private member’s Bill, supported by the government, that reforms the double jeopardy law.

Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Amendment Act 2007

- increases community protection by tightening temporary detention provisions for prisoners who contravene a supervision order.

Drugs Misuse Amendment Act 2008

- extends the definition of a dangerous drug, creates new offences for the supply and production of precursor substances and items, and prescribes a system for preparing and filing end-user declarations for transactions of controlled substances or specific things.

Education Legislation Amendment Act 2008

- gives the Queensland Studies Authority functions in relation to the administration of common national tests in literacy and numeracy.

Education Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2007

- replaces the existing senior certificate with a new qualification that supports increased literacy and numeracy and gives more students options in relation to senior secondary education.



Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2007

- introduces specific offences about littering from a vehicle and about dangerous littering, allows the offence of littering from a vehicle to be dealt with as an offence involving a vehicle under the *State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999*, and allows a person to be directed to remove litter from a place if the person unlawfully deposits more than 20 litres of litter.

Exotic Diseases in Animals (Equine Influenza) Notice 2007

- provides for restrictions on the movement of animals to prevent the spread of equine influenza.

Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008

- supports the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in the welfare reform communities and helps the members of those communities to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of individuals and families in the communities.

Fisheries Regulation 2008

- establishes a comprehensive regime regulating commercial and recreational fishing to provide for the use, conservation and enhancement of the State's fisheries resources and fish habitats.

Gambling Legislation Amendment Act 2008

- implements processes relating to third party operators who assist in general gaming, strengthens the Government's stance against minors entering, remaining and gambling in casinos, and introduces a licensing regime for those businesses that test gaming equipment.

Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2008

- upholds the standards of education delivered by higher education institutions operating in Queensland.

Iconic Queensland Places Act 2008

- protects places with characteristics or qualities in their natural or built environment that reflect or contribute in a substantial way to Queensland's character.

Judicial Remuneration Act 2007

- implements a simpler and more certain system for the determination of judicial salaries and allowances that is consistent with judicial independence and enhances national consistency in judicial remuneration.

Justice and Other Information Disclosure Act 2008

- enables the appropriate exchange of government information across a number of specified agencies to facilitate the coordinated management of persons in the criminal justice system and to improve collaboration between the agencies.



Land Court and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- confers on the Land Court most of the jurisdiction of the Land and Resources Tribunal, and makes amendments to achieve reforms in other areas of the court system, namely allowing retired Magistrates to act as Magistrates and introducing a framework for a new system for costs assessment.



Legal Profession Regulation 2007

- supports the introduction of the *Legal Profession Act 2007* and is based on an agreed national model designed to achieve improvements in the legal services industry.

Local Government and Industrial Relations Amendment Act 2008

- introduces reforms to local government and provides for the application of State employment laws to most employees of most local governments.

Local Government and Other Legislation (Indigenous Regional Councils) Amendment Act 2007

- provides for the governance framework for the new indigenous regional councils (Torres Strait Island Regional Council and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council) established under the *Local Government*

Reform Implementation Act 2007. It includes new land tenure and trusteeship arrangements to accommodate the new council structure and the need for consultation to occur in the development of these arrangements.

Local Government Reform Implementation Act 2007

- amends the *Local Government Act 1993* to implement a restructure of Queensland local governments to improve the sustainability of, and service delivery to, Queensland communities. The Act gives effect to the recommendations of the Local Government Reform Commission, published on 27 July 2007.

Local Government Reform Implementation (Transferring Areas) Regulation 2007 and Local Government Reform Implementation Regulation 2008

- provide for matters to facilitate amalgamations of local government areas and other reforms, including by providing for the transition of regulatory and administrative arrangements and allocating employees and property between affected local governments.

Mental Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- gives effect to a number of major recommendations from the Final Report of the Review of the Mental Health Act 2000, Promoting Balance in the Forensic Mental Health System, conducted by Mr Brendan Butler AM SC.

Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- includes amendments directed at streamlining the administration and operation of the petroleum and gas legislation as a result of a review of the operation of the legislation since it came into force.

Pay-roll Tax (Harmonisation) Amendment Act 2008

- improves alignment of pay-roll tax with the legislation of other jurisdictions, particularly New South Wales and Victoria.

Professional Engineers and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2008

- provides for a simplified co-regulatory regime under which assessment entities are approved to assess the qualifications and competency of professional engineers.

Public Service Act 2008

- amalgamates and enhances the functions of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner and the Service Delivery and Performance Commission.

Queensland Building Services Authority and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- includes amendments to establish a fire protection occupational licensing system for the fire protection industry as recommended by the Building Fire Safety in the Queensland Budget Accommodation Report 2000.

Queensland Competition Authority Amendment Act 2008

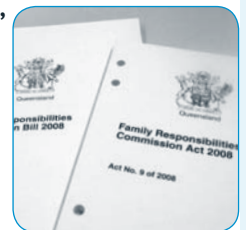
- applies the monopoly prices oversight regime to certain non-government monopoly business activities.

Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- amends the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* to enable the Queensland Heritage Council to perform a more strategic role in conserving Queensland's cultural heritage, to introduce more accountable, transparent and efficient administrative processes in relation to the Queensland Heritage Register and to regulate the development of registered places.

Racing Amendment Act 2008

- facilitates the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the Queensland Harness Racing Board and the Greyhound Racing Authority to 2 new control bodies from 1 July 2008.





Recreation Areas Management Regulation 2007

- provides for the effective management of established recreation areas to allow for the areas to be used by visitors while protecting the environment and ensuring public safety.

Research Involving Human Embryos and Prohibition of Human Cloning Amendment Act 2007

- gives effect by the State to its commitment to nationally consistent arrangements for the prohibition of human cloning for reproduction and the regulation of human embryo research.

Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

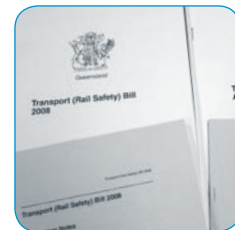
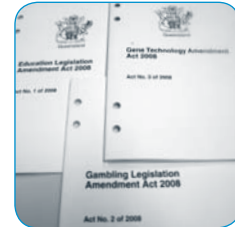
- includes amendments to facilitate the divestment of certain wind farms and associated sites and development opportunities.

South East Queensland Water (Restructuring) Act 2007

- facilitates the restructure of the water industry in South East Queensland (SEQ) to deliver significant benefits to the community.

Terrorism Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- enhances police capability to prevent a terrorist act from occurring or to minimise the impact and potential loss of life resulting from a terrorist incident or incidents.



Transport (Rail Safety) Bill 2008

- sets out legal duties and operating requirements to be applied on a nationally consistent basis to all parties responsible for rail safety. The legislation will underpin future national regulations, compliance codes and guidelines.

Transport Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- among other things, provides for the issue of peak demand taxi licences and introduces nationally uniform compliance and enforcement provisions for heavy vehicles.

Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2007

- introduces changes allowing for special hardship orders in relation to a driver whose driver licence is suspended.

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2007

- introduces changes relating to the taxi industry and in particular for the taxi subsidy scheme.

Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Driver Licensing) and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2007

- introduces changes as part of the Young Drivers Package including logbooks and P plate requirements.

Uniform Civil Procedure Amendment Rule (No. 4) 2007

- provides rules for dealing with legal costs whether payable under the *Legal Profession Act 2007* or ordered by a court.

Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007

- establishes the Urban Land Development Authority to plan, undertake, promote, coordinate and control the development of particular areas of land in Queensland for urban purposes.

Vocational Education, Training and Employment and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- includes amendments to establish a legislative framework for the establishment and operation of TAFE institutes as statutory authorities.

Water and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007

- implements a range of demand management measures in the SEQ region to address the continuing drought and contribute to long term sustainable water use

- implements a range of short and long term demand management measures in areas outside the SEQ region also experiencing water supply issues because of drought
- contributes to long term sustainable water use in areas not experiencing drought.

Water Fluoridation Act 2008

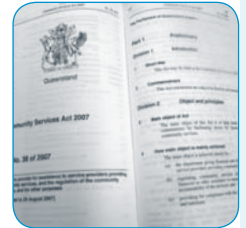
- promotes good oral health in Queensland by providing for the safe fluoridation of public potable water supplies.

Wine Industry Amendment Act 2008

- supports innovation and growth in Queensland's wine industry, including by streamlining certain wine producer licensing procedures.

Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Acts Amendment Act 2007

- increases benefits to workers and provides for a licensing review committee to review decisions of workplace health and safety inspectors regarding occupational licence holders and to determine appropriate disciplinary action against licence holders.



Quantity and effectiveness of support services delivered

During 2007–2008 the office continued to provide a number of support services to:

- Parliament, for the Bill to Act process
- the Governor-in-Council and other entities authorised to make subordinate legislation, for the subordinate legislation process.

Performing functions in the Bill to Act process

During 2007–2008 the office continued to produce all the versions of Bills required for passage through the Legislative Assembly and for assent. Under the Clerk of the Parliament's instructions, the office inserts into Bills amendments made during consideration in detail, consequential changes arising from the amendments, and other minor changes.

Performing functions in the subordinate legislation process

During 2007–2008 the office continued to perform a central role in the subordinate legislation process.

Notification, publication and tabling

The office coordinates the notification, publication and tabling processes for subordinate legislation and related regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes. This includes the publication and notification of subordinate legislation in extraordinary gazettes for client departments.

Certification

The office certifies subordinate legislation if it is satisfied the subordinate legislation is lawful and has sufficient regard to fundamental legislative principles. During the year, the office considered every instrument of subordinate legislation drafted by it before either certifying or refusing to certify it. If the office refuses to certify proposed subordinate legislation, the instrument must, under *The Queensland Cabinet Handbook*, be submitted to Cabinet before it is made.

Staged expiry of subordinate legislation

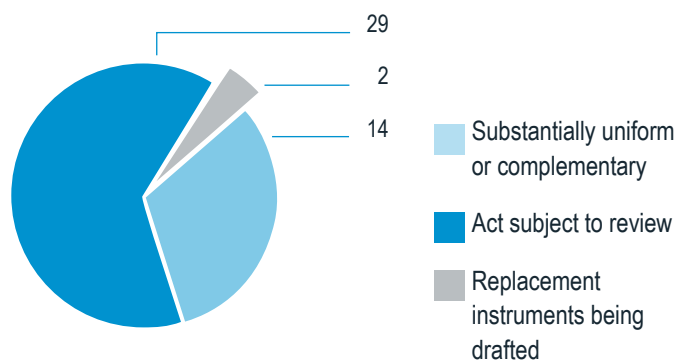
The office continued its role of monitoring and responding to the expiry of subordinate legislation under the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*. Subordinate legislation subject to part 7 of the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992* expires automatically approximately 10 years after its making, unless it is sooner repealed or expires, or a regulation is made deferring or exempting it from expiry. Exemptions from expiry are strictly limited and an exemption is renewable on two grounds only: first, that the subordinate legislation is substantially uniform or complementary with legislation of the Commonwealth or another State; second, that the Act or provision



under which or in relation to which the subordinate legislation is made is subject to review. If an exemption is renewed on the second ground, the responsible Minister must prepare and table in the Parliament a report stating how the Act or provision is subject to review. If the review is still being undertaken, the report must state the extent to which the Act or provision is being reviewed and when the Minister expects the review to end.

At the end of 2007–2008 there were 45 instruments subject to exemption. The chart below indicates the number of items of subordinate legislation and the reason for exemption.

Automatic expiry of subordinate legislation — exemptions



Delivering a drafting product of the highest standard

During 2007–2008 the office continued its commitment to providing high quality legislative drafting services and advice in a professional, impartial and responsive way.

Level of client satisfaction

During the year, the office regularly surveyed government departmental clients on the quality of its legislative drafting services. The target for the survey is an overall client satisfaction rating of 85%. The survey measures client satisfaction in four areas:

- the drafting process
- advice on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives
- advice on the application of fundamental legislative principles
- the overall drafting product.

During 2007–2008 the office achieved an overall satisfaction rate of 91% from responses received from clients.

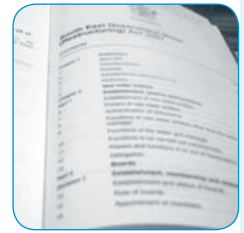




The drafting process

During 2007–2008 the office aimed to ensure high client satisfaction in relation to the processes it adopted in providing drafting services by:

- the prompt acknowledgement of instructions and allocation of a drafter
- drafts of legislation produced in a way responsive to client needs
- responsiveness to requests and queries, and availability for discussions
- comprehensive incidental advice, for example, about:
 - the drafting process
 - the relevant legislation program
 - other relevant legislation or agencies
 - general drafting matters
 - drafting progress.



As part of the drafting process, the office scrupulously maintained its duty of confidentiality to clients as required under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 9A.

During 2007–2008 the office achieved an average client satisfaction rating of 92% for the drafting process.



Advice on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

Under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 7, the office has a specific function to provide advice on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives.

To provide this advice the office undertakes an overall assessment of all relevant matters, which may include:

- the translation of policy proposals into workable legislative schemes
- the most appropriate instrument to be used
- the types of provisions that may be used
- the established or traditional government position in relation to particular provisions
- how the presentation of a law can make it user-friendly.

During 2007–2008 the office achieved an average client satisfaction rating of 89.62% for advice provided on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives.

Advice on fundamental legislative principles (FLPs)

Under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 7, the office has a specific function to provide advice on the application of fundamental legislative principles.

FLPs are defined in the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* as ‘the principles relating to legislation that underlie a parliamentary democracy based on the rule of law’. They include the requirement that legislation have sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament.

Advice provided by the office may include advice on:

- the operation of FLPs
- the existence of a potential breach of FLPs
- ways to avoid or minimise a potential breach of FLPs.

During 2007–2008 the office achieved an average client satisfaction rating of 90.14% for advice provided on the application of fundamental legislative principles.



The office has only a limited role in the legislative processes of government. It welcomes the support of the advisory role provided by the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee of the Parliament and strives to keep instructors fully informed of the committee's concerns. During the year the office continued to work with departments to develop provisions that achieve both policy objectives and compliance with FLPs. This approach minimises the need for the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee to take action in its role of monitoring the quality of legislation.

The overall drafting product

The office was established under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* to ensure that Queensland legislation is of the highest standard. This is achieved by ensuring the drafting product is clear and simple, and effectively implements government policy.

During 2007–2008 the office achieved an average client satisfaction rating of 92% for its drafting product.

Drafting style

The office adopted a comprehensive plain English drafting policy in 1991. The office continues its commitment to plain English as an attitude or philosophy that is focused on the client and that values simplicity as a way to achieve clear, effective communication. This commitment is an integral part of the office's goal to improve access to justice for all its clients through more effective communication of legislative rights and obligations.

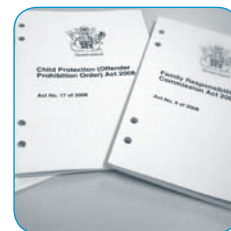
The office has a commonsense approach to the use of plain English and takes the view that legislation should be as simple as possible and should only contain the degree of complexity necessary to achieve desired policy objectives in a legally effective way. The value the office places on simplicity is consistent with its view that the ordinary person in the community should be regarded as the ultimate user of legislation.

Legislation that is easy to understand is less likely to result in dispute and litigation. However, the use of simple language alone may be insufficient to guarantee clear communication. The plain English approach does not involve the simplification of laws to the point they become legally uncertain. Care needs to be taken that legal uncertainty is not created when dispensing with terms that have established meanings for users of legislation.

There always has to be a balance between the desired outcomes of simplicity, clarity and legal certainty. The drafter must seek to meet the various needs of clients by producing legislation that is, at the same time:

- easily read and understood
- legally effective to achieve the desired policy objectives.

Drafters have a range of techniques by which legislation can expose its underlying policy while remaining accurate and unambiguous. These include the use of purpose clauses, preambles, key or basic concepts and definitions, explanatory provisions, and examples. The techniques can be used to organise, orient and explain, to help establish context, relevance and, ultimately, understanding.



Quality assurance processes

The office uses several processes to ensure that legislation is of the highest possible standard.

Drafters use a peer review process in which two drafters work on each piece of legislation—one drafts and the other reviews. Draft legislation receives a final check by a legislation officer who proofreads it, polishes the format, and prepares it for passage through Parliament or, in the case of subordinate legislation, for making.

Reviewing, documenting and communicating issues contributing to ensuring Queensland legislation is of the highest standard

During 2007–2008 the office continued to review its practices and precedents, and to publish comprehensive information about legislative matters, to ensure Queensland's statute book is of the highest standard.



Review of the style and presentation of Queensland legislation

During 2007–2008 the office continued implementing changes to the style and presentation of Queensland legislation designed to improve access to legislation by improving its readability. During 2005–2006 the office prepared a discussion paper, *Review of changes to the design of Queensland Legislation*, detailing its 2 year review of the style and presentation of legislation. Changes were initially introduced in 2004 and further changes the report proposed included informational headers and footers to legislation. The further changes will improve access to legislation by improving its readability, taking into account the link between style and the ability of readers to grasp the content.

On 10 November 2007 the reviewed style and presentation of legislation was announced in Parliament and the first Bills for 2008 incorporated this new format. All 2008 Bills, Acts as passed and subordinate legislation as made have incorporated the new style and presentation. All reprints of principal Acts and subordinate legislation as made include the new headers and footers. In 2008–2009 the office will continue to implement the new headers and footers for the Queensland Legislation Reprints series.

The Queensland Legislation Handbook

During 2007–2008 the office continued to make available *The Queensland Legislation Handbook*, which forms part of the ‘Governing Queensland’ suite of handbooks.

The handbook outlines relevant policies, recommendations, information and procedures for the realisation of policy in the form of legislation. It is particularly designed to help departmental policy and instructing officers to work effectively with the office in drafting legislation.

The handbook also incorporates material about legislative processes, including parliamentary processes, mainly from the perspective of an instructing officer.

The handbook is available:

- on the Department of the Premier and Cabinet’s website at <www.premiers.qld.gov.au> in HTML form
- on the office’s website <www.legislation.qld.gov.au> in PDF form
- for purchase from SDS in hard copy form.

Fundamental Legislative Principles: The OQPC Notebook

During 2007–2008 the office continued to make available to policy officers its documentation of the operation in Queensland of fundamental legislative principles. This internal resource manual, entitled *Fundamental Legislative Principles: The OQPC Notebook*, aims to raise policy officers’ awareness of what fundamental legislative principles are and to identify and resolve fundamental legislative principle issues. The notebook supports the work of the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee.

Exempt instrument guidelines

The parliamentary counsel is empowered, under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 9, to issue guidelines for drafting practices to be observed by persons drafting exempt instruments (which include exempt subordinate legislation and local laws). During 2007–2008 the office continued to publish on its website guidelines for drafting university exempt instruments and local government exempt instruments.

Future challenges

- Ongoing strong legislative program combined with increased level of national cooperation in the production of legislation
- Continuing the implementation of new styles and presentation for the Queensland Legislation Reprints series
- Continuing to improve office documentation, including drafting standards, precedents and procedures.



Key result area 2 Legislative publishing and information services

Goal To ensure Queensland legislation is readily available by providing responsive publication, advisory and information services

Key issues and challenges

- Meet community and international needs for access, particularly electronic access, to legislation and legislative information
- Increase client awareness of available services and respond to client needs within existing resources
- Ensure access to justice by providing the community with the ability to locate written law and to identify which law applies from time to time

Strategies

- Timely supply of:
 - Bills for introduction, and for all stages of passage through Parliament, and assent
 - amendments to Bills
 - subordinate legislation for making, including, regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes for the subordinate legislation
 - legislation as made
 - annual volumes of legislation as made, including regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes
- Publish up-to-date reprints of legislation in printed and electronic form
- Provide up-to-date information about Queensland legislation in printed and electronic form and by other services
- Review, document and communicate issues that contribute to improving the availability of legislation and legislative information

Performance measures

- Quantity of legislation supplied
 - Number of pages of:
 - Bills for introduction, all stages of passage through Parliament, and assent
 - Amendments during consideration in detail
 - Acts for the Acts as passed series
 - Certified copies of subordinate legislation, and regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes accompanying them
 - Subordinate legislation, regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes for the Subordinate Legislation series
 - Annual volumes of Acts
 - Annual volumes of explanatory notes
 - Annual volumes of subordinate legislation
- Timeliness
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the supply of subordinate legislation for the Subordinate Legislation series (target 100%)
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the supply of other legislation (target 90%)
- Quantity of up-to-date reprints of legislation published
 - Number of pages of:
 - hard copy reprints
 - electronic reprints



- **Timeliness**
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the supply of hard copy reprints (target 90%)
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the preparation of electronic reprints (target 75%)
 - Urgent reprints identified and reprinted as soon as possible
- **Quantity of information about Queensland legislation prepared**
 - Number of pages of:
 - Notification tables for subordinate legislation
 - Weekly and monthly indexes to the Subordinate Legislation series
 - Queensland Legislation Annotations—current legislation volumes and repealed legislation volume
 - Weekly Update to Queensland Legislation
 - Cumulative Weekly Update
 - Cumulative Weekly Update of Queensland Legislation Reprints
- **Timeliness**
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the supply of notification tables for subordinate legislation (target 100%)
 - Percentage of deadlines met for the supply of other information (target 90%)
- Telephone and email enquiry service provided
- Increased awareness of clients and others of accessibility issues and developments
- Substantial improvements to publishing and information services
- Relative demand for official (hard copy) versions of reprints as opposed to unofficial (electronic) versions monitored

Our performance

Timely supply of Bills for introduction, passage and assent

Bills through all stages of Parliament and assent

During 2007–2008 the office:

- provided Parliament with all Bills for all stages of passage through the Legislative Assembly and assent
- published, on its website, all Bills, and explanatory notes for Bills, after introduction
- published, on its website, all amendments made to Bills during consideration in detail and explanatory notes for amendments.

Timely supply of legislation

Acts as passed

During 2007–2008 the office published all Acts as passed as soon as they were assented to:

- in hard copy form in the Acts as passed series
- on its website.

Subordinate legislation as made

During 2007–2008 the office published all subordinate legislation as made as soon as it was notified:

- in hard copy form in the Subordinate Legislation series
- on its website.



The office also published as part of the hard copy Subordinate Legislation series and on its website:

- weekly and monthly tables of subordinate legislation as made
- explanatory notes and regulatory impact statements prepared for significant subordinate legislation as made.

Annual volumes

During 2007–2008 the office published the 2008 hard copy annual volumes of:

- Acts and explanatory notes for Bills
- subordinate legislation, and explanatory notes and regulatory impact statements prepared for significant subordinate legislation.

Timely access to legislation as passed or made

During 2007–2008 the office met 100% of mandatory deadlines. These deadlines included:

- the supply of Bills to Goprint for introduction and to the Table Office at Parliament House for the Bill to Act stages and assent
- the supply to Goprint of:
 - subordinate legislation for inclusion in the Subordinate Legislation series
 - notification tables of subordinate legislation for gazettal.

The office also met 100% of other deadlines for printed legislative publications, such as the annual volumes, for which the office target is 90%. This performance measure counts the percentage of printed publications prepared in time to meet supply.

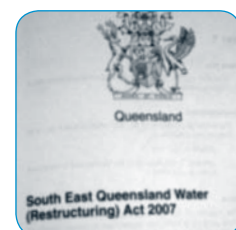
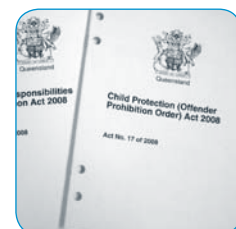
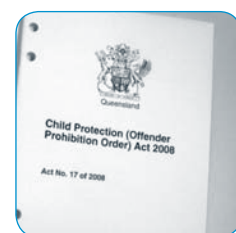
Publishing up-to-date reprints of legislation

Queensland Legislation Reprints series (hard copy reprints)

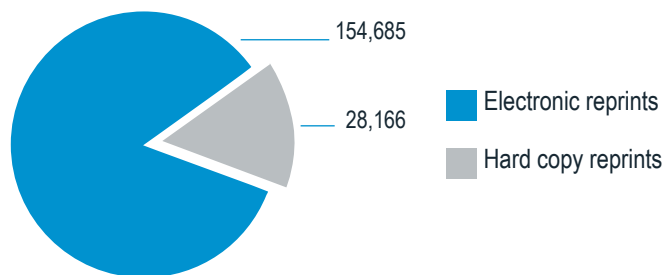
During 2007–2008 the office published 236 hard copy reprints (28,166 pages) for inclusion in the Queensland Legislation Reprints series. Under the current system for official publication of Queensland legislation, legislation is authorised by the parliamentary counsel and printed by the government printer.

The Queensland Legislation Reprints series is authorised under the *Reprints Act 1992* and contains reprints of Acts and subordinate legislation (reprints of unamended legislation and consolidations of amended legislation). Reprints are prioritised taking into account factors such as:

- the importance of the legislation as identified by clients
- the imminent repeal of the legislation
- the likelihood of further amendments in the near future
- the importance of any amendment not yet included.



Pages of reprints published in 2007–2008



Electronic reprints

The office’s website effectively provides a ‘point-in-time’ database of legislation. Since July 2002, the office has prepared an electronic reprint for each day of change. This means having an electronic reprint of an item of legislation available for each date on which an amendment to that legislation commences.

During 2007–2008 the office prepared 998 electronic reprints (154,685 pages). Although electronic reprints are not yet recognised as ‘authorised’ under the *Reprints Act 1992*, they provide users with a convenient reference document. Revised electronic editions of reprints are prepared to include amendments arising from revision notices or retrospective amendments.

During 2007–2008 the office updated its Reprints Risk Management Policy to include the introduction of a system of identifying particular reprints that are to be made available as soon as possible after commencement of relevant amendments. A reprint will be identified as urgently required when it involves:

- legislation electronically accessed by a wide section of the community very soon after the amendments commence
- an item of legislation that in its amended form should be available to the courts immediately because cases before the courts need the updated law immediately e.g. changes to provisional driver licence provisions
- legislation with significant renumbering that takes effect on commencement.

Using the Reprints Act

During 2007–2008 the office continued to use the *Reprints Act 1992* to apply editing techniques to improve legislation. Reprints Act powers are mainly applicable to hard copy reprints. Electronic reprints may incorporate very minor consequential amendments made under the Reprints Act. Since the statute book was first translated to an electronic database the editing of legislation has significantly diminished. This is due to the consistent application of modern drafting techniques and the ongoing effect of computerisation.

Timely access to reprints of legislation

During the year the office published 91.6% of electronic reprints within two weeks of the commencement of an amendment to a reprint. The office target is 75%.

The office is currently researching the daily production of electronic reprints to find mechanisms to enable the office to move to a much faster turnaround time. Making electronic reprints available at a faster rate following commencement of amendments means clients are able to access point-in-time reprints more readily.



Providing up-to-date information about legislation

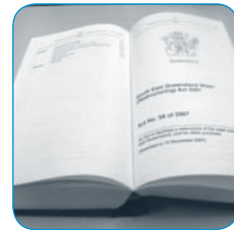
Queensland Legislation Annotations

The *Queensland Legislation Annotations* is the major printed legislative information publication produced by the office. It provides information to help users easily research the history of Queensland legislation.

During 2007–2008 the office published two volumes of current annotations (2,548 pages) and one volume of repealed annotations (741 pages). The office also continued to make the annotations available in electronic form free to the public on its website <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>.

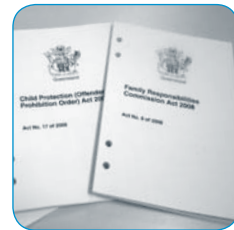
Current legislation volumes of the *Queensland Legislation Annotations* are published every six months and provide comprehensive information about all current Queensland legislation. Included in the volumes are:

- commencement dates
- details of amending legislation
- changeover and transfer dates
- information about the expiry of provisions
- information about the saving of subordinate legislation after the repeal of the empowering Act.



The repealed legislation volume of the *Queensland Legislation Annotations* is published annually. Included in this volume is information about:

- repealed Queensland legislation
- New South Wales Acts no longer applying in Queensland
- Imperial legislation no longer applying in Queensland.



Weekly Update to Queensland Legislation

During 2007–2008 the office continued to publish the hard copy *Weekly Update to Queensland Legislation*. This publication shows weekly changes in Queensland legislation and is designed to complement the information on the office's website. The update meets the office's commitment to provide a hard copy publication for clients who do not have internet access or who prefer accessing information in hard copy form.

During the year the office published 1,091 pages of weekly updates. The publication is available for purchase or subscription from SDS. This publication is also published in electronic form free to the public at <www.legislation.qld.gov.au> in both separate and cumulative form.

Tables of changed laws and references

Legislation is frequently amended or replaced and, as a result, the way things are referred to may be changed or replaced.

During 2007–2008 the office continued to update and publish on its website two documents that provide a way to track these changes in legislation:

- the table of changed citations and remade laws lists in one place citations that have changed and laws that have been remade
- the table of changed names and titles in legislation lists in one place names of things that have changed.

Providing the legislation database to other organisations

The office provides its legislation database free of charge to the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and AUSTLII (University of New South Wales). Included with the service are weekly updates.

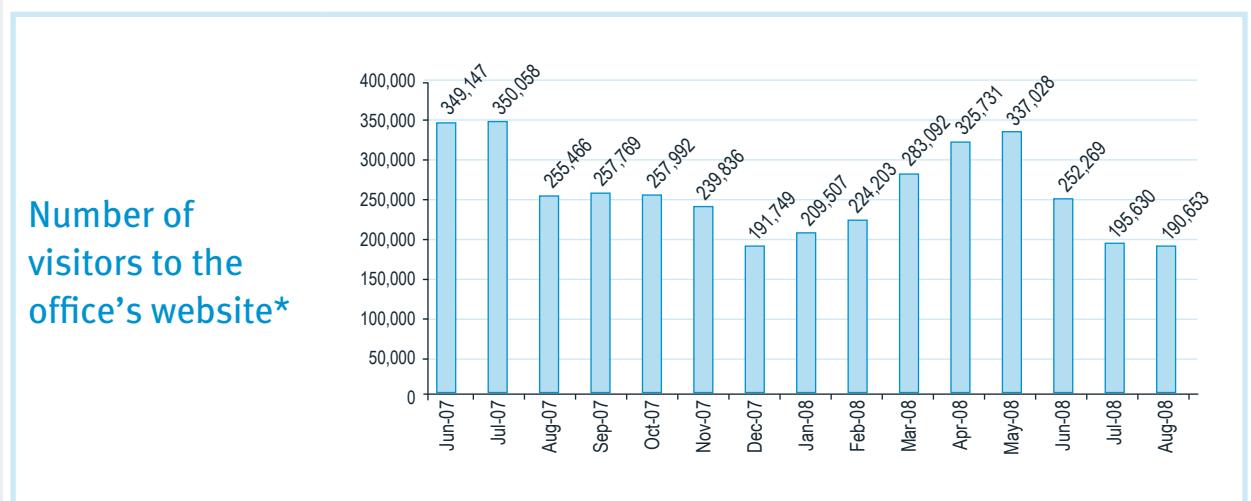
The office sells files from its legislation database to three commercial providers: LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters and TimeBase Pty Ltd. These commercial providers repackage the legislation and add contextual information, further extending access to the legislation.

Obtaining publications

The printed versions of the office's publications are available for purchase and subscription from SDS. Electronic versions of these publications are available at <www.legislation.qld.gov.au> free of charge.

Timely access to information about legislation

During 2007–2008 the office met 100% of deadlines for the supply of information about legislation.



*The chart shows the number of visitors per weekday during the year. A 'visit' is defined as the total number of times web users visit, and interact with, the website during the selected reporting period. The activities of search engines may distort figures making precise figures difficult to establish.

Ongoing access to electronic versions of legislation and legislative information

The office provides free public access to all its electronic versions of the following legislation and legislative information on its website <www.legislation.qld.gov.au> on an ongoing basis:

- Bills and their explanatory notes (from November 1992)
- amendments made during consideration in detail and their explanatory notes (from 2002)
- Queensland Acts as passed (from June 1991)
- subordinate legislation as made (from July 1991) with associated regulatory impact statements and explanatory notes (from 1996)
- electronic reprints (including revised, superseded and repealed versions)
- an annotated history of current Queensland legislation
- information about repealed legislation
- updates to current and repealed legislation
- guidelines for drafting local laws and subordinate local laws
- guidelines for drafting university statutes



- information about changed citations and remade laws
- information about changed names and titles in legislation
- information about the automatic expiry of subordinate legislation
- the office's reprinting policy.

Awareness of the office and its role and community engagement

The office uses information sessions to raise awareness of its role and functions and to provide opportunities for client feedback.

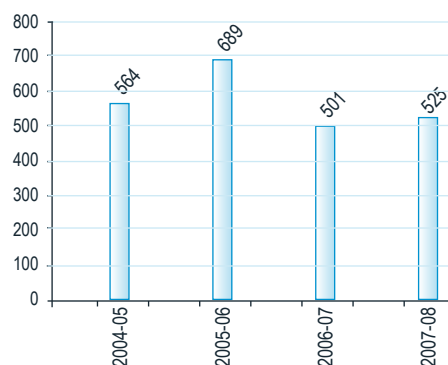
During 2007–2008 the office provided:

- an address to a meeting of cabinet legislation and liaison officers on the importance of the authority to prepare process
- several information sessions about the office and its role as part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's staff induction program.

Providing access to legislation is an intrinsic part of engaging with the community as it supports the democratic process. The office recognises the importance of community engagement and, during the year, the office's community engagement activities included:

- providing up-to-date legislation free to the community through its website <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- providing, as part of the drafting process, consultation drafts of legislation enabling the community to participate in policy processes
- continuing to provide information and assistance through both its telephone and email services
- supporting the Youth Parliament.

Number of email queries answered



Youth Parliament

The 2007–2008 Youth Parliament again provided young Queenslanders with the opportunity to:

- express their views, through a State forum, on matters important to them
- provide the State Government with 'Youth Acts' that express youth concerns and expectations and that could be acted on by the government
- gain public speaking and debating skills



- develop an interest in the parliamentary system through their involvement in a simulated parliamentary process.

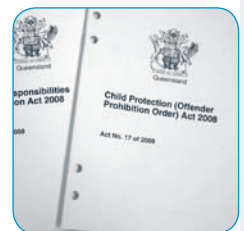
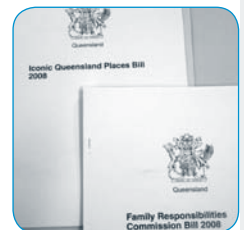
The Youth Parliament is a project run each year by the State Council of YMCAs of Queensland. Parliament House was the venue for the sittings, with the consent of the Honourable Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

During 2007–2008 the office provided support for the Youth Parliament by:

- helping to develop and format Youth Bills and their explanatory notes for introduction into the Youth Parliament
- supplying Youth Bills and explanatory notes to the Youth Parliament
- helping with the Bill to Act process for Youth Bills passed by the Youth Parliament.

Future challenges

- Significantly increasing the level of automated preparation and publication of legislative information
- Raising awareness of the office, its role and services
- Continuing the strategy to inform and educate clients
- Researching mechanisms for faster turn around time of electronic reprints
- Monitoring the relative demand for official (hard copy) versions of reprints as opposed to unofficial (electronic) versions.





Key result area 3 Organisational capability: Our staff

Goal To maximise the capacity of our skilled and diverse staff to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals

Key issues and challenges

- Use best practice human resource management to retain and develop highly skilled staff
- Promote a workplace culture that encourages flexibility, equity and diversity
- Recognise and develop staff performance to meet the increasing demand for services
- Ensure staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and resources to perform their duties

Strategies

- Involve staff in decision-making, planning and feedback
- Use a performance evaluation system and a rewards and recognition system
- Maintain a coordinated training and development program
- Use other best practice human resource management that embraces flexibility, equity and diversity and complies with whole-of-government legislative requirements
- Review, document and communicate issues that contribute to maximising staff capacity

Performance measures

- All staff given the opportunity to attend regular forums and significant number of staff involved in special purpose committees
- Promote office newsletter
- Performance evaluation and personal planning and development processes conducted for all staff
- Performance evaluation systems reviewed to ensure staff goals contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals
- Annual participation by staff in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Achievement Awards
- Induction program reviewed and enhanced
- All staff provided with training in compliance with public sector standards
- Training provided to all staff in their respective functions reviewed annually
- Targeted training provided to each staff member to enhance performance
- Regular training committee meetings held to coordinate the provision of training for all staff
- Mentoring system for new staff implemented
- Full staff levels maintained and skilled staff retained for a minimum of 5 years for drafters and 3 years for legislation officers
- Compliance with relevant legislation about human resource management, workplace health and safety, and public sector principles about flexibility, equity and diversity
- Human resource policies and procedures reviewed as required
- Role descriptions reviewed under the Lominger system



Our performance

Involving staff in decision-making, planning and feedback

The office recognises that its staff are its most valuable resource and that staff contribution is fundamental to achieving a rewarding working environment and quality services for clients.

Staff contribution is encouraged in three ways:

- the office is organised into teams with line-management responsibilities
- staff participate through whole-of-office committees in areas including training, information technology, the office newsletter, publishing practices, drafting practices, information management, workplace health and safety, and office management
- regular forums are held so that all staff have the opportunity to participate in decision-making, planning and feedback.

Performance evaluation, rewards and recognition

Performance evaluation

The performance and ongoing development of all staff is managed through participation in a performance development system (PDS). Staff prepare personal planning and achievement documentation and personal development plans and meet with their supervisors to discuss performance and to plan training and personal development. The PDS provides a formal feedback process that is supplemented by informal sessions during the year.

Rewards and recognition

During 2007–2008 the office again participated in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet’s annual Achievement Awards. Award categories included building Queensland’s regions, client engagement and service, growing Queensland’s economy, innovation and creativity, leadership excellence, partnerships and reconciliation, and sustainable environment.

The office received recognition in the client engagement and service category for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet’s water policy development work. The team, consisting of staff from the office and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, were able to combine policy and legislation abilities to progress urgent initiatives concerned with the development of the Home WaterWise rebate scheme, giving leadership to public sector authorities involved in the provision of water through necessary direction and crystallising community opinion concerning recycled water.

During the Achievement Awards ceremony 5 staff were recipients of the Outstanding Service Award for 25 years meritorious service.

Maintaining a coordinated training and development program

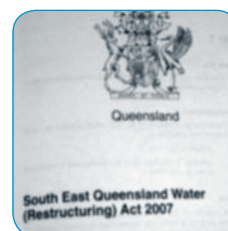
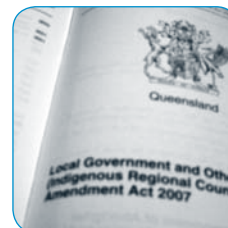
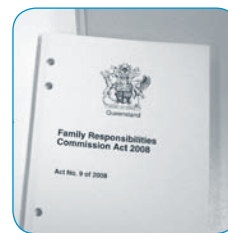
During 2007–2008 the office continued to provide internal and external training opportunities for staff. Most training is organised through the office’s training team. The office training team includes representatives from all areas of the office as well as a human resources officer from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The training team uses staff personal development plans to identify training needs.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has run a fully funded competency development program which the office has had access to in 2007–2008. The program offers training in many areas including management, leadership and legislation. Many of the office’s staff have accessed the training offered to meet their identified training needs.



Training undertaken during 2007–2008 covered a wide range of areas, including:

- advanced project management
- corporate induction
- corporate services finance training
- decision-making
- employee assistance scheme
- first aid and resuscitation
- FrameMaker (advanced)
- information management
- in-house sessions on the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, e-commerce, superannuation and grammar
- legal information sessions offered by Crown Law and the Queensland University of Technology
- mind-mapping
- parliament and the executive government
- parliamentary processes
- purchasing
- study and research assistance scheme (SARAS)
- women’s conference
- workplace harassment and bullying.



The office also operates a system of on-the-job training similar to an apprenticeship. The system involves a junior officer working with a senior officer enabling a transfer of knowledge and skills. This means there is a quality control check of all work.

It takes a considerable amount of time to fully and properly train a drafter or a legislation officer. The comprehensive training process is complemented by a series of manuals that document office procedures and contain relevant checklists.

Using other best practice human resource management to retain and develop highly skilled staff

Retaining and developing highly skilled staff

At 30 June 2008 the office had 48.6 members of staff, including temporary and part-time staff, with 3 vacancies and 2 staff members away on secondment. The office has a funded establishment of 48.6 and a corporate services allocation of 2.75 staff at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, making a total of 52.25. Traditionally the office has tended to have a very stable staff structure with turnover usually occurring at the lower levels. However in line with the public sector generally, the office is currently experiencing increased levels of retirement and is engaged in vigorous recruitment of staff. Staff who move on to other agencies are generally promoted to higher positions, indicating a high regard for the training and experience gained while working in the office.

Embracing flexibility, equity and diversity

During 2007–2008 the office continued to support workplace diversity in accordance with legislation including the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, *Public Service Act 2008*, *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cwlth), *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cwlth), and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth).

During the year, the office responded in the following ways:

- **Career management.** The office encourages senior managers to undertake targeted leadership and management training, and actively supports training for all staff to enhance career prospects.
- **Equal opportunity and anti-discrimination.** The office has adopted equal opportunity and anti-discrimination principles and provides regular training to ensure staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. Like all other government agencies, the office has zero tolerance of bullying and all staff attend regular seminars on this subject.
- **Flexible working practices.** The office recognises the link between employees' ability to balance work and life priorities and the office's achievements. The availability of flexible working practices is beneficial for both parties—the office is able to retain highly skilled staff and officers are able to better manage family responsibilities or other commitments. During the financial year 6 staff members continued to work on a part-time basis.
- **Human resource management systems.** The office uses best-practice HR systems and practices to support the management of diversity.
- **Organisational climate.** The office is aware of the importance of a happy and productive working environment. Information sharing and involvement in decision-making is promoted through office forums and meetings, a weekly electronic newsletter and an intranet.

Workplace health and safety

During 2007–2008 the office's Workplace Health and Safety Committee continued to monitor workplace health and safety issues and ensure the office complied with the standards. The committee, consisting of staff from the office and a representative from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet reviewed, among other things, the hazard assessment undertaken by the workplace health and safety officer and organised refresher courses in first aid.

Library

For the benefit of staff and other government departments the office maintains a substantial legal library managed by a qualified library technician.

Achievements made by the office's library during 2007–2008 included:

- consolidation and review of resources in accordance with the library collection management policy
- maintenance of a weekly library update service that includes contents pages and abstracts of legal journals and reports being made available on the intranet.

Reviewing, documenting and communicating issues contributing to maximising staff capacity

The office maintained its commitment to maximising staff capacity through ongoing training and development based on identified individual and organisational development needs. The office continually reviews and publishes to staff a large suite of documentation covering human resource and work quality issues. This documentation includes policies and procedures, standards, notebooks, manuals and handbooks.

Future challenges

- Undertaking vigorous recruitment and training processes as part of succession planning
- Continuing to support diversity objectives by exploring opportunities for part-time work and encouraging groups (through traineeships or employment) in the government's targeted diversity areas
- Continuing to participate in whole-of-government initiatives to ensure the office contributes and benefits



Key result area 3 Organisational capability: Office systems

Goal To continually improve the capacity of office systems and processes to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals within established frameworks

Key issues and challenges

- Implement risk management and continual improvement strategies for the office
- Ensure office systems and work practices support the office's goals
- Ensure recordkeeping systems are integrated into office systems and support the office in achieving its goals
- Enhance the management and integration of all the office's works

Strategies

- Apply risk management and continual improvement processes to the office business planning cycle
- Implement appropriate corporate governance procedures
- Implement a reliable recordkeeping system that is compliant and accountable

Performance measures

- Risk assessment undertaken and treatment strategies developed as required
- Improvement processes identified and implemented
- Compliance with relevant whole-of-government audit and legislative requirements
- Systematic review of office policies and procedures in comparison with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet policies and procedures
- Compliance with relevant legislation and information standards for recordkeeping
- Responsibility for recordkeeping clearly assigned to staff
- Significant improvements to recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices

Our performance

Applying risk assessment and continual improvement processes

Risk assessment

During 2007–2008 the office conducted its annual review of risk management of the office's work. Risk management involves the implementation of policies, standards, procedures and physical changes to eliminate or minimise adverse risks, allowing the office to operate at an acceptable level of risk. The office's policy on risk management of reprints continues to be observed and the office's strategy of documenting and reviewing office procedures continues to prove its value as a basic risk management tool.

Continual improvement processes

During 2007–2008 the office continued a business improvement process to identify and prioritise opportunities for improvements to existing office processes and systems. Mapping of all office business processes is currently being carried out.



Implementing appropriate corporate governance procedures

Shared Service Initiative (SSI)

The Shared Service Initiative is a whole-of-government approach to corporate service delivery. The vision is partnering in corporate services to support and connect government. Shared services are underpinned by standardising business processes, consolidating technology and pooling resources and expertise.

Under the shared service model, government agencies joined together to share corporate services and resources through shared service providers (SSPs). The SSPs service their existing customer agencies through operating level agreements.

In 2007–2008 Queensland Treasury led the refinement of the whole-of-government model for shared service delivery and provided policy and program management for the Shared Service Initiative.

From 21 September 2007 the Shared Service Agency (SSA) was transferred from Queensland Treasury to the Department of Public Works through a machinery of Government change. The SSA now services a number of departments, agencies and other entities across government. For more information on the SSA refer to the Department of Public Works Annual Report.

SSPs for Queensland Health (Queensland Health Shared Service Partner) and the Department of Education, Training and the Arts (Corporate and Professional Services and the Corporate Administration Agency) and Parliamentary Services continue to operate under their existing hosts.

SSA has a role in providing the following functions to the office:

- finance
- procurement
- human resources.

During 2007–08 the Department of Public Works hosted SSA as a separate entity, and will report on its activities in its annual report.

Implementing a reliable recordkeeping system

During 2007–2008 the office made considerable progress with the implementation of an electronic Documents and Records Management system (eDRMS) enabling the office to better comply with the *Public Records Act 2002* and Information Standard 40. Through its Information Management Committee, the office continued to ensure all records about the office's business were captured and managed by:

- complying with office recordkeeping procedures
- dealing with records in accordance with the office's approved retention and disposal schedule
- continuing to classify records in accordance with the office's corporate file plan.

Required reporting

Consultancies

During 2007–2008 the office engaged no consultants.

Overseas travel

During 2007–2008 no staff members of the office travelled overseas.

Public Sector Ethics Act

As part of their induction, all new staff receive training about the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the application of ethics principles and obligations, the contents of the office's code of conduct, and the rights and obligations of officials in relation to contraventions of the code of conduct.

During 2007–2008 the office updated its code of conduct to include changes made by the Office of the Public Service Commissioner to the gifts and benefits policy. Staff consultation on the changes has occurred and the code is awaiting approval by the Premier. The code is available in both printed and electronic form. Copies of the office's code of conduct are available on request or on the office's website <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>.

Waste management

During 2007–2008 the office continued to contribute to the Queensland Government's strategy in relation to waste management. The office waste management plan, developed in accordance with the *Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy 2000*, and published on the office's intranet, deals with the principles of environmental sustainability and sets out the plan's application to resource conservation and waste management in office operations.

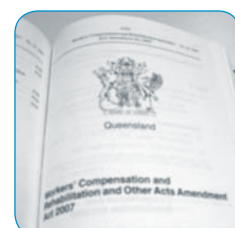
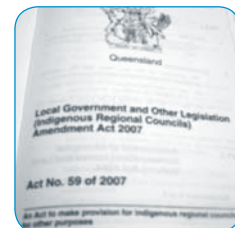
The plan specifically recognises waste management issues associated with the office's leased facilities. Though the waste management in relation to these facilities is addressed in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Waste Management Strategic Plan, the office takes an active monitoring stance and, in collaboration with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, seeks to exert influence to improve waste management practices. During the year the office continued to recycle waste, including paper and toner cartridges, and moved from using 50% recycled paper to 100% recycled paper.

Whistleblowers Protection Act

During 2007–2008 the office was not required to deal with any new disclosure of suspected official misconduct.

Future challenges

- Significant business improvement process leading to a higher level of computerised operations
- Systematic review of office policies and procedures
- Continued improvement of office recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices





Key result area 3 Organisational capability: Information technology

Goal To continually improve information technology to contribute to the achievement of corporate and government goals within established frameworks

Key issues and challenges

- Use the most effective information technology to enhance office systems
- Use information technology to increase the efficiency of the drafting function
- Use information technology to improve the community's access to legislation
- Introduce improved information technology to contribute to staff development

Strategies

- Continually develop the office's strategic response to all of office requirements for advanced technology
- Enhance processes that streamline the drafting function of the office
- Enhance processes that streamline the production, supply and publication of legislation and legislative information
- Enhance processes that better inform staff
- Enhance the office's electronic equipment and systems generally

Performance measures

- Planning for business improvement project completed and particular associated projects advanced
- Implementation of an eDRMS that meets the office's business needs
- Significant enhancements to the drafting function
- Significant enhancements to the automation of processes
- Improvements to presentation, utility and management of the office intranet
- Ongoing compliance systems for asset management and replacement
- Upgrade security systems and processes where necessary

Our performance

Continually developing the office's strategic response to office requirements for advanced technology

Business improvement project

The office continues the process of a business improvement project, with the aim of reviewing existing business processes within the office and identifying and utilising emerging technologies to advance the production of legislation and legislative information. The process will map current processes, identify issues and opportunities and lay the foundations for future technology directions.

eDRMS

The office, in conjunction with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, is implementing TRIM, an electronic Documents and Records Management System (eDRMS). An eDRMS will improve the office's information management and make it more compliant with government recordkeeping standards. Interaction between TRIM and FrameMaker, the office's core drafting and publishing software, will improve efficiency, automate manual processes and enhance the capture, use, security and storage of office documents and records.

TRIM is being implemented in 3 stages, where each stage will provide a higher level of interaction between the eDRMS and FrameMaker. The rollout of TRIM for stage 1, will take place in October 2008.

Enhancing processes that streamline the drafting function

The ongoing review of the office's business processes has identified opportunities for further streamlining. As a prelude to future work, the office has embarked on an exercise to automate the process of producing the *Queensland Legislation Annotations*. The system developed will act as a prototype for further automation and database development within the office.

Enhancing processes that streamline the production, supply and publication of legislation and legislative information and conforming to applicable standards

In line with the new headers and footers in printed and electronic files of Queensland legislation, the office's drafting and supply software was updated. The software continues the current level of automation of processes existing before the style changes.

Enhancing processes that better inform staff

The intranet continues as the primary information tool for the office. The site is continually developing with the inclusion of new information. The site works as a portal to both the Department of the Premier and Cabinet intranet, and Govnet, allowing deep linking to specific areas of information.

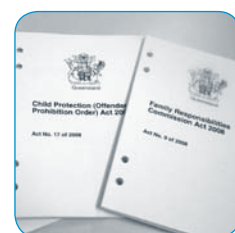
Enhancing the office's electronic equipment and systems generally

Involvement in whole-of-government IT initiatives

During 2007–2008 staff of the office participated in working groups and committees related to the web and information management such as the web steering committee and the consistent user experience working group.

Future challenges

- Implementation of TRIM eDRMS (stage 1)
- Enhanced eDRMS integration with FrameMaker (eDRMS stage 2)





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Financial summary

Foreword

For the purposes of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977*, the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (the office) is not a 'statutory body' and as such it operates as an output of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (the department) known as the 'Legislative Drafting, Advisory and Information Services'. This output is reported in the department's Income Statement by Outputs/Major Activities—Controlled.

The Income Statement (the Statement) for the office has been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the prescribed requirements. As required and as appropriate, notes supporting the statement are also provided.

As distinct from the traditional cash basis of reporting, the accrual method brings revenues and expenses to account when they are incurred without regard to the date of receipt or payment of cash.

The statement discloses revenues and expenses recognised as part of the Income Statement of the department and include allocations for corporate support and executive management services.

Further information is provided in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's 2007–2008 Annual Report.

	Notes	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Income from ordinary activities			
<i>Revenue</i>			
Output revenue	2	7,998	6,711
User charges	3	33	21
Other	4	146	95
Total income from ordinary activities		8,177	6,827
Expenses from ordinary activities			
Employee expenses	5	5,464	5,123
Supplies and services	6	2,621	1,627
Depreciation and amortisation	7	70	67
Other expenses	8	22	10
Total expenses from ordinary activities		8,177	6,827
Operating surplus/(deficit)		-	-

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The office's Income Statement (the statement) has been prepared in accordance with Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AEIFRS). In particular, the statement complies with AAS 29 Financial Reporting by Government Departments, as well as the Treasurer's Financial Reporting Requirements for the year ended 30 June 2008, and other authoritative pronouncements.

The statement has been prepared to reflect the 'Income Statement by Outputs/Major Activities—Controlled' for the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel as contained in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Financial Statements.

The revenues and expenses recognised in this statement include allocations for corporate support and executive management services on the basis of employee full-time equivalent numbers.

At the date of authorisation of the financial report, a number of new or amended Australian accounting standards with future commencement dates have been issued, however these will not have a significant impact on the department.

The accounting policies adopted by the office are generally consistent with those of the previous year.

The accrual basis of accounting has been adopted in the preparation of this statement.

The operations of the office were predominantly funded by the Consolidated Fund. The funds received were incorporated with the appropriation provided to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Appropriations provided under the Appropriation Act are recognised as revenue in the year in which the office obtains control over them.

User charges are recognised as revenues upon delivery of goods and services irrespective of whether an invoice has been issued. User charges are controlled by the office where they can be deployed for the achievement of the office's objectives.

Contributions of services are recognised only if the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated and their fair values can be measured reliably. Where this is the case, an equal amount is recognised as revenue and an expense.

All financial information is rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or where the amount is \$500 or less, to zero.

Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current period.

The Income Statement for this office and the associated notes have not been audited.

	2008	2007
	\$'000	\$'000

2. Reconciliation to payments from Consolidated Fund

Output revenue		
Budgeted output appropriation	7,998	6,711
Output revenue recognised in the Income Statement	7,998	6,711

3. User charges

Publications	26	15
User Charges – Other	7	6
	33	21

2008
\$'000

2007
\$'000

4. Other revenue

Resources received below fair value	138	80
Other	8	15
	146	95

5. Employee expenses/Number of Employees

Salaries, wages and allowances	4,484	4,193
Salary related taxes	309	304
Superannuation	537	492
Long service leave levy	80	74
Other	54	60
	5,464	5,123

Annual and sick leave expenses have been included in wages and salaries.

Number of Employees	48.6	51
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The number of employees includes both full-time employees and part-time employees measured on a full-time equivalent basis.

6. Supplies and services

Administration costs	67	89
Advertising and promotions	11	9
Building services	48	60
Maintenance	16	17
Motor vehicle costs	172	124
Office supplies, books, legislation and statutes	103	75
Professional services	309	196
Telecommunications	34	34
Travel	18	10
Other	1,843	1,013
	2,621	1,627

7. Depreciation and amortisation expenses

Depreciation and amortisation expenses for the financial year were charged in respect of:

Property, plant and equipment	65	58
Intangibles	5	9
	70	67

8. Other expenses

Losses from disposal of property, plant and equipment	3	-
Other	19	10
	22	10



Feedback survey 2007–2008

Dear Reader

We would appreciate you completing this survey about our annual report. Your comments will help us improve future reports to better meet your needs.

Responses can be emailed to <legislation.queries@oqpc.qld.gov.au> or faxed to the office on 07 3229 6295.

From: _____

Date: _____

Please circle, tick or comment as appropriate

Your overall impression	Poor	1	2	3	4	5	Excellent
Readability	Poor	1	2	3	4	5	Excellent
Ease of finding information	Poor	1	2	3	4	5	Excellent

Would you like to see anything else included in the report?

Other comments:

Where are you from?

- Queensland Government
- local or Commonwealth government
- legal organisation
- general community
- other

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

