

ANNUAL REPORT 2022–23



Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and recognises their culture, history, diversity and their deep connection to the land, waters and seas of Queensland and the Torres Strait.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we operate and wish to pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Communication objective

This report provides information about the operations of the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (OQPC) for 2022–23. It is prepared under section 13 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

It is not an annual report under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* because, under that Act, OQPC is part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and so OQPC's annual reporting requirements under that Act are met through DPC's annual report for 2022–23.

However, this report is prepared having regard to requirements under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* so far as applicable. Accordingly, this report records the significant achievements against the strategies and services detailed in OQPC's Strategic Plan and Service Delivery Statement for the reporting period.

This report has been prepared for the Premier to table in Parliament.

Readers are invited to comment on this report by searching for 'annual report' on the Get Involved website at www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/gi/

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Letter of compliance

29 September 2023

The Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP
Premier of Queensland and Minister for the
Olympic and Paralympic Games
1 William Street
Brisbane City QLD 4000

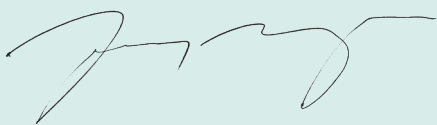
Dear Premier

I am pleased to present for tabling in the Legislative Assembly the annual report 2022–23 for the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (OQPC), as required by section 13 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

This report is not an annual report under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, because under that Act, OQPC is part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and so OQPC's annual reporting requirements under that Act are met through DPC's annual report for 2022–23. Accordingly, detailed information about OQPC's financial performance and strategic alignment with the government's objectives for the community can be found in the DPC annual report.

I certify that this annual report complies with the requirements of section 13(2) of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*. While the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* does not apply to this report, it has been prepared having regard to that Act, the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and the annual report requirements under that Standard so far as applicable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A D Keyes', with a stylized, flowing script.

A D Keyes

Queensland Parliamentary Counsel

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Highlights 2022–23



302
total legislative instruments

4,792
total pages drafted



787
total reprints

152,469
total pages reprinted



38
government Bills

2,556
drafted pages



6
private members' Bills

82
drafted pages



41
amendments during
consideration in detail

140
drafted pages



217
items of
subordinate legislation

2,014
drafted pages



10,405,424
webpage views of the Queensland legislation website

Our year in review

Message from the Parliamentary Counsel

The Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (OQPC) is a statutory office established on 1 June 1992 under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*. The core functions of the office are:

- to draft all Queensland legislation
- to make Queensland legislation accessible, including in electronic form
- to ensure the Queensland statute book is of the highest standard.

As noted in our 2021–22 annual report, the volume of COVID-19-related legislation decreased during that year, and that trend continued in 2022–23. As a result, most of our drafting, editing and publishing effort focused on delivering the government's ordinary legislative business.

However, as detailed later, the government's legislative program during the reporting year was large and ambitious. Some particularly significant and complex legislation included the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023* and the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, as well as several tranches of significant domestic and family violence reforms and integrity reforms.

More broadly, the 2022–23 financial year was marked by significant increases in the demand for OQPC's legislative drafting, editing and publishing services. The increases affected the drafting of both Bills and subordinate legislation (including consultation drafts), as well as the preparation of reprints and the publication of Queensland legislation. Quantitative measures that appear later in this report give some indication of those increases, but there are also other quantitative and qualitative dimensions that drive demand,

such as complexity, sensitivity, urgency, policy clarity and quality of instructions.

In 2022–23, OQPC continued its commitment to a healthy and inclusive workplace through a Wellbeing Group. The group is tasked with overseeing the wellbeing of the office as a whole. In addition to the Wellbeing Group, OQPC has maintained flexible work arrangements for all staff and improved regular communication through all-staff forums, regular team get-togethers and a popular weekly newsletter.

Another important aspect of our positive workplace culture at OQPC is our employee-driven social calendar organised by the OQPC Fun Squad. Events have included bake-off competitions to raise money for charity, a weekend family fun day and the annual Christmas party.

OQPC has supported wider Path to Treaty initiatives by engaging in legislative co-design on drafting projects, most notably the *Path to Treaty Bill 2023*. We were also privileged to host Shane Duffy and Greg Shadbolt of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, who spoke with OQPC staff about the effects of legislative content and process on First Nations peoples. A further staff forum is planned at which a panel of experts will discuss legislative co-design principles and practice.

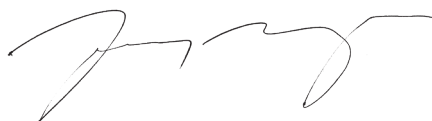
To fulfil the core statutory functions of the office, OQPC needs a professional and highly skilled workforce. Our staff is made up of legally qualified legislative drafters, expert editors and publishers, information and technology experts and corporate services professionals. Recruitment and retention

of staff is an ongoing challenge for OQPC and our Australian and New Zealand counterparts. OQPC is leading work for the Australasian Parliamentary Counsel's Committee to develop a customised, specialised post-admission qualification in legislative drafting to complement and accelerate on-the-job training and development.

Throughout the year OQPC's Learning and Development Committee coordinated a varied and relevant program of continuing professional development training for all staff, and our staff took up opportunities for personal and professional development with enthusiasm. OQPC staff continued to demonstrate not just impressive professional skill, but consistent diligence and dedication to serving the people of Queensland.

OQPC collaborates with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and with our instructing departments to contribute to the delivery of the government's objectives for the community. Further detailed information in relation to OQPC's financial performance and strategic alignment with DPC can be found in DPC's annual report.

The office looks forward to continuing to collaborate with our instructors and partners to produce excellent legislation for Queensland in the year ahead.



Tony Keyes

Queensland Parliamentary Counsel

About our office

Our purpose

The Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (OQPC) is an independent statutory office that supports Queensland's democracy and the rule of law by delivering Queensland legislation that is effective, accessible and consistent with fundamental legislative principles (FLPs).

Our vision

Excellent legislation for Queensland.

Our role

OQPC was established as a statutory office on 1 June 1992 by the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* to ensure:

- Queensland legislation is of the highest standard
- an effective and efficient legislative drafting service is provided for Queensland
- Queensland legislation, and information about Queensland legislation, is readily available in printed and electronic form.

Our guiding principles

People

We foster a diverse, inclusive workplace and prioritise the wellbeing of our employees. We invest in our people's professional development. We maintain strong, collaborative relationships with our partners.

Quality

We are committed to accuracy and precision

in producing legislation, and to maintaining the highest standards in drafting and access to legislation.

Responsibility

We perform our statutory functions with integrity and dedication. We operate transparently and use resources efficiently to serve the public. We respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision-making and actions.

Freedom

We embrace technological advances and innovation to inform future practice. We empower our employees by giving them the ability to take risks and lead change. We operate independently and impartially.

Government's objectives

OQPC supports the government's objectives for the community by:

- delivering excellence in legislative drafting and access
- providing stewardship of innovation and change
- strengthening strategic engagement with partners.

As published in the strategic plan 2022–2026, OQPC supports democracy and the strategic direction of the Queensland Government and contributes to the delivery of the government's objectives for the community, which are:

Good jobs

Good, secure jobs in our traditional and emerging industries

- Supporting jobs
- Backing small business
- Making it for Queensland
- Investing in skills.

Better services

Deliver even better services right across Queensland

- Backing our frontline services
- Keeping Queenslanders safe
- Connecting Queensland
- Educating for the future.

Great lifestyle

Protect and enhance our Queensland lifestyle as we grow

- Protecting the environment
- Growing our regions
- Building Queensland
- Honouring and embracing our rich and ancient cultural history.

Statutory obligations

The office has a broad range of functions under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992* and the *Reprints Act 1992*, including:

- drafting all government Bills
- drafting all amendments to 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 private members

- 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 FLPs
- 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 electronic access to Queensland legislation and information about legislation.

Organisational structure

The Parliamentary Counsel is the chief executive of OQPC and, subject to the Minister (the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games), controls the office.

OQPC consists of the Parliamentary Counsel, Legislation Drafting Services, and Legislation and Business Services (LaBS). The Executive Management Group (EMG) manages the office.

EMG consists of the Parliamentary Counsel, the Deputy Parliamentary Counsel (Legislative Program) and the Executive Director, LaBS. This structure optimises high-quality service delivery and exemplary work practices.

Drafting Services has four teams that are overseen by Deputy Parliamentary Counsel. LaBS consists of the Legislation Editing and Publishing Services (LEaPS), Information and Technology Services (ITS) and Corporate Services (CS) business areas.

OQPC is located at 111 George Street, Brisbane and staff work from this location or remotely under flexible work arrangements.

The Parliamentary Counsel represents Queensland on the Australasian Parliamentary Counsel's Committee and represents the office within DPC as part of its Executive Leadership Team.

Legislation Drafting Services

The Deputy Parliamentary Counsel lead the drafting teams to provide an effective and efficient legislative drafting service to produce Queensland legislation of the highest standard.

Legislation Editing and Publishing Services

The Legislation Editing and Publishing Services team edits draft legislation, prepares reprints and publishes legislation, making Queensland legislation and information relating to legislation readily accessible.

Information and Technology Services

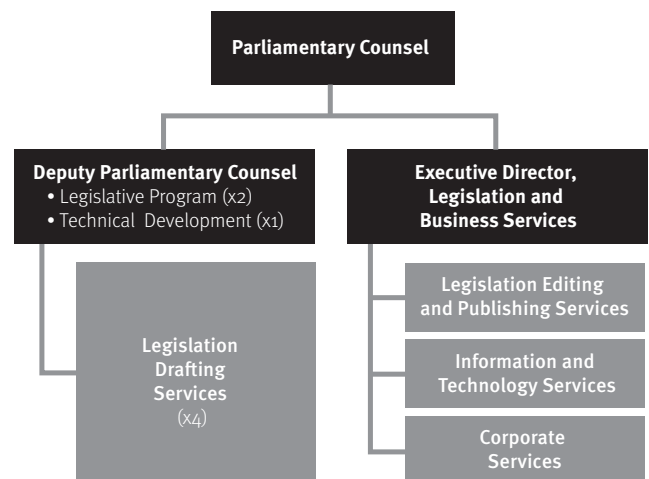
The Information and Technology Services team is responsible for the planning and delivery of information and communications technology (ICT) services to OQPC. The team provides specialised technical and operational services that directly support and enable OQPC to deliver its core functions of managing, drafting, publishing and providing access to Queensland legislation via the Queensland Legislation and Application Programming Interface (API) websites. The team delivers high quality ICT support services for OQPC's information and business systems

and its staff, including project and information management, contract and vendor management, compliance, cyber security, audit and risk mitigation functions.

Additionally, the Information and Technology Services team offers strategic oversight, guidance, and support to existing and emerging systems development, review, implementation, and application life-cycle management activities.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services team supports OQPC to deliver on broader strategic goals. The team has responsibility to ensure human resource management, corporate governance and finance functions are delivered in accordance with legislation, industry standards and using best practice methodology.



A review of QQPC's progress against our statutory obligations

Delivering the government's legislative program

During the reporting period, QQPC drafted all of the Queensland Government's Bills and subordinate legislation other than exempt subordinate legislation.

QQPC drafts legislation throughout each year to meet the government's legislative program. During the reporting period there was a great demand for legislative drafting services, as the government has a large and ambitious legislative program that includes many major pieces of complex law reform. These include, for example, the following new principal Acts: the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023*, and the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, as well as significant domestic and family violence reforms and integrity reforms.

In addition to Bills and subordinate legislation, QQPC also drafted and supplied government amendments to Bills to be moved in the Legislative Assembly.

Delivering legislation for other drafting clients

Six Bills drafted by QQPC during the reporting period were prepared for non-government members of the Legislative Assembly. QQPC also supplied 23 non-government amendments to Bills that were moved in the Legislative Assembly.

QQPC makes every effort to meet requests

for drafting assistance from non-government members within the timeframes set by the members. Requests for drafting assistance for amendments from non-government members are usually received shortly before debate on the relevant Bill is resumed.

Certifying subordinate legislation

QQPC drafts all Queensland subordinate legislation other than exempt subordinate legislation. The office certifies subordinate legislation it has drafted if satisfied it is lawful and has sufficient regard to FLPs.

During the reporting period QQPC certified 217 instruments of subordinate legislation.

If QQPC refuses to certify proposed subordinate legislation, the instrument must, under the *Queensland Cabinet Handbook*, be submitted to Cabinet before it is made. During the reporting period, no proposed subordinate legislation was refused certification.

Managing staged expiry of subordinate legislation

A significant regulatory reform device in the maintenance of the Queensland statute book is the imposition of automatic expiry dates on subordinate legislation. The current system was established under the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, part 7 and provides for a 10-year cycle for review and remaking of subordinate legislation. Exemptions from expiry are strictly limited.

In August 2022, 64 instruments were exempted from expiry until specified dates. The *Statutory Instruments Regulation 2022*, schedule 2 as at 30 June 2023 listed seven instruments as exempt on the basis they were uniform subordinate legislation. Schedule 3 of the regulation as at 30 June 2023 listed 57 instruments as exempt on the basis that the Acts under which the instruments were made were subject to review. Eleven of the 57 exempt instruments are first exemptions.

Providing drafting support services

OQPC continued to provide drafting support services to Parliament and the Governor in Council during the reporting period.

In performing functions in the Bill-to-Act process, the office produces all versions of Bills required for their passage through the Legislative Assembly and for assent. Under instruction from the Clerk of the Parliament, OQPC incorporates into Bills amendments made during consideration in detail and consequential amendments that arise.

OQPC coordinates notification, publishing and tabling processes for subordinate legislation, including extraordinary notification of subordinate legislation for government departments.

Advice on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

Under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 7, OQPC has a specific function to provide advice on alternative ways of achieving policy objectives when drafting legislation. The development of legislation involves

collaboration between the office and those involved in policy formulation.

The responsibility for making decisions on policy issues lies with Ministers, departments and other drafting clients.

OQPC contributes to the policy development process by advising on:

- 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 practice in relation to particular kinds of provisions
- how the presentation of a law can make it user-friendly.

Throughout the reporting period, the Deputy Parliamentary Counsel and First Assistant Parliamentary Counsel have provided executive level advice on proposed legislation on a regular basis.

Advice on the application of Fundamental Legislative Principles

OQPC is required by the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* to advise Ministers, government entities and members of the Legislative Assembly on the application of FLPs.

The principles 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’ and include the requirement that legislation has sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament.

The office consistently seeks to achieve policy objectives without infringing FLPs, noting

that FLPs:

- are not absolutes and can be displaced
- may conflict with each other
- derive their force from the values they enshrine
- are not fixed.

Advice provided by the office to key stakeholders may include:

- the operation of FLPs
- the existence of a potential breach of FLPs
- the likely attitude of a portfolio committee to any particular breach of FLPs
- ways to avoid or minimise a potential breach of FLPs.

OQPC provides advice on FLPs in two main ways:

- First, OQPC provides commentary on the operation of FLPs within the drafts of legislation provided to clients. This process is particularly effective because the comment is associated with the specific text to which it relates and becomes part of the normal consideration by clients for future drafts.
- Second, OQPC liaises with DPC and the instructing department in relation to significant FLP issues in Bills and significant subordinate legislation. If appropriate, OQPC provides a formal briefing note to DPC and the instructing department. This process facilitates a whole-of-government decision on the operation of the FLPs concerned.

During the reporting period, OQPC continued to work with departments to develop provisions that achieve both policy objectives and compliance with FLPs. This approach minimised the number of matters that needed to be considered by the Legislative Assembly's portfolio committees in reviewing legislation.

The drafting process

During the reporting period, OQPC continuously strove for high client satisfaction in relation to the processes adopted to provide drafting services by:

- promptly acknowledging instructions and confirming drafter allocation
- providing draft legislation in a timely way
- promptly responding to requests and queries, and promoting drafter availability to discuss complex legislative matters
- updating clients on the progress of legislative instruments being drafted
- providing incidental advice in relation to:
 - the drafting process
 - other relevant legislation or agencies
 - general drafting matters.

Throughout the drafting process the office maintains its duty of confidentiality to clients as required under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 9A.

The overall drafting product

During the reporting period, OQPC continued to review its practices and precedents, published comprehensive information about legislative matters and ensured the Queensland statute book is of the highest standard.

Key activities included:

- maintaining internal quality assurance processes
- continuing our commitment to plain English drafting.

In addition to drafting legislation for the government and private members in Queensland, OQPC drafted and reviewed proposed national scheme legislation. The office is committed to keeping informed on national

and international developments in drafting and publishing.

Strategic risks and challenges

OQPC works within an increasingly complex operating environment. We have identified a number of risks that could affect our ability to deliver on our vision. These include:

- challenges in planning the annual legislative program and competing expectations among clients and other stakeholders
- challenges in filling key OQPC roles and the potential for misaligned organisational capacity and capability
- cybersecurity threats to the Queensland legislation website and OQPC's network infrastructure and data repositories
- significant disruption of business operations as a result of major external events.

To mitigate risk, OQPC identified the following opportunities to strengthen organisational strategies:

- build stronger relationships with key partners towards a process for the clear ordering of whole-of-government legislative priorities
- engage with clients about individual departments' legislative priorities
- improve staff retention and professional development by implementing strategies specified in our strategic plan 2022–2026
- actively participate in Information Standard 18 information security compliance activities and reporting
- keep business continuity planning processes under review
- learn from past business continuity

experiences and be open to innovation in our business practices.

Key stakeholders and partners

OQPC's key stakeholders and partners include instructing departments, agencies and private members, the Queensland Parliamentary Service, the government printer, DPC, the judiciary, the legal profession, law students, the Supreme Court Library, other law librarians and members of the public.

OQPC works collaboratively with all stakeholders to uphold the rule of law and ensure that Queensland legislation is of the highest standard and easily accessible.

Drafting and advisory clients

Clients of drafting services are those providing instructions on proposed legislation and include the Premier, Cabinet, Ministers, government departments, government entities, parliamentary committees and members of the Legislative Assembly.

Executive government is a major client because it sponsors most Bills in the Parliament. However, the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*, section 10 states that any member of the Legislative Assembly may request drafting services. The Parliamentary Counsel must comply with the request unless it is considered that complying with the request would significantly and adversely affect the government's legislative program.

To strengthen stakeholder engagement with drafting clients, OQPC facilitates instructor training sessions to provide:

- information relevant for preparing high quality, clear and effective drafting instructions
- a greater understanding of the drafting process, including:
 - learning about the roles and responsibilities of the instructor and the drafter in the drafting process
 - the interaction between an instructor and a drafter in the drafting process
- a greater understanding of OQPC's functions, the way it operates and what legislative drafting entails
- a range of practical scenarios.

During the reporting period, OQPC ran four instructor training sessions, including some sessions specifically tailored to particular instructing departments.

Publishing clients

Clients of OQPC's publishing services are stakeholders who access legislation published on the Queensland legislation website. These clients include the departments, the courts, the legal profession and members of the public.

OQPC provides specific publishing services to Parliament, government departments and government entities by:

- producing the versions of Bills required for their passage through the Legislative Assembly to assent
- producing indicative reprints for particular Acts amended by Bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly
- providing certified copies of subordinate legislation
- coordinating notification, publication and tabling processes for subordinate legislation.

Assisting the Queensland Youth Parliament

The YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament is a Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority accredited education program for young Queenslanders in years 11 and 12 to experience first-hand the workings of the parliamentary process. With the consent of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Youth Parliament conducts its sittings in Parliament House.

The Youth Parliament provides young Queenslanders with the opportunity to:

- express their views, through a State forum, on matters important to them
- provide the Queensland Government with 'Youth Acts' that express youth concerns and expectations that could be acted on by the government
- develop speaking and listening skills critical to being a leader
- develop an interest in the parliamentary system through their involvement in a simulated parliamentary process.

During the reporting period the office provided support for the Youth Parliament by:

- providing general drafting and editing advice about legislative drafting
- helping 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
- formatting and supplying amendments to Youth Bills for consideration when the Youth Parliament is sitting
- helping with the Bill-to-Act process for Youth Bills passed by the Youth Parliament.

Significant policy affecting service delivery

There are no identified significant initiatives or policy changes that have affected or are likely to affect service delivery.

Financial summary

Under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Director-General of DPC is the accountable officer for QQPC. For planning, performance management and reporting purposes under that Act, QQPC is represented as a service area of DPC known as ‘Legislative Drafting and e-Publishing’. This is reported in DPC’s annual report 2022–23 *Statement of Comprehensive Income by Major Departmental Services* and *Statement of Assets and Liabilities by Major Departmental Services*.

In compliance with AASB 1052 Disaggregated Disclosures, the statement of assets and liabilities for QQPC is included in DPC’s annual report 2022–23. Section 77(2)(b) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* requires the chief finance officer of DPC to verify the department’s financial controls are operating efficiently, effectively and economically.

In support of that function, the Parliamentary Counsel conducts quarterly reviews and provides assurance that:

- the financial records of QQPC have been properly maintained in accordance with prescribed requirements
- the internal compliance and control systems of QQPC relating to financial management have been operating efficiently, effectively and economically.

Since balance date, there have been no material changes that may affect the risk management

and internal compliance and control systems of QQPC.

For the financial year ended 30 June 2023, a statement assessing QQPC’s financial internal controls has been provided by the Parliamentary Counsel to the chief finance officer of DPC. The statement was prepared in accordance with section 54 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

Further information is provided in DPC’s annual report 2022–23.

Human rights

The *Human Rights Act 2019* commenced on 1 January 2020.

QQPC continues to promote employee awareness of their responsibilities through participation in training sessions.

No human rights complaints were received by QQPC within the reporting period.

A review of OQPC's progress against strategic objectives

Strategic objectives

This section reports on OQPC's strategic objectives under the strategic plan 2022–2026.

The strategic objectives align with OQPC's service area objective presented in the Service Delivery Statement (SDS) to draft and provide access to Queensland legislation of the highest standard.

Those services support government and democracy in Queensland by drafting legislation, ensuring the statute book is of the highest standard, and arranging public access to legislation and legislative information.

OQPC makes a significant contribution by advising on the application of FLPs to ensure legislation has sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament.

Strategic objective 1

Excellence in legislative drafting and access

1. Identify and adopt best practice in drafting Bills, amendments to Bills, and proposed subordinate legislation, having regard to fundamental legislative principles and compatibility with human rights.
2. Identify and adopt best practice in making Queensland legislation easy to find, easy to understand, and easy to use.
3. Ensure timely access to Bills, legislation and related information and maintain open data arrangements.

Measures of success

- The SDS effectiveness measure targets for the legislative drafting and e-publishing service area were:
 - 90 per cent client satisfaction with legislative drafting services provided by OQPC
 - 90 per cent client satisfaction with the quality of access to legislation available online.
- The annual client survey identified that the overall satisfaction with both legislative drafting services and access to legislation was 93 per cent in the reporting period. Surveyed clients are Ministers, Chiefs of Staff, Directors-General and their departments' Cabinet Legislation and Liaison Officers and senior policy officers.
- The SDS efficiency measure result of \$158 per hour for the average cost per hour of legislative drafting and publishing output was slightly higher than the target/estimate of \$157 per hour.
- In addition to the SDS effectiveness and efficiency measures, the OQPC strategic plan 2022–2026 includes a timeliness measure that legislative consolidations (reprints) be published within three days of commencement.
- There were 787 authorised reprints (152,469 pages) published in the reporting period and 87.29 per cent were published within three days of commencement.
- The legislation program was delivered on time and produced:

- 38 government Bills (2,556 pages)
- 6 private members' Bills (82 pages)
- 18 government amendments during consideration in detail (87 pages)
- 23 private members' amendments during consideration in detail (53 pages)
- 217 instruments of subordinate legislation (2,014 pages)
- Open data arrangements for the release of Queensland legislation were maintained consistently throughout the reporting period.

Key achievements during the reporting period

Some significant legislation drafted and introduced within the reporting period included:

- *Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Betting Tax and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Coal Mining Safety and Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Public Sector Bill 2022*
- *Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional*

Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022

- *Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022*
- *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022*
- *Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023*
- *Path to Treaty Bill 2023*
- *Property Law Bill 2023*
- *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Tow Truck Bill 2023*
- *Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2023*
- *Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023*

Some significant subordinate legislation drafted and made in the reporting period included:

- *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Amendment Regulation 2022*
- *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2023*
- *Planning (Caboolture West Interim Structure Plan) Amendment Regulation 2023*
- *Superannuation (State Public Sector) Regulation 2023*
- *Local Government Legislation (Boundary Changes and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2023*

- *Major Events (FIFA Women’s World Cup) Regulation 2023*
- *Biosecurity (Panama Disease Tropical Race 4) Amendment Regulation 2023*
- *Water Plan (Barron) 2023*
- *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health (Lead) Amendment Regulation 2023*

Strategic objective 2

A skilled, flexible and resilient workforce

1. Maintain a highly skilled and high-performing workforce.
2. Provide our people with a range of opportunities for ongoing professional and personal development.
3. Continue supporting the focus on mental health and wellbeing.
4. Improve the effectiveness of our performance development processes.
5. Encourage and facilitate the sharing of learnings within and between teams.

Measures of success

- increased identification of, and allocation of resources to support, career and professional development opportunities
- increased identification of, and allocation of resources to support, learning and development opportunities
- increase on previous year’s percentage score in the Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey in learning and development metrics.

Key achievements during the reporting period

OQPC supported WfQ Champions, led by employees, to prepare an action plan focusing on those areas where there is room for improvement, such as learning and development.

OQPC has a significant commitment to professional development of employees, evidenced through:

- comprehensive professional development policy and practice
- a requirement that professional drafters undertake 10 hours (or equivalent) of professional development per year
- high training compliance rates
- comprehensive learning and development blogs
- a professional library maintained and promoted by staff
- regular drafters’ forums
- sharing of learnings from professional development opportunities
- OQPC Wellbeing Group initiatives.

Strategic objective 3

A healthy and inclusive workplace

1. Further develop a workplace culture that fosters the health, happiness, flexibility and fulfilment of our people.
2. Implement cultural capability action plan and disability service plan actions.
3. Improve regular communication with a pro-disclosure bias, for example, by seeking views, listening to staff, clearly

communicating and explaining management decisions, and openly discussing issues as they arise.

4. Encourage greater office-wide cohesion, for example, by having regular office events and encouraging cross-team projects.
5. Continue supporting flexible work arrangements.

Measures of success

- more employees trained as both first aid and mental health first aid officers
- deliver at least monthly internal communications to increase awareness, provide access to support mechanisms and destigmatise mental health in the workplace through QQPC Wellbeing Team initiatives
- documented compliance with ISO45003 [Occupational health and safety management – Psychological health and safety at work]
- 5% increase on previous year's participation rates for employee cultural capability training
- increase on previous year's percentage score in the WfQ survey in workload and health metrics
- progress towards QQPC's diversity targets
- maintenance of high overall employee satisfaction in the WfQ survey increasing on previous year's percentage score in health and wellbeing and workload metrics.

Key achievements during the reporting period

- QQPC continues to support flexible work arrangements under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*, chapter 2, part 3, division 4.
- QQPC has further developed and maintained

a healthy workplace culture in which respectful workplace behaviour and collegiality are consistently demonstrated.

- Additional two First Aid Officers and two Mental Health First Aid Officers trained.
- Ongoing communications shared through the internal newsletter and the 'Our Health and Safety' page on the intranet to destigmatise mental health in the workplace.
- Psychosocial hazard risk assessment underway and ongoing review processes for teams and leadership to consider on a regular basis.
- Ongoing consideration in upcoming recruitment to ensure the QQPC's diversity targets are progressed.

Strategic objective 4

Strategic engagement with partners

1. Build stronger functional relationships and open channels of communication with DPC, the Table Office, client departments and other partners.
2. Document mutual understanding with DPC of the governance relationship between QQPC and DPC.
3. Continue to work with key partners towards a process for the clear ordering of priorities within the government's legislative program.
4. Work with stakeholders to continuously improve the quality of access to Queensland legislation through initiatives such as instructor training and legislation website training.

Measures of success

- reduced incidence of high and medium-high

- risk profile ratings on drafting projects
- governance arrangements between OQPC and DPC documented by December 2022
- deliver two or more instructor training sessions per year
- deliver two or more legislation website training sessions per year
- facilitate one or more stakeholder reference group meetings per year.

Key achievements during the reporting period

- OQPC continued to work with DPC and other key partners toward a process for the clear ordering of priorities within the government’s legislative program.
- OQPC maintained and developed professional working relationships with instructing agencies through four instructor training sessions and other strategic engagement.
- OQPC engaged formally and informally with the Clerk of the Parliament and Table Office staff about legislative procedure.
- Seven online Queensland legislation website training sessions were delivered to more than 500 people across the public sector.

Strategic objective 5

Stewardship of innovation and change

1. Identify and adopt best practice in making Queensland legislation easy to find, easy to understand, and easy to use.
2. Make effective use of our technological resources and explore future drafting and publishing solutions to enhance the services we provide.

3. Utilise the Technology Advisory Group (TAG) to generate, review and recommend current and future system enhancements.

Measures of success

- deliver ICT roadmap initiatives
- continually review existing, emerging, and future technological trends and systems to advance OQPC business systems where applicable
- engage with national and international peers in relation to other relevant cross-jurisdictional developments and innovations.

Key achievements during the reporting period

- OQPC made effective use of our technological resources to enhance the services we provide. The Queensland Integrated Legislative Lifecycle System (QuLLS) has continued to evolve in ways that minimise manual processes, reduce the scope for human error, and optimise timely and accurate access to legislation and legislative information.
- OQPC continued to monitor international developments and will explore future development opportunities when circumstances permit.
- TAG has met on three occasions during the financial year to generate, review and recommend system enhancements.

Future direction

OQPC's priorities in 2023–24 are to:

- Pursue excellence in legislative drafting and access: identify and adopt best practice in drafting Bills, amendments to Bills, and proposed subordinate legislation, having regard to FLPs and compatibility with human rights.
- Continue to identify and adopt best practice in making Queensland legislation easy to find, easy to understand, and easy to use.
- ensure timely access to Bills, legislation, and related information and maintain open data arrangements.
- Cultivate a skilled, flexible, and resilient workforce by:
 - developing and implementing an OQPC-specific strategic workforce plan to attract, develop and retain a highly skilled and high-performing workforce
 - providing staff with a range of opportunities for ongoing professional and personal development
 - continuing to support the focus on mental health and wellbeing
 - improving the effectiveness of our performance development processes
 - encouraging and facilitating the sharing of learnings within and between teams.
- Foster a healthy and inclusive workplace by:
 - further developing a workplace culture that fosters the health, happiness, flexibility and fulfilment of our people
 - improving regular internal communication, seeking views, listening to staff, clearly communicating and explaining management decisions, and openly discussing issues as they arise
 - encouraging greater office-wide cohesion.
- Strengthen strategic engagement with partners by:
 - building stronger functional relationships and open channels of communication with DPC, the Table Office, client departments and other partners
 - finalising written understanding with DPC of respective governance roles and responsibilities between OQPC and DPC
 - continuing to work with key partners towards initiatives for the clear prioritisation of the government's Bills and subordinate legislation programs
 - working with stakeholders to continuously improve the quality of access to Queensland legislation.
- Foster stewardship of innovation and change by:
 - identifying and adopting best practice in making Queensland legislation easy to find, easy to understand, and easy to use
 - making effective use of technological resources and explore future drafting and publishing solutions to enhance the services we provide
 - utilising TAG to generate, review and recommend current and future system enhancements.

Service delivery statement

Service Area: Legislative Drafting and e-Publishing	2022-23 Target/Est	2022-23 Actual
<i>Effectiveness measures</i>		
Overall client satisfaction with legislative drafting services provided by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel	90%	93%
Overall client satisfaction with the quality of access to legislation available online	90%	93%
<i>Efficiency measures</i>		
Average cost per hour of legislative drafting and publishing output	\$157	\$158

Our governance

Executive management group

The Executive Management Group (EMG) of OQPC comprises the Parliamentary Counsel, two Deputy Parliamentary Counsel (Legislative Program) and the Executive Director, Legislation and Business Services.

The EMG is primarily a strategic forum that focuses on the future direction of the office by:

- supporting the Parliamentary Counsel in decision making and advising on matters of strategic importance
- identifying and reporting on emerging governance issues and major activities
- providing assurance on the effectiveness of governance arrangements
- reviewing and approving corporate policies and processes
- acting as a forum for strategic information sharing
- embedding risk management activities and managing risk mitigation strategies
- ensuring robust business continuity and disaster recovery frameworks are in place and regularly reviewed and tested
- considering impacts of whole-of-government initiatives on OQPC's activities.

Tony Keyes — Parliamentary Counsel

Tony Keyes was appointed as Parliamentary Counsel on 15 October 2018. Tony studied law and arts at the University of Queensland and

was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1990.

Tony has had a long and varied legal career, including private and community-sector practice, policy and investigative work at the Criminal Justice Commission, the Ombudsman's Office and the Law Reform Commission, working in law and justice policy for DPC, and serving for almost 10 years as Senior Deputy Crown Solicitor at Crown Law.

Sandra Lawson — Deputy Parliamentary Counsel

Sandra Lawson has more than 20 years' experience drafting legislation. She was appointed Deputy Parliamentary Counsel in July 2018, having worked in various drafting roles at OQPC since 2001.

Before joining OQPC, Sandra was a drafter in the New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel Office. Sandra studied law at the Victoria University of Wellington and was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand in 1995.

Sandra also worked as a solicitor in private practice, before discovering that legislation is her true calling.

Katy Le Roy — Deputy Parliamentary Counsel

Katy Le Roy was appointed Deputy Parliamentary Counsel in July 2018. Prior to joining OQPC, Katy had served as a Parliamentary Counsel in the New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel Office and as the head of the Nauru Parliamentary Counsel Office.

Katy was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1999. She obtained her LLB (Hons) and PhD from the University of Melbourne, where she later lectured and worked as a research fellow.

Katy also has experience as a solicitor in private practice, as in-house counsel, and as a consultant legal advisor. She teaches a graduate subject on Legislation and Legislative Drafting at the Australian National University.

Nicola Busch — Executive Director, Legislation and Business Services

Nicola Busch was appointed as Executive Director, Legislation and Business Services in August 2021.

Prior to joining OQPC, Nicola served as Director, Office of the Commissioner, Queensland Ambulance Service. Nicola's public sector career has been strongly oriented towards stakeholder engagement, corporate governance, business improvement and executive services functions.

Nicola holds an Executive Master of Public Administration (ANZSOG/Griffith University) and is a certified practising accountant (CPA). She also has a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy) and a Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management from the Queensland University of Technology.

Governance framework

OQPC's corporate governance framework supports strategic and operational planning and mandated reporting aligned to the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework.

Business continuity

OQPC's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is a functional plan for managing disruptions to operations and service delivery. The plan ensures business continuity in the event of a critical incident. The BCP complies with the DPC Business Continuity Framework (Crisis Response) which provides a whole-of-department and whole-of-government context for business continuity in a crisis situation.

The Business Continuity Working Group review the BCP quarterly and refresh the plan annually. OQPC also participates in annual desktop scenario BCP testing with DPC.

Committee and working group membership

OQPC provides a valuable contribution to the government's objectives through membership on the following committee structures and working groups within DPC:

- executive leadership team
- finance, performance and planning, and risk subcommittee
- information steering subcommittee
- people and capability subcommittee
- diversity, inclusion and belonging subcommittee.

Other governance matters

Other governance matters as they relate to OQPC are addressed in the DPC Annual Report. The following governance matters relate specifically to OQPC.

Information systems

Since 2016, for drafting and publishing legislation, the office has used QuLLS, a complete end-to-end proprietary system to create, manage, publish and store authorised versions of Queensland legislation.

OQPC continues to advance the features and services of the product to further enhance access to Queensland legislation.

QuLLS also offers a dynamic, database-driven website for access to Queensland legislation via the Queensland legislation website, and in 2022 the office expanded access to Queensland legislation by offering programmatical access via a dedicated Application Programming Interface (API) website offering.

Recordkeeping

QuLLS, OQPC's legislative drafting and publishing system, is the published document repository for legislative documents drafted by the office and information related to legislation drafting projects.

OQPC ensures QuLLS and other recordkeeping systems and processes comply with the *Public Records Act 2002*, policies under that Act and Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture information standards.

Workforce planning

OQPC's EMG continuously engages in strategic workforce planning. The EMG is committed to building an inclusive, agile and capable workforce to ensure the office is well positioned to achieve objectives and meet future business needs and the expectations of its stakeholders.

During 2022–23, OQPC:

- encouraged inclusive staff engagement through the OQPC intranet to promote activities organised by the OQPC social club
- invested in employee wellbeing by supporting Queensland Mental Health Week and R U OK? Day, and promoting awareness of stress management techniques
- contributed to DPC's workplace health and safety committee
- contributed to DPC-led initiatives that focused on multi-dimensional aspects of staff wellbeing (physical, financial, psychological, social and work) such as the blood drive, flu vaccinations and skin cancer assessments
- encouraged employees to participate in domestic and family violence awareness events and initiatives, including the Darkness to Daylight Challenge, White Ribbon Day and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month
- continued to progress the flex-connect principles encouraging employees to successfully access and implement flexible working agreements
- advertised vacant roles using the new flexible options on the SmartJobs website to attract job applicants from diverse backgrounds
- continued to support commitments and implement initiatives in the cultural capability action plan to strengthen an inclusive, diverse and culturally capable workforce
- supported LGBTIQ+ events and initiatives including wearing rainbow lanyards to show support for LGBTIQ+ employees
- participated in NAIDOC initiatives including walking tours, visits to the Ration Shed Museum in Cherbourg and cultural capability training.

Workforce profile data

The following is a snapshot of the workforce profile for 2022-23 based on June 2023 Minimum Obligatory Human Resources Information (MOHRI) data.

Workforce profile

Total Staffing for the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel	Headcount	Paid FTE
	46	44.03
Occupation types by FTE		
Corporate	6.81%	
Frontline and frontline support	93.19%	
Appointment type by FTE		
Permanent	79.29%	
Temporary	2.27%	
Casual	0.00%	
Contract	18.44%	
Employment status by headcount		
Full-time	82.61%	
Part-time	17.39%	
Casual	0.00%	

Figure 1: Gender

Gender	Headcount	%
Woman	28	60.87%
Man	18	39.13%
Non-binary	0	0.00%

Figure 2: Diversity target group data*

Diversity groups	Headcount	%
Women	28	60.87%
Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<5	<5
People with disability	<5	<5
Culturally and linguistically diverse – speak a language at home other than English [^]	<5	<5

* To ensure privacy, in tables where there are less than 5 respondents in a category, specific numbers are to be replaced by <5.

[^] This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages or Australian South Sea Islander languages spoken at home.

Figure 3: Target group data for Women in Leadership Roles

	Headcount	Percentage of total Leadership Cohort (calculated on headcount)
Senior Officers (Classified and s 155 equivalent combined)	3	50.00%
Senior Executive Services and Chief Executives (Classified and s 155 equivalent combined)	7	77.78%

Glossary

BCP	Business Continuity Plan	OQPC <i>or</i> the office	Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel
DPC	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	QuILLS	Queensland Integrated Legislation Lifecycle System
EMG	Executive Management Group	SDS	Service Delivery Statements
FLPs	Fundamental Legislative Principles	TAG	Technology Advisory Group
FTE	Full-time equivalent	WfQ	Working for Queensland
ITS	Information Technology Services	YMCA	Young Men’s Christian Association
LaBS	Legislation and Business Services		
LEaPS	Legislation Editing and Publishing Services		
MOHRI	Minimum Obligatory Human Resources Information		

Financial Information

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Statement of Comprehensive Income

Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel for the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Income		
appropriation revenue	12,506	12,214
user charges and fees	98	124
grants and other contributions	—	—
other revenue	160	185
Total revenue	12,764	12,523
Expenses		
employee expenses	9,461	9,119
supplies and services	3,094	3,174
grant and subsidies	1	5
depreciation and amortisation	186	203
other expenses	22	22
Total expenses	12,764	12,523
Total comprehensive income	—	—

Note:

The Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel is included in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet financial statements as a major departmental service unit. Refer to notes in the financial statements in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Annual Report 2022-2023 for relevant accounting policies and related information.

Compliance checklist

Summary of requirements		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s 	ARRs – section 7	page ii
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of contents Glossary 	ARRs – section 9.1	page iii page 24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public availability 	ARRs – section 9.2	page i
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpreter service statement 	<i>Queensland Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 9.3	page i
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copyright notice 	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> (Cwlth) ARRs – section 9.4	pag i
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information licensing 	<i>QGEA – Information licensing</i> ARRs – section 9.5	page i
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory information 	ARRs – section 10	page 3-4
Non-financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives 	ARRs – section 11.1	page 6-11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency objectives and performance indicators 	ARRs – section 11.2	page 12-17
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency service areas and service standards 	ARRs – section 11.3	page 18
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of financial performance 	ARRs – section 12.1	page 25
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structure 	ARRs – section 13.1	page 4-5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management 	ARRs – section 13.2	page 19-20
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities) 	ARRs – section 13.3	nil
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sector ethics 	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human rights 	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5	page 11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland public sector values 	ARRs – section 13.6	DPC annual report 2022–23
Governance – risk management and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management 	ARRs – section 14.1	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit committee 	ARRs – section 14.2	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal audit 	ARRs – section 14.3	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External scrutiny 	ARRs – section 14.4	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information systems and recordkeeping 	ARRs – section 14.5	page 21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information security attestation 	ARRs – section 14.6	DPC annual report 2022–23
Governance – human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic workforce planning and performance 	ARRs – section 15.1	page 21-23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment 	<i>Directive No. 04/18 Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2	DPC annual report 2022–23
Open Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement advising publication of information 	ARRs – section 16	page i
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancies 	ARRs – section 31.1	www.data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas travel 	ARRs – section 31.2	www.data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland language services policy 	ARRs – section 31.3	www.data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification of financial statements 	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1	DPC annual report 2022–23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent auditor's report 	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 46 ARRs – section 17.2	DPC annual report 2022–23

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

ARRs Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies

ANNUAL REPORT 2022–2023

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