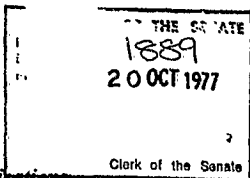


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TABLED PAPER

1889



Joint Committee on Publications

**INQUIRY INTO
THE PURPOSE, SCOPE AND
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES**

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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Joint Committee on Publications

**INQUIRY INTO
THE PURPOSE, SCOPE AND
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES**

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING SERVICE
CANBERRA 1977

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

Standing Order 36 of the Senate reads, in part:

36.—(1.) A Publications Committee, to consist of seven Senators, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament, with power to confer or sit as a Joint Committee with a similar Committee of the House of Representatives.

* * * * *

(3.) When conferring with a similar Committee of the House of Representatives, the Committee shall also have power:

- (a) to inquire into and report on the printing, publication and distribution of Parliamentary and Government Publications and on such matters as are referred to it by the relevant Minister, and
- (b) to send for persons, papers and records.

Standing Order 28 of the House of Representatives reads, in part:

28. A Publications Committee, to consist of seven Members, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament with power to confer with a similar committee of the Senate In addition, when conferring with a similar committee of the Senate, the Committee shall have power—

- (a) to inquire into and report on the printing, publication and distribution of Parliamentary and Government Publications and on such matters as are referred to it by the relevant Minister, and
- (b) to send for persons, papers and records.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Members

Chairman: Mr J. C. Hodges, M.P.

Deputy Chairman: Senator A. J. Missen

Senator B. R. Archer	Mr M. H. Bungey, M.P. ¹
Senator N. T. Bonner	Mr J. FitzPatrick, M.P.
Senator D. N. Cameron	Mr R. Gillard, M.P. ²
Senator E. A. Robertson	Mr J. R. Martyr, M.P.
Senator S. M. Ryan	Mr P. C. Millar, M.P.
Senator T. J. Tehan	Mr L. G. Wallis, M.P.
	Mr A. P. Whitlam, M.P.

Secretary: Mr T. H. G. Wharton
The Senate
Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

¹ Resigned 15 February 1977

² Appointed 24 February 1977

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INTRODUCTION

The Joint Committee

1. The Joint Committee on Publications was established in its present form in June 1970 on the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications (1964)¹, hereafter referred to as the Erwin Committee.
2. Standing Order 36 of the Senate and Standing Order 28 of the House of Representatives provide for the referral of matters to the Committee by the relevant Minister. They also empower the Joint Committee to initiate its own inquiries within its area of responsibility, namely 'the printing, publication, and distribution of Parliamentary and Government Publications'.

Background to Inquiry

3. Since Federation, the Parliamentary Papers Series has been one of the major reference sources for information on and research into the role and activities of Parliament and government for Members of Parliament and the general public. Recent successive governments, in response to the request for 'open government', have tended to supply information on a more regular basis to the electorate through the Parliament. This fact, coupled with an increasing interest by the public in their involvement in the process of government, has meant that the importance of the Parliamentary Papers Series, being a Series containing the principal papers presented to Parliament, has grown enormously over the past decade.
4. In the light of the above, the Committee recently has had occasion to express concern at the current value of the Parliamentary Papers Series, whether it is meeting adequately its responsibilities and whether there are any means by which its effectiveness can be improved. The Committee noted that no thorough investigation of the Series had taken place since the presentation of the Report of the Erwin Committee in 1964.
5. On 3 June 1976, the Committee resolved to inquire into the purpose, scope and distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series. The Committee established its Terms of Inquiry as follows:
 1. That the Committee inquire into the adequacy of the principles followed by the Committee when recommending to the Parliament certain tabled reports for printing as Parliamentary Papers. The principles are:
 - (a) that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, ad hoc committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal commissions, and the like, presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;
 - (b) that in accordance with paragraph 234 of the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications, the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
 - (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as Parliamentary Papers should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and

¹ Australia, Parliament, *Parliamentary and Government Publications: Report from the Joint Select Committee* [Chairman: G. D. Erwin], Parl. Paper 32, 1964 (Canberra, 1964), para. 373.

- (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements.
2. That the Committee in its examination determine whether it is desirable to amend the principles to (a) decrease the number of documents included in the Parliamentary Papers Series with a view to avoiding any waste or duplication which may occur, or (b) increase the number of documents included in the Series to take in other categories of tabled reports.
 3. That the Committee examine whether the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of the Series are satisfactory.
 4. That the Committee determine whether the Parliamentary Papers Series is fulfilling adequately the following purposes:
 - (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
 - (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for (i) sale to the public, and (ii) free distribution to libraries, government, tertiary institutions, etc.;
 - (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
 - (d) that in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings.
 5. That the Committee in its examination consider any suggestions that persons in submitting submissions may wish to make in areas not covered in 1 to 4 above.

Work of the Committee, submissions and witnesses

6. The Committee invited written submissions from the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Australian Government Publishing Service, the National Library, all State and Parliamentary libraries as well as other interested persons. In all, twenty-four submissions were received (see Appendix No. 1—List of Submissions). Evidence was taken from fifteen witnesses (see Appendix No. 2—List of Witnesses).
7. The Committee has the honour to present the following Report to both Houses of Parliament.

CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

8. The Committee has considered the transcript of evidence as well as the numerous submissions which have been placed before it. From this material, the Committee draws the following principal conclusions:

Duplication of Distribution and Wastage

1. That only a small degree of wastage takes place as a result of duplication of distribution of departmental reports and their Parliamentary Paper versions since the addressees are, in the main, quite separate. (Para. 20)
2. That, under the existing distribution arrangements involving reports tabled in Parliament which are subsequently printed and distributed as Parliamentary Papers, some duplication of distribution to Senators and Members does take place. (Paras 20 and 21)

Increasing Costs

3. That, with the exception of 1976, the number of Papers which constitute the Parliamentary Papers Series have remained relatively constant. Therefore, (a) the increasing cost involved in producing the Series is not linked to a growth in the number of Papers included in the Series, and (b) an amendment to the Committee's publishing guidelines to reduce the number of Papers included in the Series, unless significant, would be unlikely to reduce future costs to any marked degree. (Paras 28 to 30)

Content of the Parliamentary Papers Series

4. That, since the presentation of the Joint Select Committee Report on Parliamentary and Government Publications (1964) and with subsequent reports of the Joint Committee on Publications, the Parliamentary Papers Series has become more consistent and wider in its scope and, accordingly, has become a most important reference source for its users. (Para. 31)
5. That the failure by author bodies to table an annual report each year on a regular basis leads to variation in the content of the Parliamentary Papers Series from year to year causing some inconvenience to the users of the Series. (Para. 32)
6. That a significant decrease in the number of papers included in the Parliamentary Papers Series would greatly reduce the reference as well as the archival value of the Series. (Para. 37)
7. That the principles followed by the Joint Committee on Publications, when recommending to the Parliament certain tabled papers for printing as Parliamentary Papers, with minor exceptions, are adequate. (Paras 31 to 41)

Availability and Distribution of Series

8. That the Committee is unable, at this stage, to conclude whether the availability of the Series to the public is satisfactory until such time as it carries out the investigation referred to in paragraph 44 (c). (Para. 44)

9. That certain deficiencies, inconsistencies and wastage exist with regard to the free distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series. (Paras 49 to 51)
10. That a rationalisation of the Parliamentary Papers Series' free distribution list and a review of the grouping system of distribution would effect some economies with regard to the cost of distributing the Series. (Para. 54)

Purpose of the Parliamentary Papers Series

11. That the Parliamentary Papers Series, being a Series containing the principal documents presented to Parliament, is fulfilling adequately the following purposes:
 - (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
 - (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for sale to the public;
 - (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the relevant year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
 - (d) that, in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act, persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings. (Paras 56 to 75)

Cost of Producing Series

12. That the cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series has grown considerably over the past five years increasing from \$107 580 in 1970-71 to \$729 716 in 1975-76. (Para. 78)
13. That the increase in the cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series is the result of a number of factors including (a) the increasing size of individual publications over the years, (b) increasing costs involved with printing, binding, etc., and the supply of labour, (c) a tendency for more reports to be prepared and tabled in a camera-ready form requiring production of the Parliamentary Paper version by photographic reproduction rather than employing the relatively less expensive process of typesetting the original departmental tabling version, and (d) a failure by author bodies to observe production guidelines and procedures laid down by the Australian Government Publishing Service when producing simultaneously the departmental and Parliamentary Paper versions of reports. (Para. 79)

Delay in Publication of the Parliamentary Papers Series

14. That the average time lapse between the date of presentation of a paper to Parliament and its date of publication as a Parliamentary Paper has grown to a marked degree over the past 12 years, increasing from 2.7 months per paper in 1964 to 6.4 months in 1970 and to 8.5 months in 1975. (Para. 89)

Index to the Parliamentary Papers Series

15. That the last consolidated index to the Parliamentary Papers Series was produced in 1950. (Para. 109)

Reproduction of the Series in a Microform

16. That it is desirable to reproduce the Series in a microform version. (Paras 111, 112)

Australian Government Publishing Service Deposit of Publications

17. That it is desirable that the publications deposit arrangement of the Australian Government Publishing Service be expanded to include the State Parliamentary Librarians. (Para. 115)

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. From the principal conclusions reached by the Committee and the evidence received, the following recommendations are made:

Duplication of Distribution and Wastage

1. That where a printed departmental paper, tabled in Parliament, is given a full Parliamentary distribution, Senators and Members be excluded from receipt of the Parliamentary Paper version. (Para. 21)

Content of the Parliamentary Papers Series

2. That departments, statutory authorities and other governmental institutions which are not required, by statute, to present an annual report to Parliament, but which have had occasion to table an annual report in recent years, be encouraged to continue to present an annual report to Parliament on a consistent basis. (Para. 34)
3. That the Clerks of the Parliament advise the Chairman on any occasion where an author body has failed to meet a statutory requirement to table its annual report, return or other document within the stated statutory period, or within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the period to which the report refers. (Para. 34)
4. That at the conclusion of each year's sitting, or as often as may be deemed necessary, the Committee table a return in Parliament recording the titles of those reports of author bodies which have not been tabled during the stated statutory period or within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the period to which the report refers. (Para. 34)
5. That the publication guidelines of the Committee be amended to read as follows:
 - (a) that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, Parliamentary and ad hoc committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal commissions, and the like, and documents comprising the Australian Treaty Series, which are presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;
 - (b) that the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
 - (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as Parliamentary Papers should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and
 - (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements. (Para. 42)

Distribution

6. That the free distribution list for the principal Parliamentary publications (excluding *Hansard*) be as follows:

- (a) that libraries of States, State Parliaments, municipalities, universities, colleges of advanced education, teachers colleges and other post-secondary institutions, secondary schools and Commonwealth departments (or in absence, the Secretary); and foreign embassies, newspapers, members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, political parties which contest Federal elections and which have a recognised National Secretariat, and appropriate addresses as determined by the Presiding Officers which are consistent with the terms of this recommendation, be entitled to be supplied with one free copy of each of the undermentioned publications, upon request:

Parliamentary Papers, Standing Orders of both Houses and the *Short Description of Business and Procedures of the House of Representatives*

- (b) That trade, business, employer, employee, professional, commercial and similar organisations be not entitled to receive free distribution of the above.
 - (c) That, unless the Presiding Officers otherwise determine, all State, State Parliamentary, Commonwealth departmental (excluding statutory authority), university, college of advanced education and municipal libraries, and appropriate overseas addresses as determined by the Presiding Officers, be eligible to receive one free set of bound volumes of Parliamentary Papers, *Journals of the Senate* and *Votes and Proceedings*, upon request.
 - (d) That the Presiding Officers advise current recipients on the free distribution list when the revised distribution scheme becomes operative, and instigate checks from time to time as they consider necessary, to ascertain whether recipients desire to continue to receive their entitlement.
 - (e) That the free and advanced order lists be rationalised and maintained so that persons and organisations eligible for free receipt are not included on the paying lists.
 - (f) That the distribution arrangements for single copies of *Journals of the Senate*, *Votes and Proceedings*, Notice Papers, Bills and Tariff Proposals be the same as those referred to in (a) to (c) above, except that the maximum number of free copies be increased from one to five. (Para. 52)
7. That the grouping system used to determine the free distribution of Parliamentary Papers be revised and updated. (Para. 55)

Bound Volumes

8. That the number of future sets of bound volumes held in reserve be reduced to twenty-five. (Para. 66)
9. That future volumes of the Parliamentary Papers Series be bound in high quality buckram material. (Para. 70)

Cost of Producing Series

10. That, following the tabling of a report in Parliament which:
 - (a) is in an unacceptable form to enable its reproduction for inclusion in the Parliamentary Papers Series,

- (b) readily falls within the publishing guidelines followed by the Committee, and
- (c) is ordered to be printed,
- the originating department or statutory authority be levied with the cost of bringing the report to an acceptable standard for reproduction and inclusion in the Series. (Para. 84)
11. That the Australian Government Publishing Service advise the Committee of author bodies which depart from AGPS production guidelines where it is known that the report will be tabled and printed as a Parliamentary Paper. (Para. 84)
 12. That where time permits, all reports which are due to be tabled in Parliament and which fall within the Parliamentary Paper publishing guidelines laid down by this Committee should be typeset with sufficient copies being produced simultaneously to satisfy the Parliamentary Paper distribution. (Para. 88)
 13. That where it is necessary for a report to be produced with the utmost urgency, and, as a result, the necessary time required to typeset the document is unavailable and, if such report readily falls within the Parliamentary Paper publishing guidelines laid down by this Committee, then it is most desirable that such report be produced in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Australian Government Publishing Service Circular dealing with reproduction from camera-ready copy. (Para. 88)

Delay in Publication of the Parliamentary Papers Series

14. That, at the commencement of each year's sittings, and thereafter as necessary, the Committee determine whether or not certain papers due to be tabled that year fall within the publishing guidelines laid down by the Committee in this Report and that the Parliament be advised that, when these papers are tabled, it is the intention of the Committee to recommend that they be printed as Parliamentary Papers. (Para. 97)
15. That, following the adoption by Parliament of the reports of the Committee which contain its recommendations for the printing of Parliamentary Papers, such reports be included in the appropriate catalogue of the Australian Government Publishing Service. (Para. 97)
16. That, for a trial period of two years, following upon the completion of the departmental versions of reports by a printing contractor or the Government Printer, the completion of the Parliamentary Paper versions of those reports be undertaken by the Government Printer. (Para. 100)
17. That, for a trial period of two years, the Government Printer undertake the printing of Parliamentary Papers on all occasions where Parliamentary Paper stocks have not been produced simultaneously with the departmental tabling version. (Para. 100)
18. That in the event of the Government Printer being unable to complete the Parliamentary Paper version of a report, he be authorised to refer the report to the Australian Government Publishing Service to arrange its completion through a suitable printing contractor. (Para. 102)

19. That the Government Printer complete the Parliamentary Paper version by encasing the original departmental version with the standard blue Parliamentary Paper cover; such cover to include the tabling and printing details presently being recorded on the title page. (Para. 104)
20. That the Parliamentary Presiding Officers examine the practicability of employing terminal production units in:
 - (a) the Committee Secretariat of the Parliament with a view to the Government Printer producing simultaneously, through his phototypesetting equipment, both the Parliamentary tabling and Parliamentary Paper versions of Parliamentary Committee Reports; and
 - (b) the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter to enable the Government Printer to produce Parliamentary Committee evidence through his phototypesetting equipment. (Para. 107)

Index to the Parliamentary Papers Series

21. That the Parliamentary Papers Index be consolidated for the period 1901-1975. (Para. 109)

Reproduction of the Series in a Microform

22. That when production and financial considerations permit, the Parliamentary Papers Series be reproduced in a microform version. (Para. 113)

Australian Government Publishing Service Deposit of Publications

23. That the publications deposit arrangement of the Australian Government Publishing Service be expanded to include the six State Parliamentary Librarians, upon request. (Para. 116)

BACKGROUND TO THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES

10. The *Parliamentary Papers Series* comprises those papers which have been presented to either House of the Parliament and which, under the Standing Orders of either House, have been 'ordered to be printed'.
11. Papers may be presented to either House:
 - pursuant to statute
 - by Command of His Excellency the Governor-General (the method used by a Minister if no statutory requirement exists)
 - by Order of either House
 - by either Presiding Officer
12. The responsibility for determining which tabled papers are included in the *Parliamentary Papers Series* lies with either House of the Parliament. However, in practice, this function is delegated to the Publication Committee of each House either meeting separately or as a Joint Committee. Normally, it is the Joint Committee which considers regularly all tabled papers presented to both Houses between meetings of the Committee which have not previously been ordered to be printed, and reports to the Parliament through the Senate and the House of Representatives Committees recommending a list of papers for printing and inclusion in the Series. The papers listed in the report are then 'ordered to be printed' by means of the House adopting the report of its Committee.
13. The Erwin Committee Report at paragraph 232 stated:

The *Parliamentary Papers Series* should be a comprehensive selection of the papers of a substantial nature presented to Parliament.
14. One witness took the rationale of the Series somewhat further when he stated:

that the reasons for publication of Parliamentary documents are twofold. Primarily to provide information to an interested, educated and involved electorate about the activities of government, so that being aware of the deliberations and activities of the prime organisation of government in our society, the community may be in a better position to benefit from these activities and to provide a firmer basis on which the society might work more efficiently to reach the goals set by the legislature. Secondly, these publications provide invaluable source material on practically all facets of life, social, economic and industrial of the Australian community and thus are some of the major tools of the Australian research worker, both present and future. It is of great importance to the community therefore, that these publications be available on as wide a range of subjects as possible, that they be printed and distributed urgently to places of free access and that complete bound sets be available promptly to assist in the ready location of material required for current purposes and for research purposes.
15. The Terms of the Committee's Inquiry were designed to determine whether the *Parliamentary Papers Series* is fulfilling its functions in the most efficient and economic manner and, if not, whether any action can be taken which might remedy any deficiency.

I. ADEQUACY OF COMMITTEE'S PUBLISHING GUIDELINES: INQUIRY ITEMS 1 and 2

That the Committee inquire into the adequacy of the principles followed by the Committee when recommending to the Parliament certain tabled reports for printing as *Parliamentary Papers*. The principles are:

- (a) that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, *ad hoc* committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal commissions, and the like, presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;
- (b) that in accordance with paragraph 234 of the Joint Select Committee on *Parliamentary and Government Publications*, the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
- (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as *Parliamentary Papers* should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and
- (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements.

(Inquiry Item 1)

That the Committee in its examination determine whether it is desirable to amend the principles to (a) decrease the number of documents included in the *Parliamentary Papers Series* with a view to avoiding any waste or duplication which may occur, or (b) increase the number of documents included in the Series to take in other categories of tabled reports.

(Inquiry Item 2)

16. Under Terms of Inquiry Items 1 and 2, the Committee has charged itself with the task of examining the adequacy of the principles (*hereafter referred to as its publishing guidelines*) upon which it makes recommendations to the Parliament to include certain reports in the *Parliamentary Papers Series*.
17. The Committee determined that the adequacy of the publishing guidelines could be demonstrated if:
 - (a) they do not lead to any wastage or unnecessary duplication of distribution;
 - (b) they do not contribute significantly to the increasing costs involved in producing the Series; and
 - (c) the content of the Series is such that it contains the principal documents presented to Parliament.

Duplication of Distribution and Wastage

18. For some time the Committee has been aware that an element of duplication of distribution, with consequent wastage, takes place as a result of the publication of a departmental tabling version of a report and a *Parliamentary Paper* version. Until the present Inquiry was undertaken, the Committee was unable to determine its extent and whether it could be attributed to the publishing guidelines of the Committee.

19. For proper consideration of the occurrence of duplication and wastage, the purpose of both the departmental tabling version and the Parliamentary Paper version require some explanation. Basically, the departmental version is required by Members of Parliament, librarians and other interested persons for immediate information and research. The Parliamentary Paper version, which frequently becomes available some months after the original tabling takes place, is used mainly as a replacement copy for research and archival purposes.

(a) Duplication of Distribution

20. Distribution of the departmental version of a report and the Parliamentary Paper version can be duplicated only if the relevant distribution lists have some common addressees. Basically, this occurs for only two groups, namely, Members of Parliament and those libraries which are part of the publications deposit arrangements of the Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS). In all other cases, the addressees on each list are quite separate and distinct.

21. The Committee is of the opinion that most Members of Parliament, once having received the departmental version of a report on tabling, are unlikely to require a copy of the Parliamentary Paper version of the same report, and, accordingly, recommends:

That where a printed departmental paper, tabled in Parliament, is given a full Parliamentary distribution, Senators and Members be excluded from receipt of the Parliamentary Paper version.

The Committee, in proposing this recommendation, is aided by the knowledge that Senators and Members can readily obtain free copies of Parliamentary Papers from the Records and Papers Office of their respective Houses or Australian Government Publishing Service Bookshops situated in the State capital cities.

22. In many instances, the Parliament is not provided with sufficient copies of tabled reports to enable full distribution to its Members to take place. The Committee considers this growing practice to be unsatisfactory. It is only due to the existence of the Parliamentary Papers Series and the free distribution list that Members of Parliament can guarantee that they will eventually be provided with a copy of the principal papers presented to Parliament. This matter will be covered fully in the forthcoming report of the Committee on Annual Reports of Commonwealth Departments and Statutory Authorities.

23. The Committee is reluctant to recommend that libraries which receive the majority of reports tabled in Parliament through the AGPS deposit arrangements¹ should be excluded from receiving the Parliamentary Paper version. The Committee points out that the number of libraries involved is small and that any savings made through exclusion would be minimal. In addition, because of the importance of these libraries in disseminating the information contained in such publications, the provision of an additional copy (the Parliamentary Paper version) would be of added benefit to its users.

24. Overall, the Committee is satisfied that, with the exception of issues to Senators and Members, duplication of distribution of the departmental and/or the Parliamentary Paper versions of reports is minimal.

¹ They include the National, Commonwealth Parliamentary, State and University libraries (some 25 addressees).

(b) Wastage

25. Members of Parliament currently are entitled to receive automatically one copy of each Parliamentary Paper through the free distribution list of the principal Parliamentary publications. With the implementation of the recommendation contained in paragraph 21, most elements of wastage in distribution of the Series to Members of Parliament will be removed since only in cases where the departmental version is not distributed to all Members of Parliament will Members be entitled to receive a copy of the Parliamentary Paper. The Committee considers this to be a satisfactory arrangement.

26. Some further elements of wastage are apparent in the Parliamentary Papers free distribution list. However, these cannot be attributed to the application of the Committee's publishing guidelines, but rather to the presence of an out-dated distribution arrangement. This matter is discussed in some detail at paragraphs 53 to 55.

27. While the Committee concedes that some examples of duplication of distribution and waste can occur under present distribution arrangements, it is of the opinion that these are of minor significance and, as such, do not warrant alteration of the Committee's publishing guidelines. The Committee is of the opinion that some elements of duplication and waste will be removed by the implementation of the Committee's recommendation on this matter.

Increasing Costs

28. Over the past six or seven years, the cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series has increased enormously (see paragraph 78). The Committee was advised when taking evidence, that the major factors contributing to the increasing cost were a general increase in the size of individual publications and large scale increases in wages and costs of materials throughout the printing industry.

29. The Committee notes that, with the exception of 1976¹, the number of papers which constitute the Parliamentary Paper Series has remained relatively constant since 1970. The Committee therefore concludes that the increasing cost involved in producing the Series is not linked to a growth in the number of documents included in the Series and, accordingly, any amendment to the Committee's publication guidelines, unless significant, would be unlikely to reduce future costs to any marked degree.

30. For these reasons, the Committee concludes that the publishing guidelines followed by the Committee do not significantly contribute to the increasing cost involved in producing the Series.

Content of the Parliamentary Papers Series

31. There is little doubt that since the presentation of the Erwin Committee Report in 1964, the Series has become more consistent and wider in its scope. The greater consistency in the content of the Series can be directly related to the practice of successive Joint Publications (Printing) Committees² following following the publishing

¹ The number of Papers included in the 1976 Series were 425, some 75 above an average year of 350. The Committee was advised that a large proportion of these comprised those reports which would have been tabled later in 1975 but for the Double Dissolution in November of that year.

² The Joint Printing Committee was the predecessor of the Joint Committee on Publications. The Standing Orders of both Houses of Parliament were amended in 1970 to create the Joint Committee on Publications and conferred upon it powers of an investigatory nature.

guidelines suggested by the Erwin Committee. The widening of the content of the Series, in the main, can be attributed to the policy of recent governments encouraging its Ministers to table a greater number of reports and documents dealing with the activities of government. A large proportion of these reports have found their way into the Parliamentary Papers Series.

32. The Committee noted that while most witnesses agreed that the content of the Series had become more consistent over the past decade or so some, including Officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives, were concerned to point out that in a number of instances where annual reports are tabled by Command (and therefore not in accordance with a statutory requirement), such tabling often takes place on an infrequent basis. A year to year element of inconsistency in the content of the Series is the eventual outcome. As a result, researchers are unable to anticipate that the report of a certain department or instrumentality will appear in the Series each year. Such occurrences considerably inconvenience the researcher and other users of the Series. To them, the value of the Series is diminished accordingly.

33. Parliamentary Officers also advised the Committee that, on occasions, papers required to be presented to Parliament by statute have either not been tabled within the time limit imposed by the relevant statute, or may not have been tabled at all had not individual Members of Parliament prompted tabling from the Floor of the House. The Committee is concerned that no Parliamentary machinery exists to ensure that non-statutory reports are tabled on a regular basis or that, where applicable, statutory reports are tabled in accordance with their statutory requirement.

34. The Committee therefore recommends:

That departments, statutory authorities and other governmental institutions which are not required, by statute, to present an annual report to Parliament but which have had occasion to table an annual report in recent years, be encouraged to continue to present an annual report to Parliament on a consistent basis.

That the Clerks of the Parliament advise the Chairman on any occasion where an author body has failed to meet a statutory requirement to table its annual report, return or other document within the stated statutory period, or within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the period to which the report refers.

That at the conclusion of each year's sitting, or as often as may be deemed necessary, the Committee table a return in Parliament recording the titles of those reports of author bodies which have not been tabled during the stated statutory period or within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the period to which the report refers.

35. During the course of the Inquiry, the Committee received various suggestions on possible amendments to the guidelines. They varied from a suggestion that all tabled papers should be included in the Series to one which recommended the deletion of those reports which are readily available in a departmental version.

36. The Committee is not convinced that all tabled papers, including Acts of Parliament, Ordinances, Determinations by the Public Service Arbitrator and other machinery papers which are readily available in separate series or are of limited interest, should be included in the Parliamentary Papers Series. The Committee points out that should the occasion warrant, the Committee has enough flexibility within its procedures to recommend that a paper of particular interest be included in the Series.

37. It is not new to suggest that where the departmental version of a report is readily available, some savings could be achieved by excluding the report from the Parliamentary Papers Series. The Committee is in agreement with the conclusions of the Erwin Committee on this matter, namely, that the suggestion ignores the archival and research value of the Series. Even if the departmental versions were bound in volumes in a similar manner to the Parliamentary Papers Series the situation would be unsatisfactory. An additional series would be created which would also require indexing to be of any research or archival value. But most importantly, both series would be incomplete. Paragraph 259 of the Erwin Committee Report stated:

Your Committee was urged by a number of librarians to avoid increasing the number of printed series of documents. The Librarian of the Public Library of New South Wales submitted:

'Experience in the use of United Kingdom Command Papers . . . is very satisfactory, but there are disadvantages in proliferating series. For the convenience of the public who cannot be expected readily to distinguish between the contents of different series, it is suggested that the number of different series should be kept to a practicable minimum.'

The Committee concludes that a significant decrease in the number of papers included in the Parliamentary Papers Series would greatly reduce the reference as well as the archival value of the Series.

38. A number of witnesses suggested to the Committee, either by submission or in evidence, that interim annual reports should be included in the Series due to their importance prior to the release of the final report. The Committee resists this proposition on two grounds. Firstly, on very few occasions does the content of interim annual reports depart from the prepared text of the final report. The only addition, in the great majority of cases, is the inclusion of the Auditor-General's Certificate. Secondly, by the time the interim report could be made available as a Parliamentary Paper the annual report itself would most likely be tabled and made available through the normal avenues.

39. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of the Committee's publishing guidelines refer to regular papers which are tabled in Parliament constituting 'nil' returns, and the inclusion, wherever possible, of the Auditor-General's reports on financial statements. All comments on paragraphs (a) and (b) favoured their retention within the Committee's guidelines for reasons of adequacy of content and consistency of the Series. The Committee finds no argument with these conclusions.

40. The Committee, however, does concede that some small amendments to the guidelines are desirable. The arguments put forward by librarians favouring the inclusion of the Australian Treaty Series being a series of considerable national and international importance and certainly of great archival value are convincing. If the individual treaties were bound together as one paper at the conclusion of each year the cost would be minimal. Similarly, the increased activities of Parliamentary Committees require recognition.

41. After considering all the relevant evidence, the Committee concludes that the guidelines, as they now exist, satisfactorily meet the tests imposed by paragraph 17 and that, with minor exceptions (paragraph 40), are adequate.

42. The Committee amends its publication guidelines to read as follows:

(a) *that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, Parliamentary and ad hoc committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal*

commissions, and the like, and documents comprising the Australian Treaty Series, which are presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;

- (b) that the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
- (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as Parliamentary Papers should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and
- (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements.

II. AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF SERIES: INQUIRY ITEM 3

That the Committee examine whether the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of the Series are satisfactory.

(Inquiry Item 3)

43. Any composite series of documents which is designed to fulfil a specific purpose can be considered effective only if it can be acquired readily or is received regularly by its users. The Parliamentary Papers Series is no exception.

Availability

44. The users of the Parliamentary Papers Series can be divided into three main groups, namely, Members of Parliament, researchers and the public.

- (a) *Members of Parliament* have ready access to the individual papers of the Series through their respective Records and Papers Offices in Parliament House or can obtain, at no cost, two copies of any AGPS or Parliamentary publication at AGPS Bookshops in the State capital cities. Under present distribution arrangements they are also entitled to receive, via the free distribution list, copies of Parliamentary Papers in their Parliament House office and their electorate office (see para. 46). These are free services and ensure that, in the great majority of cases, Members' requirements are satisfied. Some difficulty is currently being experienced by a number of Senators and Members who do not reside in a capital city in relation to ease of access to AGPS Bookshops. However, the Committee is aware that this deficiency is being examined by the Senate and House of Representatives Departments and the AGPS. The Committee supports the removal of this shortcoming.
- (b) *Researchers* have access to the bound volumes and single issues of the Series through State, municipal (in cases where those libraries have taken up their entitlements under the free distribution list) and tertiary libraries. Single copies can be purchased at the AGPS Bookshops.
- (c) *The public* have access to the Series through State and municipal libraries and can also purchase copies from AGPS Bookshops. In addition, individual copies can be obtained by mail order purchase or, should the user so wish, the full Series can be obtained by means of a forward order system which attracts a sizeable discount. The Committee, at the date of presentation of this Report, is undertaking an investigation into the Australian Government Publishing Service. One of the factors which the Committee will be considering is the number of bookshops established to cater for public access to Parliamentary and Government publications and their locations. The Committee defers detailed analysis of this area until such time as its investigations are completed.

45. Overall, the Committee feels that the arrangements by which Members of Parliament are able to obtain free copies of Parliamentary Papers are adequate. Accessibility of the Series to researchers and the general public is provided for by (a) direct

sales and mail order purchase through the AGPS, and (b) the availability of single copies and bound volumes at State, university and municipal libraries, etc.

Distribution

46. Distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series is, in the main, achieved through the free distribution list of the principal Parliamentary publications controlled by the Presiding Officers. It has evolved through previous Parliaments to its present scope by the Presiding Officers approving the addition of categories and some individuals to the list. These categories include Senators and Members, Commonwealth and State departments and instrumentalities, diplomatic and consular representatives in Australia, Australian diplomatic posts abroad, and State, municipal, university and other tertiary and Australian Parliamentary libraries.

47. The principal Parliamentary publications include Parliamentary Papers, *Hansard*, Bills, Tariff Proposals, Notice Papers of both Houses, *Journals of the Senate* and the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House of Representatives.

48. The extent of the free distribution can be measured by statistics which show, for example, that some 600 or more copies of each Parliamentary Paper and over 1500 copies of each House of Representatives Notice Paper are distributed by way of the free distribution list.

49. The free distribution list appears to have worked well in the past but the recent upsurge in interest in national affairs and the increasing activity of government have led to requests for placement on the list from organisations within existing categories of recipients as well as new categories. This fact, when combined with a general lack of endorsed guidelines upon which distribution is effected, has encouraged Parliamentary Officers to take the opportunity offered by the Committee's Inquiry to voice their concern at the waste and inconsistency which is beginning to arise as a result of free distribution.

50. In 1971, the Joint Committee on Publications¹ recommended revisions to the free distribution list designed to remove much of the avoidable waste. The Committee was concerned to note that the recommendations have never been formally adopted. In the main, Parliamentary Officers have endeavoured to follow the Committee's recommendations, but without the formal adoption of the recommendations, they have been unable to update those categories which were established prior to 1971.

51. The Committee has reconsidered the 1971 recommendations of the Committee and finds the basic criteria to be sound, but feels a number of small amendments to the recommendations would encourage consistency and provide for ease of administration.

52. The Committee recommends that the free distribution list for the principal Parliamentary publications (excluding *Hansard*) be as follows:

- (a) *That libraries of States, State Parliaments, municipalities, universities, colleges of advanced education, teachers colleges and other post secondary institutions, secondary schools, and Commonwealth departments (or in absence, the Secretary); and foreign embassies, newspapers, members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, political parties which contest Federal elections and*

which have a recognised National Secretariat, and appropriate addressees as determined by the Presiding Officers which are consistent with the terms of this recommendation, be entitled to be supplied with one free copy of each of the undermentioned publications, upon request:

Parliamentary Papers, Standing Orders of both Houses and the 'Short Description of Business and Procedures of the House of Representatives'.

- (b) *That trade, business, employer, employee, professional, commercial and similar organisations be not entitled to receive free distribution of the above.*
- (c) *That, unless the Presiding Officers otherwise determine, all State, State Parliamentary, Commonwealth departmental (excluding statutory authority), university, colleges of advanced education and municipal libraries and appropriate overseas addressees, as determined by the Presiding Officers, be eligible to receive one free set of bound volumes of Parliamentary Papers, Journals of the Senate, and Votes and Proceedings, upon request.*
- (d) *That the Presiding Officers advise current recipients on the free distribution list when the revised distribution scheme becomes operative, and instigate checks, from time to time as they consider necessary, to ascertain whether recipients desire to continue to receive their entitlement.*
- (e) *That the free and advance order lists be rationalised and maintained so that persons and organisations eligible for free receipt are not included on the paying lists.*
- (f) *That the distribution arrangements for single copies of Journals of the Senate, Votes and Proceedings, Notice Papers, Bills and Tariff Proposals be the same as those referred to in (a) to (e) above, except that the maximum number of free copies be increased from one to five.*

Grouping System of Free Distribution

53. Under present distribution arrangements, the individual papers of the Series are grouped into subject categories (see Appendix C—Distribution Groupings of Parliamentary Papers). The rationale behind the grouping system is to achieve economies of distribution within the free distribution list. Each addressee is invited to limit his receipt of Parliamentary Papers to those which are contained in the subject group or groups in which he has an interest, for example, topics under Group B relate to finance, under Group D relate to defence, and so on.

54. The Committee was advised by both Parliamentary House Departments and the AGPS that the grouping categories are fast becoming outdated. This fact, coupled with the growth in the range of documents included in the Series, often necessitates the assignment of a Paper to two or more groups. Addressees are more frequently requesting receipt of most, if not all, groups to ensure that they receive the Papers in which they have an interest. As a result, they receive under the present grouping system a great number of papers outside their area of specific interest, which results in avoidable wastage.

55. The Committee recommends:

That the grouping system used to determine the free distribution of Parliamentary Papers be revised and updated.

¹ Australia: Parliament, *Distribution and Pricing of Parliamentary Publications: Report from the Joint Committee on Publications* [Chairman: G. D. Erwin], Parl. Paper 153, 1971 (Canberra 1971), Vol. 12, p. 205, paras. 74, 81.

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES AND ITS ADEQUACY: INQUIRY ITEM 4

That the Committee determine whether the Parliamentary Papers Series is fulfilling adequately the following purposes:

- (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
- (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for (i) sale to the public, and (ii) free distribution to libraries, government, tertiary institutions, etc;
- (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
- (d) that in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings.

(Inquiry Item 4)

Availability for the Use of Senators and Members¹

56. Evidence on the extent of supply of Parliamentary Papers to Senators and Members of the House of Representatives was given in some detail to the Committee by Officers of the Senate and House of Representatives Departments. Individual Members of the Committee were able to draw upon their own experiences as far as the adequacy of supply was concerned. Senators and Members are able to obtain free copies of Parliamentary Papers from their respective Records and Papers Offices in Parliament House, from AGPS Bookshops in State capital cities and through the free distribution list of principal Parliamentary publications. The Committee considers these arrangements to be satisfactory.

Availability for Sale and Free Distribution

57. Sales of Parliamentary Papers are achieved by over the counter sales at AGPS Bookshops, by mail order and, for the complete Series, by advanced mail order.

58. The Committee was advised by the AGPS that the average turnround of mail orders for Parliamentary Papers is some two to three weeks compared to an average of four to six weeks for other publications. The difference in turnround is attributed to the AGPS policy of attaching a higher priority to Parliamentary publications. So far as the mail order for Parliamentary Papers is concerned, the Committee is satisfied that the arrangements are satisfactory. The Committee will be devoting close attention to the overall mail order situation during the course of its present inquiry into the Australian Government Publishing Service.

59. Under present arrangements, persons are able to acquire the full annual Series of Parliamentary Papers by an advanced mail order system. Each recipient of the Series receives each Parliamentary Paper as it is published at the basic cost of print production less a 20 per cent discount, plus postage. Currently some forty individuals

¹ This matter is covered in some detail at paragraph 44.

and organisations receive the full Series by this means. While this number is not great, the Committee feels that this service is important and should be retained.

60. From the evidence received the Committee concludes that the sales and distribution arrangements for the Parliamentary Papers Series are satisfactory.

Bound Volumes

61. One of the greatest advantages of the Parliamentary Papers Series is its availability in annual bound volumes. Bound volumes of Parliamentary Papers have been prepared and made available throughout Australia and overseas since Federation.

62. In 1964 the Erwin Committee stressed the importance of maintaining a Series which can be as readily available to its users in one year or fifty years. The fact that an index is prepared especially for the volumes enhances their value. All witnesses and persons who made submissions were appreciative of the value of the bound series.

63. The Committee was advised in evidence that each year 200 copies of each Parliamentary Paper are put aside for binding. For the 1971 volumes, the last set bound, 100 sets were issued and the remainder were placed in store. The cost of binding the 1971 series was \$39 281.

64. Distribution of the bound volumes is not as wide as for the single issues, being limited to State, Parliamentary, university and college, departmental and some overseas libraries. The Committee was advised that those addressees who receive Parliamentary Papers through the free distribution list also receive the index to the bound volumes and the title pages for each volume to enable self-binding should the addressee so wish. A similar arrangement applies to those persons who purchase the papers of the Series from the AGPS by the advance mail order system. The Committee considers these arrangements to be satisfactory.

65. The Committee, on questioning Parliamentary Officers over the delay in binding the Series, was informed that some blame could be levelled at the late production of some individual Papers. For example, two Papers are still outstanding for the 1970 Series.² However, the main problem involved the individual by-hand page numbering of each alternative page of each volume to enable ready reference from the index. The Committee was advised that in 1976 the method of page numbering had been streamlined and, as a result, it can be expected that future volumes will be issued more expeditiously.

66. The Committee questions the wisdom of retaining 100 spare volume sets in store. Not only does the cost of binding so many spare sets appear to be wasteful but storage costs must be substantial. The Committee is satisfied that the likelihood of new addressees for the bound volumes will be low and accordingly recommends:

That the number of future sets of bound volumes held in reserve be reduced to twenty-five.

67. Traditionally, each bound volume of the Series has been bound in cloth sides with leather case binding for the spine and corners. The Committee was advised by the Government Printer that this system was highly labour-intensive and employed, perhaps, unnecessarily high quality materials.

² These papers are evidence of a Parliamentary Committee which had attracted most unusual circumstances during production. The circumstances are unlikely to occur again.

68. The Committee noted that the method of binding the bound volumes of *Hansard* recently had been varied to employ the use of high quality buckram. It is understood that the use of this material, in binding, would enable the utilisation of less labour-intensive methods. Estimates were provided to the Committee of savings of approximately \$2.25 per volume if this method was employed. With the recommended revised number of sets for binding in future years being 125, the Committee estimates that an overall saving of some \$5200 per annual bound series could be achieved by binding with buckram instead of leather.

69. The Government Printer provided a sample volume of Parliamentary Papers prepared in this manner. Its appearance, strength and durability are acceptable to the Committee.

70. The Committee recommends:

That future volumes of the Parliamentary Papers Series be bound in high quality buckram material.

71. Although the binding of the bound volumes is well behind what reasonably could be considered an appropriate timetable, the Committee is satisfied that the availability of the bound volumes and their distribution ensures that the Series is providing a convenient, accessible and permanent record of the principal papers presented to Parliament.

Parliamentary Protection

72. One of the functions of the Parliamentary Papers Act is to protect persons against any civil or criminal action arising out of the publication of documents published under the authority of the Senate, the House of Representatives or a Joint Sitting of both Houses. Sections 2. (1) and 4. (1) state:

2. (1) It shall be lawful for the Senate, the House of Representatives or a joint sitting to authorize the publication of any document laid before it.
4. (1) No action or proceeding, civil or criminal, shall lie against any person for publishing any document or evidence published under an authority given in pursuance of section two . . .

73. The Committee is satisfied that, as far as the provisions of the Act extend, the stated protection exists. Certainly no evidence to the contrary was placed before the Committee.

74. However, the Clerk of the House of Representatives in his submission drew the Committee's attention to an apparent lack of express legislative protection which could result in legal proceedings for defamation in certain circumstances. They include:

- (a) protection of the Clerk of the House in respect of the printing and publishing of the Votes and Proceedings.
- (b) protection of the Clerk of the House in respect of the printing and publishing of the Notice Paper.
- (c) protection of the Clerk of the House and his officers if they allow Members of the House, the press and other persons to inspect or obtain copies of documents which have been presented to the House, but have not been ordered to be printed.
- (d) protection of the Clerk of the House and his officers if, in the case of documents presented to the House and ordered to be printed, they give to Members, the press and

other persons, either before or after the Government Printer has printed the documents:

- (i) copies of the documents not printed by the Government Printer;
 - (ii) copies of the documents printed by the Government Printer but not in Parliamentary Paper form, that is to say, not bearing particulars of presentation and the order to print, and not showing a Parliamentary paper number (S.O. 320 relates).
- (e) protection of persons, for example the Commissioner of Taxation, in connection with the publication of reports presented to Parliament pursuant to statute.

75. The Committee shared the concern of the Clerk of the House and immediately wrote to the Attorney-General regarding the matter. The Attorney's reply indicated that legislation would soon be introduced into the Parliament which would be designed to overcome many of the concerns expressed by the Clerk of the House. The Committee notes the prospective introduction of such legislation and defers further comment until such time as the legislation is introduced and can be examined.

IV. OTHER MATTERS: INQUIRY ITEM 5

That the Committee in its examination consider any suggestions that persons in submitting submissions may wish to make in areas not covered in Inquiry Items 1 to 4.

(Inquiry Item 5)

76. In determining its Terms of Inquiry, the Committee was concerned to ensure that the more important considerations contained in Inquiry Items 1 to 4 concerning the content of the Series, its availability and distribution and whether the Series is fulfilling adequately its intended purposes, were covered fully by the Inquiry. The Committee was aware that other important considerations were likely to be raised during the course of the Inquiry, and for this reason, Inquiry Item 5 was added to the Terms of Inquiry. The Committee was pleased to note that the insertion of the additional item attracted interesting comment in a number of areas involving the Series. The more important of these are discussed below.

Cost of Producing the Parliamentary Papers Series

77. The cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series is shared equally by the Senate and the House of Representatives Departments.

78. The Committee is concerned to note that the cost of the Parliamentary Papers Series has grown from \$107 580 in 1970-71 to \$729 716 in 1975-76.

79. The Committee was informed that the increase in the cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series is the result of a number of factors which include (a) the increasing size of individual publications over the years, (b) increasing costs involved with printing, binding, etc. and the supply of labour, (c) a tendency for more reports to be prepared and tabled in a camera-ready form requiring production of the Parliamentary Paper version by photographic reproduction rather than employing the relatively less expensive process of typesetting the original departmental tabling version, and (d) a failure by author bodies to observe production guidelines and procedures laid down by the AGPS when producing simultaneously the departmental and Parliamentary Paper versions of reports.

80. The Committee believes that matters involving the increasing size of individual publications and increasing production costs are outside the Terms of the present Inquiry. However, it feels that some modification of publishing procedures can be achieved with resulting overall cost savings.

(a) Simultaneous Production

81. Over recent years departments and statutory authorities which present regular reports to Parliament which fall within the publishing guidelines of the Committee have been requested by the AGPS to print additional copies of the report, minus cover and title page, for the purposes of the Parliamentary Paper stock. Following the 'order to print' by Parliament, the blue Parliamentary Paper cover and a title page containing tabling details are attached to the copies held by the printer. Parliamentary Paper distribution is then effected by the AGPS. The great majority of Parliamentary Papers are produced in this manner.

82. In essence, only one production run is undertaken to produce both the departmental tabling version and the stock for the Parliamentary Paper version. Considerable cost savings are achieved through the method of simultaneously producing both versions since the Parliamentary departments are able to acquire the Parliamentary Paper stock at the run-on cost¹ of production. By following closely the publishing guidelines of the Committee, Parliamentary Officers and AGPS are able to anticipate that a particular paper normally would be included in the Series and are able to instruct the printer to run the Parliamentary Paper stock simultaneously with that of the departmental version.

83. The success of this arrangement is dependent on the co-operation of departments and statutory authorities to produce Parliamentary Paper copies in accordance with AGPS instructions. In the main, departments and statutory authorities are generous in their co-operation. However, the Parliamentary House Departments were able to provide numerous examples where an author body had either failed to produce Parliamentary Paper stocks or had departed from standards laid down by the relevant AGPS Circulars.² In such cases, the job either has to be placed back on the press to run the necessary copies or it requires partial or whole reprinting. It would appear that in the majority of such instances the author body does not feel a responsibility to provide run-on copies for the Parliamentary Paper version despite AGPS instruction and despite the fact that the resulting costs involved in producing separately two versions of a report can be substantial.

84. The Committee recommends:

That, following the tabling of a report in Parliament which:

- (a) is in an unacceptable form to enable its reproduction for inclusion in the Parliamentary Papers Series,*
- (b) readily falls within the publishing guidelines followed by the Committee, and*
- (c) is ordered to be printed,*

the originating department or statutory authority be levied with the cost of bringing the report to an acceptable standard for reproduction and inclusion in the Series.

That the Australian Government Publishing Service advise the Committee of author bodies which depart from AGPS production guidelines where it is known that the report will be tabled and printed as a Parliamentary Paper.

(b) Production from Camera-ready Copy

85. Until 1974, all documents included in the Parliamentary Papers Series were required to be typeset. However, following an approach from the Committee, the Presiding Officers relaxed this requirement to enable the inclusion in the Series of documents which could be photographically reproduced from camera-ready typescript copy, provided a satisfactory standard was maintained. The ease of producing documents by this process, which avoids several lengthy production stages, including those of design and proof reading, was recognised quickly by departments. The Parliamentary House Departments offered no objection since, as with the typesetting process, Parliamentary Paper stocks were still able to be produced simultaneously with the departmental version.

¹ Defined as the cost of printing after type has been set. Costs are restricted to the cost of paper, ink, press work, etc.

² These Circulars have received the endorsement of this Committee.

86. The readiness with which departments have taken up the process of photographic reproduction from camera-ready copy has prompted the AGPS to seek a restriction on its use due to cost considerations. The Committee was advised that the process can use two or three times as much paper as a fully typeset report with resulting increased costs for ink and binding. A proportion of these production costs flow on to the Parliamentary Paper version.

87. The Committee has some sympathy with the view expressed by the AGPS in this matter. However, it recognises the fact that on some occasions, where the utmost urgency applies, the extra cost involved in producing a document by this process can be justified.

88. The Committee recommends:

That where time permits, all reports which are due to be tabled in Parliament and which fall within the Parliamentary Paper publishing guidelines laid down by this Committee should be typeset with sufficient copies being produced simultaneously to satisfy Parliamentary Paper distribution.

That where it is necessary for a report to be produced with the utmost urgency, and, as a result, the necessary time required to typeset the document is unavailable and, if such report readily falls within the Parliamentary Paper publishing guidelines laid down by this Committee, then it is most desirable that such report be produced in accordance with the requirements of the relevant AGPS circular dealing with reproduction from camera-ready copy.

Delay in Publication of the Parliamentary Papers Series

89. Each of the witnesses, and many of the submissions received by the Committee, expressed a mounting concern over increasing delays involved in publishing individual Papers in the Series. The Committee was surprised to learn that over the past twelve years, the average time lapse between the date of presentation of a paper to Parliament and its date of publication as a Parliamentary Paper had increased from 2.7 months per paper in 1964 to 6.4 months in 1970 and to 8.5 months in 1975.

90. While, in some respects, the issuing of the departmental version of a report on tabling satisfies Members of Parliament and those recipients of the AGPS Deposit, the vast majority of those on the free distribution list, as well as advance order clients of the AGPS, are almost entirely dependent on the Parliamentary Paper version. In a situation where the Parliamentary Paper is issued some 9 months, or more, after tabling, considerable inconvenience must be caused to its users. The value of the Series is reduced accordingly.

91. Delays are known to occur as a result of (a) the period which elapses between the date of tabling and the order to print by the Parliament, (b) the sending of papers, so ordered, to the AGPS for printing, (c) the dispatch of papers to a contract printer for printing, (d) the movement of proofs between contract printers, the AGPS and the Senate and House of Representatives Departments, and (e) the relative importance attached to the publication, in a Parliamentary Paper form, of reports which are available in a departmental version.

(a) Delay from date of tabling to dispatch to the Australian Government Publishing Service

92. One of the responsibilities of this Committee is to recommend to the Parliament certain papers for inclusion in the Parliamentary Papers Series. On average, the Committee meets once every three weeks of the Parliamentary sittings for this purpose. The list of papers subsequently ordered to be printed can vary from approximately ten to fifty or even up to seventy depending on the time of the year.¹ Parliamentary Officers are then required to prepare a draft cover and title page for each report containing tabling and order to print details, complete a number of order forms and finally dispatch documents to the AGPS for processing. The time which can elapse between the date of tabling and dispatch to the AGPS varies, but can be as long as five to six weeks. The Committee does not believe that the delays which arise out of the following of such procedures should be so significant.

93. In its Report the Erwin Committee was conscious of this area of delay. It recommended at paragraph 293 as follows:

- (a) That, early in each Parliament, and thereafter as necessary, the proposed Joint Committee on Publications consider the papers that are due to be presented by Statute and that it recommend those it considers should be printed; provided that the Committee shall not recommend, prior to its presentation, the printing of any statute paper that Parliament may disallow, disapprove of or declare void (such as Statutory Rules, notices of the acquisition of lands, etc.).
- (b) That in adopting the report of this Committee, the Houses, unless they otherwise order, authorize the printing of all papers listed in the Committee's report which are subsequently to be presented during the existence of that Parliament.
- (c) That the Publication of a Statute paper so printed be made only after it has been presented.

94. In his submission, the Clerk of the Senate stated that such a procedure could provide certain advantages such as:

- (a) an opportunity of alerting departments and instrumentalities of their obligations in relation to the presentation of reports to Parliament;
- (b) advice at an early date to Members of Parliament, Officers of the Parliamentary Departments, libraries and educational institutions of the partial content of the Parliamentary Paper Series for that year, which would in turn go some way towards resolving distribution, duplicating and wastage problems;
- (c) a clear indication to author departments and the printers who handle the production of the departmental version of reports of the necessity of producing those reports in correct style and in sufficient quantities to cover run-on copies, thus creating savings in production time and cost; and
- (d) a time saving of up to three weeks on the delivery date of any Parliamentary Paper, since the period of time between a report's presentation to Parliament and its consideration for printing as a Parliamentary Paper by the Publications Committee would be removed.

95. The proposal has lacked support, possibly for those reasons outlined by the Clerk of the Senate in his submission:

It would seem that the proposal has failed to gain favour and it could possibly be for the following reasons:

¹ Most reports are tabled during the August Budget sittings.

- (a) it would involve the Joint Committee on Publications in recommending the printing of a document without having any knowledge of its content;
- (b) the Parliament would be authorising the publication of documents sight unseen;
- (c) Senators would be precluded from speaking on a motion to print a document on its presentation to Parliament;
- (d) Senate Standing Orders would require amendment to enable a document to be ordered to be printed prior to its presentation; and
- (e) an amendment of the Parliamentary Papers Act would be necessary to afford to the papers ordered to be printed prior to presentation the protection provided under the Act in relation to papers published by order of the Parliament after presentation.

96. The Committee, however, feels that the benefits to be obtained from the implementation of the Erwin proposal are considerable and, with some slight modification designed to satisfy possible objections, a major element in delays involved in processing the Series could be reduced. Librarians also expressed an interest in the proposal since it would enable them to be advised, in advance, of the likely content of the Series.

97. The Committee recommends:

That at the commencement of each year's sittings, and thereafter as necessary, the Committee determine whether or not certain Papers due to be tabled that year fall within the publishing guidelines laid down by the Committee in this Report and that the Parliament be advised that, when these papers are tabled, it is the intention of the Committee to recommend that they be printed as Parliamentary Papers.

That, following the adoption by Parliament of the Reports of the Committee which contain its recommendations for the printing of Parliamentary Papers, such Reports be included in the appropriate catalogue of the Australian Government Publishing Service.

(b) **The dispatch of reports to contract printers and the return of proofs**

98. Following receipt from the Parliament of reports for inclusion in the Series, the AGPS prepares certain specifications on each job and forwards them on to either a contract printer or the Government Printer to complete the production of the Parliamentary Paper version. In most cases where the Parliamentary Paper cover and title page is required to be prepared for attaching to run-on copies, the job is referred to the original contractor. Those jobs which require a full typeset are allocated to contract printers or the Government Printer at the discretion of the AGPS. In the main, the production of the Series is handled by interstate contract printers.

99. Proofs of the cover and title page, or full page proofs in the case of a job requiring a full typeset, are returned from the printer to the AGPS and then forwarded to the House Departments for final checking and clearance. They are then returned through the AGPS to the printer for final printing. The Committee was advised by both House Departments that all too frequently revised proofs were required where a printer, in most cases, had not followed AGPS specifications. In such cases, it is necessary to repeat the time-consuming process of receiving and returning revised proofs through the AGPS to the printer.

100. While the Committee concedes that these arrangements are normal AGPS production procedures, it believes that, because of the simplicity of completing the Parliamentary Paper versions after tabling and the need for early production of the Series, the implementation of the following recommendations is justified:

That, for a trial period of two years, following upon the completion of the departmental versions of reports by a printing contractor or the Government Printer, the completion of the Parliamentary Paper versions of those reports be undertaken by the Government Printer.

That, for a trial period of two years, the Government Printer undertake the printing of Parliamentary Papers on all occasions where Parliamentary Paper stocks have not been produced simultaneously with the departmental tabling version.

101. The implementation of these recommendations would enable direct contact to take place between the Government Printer and Parliamentary Officers, shorten delays caused by the preparation of design specifications and setting type because of the familiarity of the Government Printer with this type of work, and certainly reduce considerably the delays associated with the movement of proofs. The implementation of these recommendations would bring the production of the Series into line with the production of the other principal Parliamentary publications.

102. The Committee was given the assurance of the Government Printer that he has the capacity to undertake the completion of the Series. However, it does heed the warning of the AGPS central office that, on occasions, the Government Printer might not be able to devote adequate time to the production of the Series due to other pressures of Parliamentary and government work and, accordingly, the production of the Series would be delayed. For this reason, the Committee feels the need for a back-up arrangement and recommends:

That in the event of the Government Printer being unable to complete the Parliamentary Paper version of a report, he be authorised to refer the report to the Australian Government Publishing Service to arrange its completion through a suitable printing contractor.

103. For a number of years officers from the Parliamentary Departments and the AGPS have considered that the overprinting of the Parliamentary Paper details on the departmental version would facilitate the early production of individual Papers by avoiding delays involved with the process of arranging the binding of the run-on copies with the Parliamentary Paper cover and title page, subsequent to the Parliamentary 'order to print'. The difficulty and inconvenience experienced by the contract printer of undertaking two separate production runs for the departmental version with cover and title page and the Parliamentary Paper version without cover and title page would be removed. During the course of the Inquiry the Committee was advised that it was impractical and expensive to introduce an overprint method. In lieu, the AGPS recommended the affixing of a label containing the Parliamentary Paper details to the original departmental version, which, in essence, would result in similar advantages.

104. The Committee carefully considered the label proposal of the AGPS and finally resolved that such a procedure would detract from the standard presentation of the Series. It determined that the blue cover identification of the Series was important and should be retained to ensure ready recognition of each Paper as a part of the Series and to firmly indicate that it was a document emanating from the Parliament which attracted its endorsement and privilege. Consistent with the Committee's desire for the Government Printer to complete the final stages of production of the Series, the Committee recommends:

That the Government Printer complete the Parliamentary Paper version by encasing the original departmental version with the standard blue Parliamentary Paper cover; such cover to include the tabling and printing details presently being recorded on the title page.

105. The above involves the Government Printer receiving the stock for Parliamentary Papers in a completed departmental version enabling him to use automatic equipment to attach the Parliamentary Paper cover. Few, if any, labour costs are involved in this process. In addition, some savings in the time required to typeset and proof read the Parliamentary Paper details will be achieved since only the front cover will require typesetting. This procedure is in lieu of the present practice of typesetting both the cover and title page. The contract printer also will benefit from savings in storage of the Parliamentary Paper stock and will be able to complete his contractual agreement with the Commonwealth by forwarding the Parliamentary Paper stocks to the Government Printer immediately upon tabling rather than having to wait the usual month to six weeks before production can commence on the Parliamentary Paper version.

106. In the past, the Printer has experienced difficulties through either loss or confusion of copy when reports requiring Parliamentary Paper processing have been sent to him in a loose leaf form. The receipt of a complete document should remove this deficiency. The Committee also believes that because of the closer involvement of the Government Printer with the requirements of the Parliament, appropriate attention would be given to the more expeditious production of the Series.

(c) Production of Parliamentary Committee Reports

107. The introduction of the phototypesetting equipment at the Government Printing Office has provided the Parliament with the potential of greatly improved printing services. While the equipment was originally intended for the production of *Hansard*, the Committee has been aware, for some time, that the benefits of using the equipment extend into the area of reproducing Committee evidence and reports. In fact, the evidence from this Inquiry was reproduced by the Government Printer's computer equipment. The savings in time and the ease of reproduction made possible by the use of this process are of great advantage. The Committee recommends:

That the Parliamentary Presiding Officers examine the practicability of employing terminal production units in:

- (a) the Committee Secretariat of the Parliament with a view to the Government Printer producing simultaneously, through his phototypesetting equipment, both the Parliamentary tabling and Parliamentary Paper versions of Parliamentary Committee Reports; and*
- (b) the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter to enable the Government Printer to produce Parliamentary Committee evidence through his phototypesetting equipment.*

Index to the Parliamentary Papers Series

108. The Parliamentary Papers index is a comprehensive index containing references to all papers tabled in the Senate and the House of Representatives as recorded in the *Journals of the Senate* and the *Votes and Proceedings*. It is an essential reference source for all users of the Parliamentary Papers Series since it records the number of each Parliamentary Paper as well as providing a reference to its position in the bound volumes. Each index covers a Parliamentary sessional period. It is published twice a

year in proof form at the conclusion of each half-yearly period of sittings, and is distributed to all recipients of Parliamentary Papers, *Journals of the Senate* and *Votes and Proceedings*. Because of the need to include details on the position of each Parliamentary Paper in the bound volumes, the final of the index cannot be produced until the bound volumes are completed. Most witnesses were satisfied with the format of the index.

109. The Committee was advised that the last issued consolidated index covered the period 1901-1950. A subsequent index covered the period 1950-61 after which they have been prepared according to Parliamentary Sessions. In all, ten individual indexes have been released to cover the period 1950-1975. The Committee considers the situation to be unsatisfactory and recommends:

That the Parliamentary Papers Index be consolidated for the period 1901-1975.

110. The Committee suggests that the computer and phototypesetting equipment of the Government Printer could be employed to achieve this task. The placing of the 1901-1975 consolidation on computer tape would facilitate future consolidations of the index.

Reproduction of the Series in a Microform

111. The great majority of submissions from librarians and specialist users of the Series recommended that consideration should be given to producing the Series in a microform. It was argued that substantial savings in space, easier referral and some cost savings could be achieved in most, if not all, libraries if a microform version of the Series was available.

112. Ultimately, the Committee feels the reproduction of the Series in a microform to be most desirable. Technological developments in the field of micrographics indicate that the conversion of the Series to a microform is not unrealistic.

113. The Committee recommends:

That when production and financial considerations permit, the Parliamentary Papers Series be reproduced in a microform version.

Australian Government Publishing Service—Deposit of Publications

114. Under the AGPS deposit arrangements some 2500 or more of its publications are distributed to recipients each year. They are deposited with twenty-five addressees, comprising National, university, State and the Commonwealth Parliamentary libraries.

115. During the course of the Inquiry, the Committee received a plea from a representative of State Parliamentary Librarians who complained that they can only obtain access to Commonwealth tabled papers through an informal arrangement with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Librarian who receives an additional six copies of each tabled report for this purpose. The Committee considered this arrangement to be unsatisfactory, particularly when Commonwealth-State relations are becoming more and more an important and topical issue.

116. The Committee recommends:

That the publications deposit arrangement of the Australian Government Publishing Service be expanded to include the six State Parliamentary Librarians, upon request.

117. Insofar as tabled reports are concerned, the cost of offering this service to State Parliamentary Librarians could be offset by reducing the issue to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Librarian by the six copies which are set aside for the State Parliamentary Librarians.

J. C. Hodges, M.P.
Chairman

Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
August 1977

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

Written submissions were received by the following persons:

- No. 1 Mr J. R. Odgers, Clerk of the Senate
- No. 2 Mr N. J. Parkes, Clerk of the House of Representatives
- No. 3 Mr B. P. Shurman, Acting Controller, Australian Government Publishing Service
- No. 4 Mr A. L. Moore, Commonwealth Parliamentary Librarian
- No. 5 Dr G. Chandler, Director-General, National Library of Australia
- No. 6 Mr Robert Sharman, State Librarian of Western Australia
- No. 7 Mr T. B. Southwell, University Librarian, Monash University
- No. 8 Mr W. L. Brown, State Librarian of Tasmania
- No. 9 Mr E. B. McGreeven, Librarian, Humanities Division, State Reference Library of Western Australia
- No. 10 Ms Enid Bishop, Acting Librarian, Australian National University
- No. 11 Mr R. J. N. Bannenberg, Parliamentary Librarian, Queensland
- No. 12 Ms Edith M. Tattersall, Librarian, Special Collections, University of New England
- No. 13 Mr R. L. Cope, Parliamentary Librarian, New South Wales
- No. 14 Mr John Macallister, Assistant State Librarian (Technical Services), State Library of New South Wales
- No. 15 Mr N. Stockdale, Librarian, Flinders University of South Australia
- No. 16 Mr E. H. Wilkinson, Librarian, Macquarie University
- No. 17 Mr D. H. Borchart, Chief Librarian, La Trobe University
- No. 18 Mr P. Clayton, Assistant Librarian, Canberra College of Advanced Education
- No. 19 Mr Allan Horton, University Librarian, University of New South Wales
- No. 20 Mr Michael Harrington, Member, Government Publications Sub-Committee, Victorian Regional Committee of AACOBs
- No. 21 Mr Harrison Bryan, Librarian, University of Sydney
- No. 22 Mr Leonard Jolley, University Librarian, University of Western Australia
- No. 23 Mr Colin S. Watson, Regional Librarian, Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service, Victoria
- No. 24 Mr R. K. Olding, State Librarian of South Australia

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF WITNESSES

Atkinson, Mr F. D.	Government Printer, Australian Government Publishing Service
Bannenberg, Mr R. J. N.	Parliamentary Librarian, Queensland Parliamentary Library
Borchardt, Mr D. H.	Chief Librarian, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria
Bradshaw, Mr K. O.	First Clerk Assistant, Department of the Senate
Browning, Mr A. R.	Acting First Clerk Assistant, Department of the House of Representatives
Brudenall, Mr M. J.	Principal Librarian, Legislative Reference Service, Parliamentary Library, Parliament House, Canberra
Cochran, Mr I. C.	Senior Parliamentary Officer, Bills and Papers Office, Department of the House of Representatives
Hemingway, Mr C.	Acting Director (Publishing), Australian Government Publishing Service
Macallister, Mr J. F.	Assistant State Librarian (Technical Services), State Library of New South Wales
Miller, Miss A. E.	Government Publications Librarian, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria
Moore, Mr A. L.	Parliamentary Librarian, Parliamentary Library, Parliament House, Canberra
Morton, Mr N. C.	Parliamentary Officer (Papers), Department of the Senate
Nott, Mr P. A.	Controller, Australian Government Publishing Service
Owens, Mr R.	Parliamentary Officer (Papers), Department of the House of Representatives
Thorn, Mr W. D.	Director, Australian National Social Sciences Library, National Library of Australia, Canberra

APPENDIX 3

DISTRIBUTION GROUPINGS OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

Group

- A Tariff Board and Industries Assistance Commission
- B Finance
- C Trade, Commerce, Primary Industry
- D Defence
- E Foreign Affairs
- F Scientific, Industrial and Geological Research, Mining, Education
- G Territories
- H Internal Affairs
- I Miscellaneous and Parliamentary Committee Reports



PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

**Inquiry into the Purpose, Scope and Distribution of the
Parliamentary Papers Series**

1976-77

OFFICIAL HANSARD TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

Standing Order 36 of the Senate reads, in part:

36.—(1.) A Publications Committee, to consist of seven Senators, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament, with power to confer or sit as a Joint Committee with a similar Committee of the House of Representatives.

* * * * *

(3.) When conferring with a similar Committee of the House of Representatives, the Committee shall also have power:

- (a) to inquire into and report on the printing, publication and distribution of Parliamentary and Government Publications and on such matters as are referred to it by the relevant Minister, and
- (b) to send for persons, papers and records.

Standing Order 28 of the House of Representatives reads, in part:

28. A Publications Committee, to consist of seven Members, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament with power to confer with a similar committee of the Senate In addition, when conferring with a similar committee of the Senate, the Committee shall have power—

- (a) to inquire into and report on the printing, publication and distribution of Parliamentary and Government Publications and on such matters as are referred to it by the relevant Minister, and
- (b) to send for persons, papers and records.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr J. C. Hodges, M.P.

Deputy Chairman: Senator A. J. Missen

Senator B. R. Archer	Mr M. H. Bungey, M.P. ¹
Senator N. T. Bonner	Mr J. FitzPatrick, M.P.
Senator D. N. Cameron	Mr R. Gillard, M.P. ²
Senator E. A. Robertson	Mr J. R. Martyr, M.P.
Senator S. M. Ryan	Mr P. C. Millar, M.P.
Senator T. J. Tehan	Mr L. G. Wallis, M.P.
	Mr A. P. Whitlam, M.P.

¹ Resigned 15 February 1977
² Appointed 24 February 1977

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS
INQUIRY INTO PURPOSE, SCOPE AND DISTRIBUTION
OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES

TERMS OF INQUIRY

1. That the Committee inquire into the adequacy of the principles followed by the Committee when recommending to the Parliament certain tabled reports for printing as Parliamentary Papers. The principles are:
 - (a) that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, *ad hoc* committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal commissions, and the like, presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;
 - (b) that in accordance with paragraph 234 of the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications, the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
 - (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as Parliamentary Papers should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and
 - (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements.
2. That the Committee in its examination determine whether it is desirable to amend the principles to (a) decrease the number of documents included in the Parliamentary Papers Series with a view to avoiding any waste or duplication which may occur, or (b) increase the number of documents included in the Series to take in other categories of tabled reports.
3. That the Committee examine whether the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of the Series are satisfactory.
4. That the Committee determine whether the Parliamentary Papers Series is fulfilling adequately the following purposes:
 - (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
 - (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for (i) sale to the public, and (ii) free distribution to libraries, government, tertiary institutions, etc.;
 - (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
 - (d) that in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings.
5. That the Committee in its examination consider any suggestions that persons in submitting submissions may wish to make in areas not covered in 1 to 4 above.

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Friday, 8 October 1976

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

(Reference: Parliamentary Papers Series)

Present:

Mr Hodges (Chairman)

Senator Donald Cameron
Senator Missen

Mr Martyr
Mr Antony Whitlam

Mr Keith Oscar BRADSHAW, First Clerk
Assistant, Department of the Senate, and

Mr Neil Craddock MORTON, Parliamentary
Officer (Papers), Department of the Senate,
were called and examined.

CHAIRMAN— I declare open the Parliamen-
tary Joint Committee on Publications and wel-
come Mr Bradshaw and Mr Morton.

Does anyone have any objection to the incor-
poration in *Hansard* of the Senate submission?
There being no objection, it is so ordered.

(The document read as follows):

SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS BY THE CLERK OF THE SENATE ON THE PURPOSE, SCOPE AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPER SERIES—SEPTEMBER 1976

INTRODUCTION

The main objectives which the Parliamentary Paper Series
is designed to fulfil are:

- (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
- (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for (i) sale to the public, and (ii) free distribution to libraries, government, tertiary institutions, etc.;
- (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
- (d) that in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings.

2. The responsibility for determining which papers presented to the Parliament are to be printed for inclusion in the Parliamentary Paper Series resides in each House of the Parliament and is usually delegated to the Standing Publication

Committee of each House, whether acting individually or sitting as a Joint Committee. While the Publications Committee, in reporting to the Senate, recommends that of the papers considered by it certain ones should be printed, it is nevertheless open, under the Standing Orders, for any Senator to move for the printing of any tabled paper, not recommended to be printed by the Committee, for inclusion in the *Parliamentary Paper Series*.

THE ADEQUACY OF THE PRINCIPLES FOLLOWED BY THE COMMITTEE WHEN RECOMMENDING REPORTS FOR PRINTING IN THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPER SERIES

3. Under the above heading it is proposed to make comment in respect of Items 1 and 2 of the Committee's Terms of Inquiry since the matters contained therein are inter-related. Items 1 and 2 read as follows:

'1. That the Committee inquire into the adequacy of principles followed by the Committee when recommended to the Parliament certain tabled reports for printing as Parliamentary Papers. The principles are:

- (a) that all reports, returns and statements of departments, authorities, *ad hoc* committees of inquiry, delegates to conferences, royal commissions, and the like, presented to Parliament be recommended for printing;
- (b) that in accordance with paragraph 234 of the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications, the previous resolution is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities;
- (c) that papers which are regularly presented and subsequently printed as Parliamentary Papers should continue to be recommended for printing on those occasions when they constitute a 'nil' return; and
- (d) that, wherever possible, the reports of the Auditor-General which are presented in conjunction with annual reports and financial statements of statutory bodies be included in the one printed document with those reports and statements.

'2. That the Committee in its examination determine whether it is desirable to amend the principles to (a)

decrease the number of documents included in the Parliamentary Paper Series with a view to avoiding any waste or duplication which may occur, or (b) increase the number of documents included in the Series to take in other categories of tabled reports.*

4. To gauge the adequacy of the principles which guide the Committee in its deliberations as to which papers presented to Parliament should be recommended for printing it is felt that it is necessary to establish whether the principles are such that they:

- (i) enable the Parliamentary Paper Series to fulfil its objectives as described in paragraph 1 above;
- (ii) contribute to or be responsible for the vastly increasing cost to the Parliamentary departments of the Parliamentary Paper Series; and
- (iii) contribute to or be responsible for any unnecessary wastage or duplication.

5. Given the objective that the Parliamentary Paper Series is intended to fulfil, it is considered that the principles which the Committee has adopted to enable it to achieve those objectives are framed in such a way as to be sufficiently flexible to attain that end. When taking into consideration the additional opportunity under the Standing Orders for individual Senators to table to the Parliamentary Paper Series in the light of their particular needs, expertise or experience, it is felt that the principles as they stand are quite adequate in terms of realising the desired objectives.

6. Despite the rapidly rising cost of production of the Parliamentary Paper Series (see appendix A) it should be pointed out that the number of papers which constitute the series in any particular year is relatively constant (see appendix B). Since the increasing cost does not appear to be related to any growth in the number of Parliamentary Papers, it does not appear that amendment of the principles to decrease the number of papers included in the Series would be a significant factor in cost savings, other than at the expense of fulfilling the objectives of the Parliamentary Paper Series.

7. Wastage and duplication are problems which confront the department in relation to Parliamentary Papers. These problems, however, are not caused by the principles adopted by the Committee but rather by distribution factors, as discussed in paragraph 43 to 58 below.

8. Accordingly, it is considered that:

- (a) the principles followed by the Committee when recommending reports for printing in the Parliamentary Paper Series are adequate; and
- (b) it does not appear necessary to amend the principles for the purpose of item 2 of the Terms of Inquiry.

WHETHER THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO THE AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE SERIES ARE SATISFACTORY

9. Item 3 of the Terms of Inquiry requires:

That the Committee examine whether the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of the Series are satisfactory.

10. The question which the Committee is charged to examine requires, it seems, to be considered in a fairly broad sense and to embrace matters relating to the preparation and presentation of documents to Parliament, since many of the problems relating to Parliamentary Papers such as wastage, duplication, time of production and cost of production arise in the pre-Parliamentary Paper stage. Resolution of the problems which are created at this preliminary stage could contribute considerably to removing the more specific problems connected with the availability and distribution of the

Parliamentary Paper Series. Some observations and suggestions with respect to what are considered to be some of these problems are set out hereunder.

The Presentation of Documents to Parliament

11. While it is accepted that in most cases the decision to print, the content and the editorial policy in relation to a document are the sole responsibility of the relevant Minister and author department, it is nevertheless most important that the guidelines laid down for the production and presentation of documents are strictly adhered to. Failure to observe the guidelines can contribute greatly to the cost of the Parliamentary Paper Series and the length of time taken to produce Parliamentary Paper versions of tabled documents. The matters of content and style in relation to the time and cost of production are discussed in paragraphs 22 to 31 below.

12. The frequency with which reports and other documents are presented to Parliament and the timing of their presentation necessitate some comment, particularly with regard to the continuity of the Parliamentary Paper Series from year to year, which in turn has ramifications in regard to availability and time and cost of production. The problem from this Department's viewpoint is lack of control over the documents as presented, and when they are presented.

13. Command Papers: As far as papers presented by Command of the Governor-General are concerned, since they are presented to Parliament at the discretion of the relevant Minister and not subject to any statutory requirement, Parliament exercises no control as to what or when such papers are presented. As a result, the content of the Parliamentary Paper Series varies from year to year. While it is appreciated that many Command Papers are of a unique and non-repetitive nature, it is to be noted that some departments and instrumentalities are required to present annual reports to Parliament nonetheless do so, although on an irregular basis. For example, while the former Department of External Affairs presented annual reports for the years 1967-68 and 1969, its successor, the Department of Foreign Affairs did not present an annual report until 1974. The Department of the Capital Territory, although constituted in 1972, did not present an annual report until that covering the period 1974-75. On the other hand, some departments do not present an annual report to Parliament at all.

14. Given objective (a) of the Parliamentary Paper Series, as set out in paragraph 1 above, the Committee might care to consider whether departments not required by statute to present annual reports might be encouraged either to initiate the production of such reports or regularise their presentation to Parliament. A suggestion to this end is discussed in paragraphs 18 to 21 below.

15. Statute Papers: At present, statutory tabling provisions are not always observed. Parliamentary officers have neither the power nor the responsibility to ensure that reports, etc. required to be tabled under an Act of the Parliament, are actually tabled in accordance with the statutory provisions. For example, the following Acts each require an annual report to be presented to Parliament but during the period 1970-75 no reports were presented: Dairy Industry Equalization, Estate Duty Assessment, Gift Duty Assessment, Income Tax Assessment, Pay-roll Tax Assessment, and Stevedoring Industry Charge Assessment.

16. In addition, the requirement of some Acts, that annual reports be presented to Parliament within a specified period of time, is often not observed. For example, during the period 1970-75, the statutory period for presentation was exceeded in relation to the following Acts: Egg Export Control, Gold Mines Development Assistance (for which no reports were presented at all) and Wine Overseas Marketing.

17. Perhaps the Committee might care to give some consideration as to whether departments and instrumentalities should be reminded of their responsibilities in observing any statutory requirement for the tabling of reports, etc.

Insertion to Print

18. In respect of the problem of the regularisation of presentation of papers to Parliament, a proposal of which no doubt the Committee is aware and which might be considered by the Committee is one recommended by the Joint Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications (The Erwin Committee) in 1964. The Committee reported:

*4(a) THAT, early in each Parliament, and thereafter as necessary, the proposed Joint Committee on Publications consider the papers that are due to be presented by Statute and that it recommend those it considers should be printed; provided that the Committee shall not recommend prior to its presentation, the printing of any Statute Paper that Parliament may disallow, disapprove or declare void (such as Statutory Rules, notices of acquisition of lands, etc.).

(b) THAT in adopting the report of the proposed Joint Committee on Publications, the Houses, unless they otherwise order, authorise the printing of all papers listed in the Committee's report which are subsequently to be presented during the existence of that Parliament.

(c) THAT the publication of a Statute Paper so printed be made only after it has been presented.*

19. It might well be that such a procedure could provide certain advantages such as:

- (a) an opportunity of alerting departments and instrumentalities of their obligations in relation to the presentation of reports to Parliament;
- (b) advice at an early date to Members of Parliament, Officers of the Parliamentary Departments, libraries and educational institutions of the partial content of the Parliamentary Paper Series for that year, which would in turn go some way towards resolving distribution, duplication and wastage problems;
- (c) a clear indication to author departments and the printers who handle the production of the departmental version of reports of the necessity of producing those reports in correct style and in sufficient quantities to cover run-on copies, thus creating savings in production time and cost (see paragraphs 24 to 35 below); and
- (d) a time saving of up to three weeks on the delivery date of any Parliamentary Paper, since the period of time between a report's presentation to Parliament and its consideration for printing as a Parliamentary Paper by the Publications Committee would be removed.

20. It would seem that the proposal has failed to gain favour and it could possibly be for the following reasons:

- (a) it would involve the Joint Committee on Publications in recommending the printing of a document without having any knowledge of its content;
- (b) the Parliament would be authorising the publication of documents sight unseen;
- (c) Senators would be precluded from speaking on a motion to print a document on its presentation to Parliament;
- (d) Senate Standing Orders would require amendment to enable a document to be ordered to be printed prior to its presentation; and
- (e) an amendment of the Parliamentary Papers Act would be necessary to afford to the papers ordered to be printed prior to presentation the protection provided under the Act in relation to papers published by order of the Parliament after presentation.

21. However, although the Committee may not consider that the Erwin Committee proposal is one which on principle should be implemented, it may be that the Committee would wish to give consideration to obtaining some of the suggested advantages that such a procedure might provide. For instance, the Committee might, early in each Parliament, and thereafter as necessary, consider papers that are due to be presented and form an opinion as to what its intention is likely to be in respect of those papers when they are presented. The Committee's attitude could then be reported to the Parliament, and all interested parties and those responsible for the production of the documents would thereby be alerted.

Content and Style of documents presented to Parliament

22. The criteria for departmental classification of documents and their production standards which are laid down in AGPS Circular No. 23 of 3 July 1975 appear to be quite adequate. However, it is submitted to the Committee that it cannot be stressed too strongly that any departure from the established guidelines adds to the normal cost of production of a paper, including the Parliamentary Paper edition.

23. The Erwin Committee, in its 1964 Report, drew attention to the content and style of presentation of papers presented to Parliament (matters dealt with in AGPS Circular 23) and reported as follows:

304. The Committee welcomes the efforts of author departments and instrumentalities to present their annual reports in an easily understandable and readable form. It believes, however, that the use of colour printing, art paper, photographs, graphs and other forms of pictorial representation, can be wasteful, unless carefully watched.

305. In many instances, papers presented to Parliament are prepared to fulfil a statutory obligation. Their importance as general public relations media should not be over-emphasised. It certainly should not overshadow the primary role which is to present a balanced and factual report to Members of Parliament.

Those observations of the Erwin Committee were sound when they were expressed in 1964 and, it is suggested, are just as valid today.

Cost of Production

24. The additional cost arising from the use of standards which depart from the AGPS guidelines in the production of papers for presentation to Parliament is of concern to this department in view of its commitment to meet the run-on cost in producing the Parliamentary Paper editions of the documents. Given the rapidly escalating annual cost of production of Parliamentary Papers it is most important that departments and instrumentalities observe strictly the guidelines laid down in the AGPS circular, as adopted by the Joint Committee on Publications.

25. The cost to this Department of the production of Parliamentary Papers shows good cause for the concern expressed above. Since the financial year 1970-71, when the cost to this Department was \$46,221.78 the cost has increased by approximately 623 per cent to \$334,337.61 for the financial year 1975-76 (see appendix A).

26. As the Committee is aware many of the variables affecting the cost of production are beyond Parliamentary departmental control. However, it is felt that some steps can be taken to minimise the increase in costs. Attention has already been drawn to the need for departments to adhere strictly to AGPS guidelines in the production of their reports, but in addition to the costs incurred by departing from style

and content guidelines, increased expenditure on Parliamentary Papers can be caused by author departments and Committees of Inquiry presenting reports to Parliament in an unsatisfactory form.

27. The printing costs involved in producing the Parliamentary Paper version of a report are shared by the Parliamentary Departments on the following basis:

- (i) If tabled in type-set form the Parliamentary Departments meet the cost of producing sufficient copies of the Parliamentary Paper version to satisfy the free of distribution list and their stock requirements. The rate of charge is calculated at the run-on production cost* and
- (ii) If tabled in duplicated form, the Parliamentary Departments are charged the initial production costs including those involved with type-setting, design, art-work, etc. As well, the Parliamentary Departments must meet the run-on cost of producing sufficient copies to satisfy the free distribution list and Parliamentary requirements.

* Defined as the cost of printing after type has been set, and includes cost of paper, ink, press work, etc.

28. It is apparent that there are advantages to the Parliamentary Departments if annual reports are prepared early evident in the production stages of design, printing and proof-reading.

29. Documents produced for the Parliamentary Paper Series by the photographic reproduction of camera-ready material can have similar cost and time savings, although care must be taken when using this method to ensure that a reasonable quality of production is maintained. In this regard it is most important that all author departments, instrumentalities and Committees of Inquiry adhere to the guidelines set out in AGPS Circular 24 of September 1975, as adopted by the Joint Committee on Publications, on the preparation of type-written copy for reproduction, particularly with regard to the use of typing guide sheets TSG 1 and TSG 3.

Time of Production

30. The increase in the amount of time taken to produce Parliamentary Papers is also a source of major concern. Production time has increased from an average of 2.7 months per paper in 1964 to 6.4 months in 1970 to 8.5 months in 1975 (see appendix C).

The observations made in respect of cost of production also have relevance in relation to time of production. Further considerations and suggestions which could effect savings of time are discussed in ensuing paragraphs 32 to 39.

Overprinting on Covers and Title Pages of Papers presented to Parliament

31. In an effort to shorten the amount of time necessary for the production of Parliamentary Papers, the Presiding Officers of the Parliament, following advice from the Joint Committee on Publications, and the AGPS, recently instituted changes to the cover and title page formats in order to introduce uniformity, and by-pass the need for detailed design supervision of contract work. While it is not possible at this juncture to comment on the success of this move, it is considered that further savings of time could be made by dispensing with the blue cover and title page of Parliamentary Papers, and over-printing on the cover and title page of the original document the details peculiar to the Parliamentary imprint, number and category, and tabling details. Parliament would not affect the changes for uniformity recently instituted by the Presiding Officers.

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33. Those papers tabled in duplicated form would be unable to meet the requirements for over-printing and presumably would still need to be produced in the blue covered form of the present Series.

34. It is submitted that the adoption of an overprint system of production:

- (a) would provide almost immediate access by those on the distribution list and the public to many of the documents included in the Parliamentary Paper Series and, by retaining the original glossy cover, would improve the appearance of the Parliamentary Paper edition of those papers;
- (b) would not detract from the standard appearance of the Bound volumes of the Parliamentary Paper Series as all covers are removed prior to binding; and
- (c) would facilitate the introduction of a system whereby the Government Printer exclusively could handle the production of the Parliamentary Paper version of tabled documents (see paragraphs 36 to 39 below).

35. Therefore, it is suggested that the Committee consider the possibility of abandoning the blue cover of Parliamentary Papers, except for those papers tabled in duplicated form, and investigate the possibility of overprinting Parliamentary Paper details on the cover and title page of the original document as presented to Parliament.

The Use of Contract Printers

36. A further problem which often contributes to the amount of time taken to produce Parliamentary Papers is the practice of the AGPS letting contracts for Papers which are tabled in duplicated form, and which need to be completely typeset, to private printers. With such a practice, a delay can be experienced in the letting of the contracts, the movement of the proofs between the contracted printers—most of whom are interstate—the AGPS and the Parliamentary Departments. In addition, some printers are either unfamiliar with the requirements laid down for the production of Parliamentary Papers, or do not hold the correct type, with the result that the first proofs received are sometimes unacceptable, necessitating further proofs, all of which contribute to the delay experienced in the production of the final Parliamentary Paper version of a Paper.

37. It appears that the problem of using commercial contract printers is tied directly to the issue of the priority given to the production of material for Parliament. Since the Government Printer was set up originally to service the needs of Parliament, it is suggested that the Committee might examine the possibility of the Government Printer, in all possible cases, handling the production of Parliamentary Papers. It is recognised that many official papers are printed by commercial printers, and that, with the simultaneous production of run-on copies for the Parliamentary Paper version, the practice has developed that the same commercial printer who produces the original paper completes the Parliamentary Paper version. It is suggested that this need not be the case. Instead, the run-on copies produced by the contract printer could be sent to the Government Printing Office version where the document has to be completely typeset, consideration might be given to the possibility of the work being carried out entirely by the Government Printer, and avoid contracting to private printers.

38. If the procedures suggested above were to be adopted, it would bring the production of Parliamentary Papers more into line with the production of other Parliamentary publications such as Notice Papers, Journals, Bills, etc. This, if considered, could remove or reduce periods of delay experienced when a contract printer is involved, give the Parliament a more direct control over the production of its own material, and minimise the risk of stock loss and the expense

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of replacing it, a problem which occurs occasionally with contract printers.

39. Accordingly, it is suggested that the Committee might give consideration to:

- (a) the possibility of the Government Printer alone handling the production of the Parliamentary version of tabled papers; and
- (b) the possibility of the Parliamentary Departments dealing with the Government Printer in relation to the production of Parliamentary Papers, as is the case with many other Parliamentary publications.

The availability of Papers presented to Parliament

40. The Parliament requires 330 distribution copies of each paper to be tabled. These copies are distributed as follows:

- 100 copies—Senators
- 154 copies—Members of the House of Representatives, the National Library and State Parliamentary Libraries.
- 60 copies—Press Gallery
- 16 copies—Parliamentary Library

41. Unfortunately, these distribution requirements are not always met. During the autumn period of sittings this year, 24 reports were presented to Parliament of which there were insufficient copies to effect distribution to all those entitled to them. It is appreciated that Ministers desire to make public reports of departments and instrumentalities as tabled before and occasionally for this reason papers are tabled before adequate copies are available.

42. It is important that all departments and instrumentalities are aware of Parliament's requirements and that, where it is necessary for reasons of urgency for reports to be presented to Parliament when there are insufficient copies to effect a proper distribution, sufficient copies are made available at the earliest opportunity.

Wastage of Documents presented to Parliament

43. Of the documents distributed to Senators, it is estimated that approximately 10 per cent only are returned to the Records and Papers Office and the remainder are absorbed into the stocks held by the office, and means of returning them to the author department when they are no longer required by the Senate are currently being investigated. Although the wastage is relatively slight, the problem of alleviating it is a difficult one.

44. Senators require to see all papers in order to ascertain whether they wish to retain a copy. An unofficial suggestion was that a list only of those papers available be distributed to Senators but information informally elicited from individual Senators seemed to indicate that this would not be a satisfactory solution. A possible alternative would be for author departments, upon production of a report, to prepare a synopsis or summary of that report in duplicated form which could be distributed to all Senators and Members as a firm basis upon which to make a decision regarding the desirability of acquiring copies. However, it will be appreciated by the Committee that before any alteration could be made to the current practice, all Senators and Members would have to be consulted.

Whether the Parliamentary Paper Series is fulfilling adequately its purposes

45. The next matter with which the Committee is concerned is set out in Item 4 of the Terms of Inquiry which states:

4. That the Committee determine whether the Parliamentary Paper Series is fulfilling adequately the following purposes:

- (a) that adequate copies of Parliamentary Papers are available for the use of Senators and Members;
- (b) that Parliamentary Papers are available for (i) sale to the public, and (ii) free distribution to libraries, government, tertiary institutions, etc;
- (c) that each Parliamentary Paper is available to be bound at the end of the year into a series of volumes and preserved in a convenient and accessible form as a permanent record; and
- (d) that in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act persons who publish any paper which has been ordered to be printed are afforded protection against civil or criminal proceedings.

Availability of Parliamentary Papers

46. To Senators: Senators are included, if they so request, in the free distribution list for Parliamentary Papers, of which receive copies of them from the Senate Records Office. Since, in most cases, Senators have already received a copy of the original paper presented to Parliament this can lead frequently to duplication (see paragraphs 53 to 59 below).

47. In addition, at present, all Senators are entitled to two copies of any Government or Parliamentary publication on sale at Australian Government Publishing Service shops or shops on production of the medalion issued by the Department of Administrative Services. This is a free service, although one which few Senators seem to utilise.

48. To the general public: The AGPS bookshops holds stocks of all Parliamentary Papers for sale to the general public. The quantity of stocks which they hold is determined by the AGPS on the basis of saleability and anticipated demand of any particular Parliamentary Paper. Stocks of Parliamentary Papers held will also be dependent on the availability of a departmental version.

49. Since limited copies of all Parliamentary Papers are made available to public libraries, this avenue also exists for Parliamentary Paper which they may wish to peruse.

50. To government departments and other organisations: It is the practice of this Parliament to follow the recommendation of the Report of the Joint Committee on Publications relating to the Distribution and Pricing of Parliamentary Publications (1971—Parliamentary Paper No. 153). That with one free copy of Parliamentary Papers . . . as of right, that colleges of advanced education, teachers' colleges, other tertiary institutions and secondary libraries be eligible to receive one free copy, on request, that foreign embassies retain their present entitlement; that all State and municipal libraries be eligible to receive them free on request; that trade, business, employer, employee, professional, commercial and similar organisations (with the exception of newspapers and the Parliamentary Press Gallery) not receive them free, that the political parties referred to in paragraph 38—Federal and State offices of political parties which contain Federal elections and which have a recognised National Secretariat—receive them free on request . . .

51. Although the above recommendation of the 1971 Committee is generally acceptable, some consideration might be given to the listed priorities. For instance, most universities have more than one major library and perhaps of Parliamentary Papers. Also, the present status of colleges of advanced education might suggest an automatic entitlement rather than the existing eligibility to receive one free copy on request.

52. Accordingly, it is suggested that the Committee might give consideration to some modification of present entitlements with a view to determining firm guidelines for recommendation to the Parliament for adoption.

Duplication and Wastage of Parliamentary Papers

53. An element of wastage occurs as a result of the Parliamentary Paper distribution principles as they stand at present. The problem exists both in relation to Members of Parliament particularly, and to the free distribution list generally. A prime cause appears to be the system of grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution as it now exists. (see appendix E.)

Grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution

54. With the growth in the range of documents recommended for printing as Parliamentary Papers, the distribution grouping as it exists no longer appears adequate to achieve its purpose. In addition to the difficulty of ascribing papers to groups, the result of the growth of Papers considered for printing has been that most groups now contain a much more widespread range of subject matter. Furthermore, it has been found necessary frequently to assign a Parliamentary Paper to more than one group.

55. This seems to have directly contributed to an element of wastage. With regard to the increase in the range of reports contained within any group, the problem is that a subscriber to a particular group as a result of a specific interest often receives reports outside that specific interest, and resultant wastage occurs. This is particularly the case with regard to groups C to I.

56. Because of the increasing uncertainty as to which group a paper will be assigned, there seems to be an increase in the number of subscribers to more than one, if not all groups, to ensure that desired reports are ultimately received in Parliamentary Paper form. This obviously results in increased wastage.

57. The solution to the problem of wastage is again a difficult one. One obvious step is the revising of the grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution. Although some group allocations appear to be satisfactory, the majority do not appear to be so. It might be that the present number of groups could be extended but, if this is not the answer, then it is submitted that consideration be given to a complete overhaul of the system.

58. It is also suggested that consideration be given to whether recipients on the free list should receive all the Parliamentary Paper groupings, since this is probably the prime cause of wastage. Obviously, there are some categories, such as Universities and Public Libraries, which have a real need for all papers. The need is not so apparent, however, in relation to other categories of recipients.

Other Parliamentary Publications (Notice Papers, Journals, Bills)

59. In respect of Parliamentary Publications, such as Notice Papers, Journals, Bills, etc., a problem exists in relation to multiple ordering. It would assist officers of this Department if the Committee would consider the laying down of guidelines to govern the processing of requests from recipients on the free list and casual requests from departments and others for multiple copies of Parliamentary Publications. Once guidelines were set, departments and others could be informed and, should they require copies additional to the number set under the AGFS, guidelines, could, by subscription, obtain them through the AGFS.

Bound Volumes

60. The papers constituting the Parliamentary Paper Series are produced in yearly volumes but, because of delays

which inevitably occur under present arrangements, considerable periods of time can elapse before volumes are available. It is considered that the adoption by the Parliament of the suggestions contained in this submission, particularly in respect of the intention to print proposal (paragraphs 18 to 21), the overprinting of Parliamentary Paper details by the Government Printer (paragraphs 32 to 35), and the printing by the Government Printer exclusively of papers presented in a form such that they need to be type set (paragraphs 36 to 39), would facilitate to some degree the earlier production and availability of Bound Volumes.

Protection of Publisher

61. The Parliamentary Papers Act is framed to afford protection in respect of documents presented to Parliament and published under the authority of Parliament. No problem in relation to the publication of Parliamentary Papers has come to the notice of the Department. (And see paragraph 20)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

62. A summary of observations and suggestions made in this submission which the Committee might wish to consider is set out hereunder.

The Adequacy of the Principles followed by the Committee when recommending reports for printing in the Parliamentary Paper Series

1. It is considered that:

- the principles followed by the Committee when recommending reports for printing in the Parliamentary Paper Series are adequate; and
- it does not appear to be necessary to amend the principles for the purposes of Item 2 of the Terms of Inquiry. (Paragraphs 1 to 8.)

Whether the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of the Series are satisfactory

Presentation of Documents to Parliament

2. Failure to observe the guidelines laid down for the production and presentation of documents can contribute greatly to the cost of the Parliamentary Paper Series and the length of time taken to produce Parliamentary Paper versions of tabled documents. (Paragraphs 11 and 12.)

3. Command Papers: The Committee might care to consider whether departments not required by statute to present annual reports might be encouraged either to initiate the production of such reports or regularise their presentation to Parliament. (Paragraphs 13 and 14.)

4. Statute Papers: The Committee might care to give some consideration as to whether departments and instrumentalities should be reminded of their responsibilities in observing any statutory requirement for the tabling of reports, etc. (Paragraphs 15 to 17.)

Intention to Print

5. It is suggested that the Committee consider a proposal to report to Parliament as to what its intention is likely to be in respect of recommending the printing, or otherwise not so recommending, of papers due to be presented by statute. (Paragraphs 18 to 21.)

Content and Style of documents presented to Parliament

6. The observations in paragraphs 304 and 305 of the report of the Joint Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications, on the content and style of papers presented to Parliament, were sound when they were expressed in 1964 and, it is suggested, are just as valid today. (Paragraphs 22 and 23.)

Cost of Production

7. There are advantages to the Parliamentary Departments if annual reports are prepared for tabling in type-set form. (Paragraphs 24 to 28.)

8. Documents produced for the Parliamentary Paper Series by the photographic reproduction of camera-ready material can have similar cost and time savings, although care must be taken when using this method to ensure that a reasonable quality of production is maintained. (Paragraph 29.)

Time of Production

9. The observations made in respect of cost of production also have relevance in relation to time of production. (Paragraphs 30 and 31.)

Overprinting on Covers and Title Pages of Papers presented to Parliament

10. It is suggested that the Committee consider the possibility of abandoning the blue cover of Parliamentary Papers, except for those papers tabled in duplicated form, and investigate the possibility of overprinting Parliamentary Paper details on the cover and title page of the original document as presented to Parliament. (Paragraphs 32 to 35.)

The Use of Contract Printers

11. It is suggested that the Committee might give consideration to:

- the possibility of the Government Printer alone handling the production of the Parliamentary version of tabled papers; and
- the possibility of the Parliamentary Departments dealing with the Government Printer in relation to the production of Parliamentary Papers, as is the case with many other Parliamentary publications. (Paragraphs 36 to 39.)

The availability of Papers presented to Parliament

12. It is important that all departments and instrumentalities are aware that Parliament requires 330 distribution copies of each paper to be tabled and that, where it is necessary for reasons of urgency for reports to be presented when there are insufficient copies to effect a proper distribution, sufficient copies are made available at the earliest opportunity. (Paragraphs 40 to 42.)

Wastage of Documents presented to Parliament

13. It is estimated that approximately 10 per cent only of documents distributed to Senators are returned as not required. (Paragraphs 43 and 44.)

Whether the Parliamentary Paper Series is fulfilling its purposes

Availability of Parliamentary Papers

14. Senators may be included in the free distribution list for Parliamentary Papers and may also obtain them from (a) the Senate Records Office; and (b) any AGFS bookshop. (Paragraphs 46 and 47.)

15. The general public may purchase any Parliamentary Paper from AGFS bookshops or peruse them in public libraries. (Paragraphs 48 and 49.)

To Government Departments and other Organisations

16. It is suggested that the Committee might give consideration to some modification of present entitlements with a view to determining firm guidelines in respect of the distribution of Parliamentary Papers to Government Departments and other Organisations for recommendation to the Parliament for adoption. (Paragraphs 50 to 52.)

Duplication and Wastage of Parliamentary Papers

17. An element of wastage occurs as a result of the Parliamentary Paper distribution principles as they stand at present. The problem exists both in relation to Members of Parliament particularly, and to the free distribution list generally. A prime cause appears to be the system of grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution as it now exists. (Paragraph 53.)

Grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution

18. The solution to the problem of wastage is a difficult one. One obvious step is the revising of the grouping of Parliamentary Papers for distribution. Although some group allocations appear to be satisfactory, the majority do not appear to be so. It might be that the present number of groups could be extended but, if this is not the answer, then it is submitted that consideration be given to a complete overhaul of the system. (Paragraphs 54, 57.)

19. It is also suggested that consideration be given to whether recipients on the free list should receive all the Parliamentary Paper groupings, since this is probably the prime cause of wastage. (Paragraph 58.)

Other Parliamentary Publications (Notice Papers, Journals, Bills)

20. It would assist officers of the Department if the Committee would consider the laying down of guidelines to govern the processing of requests from the recipients on the free list and casual requests from departments and others for multiple copies of Parliamentary Publications. (Paragraph 59.)

Bound Volumes

21. It is considered that the adoption by the Parliament of the suggestions contained in this submission, particularly in respect of the intention to print proposal (paragraphs 18 to 21), the overprinting of Parliamentary Paper details by the Government Printer (paragraphs 32 to 35), and the printing by the Government Printer exclusively of papers presented in a form such that they need to be type-set (paragraphs 36 to 39), would facilitate to some degree the earlier production and availability of Bound Volumes. (Paragraph 60.)

Protection of Publisher

22. No problem in relation to the protection afforded under the Parliamentary Papers Act to publishers of Parliamentary Papers has come to the attention of the Department. (Paragraph 61.)

APPENDIX A

Parliamentary Papers—Cost of Printing (Senate)

	\$
1970-71	46,221.78
1971-72	79,126.49
1972-73	133,922.17
1973-74	106,961.75
1974-75	170,772.16
1975-76	334,337.61

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APPENDIX B

Growth in Parliamentary Paper Series—1970-1975

Year	No. of papers printed
1970	249
1971	285
1972	287
1973	335
1974	338
1975	300

APPENDIX C

Average time of reproduction 1970-75

1970	6.4 months*
1971	5.7 months
1972	5.5 months
1973	7.8 months
1974	9.7 months*
1975	8.5 months*

*2 papers still to be printed
 *7 papers still to be printed
 *74 papers still to be printed

APPENDIX D

Reports tabled in the Senate of which less than 20 copies were made available to Senate Records Office February-June 1976

Bureau of Roads: Report on Roads in Australia	10 copies
Report on a North-South Highway connecting Darwin to Melbourne via Mount Isa and Broken Hill	19 copies
Bureau of Transport Economics: Consumer Preferences in Urban Buses and Bus Services—	
A	20 copies
B	3 copies
C	3 copies
Mainline upgrading: Evaluation of a Range of Options for the Melbourne-Sydney Rail Link	3 copies
Mainline upgrading: Evaluation of Range of Options for the Melbourne-Serviceton Rail Link	3 copies
Report of the Port Pirie Economic Evaluation of Harbour Improvements	3 copies
Joint Coal Board Annual Report 1974-75	2 copies
Final Report of Australian Wool Board 1.7.72-31.12.72	14 copies
Final Report of the Australian Wool Corporation 1.1.73-30.6.73	10 copies
Final Report of the Australian Wool Corporation 1973-74	3 copies
Statistical Returns Relating to Referenda: All States	5 copies
Monthly Reports on Darwin Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund for October, November and December 1975, January 1976	5 copies
Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Transport to and from Tasmania	Nil copies
Report by the Committee on Post-Secondary Education in Tasmania	1 copy
Report of the Laverton Royal Commission Royal Commission on Petroleum. Fourth Report: The Marketing & Pricing of Petroleum Products in Australia	8 copies
	1 copy

VIP Flights by No. 34 Squadron RAAF	10 copies
Third Main Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Poverty: 'Social/Medical Aspects of Poverty in Australia'	4 copies
Katherine Rural College Planning Report, April 1976	10 copies
'Literacy and Numeracy in Australian Schools'	Nil copies
BTE Report 'Provision of General Cargo Facilities at the Port of Darwin'	20 copies
Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Payments to Maritime Unions	1 copy

APPENDIX E

Distribution Groupings of Parliamentary Papers

Group	
A	Tariff Board and Industries Assistance Commission
B	Finance
C	Trade, Commerce, Primary Industry
D	Defence
E	Foreign Affairs
F	Scientific, Industrial and Geological Research, Mining, Education
G	Territories
H	Internal Affairs
I	Miscellaneous and Parliamentary Committee Reports

CHAIRMAN—In paragraph 5 of your submission it is stated that given the objectives that the parliamentary papers series is intended to fulfil, the principles followed by the Committee in recommending that certain papers be printed are quite adequate. Do you consider that the series is meeting these objectives as well as it has done in the past, say, going back 10 years or more?

Mr Bradshaw—Firstly, might I say that Mr Morton seems to have a foot in both camps and I will from time to time ask him to answer a question if I feel that he can do it better than I. He is our Papers Officer in the Senate, besides being your Assistant Secretary.

So far as your question is concerned, I believe that the series at the moment is probably catering for the needs of senators and the public generally better than it did in, say, 1964, but I would have to make some reservations. I think that the purpose and objectives of the series are to inform senators, members and the public generally. This is certainly being done better because today, within the series, there are approximately twice the number of papers that there would have been in 1964; the content of the papers is greater and they are put forward much more regularly. The facilities that were available in 1964 to distribute the parliamentary papers are still available and they have been added to by the Australian Government Publishing Service bookshops. I suppose a qualification that I would make is that the papers are no longer available at about \$5 a year subscription. Now I understand that there is

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no subscription as such, but that those who want to subscribe to the Parliamentary Paper Series pay at run—on cost plus postage. The other qualification is that parliamentary papers today are taking longer to produce than they did in 1964. But in general I believe that they are catering better for the needs of the public, and members and senators than they did in 1964.

CHAIRMAN—Do you get much feedback from senators and people outside, such as librarians and people of that type?

Mr Bradshaw—No, none that I know of.

CHAIRMAN—No criticisms?

Mr Bradshaw—No criticisms, and I think that is probably a good thing. We have probably not had any feedback because they are adequate. Otherwise I am sure we would get feedback.

Senator MISSEN—The fact that you get no feedback could be open to another interpretation, namely that you have a lot of traditional people in libraries and so forth getting these things by way of routines. Since 1964 enormous change has taken place in the idea of public involvement and in what ought to be the interest in publications—open government, in a general sense. Do you think that it is perhaps not serving as well as it might the cause of evoking public interest in buying these publications, or does the public know in advance what it would cost to get, say, one of the relatively bigger reports? Are they frightened off by that and therefore not subscribing?

Mr Bradshaw—I do not know how you could overcome it. I think that if anyone wants a copy of a report they have to be prepared to pay for the report at the price at which it is marked. They are priced at a run—on cost plus postage, or if they are sold at the shop itself, at run—on cost price. I am sorry I was out of court there. Perhaps Mr Morton can answer that question.

Mr Morton—The system of subscribing to the series operates on what is called a standing order system whereby the subscriber—we will call him a subscriber—indicates that he wants to receive papers of a particular group and the Australian Government Publishing Service either sends out an account with the paper when it is produced or else notifies the subscriber that the paper is available and requests payment before delivery. Under that mode of operation the cost to the subscriber would be run—on cost plus postage. If the subscriber just wants to pick up individual papers through the book shops his cost is 3 times the run—on cost of the publication. That is the pricing policy which the AGPS has adopted.

Senator MISSEN—If you took a typical example of a fairly big report, say about 200 pages or 300 pages, what would be roughly the average cost of buying it in the bookshop?

Mr Morton—It would be very hard to say. It would depend to some extent on whether the report had been typeset or whether it had been produced off camera ready copy. There would be a number of variables involved, such as photographs. I think it would be anything from \$7 to \$9, or \$10 even, but some of the big reports could be considerably more expensive.

CHAIRMAN—Both Clerks have expressed concern that the contents of the series varies from year to year due to inconsistent tabling of papers, particularly command papers, which come up in paragraph 13. Do you feel that such inconsistency of tabling creates a serious deficiency in the series? If so, how do you consider that departments might be encouraged to initiate production of annual reports or regularise their presentation to Parliament?

Mr Bradshaw—I think we have 2 areas there. Command papers, because of their very nature, are going to be different each year—or some command papers are. Therefore, there will be inconsistencies unless command papers are a separate series, which I am not advocating at this stage. The annual reports of departments brought down by command do, as we have pointed out in our paper, vary from year to year. In some cases a departmental report has been presented to the Parliament and then we have not received one for several years after that. To get some consistency and regularity in the tabling of annual reports from departments would, I think, require ministerial direction, a Cabinet decision or some statutory provision requiring departments to table reports each year.

We had a report on transport tabled recently. It was a report on the whole Transport Department. The Department has no statutory requirement to bring down a report but the Minister brought down a report covering all transport when he had to report to Parliament under the Air Navigation Act. He included in that report his obligation under the Air Navigation Act but extended his report to cover the whole transport area. The Committee might consider suggesting to departments that they might do the same thing under an obligation they have in an Act which they are administering. Possibly I think it would have to be a government policy or a Cabinet directive to departments. Once it was started I believe they should have regular

annual reports brought down. Otherwise you are going to have the same thing again.

CHAIRMAN—Other than that is there no easy solution?

Mr Bradshaw—I cannot see one.

CHAIRMAN—Are you going to get this inconsistency because of these peak periods and off periods?

Mr Bradshaw—I think that is so.

Senator MISSEN—The command papers, as I understand it, are really a decision by a Minister through the Government to get the Governor-General to require them to be printed. It is a mere subterfuge.

Mr Bradshaw—A formality.

Senator MISSEN—Formality is perhaps a kinder way of putting it. You want to have your report printed and you get it done by this means. Is there any reason why there should be this distinction of command papers as against any straight forward decision? Is it just for this purpose that you call it a command paper?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. We call them statutory papers when, in an Act, there is a statutory provision which requires some body to report to the Minister on its operations, and then the Minister has to table a report within a particular period of time. That is what we call a statutory paper. Command papers are those papers which a Minister decides to table in the Parliament. As there are no statutory means by which he can table the paper, he does it by command.

Senator MISSEN—Could he do it by leave of the House?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes.

Senator MISSEN—Without the necessity of this rigmarole, you could seek the leave of the House to make a statement and present a report?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes, and by leave, table it.

Senator MISSEN—It puzzles me.

Mr Bradshaw—I think it goes back in history to the United Kingdom where they had their command series and other parliamentary papers. The command series made up a particular series. Any paper that was laid on the table which was not required by statute, was by command.

Senator MISSEN—I can see that it is also an irregular series or that it may be a one-off report. In paragraph 15 you list a number of Acts for which no reports were presented between 1970 and 1975, for example, the Dairy Industry Equalization Act, the Estate Duty Assessment Act, the Gift Duty Assessment Act, the Income

Tax Assessment Act, the Payroll Tax Assessment Act and the Stevedoring Industry Charge Assessment Act. Are these all under statute and have no reports been received? What is the situation since 1975? Have any of these papers been presented?

Mr Morton—No, none of these papers have been presented since then.

Senator MISSEN—I suppose this must reflect on the value of the previously presented documents since there is no continuity in the series.

Mr Bradshaw—I think there is a greater concern than that relating to the detraction from the value of the previous report. I think it is a concern, or should be a concern, of Parliament. Parliament has provided within statutes a requirement that certain bodies bring down reports and the bodies are just not carrying out their obligations.

Senator MISSEN—As you say, that is much more significant than the point I raised.

Mr Bradshaw—Certainly from the point of view of members of Parliament, librarians, cataloguers and anybody dealing with papers, it must be rather frustrating if one year a report is brought down and next year it is not.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Parliament provides a lot of obligations in statutes and it is left to the Minister to enforce them. If the Minister who has the administration of that Act does not enforce them, then it is he who should be held to account.

Senator MISSEN—But members of Parliament have not brought attention to this.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—But there seems to me to be a veiled suggestion in here that some other enforcement procedure ought to be introduced whereby someone other than the Minister who has the administration of the Act at the moment could call these bodies to account if they do not deliver reports on time.

Senator MISSEN—The suggestions you make in the submission in paragraph 21 about notice relating to annual reports could perhaps be expanded to include things like statute papers. The proposals there to give advance notice of the possibility of printing would draw the attention of the Department to the fact that this report was required to be presented. The suggestion you make is particularly in regard to annual reports. What percentage of the Parliamentary Paper Series is made up by annual reports?

Mr Bradshaw—It would be about 45 per cent to 50 per cent. That would include all statutory annual reports and reports which are regularly tabled by command.

Senator MISSEN—Is that a percentage of the number or a percentage of the work? You may have a small annual report.

Mr Bradshaw—It is a percentage of the number of papers or of the number of annual reports actually presented.

Senator MISSEN—In view of the fact that some reports are very large, would it bear any resemblance to the percentage of the work done?

Mr Bradshaw—I do not think we could answer that at this stage.

Mr Morton—It would depend on what work actually had to be done and in which form the papers were presented in relation to their production as parliamentary papers, in other words, whether they had to be typeset, proofread and so on. It would be very hard to establish this.

Senator MISSEN—I am asking about volume, sheer size?

Mr Morton—No, I do not think I could answer that.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—There would probably be a greater proportion this year than in the past 3 years. Annual reports will comprise a greater proportion of papers.

Senator MISSEN—On this same topic, you suggest a compromise with what the Erwin Committee suggested in regard to printing, or advising in advance that you were going to print, and you are now suggesting that advance intention is likely to be required. Do you think that the proposal you make ought to be expanded to deal not only with annual reports, but also with other reports where advance warning would be made available to you?

Mr Bradshaw—In relation to reports which are regularly tabled, yes.

Senator MISSEN—Like the Coombs Report, for example, which is anticipated many many months ahead?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes, the Coombs Report would be a good example where intention to print could be indicated through AGPS to the Committee. This would be the way it would be done, I think. The Committee could then make up its mind on that. I think that would be a good example. There would be some reports that you would be able to make some assessment about. There would be others, though—such as those under the new scheme whereby the AGPS are to be informed each year of the intentions of departments for the ensuing year—on which the Committee would not have any detailed information. It would be unable to form an opinion as

to whether it was going to recommend printing or not. But a royal commission report like the Coombs Report could be included in the intention to print.

Senator MISSEN—An annual report has a general fixed nature which you can anticipate to some extent. The details can change, but the format may be the same. I suppose there are a lot of reports about which you have no idea whether they will be large or small, or whether they will be uninteresting or of great public interest.

Mr Bradshaw—Under this new scheme which the AGPS has proposed, they will be getting quite a deal of information from departments. But it will only be the information they get from the departments which they will be able to hand on to the Committee to indicate to the Committee just what the report entails. I think that Ministers might be a bit loathe to allow too much information to be given in relation to particular papers which they might want to bring down during the year anyhow.

Senator MISSEN—They may decide not to bring them down, therefore they would be embarrassed by the prior disclosure. Do you think that the compromise you recommend with the Erwin Committee proposals will sufficiently cover the same advantages which the Erwin Committee had in mind?

Mr Bradshaw—In the main, yes. The Erwin Committee Report, as we spelt out in our submission, could bring certain advantages. Probably the one that would not be there would be the saving of about three or four weeks at the most. The idea of the Erwin Committee recommendation was that the paper would be ordered to be printed prior to its presentation to Parliament but that had problems in relation to the Parliamentary Papers Act. In this case it was suggested that the Committee would recommend to the Parliament, or report to the Parliament, what its intention would be when the report was tabled. After the report was tabled this Committee would have to meet and make up its decision on the paper. For instance, if a Committee sat today and a paper was not presented until next week, the Committee might not sit for another three or four weeks, so you would have that delay. But other than that, it has the advantage that there need not be any amendment of the Parliamentary Papers Act in this respect.

CHAIRMAN—You mentioned that about 45 per cent to 50 per cent of the series was annual

reports. With the exception of, say, ad hoc committees would you not be able to predict in advance almost 100 per cent of what is going to be printed?

Mr Bradshaw—As the Committee is operating today, we would in relation to all annual reports but certainly not in relation to those command papers which do not come down anyway. I think it operates today. The AGPS gets in touch with the papers officers of the respective departments and asks whether a particular paper which he has on his press is likely to require run-on copies. At the moment it is being done this way because of the knowledge that the Committee functions in a particular manner and is likely to recommend that that report be printed because it is of a certain type.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—In paragraph 4 of the submission you stress the importance of departments and instrumentalities adhering strictly to the guidelines set down by the AGPS. In the following paragraph you also quote an increase of approximately 623 per cent in cost of production of parliamentary papers from 1970-71 to 1975-76. Can you give examples where a failure to follow AGPS guidelines has increased the cost to your Department of producing the parliamentary papers version?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. We have correspondence which has been sent on to the Committee indicating occasions when the AGPS has not been informed of a document being published at a particular time and therefore has been unable to indicate that run-on copies should be made at the time. In such a case it has cost, say, another \$3,000 to set the thing up again. This correspondence has been forwarded to the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the Senate did forward it on to this Committee.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—What response has there been from the departments in observing the guidelines that are to be set down with AGPS? Are there any particular departments that depart from it that you could quote?

Mr Bradshaw—Again that is in the Committee's files. Do you wish me to indicate the departments?

Senator MISSEN—Could we have a reference to the date of the letter?

Mr Bradshaw—The reference is our letter of 28 July 1976 from the AGPS, and letters forwarded to the Committee on 11 November 1975 by the Clerk of the Senate from the AGPS.

CHAIRMAN—I refer to your appendix A and to the point Senator Cameron made a little earlier in reference to the increase in cost. Obviously there is much more than just inflation involved there. To what do you attribute that very large jump from 1974-75 to 1975-76? Would that be a proliferation of inquiries occasioning more reports coming forward? It seems to be a tremendous jump. It is almost double, from \$170,000 to \$334,000.

Mr Bradshaw—I do not know what the main reason is but a lot of the reports between 1970 and 1975 are committee reports. I can only think that committee reports must have some bearing on that figure. Also reports which are not set up in a proper manner in the first place in the presentation to Parliament are costly. If they are not set in conformity with the guidelines set down by the AGPS then the typesetting of the report afterwards is very costly and, of course, all the cost then is charged against the Parliament. If the paper is presented to Parliament in a typeset form initially, the author departments, or the author bodies bear the cost of setting up the departmental version. Then the Parliament just pays the run-on costs of the documents for its copies.

CHAIRMAN—Appendix B, I think, answers my question actually. The numbers have not increased at all. The size of the reports perhaps may have. It is difficult to look at it in terms purely of numbers but in fact we had a drop off from 338 to 300 from 1974 to 1975. That discounts that point that I made and the question I asked you.

Mr Morton—To the best of my knowledge we do not have a breakdown of exactly what all the components of this increased cost would be. As you mentioned, inflation would certainly be one factor.

Senator MISSEN—These 2 figures are really about different things. Appendix A seems to be for the financial year and the second one seems to be for the calendar year. Am I right?

Mr Bradshaw—That is right, but I think we could take it that it is over a period of 12 months.

Senator MISSEN—But it is a different 12 months. One is the financial year and the other one is the calendar year.

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. We are not relating like to like.

CHAIRMAN—I take your point Senator Misen, but if you look from 1970 through to 1975 you will notice that it is 249 to 300. It has been over 300 on 2 other occasions but there

is not a great deal of difference. Yet the cost has gone from \$46,000 to \$334,000.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Perhaps all the increased expenditure is for 1976.

CHAIRMAN—The Committee has given some attention to the form in which reports are presented. Would you say that the Committee should direct its attention constantly to see that the departments do meet the requirements that are laid down by AGPS?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. We believe this would certainly assist in keeping costs down, or keeping costs at a reasonable figure. We are getting more papers today but, as we said in our report, the increase is not substantial. From 1970 to 1975 there has been an increase of only 51 papers over that period of 5 years. That is an average of, say, 10 papers a year. If departments or author bodies do not present their reports to Parliament in a form acceptable to the standards which the AGPS has set down then it is going to mean a complete typeset which means a complete duplication of the costs relating to a report. In some cases it is going to cost more; we may need more copies than were initially run off.

Senator MISSEN—Would this also account for your Appendix C which deals with the length of time of production? I see it reached a peak in 1974. It declined in 1975 but is still well above the earlier years. Would the time taken indicate anything to do with the costs of production, or is that purely related to the backlog or something?

Mr Bradshaw—I think that is probably related to the activity of Government today. Not only have the number of papers increased from 1964—they have been doubled to 1975—but, I would say the number of Bills, or the number of pieces of paper that go through the Parliament, have more than doubled in that time.

Senator MISSEN—It is not really related entirely to costs?

Mr Bradshaw—I do not think it is related to costs.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Is there any explanation for the year 1972-73? The costs to the Senate were \$133,000 approximately, and there were 287 papers. For the following year the papers increased yet the cost dropped to \$106,000.

Mr Bradshaw—I can only say that the bulk of the papers for that year was greater than in the year 1973. I cannot give you any other reason for the drop in costs.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—It is the reverse if, in 1973 there were 335 papers at a cost

of \$106,000 and the previous year there were 287 papers at a cost of \$133,000.

Mr Bradshaw—When I said 'bulk' I was thinking of the bulk of document—the pagination—rather than the number of papers that were tabled.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Would the Senate Estimates Committee report add to the costs in any way?

Mr Bradshaw—No. That would have no effect whatsoever. That would be a charge against Hansard.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—In paragraph 32, under the heading of 'Overprinting on Covers and Title Pages' there is a proposal suggesting an overprinting for Parliamentary Papers for details and cover and title pages. Could you explain to the Committee the process which would be followed if the suggestion was adopted?

Mr Bradshaw—What we have suggested there is that if a paper is printed either by the Government Printer or by an outside contract printer all the run-on copies which are printed should be sent onto the Government Printer. It goes back virtually to the design stage where on the design of the cover and the front page of the report, space would have to be left so that an overprint could be made for the parliamentary imprint. All that would be necessary, if the report were set up or designed initially allowing that space, would be for the Government Printer to run the run-on copies through his machine for the original cover and the front page of the report.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—How much time do you consider would be saved by the adoption of that process?

Mr Bradshaw—We have not submitted this to AGPS or the printer so I think it would be up to them to give you an assessment on that. I think there would be a substantial saving in time, especially if it were all handled by the Government Printer. All that would be necessary would be for a copy of that overprint, which would not alter substantially at all—it would only alter in the actual date of presentation and the number of the paper—to be sent through the normal chute that comes up to Hansard. We would look at it and send it straight back to the Printer. So there would be little time in handling there; there would be no binding because the reports would already be set up and bound. It would just be an overprint of the cover and front page. There should be a substantial saving of time, I would think.

Senator **DONALD CAMERON**—Would proofs of the cover and title pages still be required?

Mr Bradshaw—Not really. I would think that parliamentary officers would still like to cast their eyes over it. As I say, that could be done very easily by just a run being made on blank piece of paper of the actual type that was to be put onto the front cover and title page. There would only be one page to be sent up in the chute to Parliament House and it could be sent directly back. There would be very little involved.

Senator **MISSEN**—Would this mean that if a department wanted to have a pretty cover, a design and so on, they would have to comply with this in advance?

Mr Bradshaw—The Design Section of the AGPS would have to look at it to see that space was available for the overprint. But I think they could still have a pretty cover because there would be very little to provide in fact. We would need a crest for the Parliament of the Commonwealth; we would need presented to the Parliament and ordered to be printed on such and such a day, and we would need the Parliamentary Paper number at the bottom. So there is very little involved. I do not think it would hinder much.

Senator **MISSEN**—A picture of some sort would naturally inhibit this to some extent. You could not overprint that over a very strong colour?

Mr Bradshaw—No, possibly we would have to put it to one side of the cover.

Senator **DONALD CAMERON**—Would there be any significant cost savings?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes, there would be cost savings inasmuch as handling and binding of the run-on copy.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—There is also the general question of the use of contract printers, which you mention in paragraphs 36 and 39 of the submission. You mention, particularly in paragraph 36, that with the use of contract printers one of the problems is that you have to request revised proofs fairly regularly. Can you provide any examples of that?

Mr Morton—I cannot provide you with specific examples, but I can outline to you the problems which we have which necessitate the seeking of a revised proof. The contract printer may produce the proof in the wrong size type; he may produce it with the wrong colour ink; he may leave significant data off the parliamentary papers—for example, he may omit to put the

wording on the spine. He may, for example, use the wrong crest. These are the sorts of factors which may call for a revised approach. These, we feel, are problems which, if the Government Printer were used, would not necessarily occur.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Are the difficulties which occur with these printers because of incompetence on their part or poor instructions to the printer? Why would he use the wrong crest? Was he not given specific instructions?

Mr Morton—I could not answer that question. I imagine that the instructions given to printers would be adequate. It may be in some cases that the printer does not hold a block of the correct crest.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—In paragraph 38 you talk about stock loss problems with contract printers. Is that a continuing problem?

Mr Morton—It is a very infrequent problem but it does happen on occasions.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—You mention that you thought the use of the Government Printer, who handles notice papers, journals and those kinds of documents, might solve this problem rather than AGPS going through these procedures with contract printers. Can you elaborate on that?

Mr Morton—What problems are you referring to?

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The problems of difficulties with the proofs and the possibility of stock losses.

Mr Morton—We feel the Government Printer is thoroughly familiar with the requirements of the Parliamentary Paper Series and their production and, given that, he would be the best person to use. He is also in a position where officers of parliamentary departments can have very ready access, and perhaps direct access to him, to cope with problems. With that direct access and his familiarity, some of the problems which occasionally occur with contract printers might be avoided.

CHAIRMAN—Could I go back to the problems that arise with contract printers? How frequently do they happen? What percentage of jobs done by contract printers would present problems?

Mr Morton—To which problems are you referring?

CHAIRMAN—Problems in relation to revised proofs. Do they happen frequently? Do you have to go back to them often? Is it because of lack of

direction? Why does it occur and how frequently does it occur?

Mr Morton—It does not occur very frequently. Certainly, as far as second revised proofs go, I could not put a percentage on them, I am sorry. I imagine that with most printing jobs there is a large range of reasons why one might seek to get a set of revised proofs. This would happen in any printing process. I think it would certainly not be more than 50 per cent of the time that we would have to seek revised proofs. It would not be near that order; it would be considerably smaller than that. And the more serious problems, such as loss of stock, are very rare indeed.

CHAIRMAN—Who do these contract printers deal with? Is it with AGPS?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—They take their directions from, and their dealings are directly with, AGPS?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. I do not think the author department comes into it at all. We do not come into it at all.

Mr Morton—All our dealings with parliamentary papers are through the AGPS. We do not deal direct with the contract printer.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Then I guess you people would not know the criteria that the AGPS uses?

Mr Morton—No.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—This is why I am concerned about the instructions given to the printers. You make the point that you think the Government Printer would be ideally suited to do all the parliamentary papers work. He is familiar with your requirements; he is familiar with the requirements of the Parliament. Clearly there must be difficulties in that. What are they?

Mr Bradshaw—The difficulty, I believe, is the bulk of material that has to be done by the Government Printer.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—It is just that he is overloaded?

Mr Bradshaw—I think he is either overloaded or that the priorities given to parliamentary papers are such that he is not required to get them out in the time that he is apparently required to get out papers from departments.

Senator **MISSEN**—Was there a time when he did all the parliamentary papers?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes, but it goes back many years. The Government Printer used to do all the parliamentary papers that he could handle.

Some used to be sent to State Government printers and to private printers if necessary, but in the main he did most parliamentary papers.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The Clerk of the House in his submission said, in relation to the problem of using contract printers, that if it were not possible to employ the Government Printer solely, then you should use only a small number of commercial printers for parliamentary paper printing. He says it may be practical, and the AGPS could best advise on this, to enter into a bulk printing contract with a small number of commercial printers to undertake parliamentary printing. Clearly, as he says, AGPS might be the best persons to advise. Do the problems you have with proofs and stock arise because there are a great number of commercial printers being used rather than a smaller, specialised number? Are you aware whether the AGPS uses only certain printers for work that is likely to result in parliamentary papers?

Mr Morton—I am not aware of the practice of the AGPS in letting contracts. I think you would have to seek that information from them.

CHAIRMAN—I think it is an interesting question, but we may have to wait until the AGPS answers it.

Mr Bradshaw—I think it is a rather good suggestion. After all, if the Government Printer could not handle the bulk only a small number of contract printers should be used. They would become quite familiar with our requirements, the Parliament's requirements and AGPS requirements.

Senator **MISSEN**—It may offend the Trade Practices Act.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—One of the questions that vexes the Committee during its usual deliberations is the availability of papers presented to Parliament. Has your Department experience difficulties when sufficient copies of an important report were not made available on tabling?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. We would have Senator Missen or Senator Cameron coming down looking for a report which we do not have. This is an embarrassment—there is no doubt about it— which can only be overcome by our own production area running off copies. Sometimes this can be difficult if the reproduction area at the time is overloaded with, say, running off committee evidence or reports or something like that. We have had instances recently where fairly substantial reports—some 400 pages I think it was— had to be run off because we only received one

copy in the records office. On another occasion another substantial report needed to be run off because there were no copies of it available.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—You say in paragraph 40 that 330 copies are the minimum you really need. Do you think there should be that number made available on every occasion?

Mr Bradshaw—I will only speak for the Senate on that point. The Senate requires 100 copies and I believe 100 copies or very close thereto, of every paper that is presented are necessary.

Senator MISSEN—There is a significant difference, is there not, between 100 copies for the senators and 154 for the House of Representatives, the House of Representatives Library and State libraries. I do not want to suggest that there is a lack of readability or a lack of interest in reading by members of the House of Representatives. What is the reason for the difference between the two, particularly in view of the fact that there are 64 senators and 127 members of the House of Representatives?

Mr Bradshaw—No, I cannot give you any reason for it. I can say only that over the years this is what we have required in the distribution to senators and other requests from the Records Office.

CHAIRMAN—All members and senators receiving reports, of course, do not keep them all. They are put outside the doors and the attendants take them away. Are these carefully channelled back through to the Bills and Papers Office for use, perhaps for other senators and members who may want another copy for their electorate office.?

Mr Morton—Yes. We have boxes distributed in various areas of the Senate into which senators can deposit reports they do not require, or they can leave them outside their doors, or call attendants to take them away. The attendants gather them together and bring them back to the Records Office where they are held as stock until they are required by the senators or other interested parties.

Mr Bradshaw—But we did indicate in the submission that apparently we receive back only about 10 per cent. I have been advised also of something which I missed before. All annual reports of Commonwealth Departments that are presented are, by resolution of the Senate, automatically referred to our Legislative and General Purpose Standing Committees. So this again would account for a few of the extra copies that the Senate requires.

Mr MARTYR—We were talking about availability: Is my presumption correct that all senators and members automatically receive all parliamentary papers?

Mr Morton—The practice in the Senate is that senators would receive all copies of the report in its departmental version upon tabling, or as shortly after tabling as stocks are available. We circulate the senators with a questionnaire asking them what requirements of parliamentary publications they have throughout the year. In the last week or so we have sent out a new questionnaire which adopts the practice of giving senators the opportunity of receiving parliamentary papers and other parliamentary publications at their State offices as well as at Parliament House. When we distribute parliamentary papers we would, generally speaking, exclude senators from the distribution of parliamentary papers at Parliament House, although that would depend upon the original availability of the departmental version. But we have offered senators the opportunity of receiving parliamentary papers at their State addresses if they so desire. I suppose the answer is that, to some extent senators do receive parliamentary papers depending, firstly, on the availability of the departmental version, and, secondly, on whether they desire to receive them at their State addresses.

Senator MISSEN—You mentioned previously that a questionnaire has gone to senators. In general terms, to what extent do senators indicate that they want everything, or are they very discriminating in their response? It might be interesting to know to what extent this cut it down.

Mr Bradshaw—Senators are always discriminating.

Mr Morton—It is hard to answer at this stage because we have not had all the replies. I think I can say that of the replies we have had to this time, senators have indicated that they require much less material than they indicated they required at the beginning of the Autumn Session.

Mr MARTYR—Have the university, libraries and college, State and other libraries taken up their entitlements in accord with the recommendations of the 1971 report? This is in paragraph 50 in the submission.

Mr Bradshaw—No, I cannot say that we have done this. Possibly this is because they have not been invited to. The 1971 report recommended to the Parliament that universities, colleges, tertiary institutions and secondary libraries be eligible to receive one free copy, but we have not acted on that. We have not been in touch with all

of these institutions to see whether they require a copy. I do not think the 1971 report has ever been considered by the Parliament; certainly it has not been adopted by the Parliament.

Mr MARTYR—What about departments? I suppose some departments receive free copies of the parliamentary papers, and if so, how do they get on the list, and if we chopped them off would they still get copies?

Mr Bradshaw—Yes. I suppose how they got on the list goes right back to when the parliamentary papers first started to be produced. It is just a matter of evolution; they have just stayed on the list over all these years. If they were cut they could still purchase them from the AGPS, or by subscription through the AGFS. I do not know whether you would consider though that those papers are already payable for by the parliamentary departments and, in fact, it would just be like an entry from one department to another, would it not? I do not know what the Committee's attitude is.

Mr MARTYR—In your submission, paragraphs 54 to 58, you talk about wastage occurring as a result of the distribution grouping, and the free distribution list. Could you explain that a little bit further?

Mr Bradshaw—In Appendix E, on the last page of the submission, there are many groupings from (A) to (I). As you will see the groupings cover fairly broad areas. For instance, to obtain a paper on education, a person would have to subscribe to the whole series, in which case he would receive all those papers under group (F). I do not know what should be done about this. I suppose a copy of the single paper could be bought from the AGPS when it came out.

Senator MISSEN—He is entitled to it anyway.

Mr Bradshaw—Senators are. But I am speaking generally here about the public subscribing to receive parliamentary papers. Group (I), Miscellaneous and Parliamentary Committee Reports, covers the Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing Committees which cover every aspect of administration. So a person subscribing to group (I) receives just about everything. He receives all the committee reports anyway, and he may want only something on education. We did comment on this and suggest that these groupings should be looked at again. I am afraid we cannot come up with any real suggestion to you as to what it should be. Perhaps librarians might be able to help you in that respect. But I believe that there should be an

additional group (J) for Miscellaneous under which there should be about 17 sub-groups.

CHAIRMAN—There should be more categories?

Mr Bradshaw—These sub-groups would set out all the committees, so that if somebody wanted to subscribe to just a particular committee he could receive just those. I do not know what work this would involve for the Government Printer or anything else.

Mr MARTYR—Probably the cost of setting it up would outweigh the advantages.

Senator MISSEN—It would not just be the cost of setting it up. There would be the constant cost of administration in having so many separate lists. That would add to the cost, would it not?

Mr Bradshaw—I would think so. I would think this is why there is only the limited number of groupings at the moment.

Mr MARTYR—On the general subject heading of wastage, could you suggest to the Committee those categories of recipients presently on the list who may not require full distribution?

Mr Bradshaw—I think one would have to revise the grouping first to see just what people were getting and what they wanted. Then we would have a better idea. I do not think we could, at this stage, indicate who the people were. We would not know until we went through a complete list. It would mean going right through all the cards and looking at them one by one, and then making an assessment. We can suggest that some people, say in educational institutions, do not want the scientific, industrial and geological research and mining reports; they want only the education reports. Apart from that I do not think we can give you an assessment.

Mr MARTYR—In 1971 the Committee recommended a general guideline for the free distribution of principal parliamentary publications, including parliamentary papers. Do you feel that the peculiarities, if any, of the Parliamentary Paper Series warrant perhaps a separate guideline?

Mr Bradshaw—The 1971 recommendations suggested one copy to libraries and such institutions, whereas numerous copies of other parliamentary publications such as notice papers, journals, Bills and these sorts of things are sent to people. I suppose in that respect it needs a separate guideline.

CHAIRMAN—There being no further questions, I thank both of you for participating and for being explicit with us. We have gained a lot from this hearing today.

Short adjournment

Mr Alan Robert BROWNING, Acting First Clerk Assistant, Department of the House of Representatives,

Mr Ian Charles COCHRAN, Senior Parliamentary Officer, Bills and Papers Office, Department of the House of Representatives, and

Mr Ronald OWENS, Parliamentary Officer (Papers), Department of the House of Representatives, were called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—Does the Committee have any objection to the incorporation in *Hansard* of the House of Representatives submission. There being no objection, it is so ordered.

(The document read as follows):

SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE PURPOSE, SCOPE AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES—SEPTEMBER 1976

INTRODUCTION

1. The rationale behind the Parliamentary Papers series is to preserve in a permanent, convenient and accessible form those papers presented to the Parliament which have particular importance as part of the National Record. The Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications in its report presented to Parliament on 13 May 1964 said "The Parliamentary Papers series should be a comprehensive collection of the papers of a substantial nature presented to Parliament."

¹ Parliamentary and Government Publications—Report from the Joint Select Committee, para. 232 (Parliamentary Paper No. 32 of Session 1964-66.)

2. The responsibility for deciding which papers are of a substantial nature or are important enough to form part of the National Record resides with both or either House of the Parliament. This responsibility is delegated to the Publications Committee of both Houses acting independently or jointly.

3. It should be the right of any Member of Parliament or any ordinary citizen to be able to refer to these papers without any undue difficulty despite any lapse of time since publication.

4. The rationale behind the Parliamentary Papers series would seem to indicate that the principles followed by the committee when recommending to the Parliament certain tabled reports for printing as Parliamentary Papers are adequate and capable of either a broad or a limited interpretation as the committee so desires.

CONTINUITY

5. The problem of continuity concerns both statutory and non-statutory papers which are presented to the Parliament on a regular basis and are normally recommended for printing as Parliamentary Papers. The major contributing factor to this problem is lack of control over (a) what papers are presented and (b) when papers are presented.

Non-Statutory Papers

6. As these papers are presented by command of the Governor-General there is little control over what is presented. As a result the content of the Parliamentary Papers

series varies from year to year. For example the old Department of External Affairs presented annual reports for the years 1967-68 and 1969 but its successor, the Department of Foreign Affairs, did not present an annual report until 1974. The old Department of Supply regularly presented annual reports up to 1970-71 but in the period 1971-72 to 1973-74 the Department presented separate annual reports for the following establishments under its control: Aeronautical Research Laboratories, Central Studies Establishment, Defence Standards Laboratories and Weapons Research Establishment. There have been no separate reports of these bodies since.

7. Other papers that could fall into the category include Industries Assistance Commission and Temporary Assistance Authority Reports and Reports of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads and the Bureau of Transport Economics.

Statutory Papers

8. At present there is no authority by which Officers of the Parliament can ensure that statutory tabling provisions are met.

9. For example the following 3 Acts require annual reports to be presented to the Parliament within a specific time and during the period 1970-75 the statutory period for presentation was exceeded and in one instance no reports were presented during the period: Egg Export Control, Gold Mines Development Assistance (No reports) and Wine Overseas Marketing.

10. If the Parliamentary Papers series is to have a fair degree of continuity, and, more importantly, if the statutory provisions laid down by the Parliament are not to be ignored, then it would appear necessary for (a) the Parliament to exercise some control over the presentation of annual reports by Departments and instrumentalities and (b) some procedure should be set up to ensure that statutory tabling provisions are met.

DUPLICATION

11. It appears to me that there is little duplication of reports by the maintenance of the Parliamentary Papers series. The bulk of the Parliamentary Papers printed are for distribution to addresses on the free distribution list (see appendix A). This distribution would be quite distinct, with the exception of Senators and Members, from the distribution of the author copy. Sale copy requirements are assessed by the Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS).

WASTAGE

12. If there is a problem of wastage, the fault would probably lie with the Parliament and would be due, in part, to:

- the requirement that every Member and Senator be entitled to receive copy of every paper as it is presented, and
- the arrangement to place all Members and Senators on the distribution list for Parliamentary Papers.

13. The Parliament requires 330 distribution copies of each paper to be tabled. These copies are distributed on the day of presentation as follows:

- 154 copies—Members of the House of Representatives, the National Library and State Parliamentary Libraries.
- 100 copies—Senators
- 60 copies—Press Gallery
- 16 copies—Parliamentary Library

14. These distribution arrangements cannot always be met, and during the 1976 autumn sittings there were 14 reports presented to the Parliament with insufficient copies for distribution to Members and Senators (see appendix B).

15. Of the reports distributed to Members of the House of Representatives, it is estimated that approximately 35 per cent-40 per cent are returned to the Bills and Papers Office as not required. It has been the practice of this Department that, wherever possible, reports returned to the Bills and Papers Office are despatched back to the author Department.

16. There is obviously some wastage here but, as most Members like to see all reports, it is only to ascertain whether they require a copy or not, there seems little that can be done to alleviate the wastage. Some wastage/duplication also occurs as Members, if they so nominate, are entitled to receive copies of the Parliamentary Paper edition as well.

17. Steps have been taken by Officers of this Department to try to rationalise this situation, and all Members of the House have received a questionnaire concerning their requirements for both copies of papers when they are presented and the Parliamentary Paper edition when it becomes available (see appendix C).

AVAILABILITY

18. Copies of all Parliamentary Papers are available through the Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS) bookshops. The number of copies printed for sale purposes is based on the salesability of the individual paper as determined by the AGPS. Limited copies of all Parliamentary Papers are made available to State Public Libraries and by this means also are available to the general public.

19. When a Parliamentary Paper is out of print and the AGPS feels there is insufficient demand to warrant a reprint, limited copies would be available through the offices of the Senate or the House of Representatives.

20. At present all Members of Parliament are entitled to two copies of any government or Parliamentary publication on sale at AGPS bookshops. This is a free service and the publications can be obtained by producing the medalion issued by the Department of Administrative Services or by Members authorising one of their staff to act on their behalf. Although not many Members use this facility, its existence does mean that adequate arrangements are made to ensure that Members' requirements are being catered for (see appendix D).

DISTRIBUTION

21. It has been the practice of this Department to accept requests for sample copies of Parliamentary Papers at face value and to provide adequate free copies to Members and Officers of the two Houses; Executive Departments; the Press; State Parliaments and Departments; political and business organisations; and representatives of foreign governments. This practice stems from instructions by the Presiding Officers of the early Parliaments. Distribution lists grew up for all publications. In each specific instance the Presiding Officers gave (or withheld) approval for free issue to applicants. Thus, there arose certain classes of persons and organisations for whom this approval became virtually automatic (see appendix A).

22. It should be noted that there has not been a great increase in the number of papers ordered to be printed. For example in 1971, 285 papers and in 1975, 300 papers were printed (see appendix E).

23. The question arises whether the free distribution of Parliamentary Papers needs to be so extensive. Any recommendations by the committee concerning the re-evaluation of the criteria for placing addresses on the free list would be helpful.

BOUND VOLUMES

24. An additional 200 copies of each Paper are printed above the distribution and sales requirement. These copies

are set aside for binding into the annual bound volumes. For the 1971 volumes, the last set to be bound, there is a distribution list for 100 sets.² The distribution is as follows: 27 overseas addresses, 25 University and College libraries, 7 public libraries, 6 State Parliamentary Libraries, 4 Australian Parliamentary Offices, 10 Executive Departments and sets for the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Parliamentary Library and the National Library. A number of addresses receive more than one set. The other 100 sets are set aside to meet future requests.

25. The 1970 volumes consisted of 132 sets at 13 volumes a set and cost \$14,608 to produce. The production time was approximately 14 months. The 1971 volumes consisted of 200 sets at 17 volumes a set, cost \$39,281 to produce, and again the production time was approximately 14 months (see appendix F).

26. Although there is a considerable time lag in the production of the volumes, all of the addresses regard the volumes as an important item in their collections. As a result the Parliamentary Papers series is adequately fulfilling its purpose in that the volumes are providing a permanent, convenient and accessible record.

PRODUCTION TIMES

27. A major problem facing the Parliamentary Papers series is the length of time taken to produce a Parliamentary Paper. The production time has increased from 2.7 months in 1964, to 6.4 months in 1970, and to 8.5 months in 1975 (see appendix G).

28. During 1975 the average turnaround time for proofs held by this Department was approximately 34 days for each Parliamentary Paper proof.

29. The increasing length of production time has been due, in part, to the work being contracted to commercial printers. When this happens, there are delays associated with the actual letting of contracts, and the movement of proofs between the printers (often interstate), the Australian Government Publishing Service and this Department. In addition further proofs are often required and correspondence may be involved as personal contact and discussion on matters of style and format is not possible.

30. Delays are also being experienced as the various private printers used often do not comply with the specifications required for Parliamentary Papers, and this aspect therefore requires substantially more attention by the Design Section of the Australian Government Publishing Service than otherwise would be the case.

31. As your committee will be aware recent changes in the format of the cover and title page of Parliamentary Papers are an attempt to overcome this difficulty, but as no 1976 Parliamentary Papers have been printed to date this Department is unable to comment on whether or not production times have improved.

32. Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the delays which are occurring is that many reports are often not available to Members, subscribers or the public for many months after their release, and, by the time a paper does become available, its subject matter may be no longer of current interest.

33. It is not unusual for a lapse of approximately 4 to 5 months to occur between a paper being ordered to be printed and the first set of galley proofs being returned to this Department for checking. This could be avoided if it were possible to either employ the Government Printer solely or use only a small number of commercial printers for Parliamentary Paper printing.

34. It may be practicable, and the AGPS could best advise on this, to enter into bulk printing contracts with a small number of commercial printers to undertake Parliamentary

printing. This course of action could help to alleviate the delays now occurring in the production of Parliamentary Papers.

COSTING

35. A problem that has concerned this Department in recent years has been the increasing cost of printing Parliamentary Papers. Since the financial year 1970-71, when the cost was \$61,358, the cost has increased by approximately 650 per cent to \$395,378 for 1975-76 (see appendix H).

36. Although this Department has little direct control over the cost of printing it might be possible to achieve some savings in time if we were able to ensure that, wherever possible, Parliamentary Committees produce their reports on either typing guide-sheets TGS1 or TGS 3. This would then eliminate the need for lengthy periods of proof reading.

37. Savings in time could also be achieved if it were possible for the Temporary Assistance Authority to produce its reports on TGS1 or TGS3 as is done by the Industries Assistance Commission. During 1975 the Temporary Assistance Authority produced 19 reports each of which, having been ordered to be printed, had to be typeset and fully proof read.

38. These suggestions and other methods of reducing the printing cost would need to be discussed fully with the AGPS.

PRIORITY OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

39. One question which has not been satisfactorily resolved in relation to Parliamentary Papers and which could be determined by the Committee is that of priorities. There is a wide range of documents which are published through the AGPS and which in many cases are afforded high priorities. It is appropriate that the relative importance of the Parliament, and of Parliamentary Papers, should be more firmly established at the same time as attempts are being made to reduce the time expended in production.

OTHER PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS (i.e. NOTICE PAPERS, VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS AND BILLS)

40. A previous Publications Committee in its report relating to the distribution and pricing of Parliamentary Publications recommended that university libraries be supplied with one free copy of Bills, Notice Papers and Votes and Proceedings as of right; that colleges of advanced education, teachers colleges, other tertiary institutions and secondary school libraries be eligible to receive one free copy, on request; that foreign embassies retain their present entitlement; that all State and municipal libraries be eligible to receive them free on request; that trade, business, employer, employee, professional, commercial and similar organisations (with the exception of newspapers and the Parliamentary Press Gallery) not receive them free; that political parties receive them free on request.¹

¹ Joint Committee on Publications—Report relating to the Distribution and Pricing of Parliamentary Publications, Parliamentary Paper No. 153 of 1971, p. iii.

41. Since that Committee reported to the Parliament in October 1971 there have been further increases in the number of free issues of the Notice Paper, Votes and Proceedings and Bills (see appendix I).

42. The question arises as to whether the free distribution should be so extensive. Other than the recommendations of the 1971 Committee, it is doubtful whether the criteria for being placed on the free distribution lists have been seriously re-evaluated since 1950.

43. Any recommendation made by your committee concerning the free distribution lists will be helpful as the lists must be accepted as having 'fossilised' to some extent. This is not to say that they are not continually updated and

kept accurate, but that the criteria of eligibility have not been challenged for many years.

PROTECTION OF PERSONS WHO PUBLISH ANY PAPER WHICH HAS BEEN ORDERED TO BE PRINTED AGAINST CIVIL OR CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS ACT

44. Over a number of years (since 1963), the Clerk of the House has expressed concern to the Attorney-General's Department over the lack of express legislative protection from legal proceedings for defamation in certain circumstances. These include:

- protection of the Clerk of the House in respect of the printing and publishing of the Votes and Proceedings;
- protection of the Clerk of the House in respect of the printing and publishing of the Notice Paper;
- protection of the Clerk of the House and his officers if they allow Members of the House, the press and other persons to inspect or obtain copies of documents which have been presented to the House, but have not been ordered to be printed;
- protection of the Clerk of the House and his officers if, in the case of documents presented to the House and ordered to be printed, they give to Members, the press and other persons, either before or after the Government Printer has printed the documents:
 - copies of the documents not printed by the Government Printer;
 - copies of the documents printed by the Government Printer but not in Parliamentary Paper form, that is to say, not bearing particulars of presentation and the order to print, and not showing a Parliamentary paper number (S.O. 320 relates).

- protection of persons, for example the Commissioner of Taxation, in connection with the publication of reports presented to Parliament pursuant to statute.

45. These matters were processed to the point of a preliminary draft Cabinet submission in 1972 and despite a number of reminders to the Attorney-General's Department in the intervening period no worthwhile progress appears to have been made.

CONCLUSION

46. Principles: The present principles followed by the Committee when recommending to the Parliament that certain tabulated reports be printed as Parliamentary Papers are considered to be adequate and need not be maintained.

47. Content of Series: There appears to be no reason to reduce the number of documents included in the Parliamentary Papers series as there is (a) little avoidable waste or duplication and (b) sufficient demand from interested parties on the free list to maintain the present scope of papers ordered to be printed. Nor is it considered necessary to increase the number of documents included in the series. The scope given by the current set of principles should adequately provide a basis for the printing of any paper which the committee wishes to recommend to the Parliament.

48. Distribution and availability: The present arrangements do cater fully for the requirements of Members, University and College libraries, State Public Libraries and those persons and other bodies eligible for free copies. Accessibility to the general public is provided (a) through sale copies at the AGPS bookshops and (b) by the provision of copies to State Public Libraries. However a revaluation of the criteria for placing addressees on the free list for both Parliamentary Papers and other Parliamentary publications is probably desirable.

49. Cost: Serious consideration should be given to the escalating cost of printing Parliamentary Papers and a direction is desirable to ensure that all reports presented to the Parliament are presented in the international B5 size. Some savings may be effected if certain reports were produced on either typing guide-sheets TGS1 or TGS3.

50. Production time: There appears to be a real need to investigate the increasing length of time it takes to produce a Parliamentary Paper. It is felt that the relative importance of the Parliament, and of Parliamentary Papers, should be more firmly established with the AGPS. It is suggested that the possibility should be explored of either employing the Government Printer solely or entering into bulk printing contracts with a small number of commercial printers for Parliamentary Paper printing.

51. Continuity: It is suggested that (a) Parliament should exercise some control over the presentation of annual reports by Departments and Instrumentalities and (b) some procedure should be set up to ensure that statutory tabling provisions are met.

52. Protection of persons: Early action needs to be taken to give legislative protection to the Clerk of the House and other officers from legal proceedings for defamation as outlined in paragraph 44.

APPENDIX A

Categories of those eligible to receive free copies

Senators and Members
Parliamentary Officers
Executive Departments
State Parliaments and Departments
Universities and libraries
Newspapers
Political Organisations
Embassies in Canberra
Overseas addressees*

* mostly libraries and universities

(as at 30 June 1976 there were 633 addressees on the free distribution list for Parliamentary Papers)

APPENDIX B

Reports tabled in the House of Representatives but not circulated to Members due to insufficient quantities

Date	Report
18 February 1976	Statistical Returns showing the voting within each sub-division in relation to Proposed Laws to alter the Constitution.
16 March 1976	Mainline upgrading—Reports by the Bureau of Transport Economics.
1 April 1976	Public Libraries—Report of Committee of Inquiry.
7 April 1976	Brisbane Airport—Economic evaluation of alternative development strategies—Report by Bureau of Transport Economics.
5 May 1976	Consumer preferences in urban buses and bus services—Report by Bureau of Transport Economics. North-South Highway connecting Darwin to Melbourne—Report by Commonwealth Bureau of Roads. Laverton area—Incidents involving Aborigines—Report for Royal Commission.

Date	Report
26 May 1976	Alleged Payments to Maritime Unions Final Report of Royal Commission. Provision of general cargo facilities at the Port of Darwin—Report by Bureau of Transport Economics.
28 May 1976	Grants Commission—Special report on financial assistance for local government.
3 June 1976	Katherine Rural College—Report of Planning Committee.
4 June 1976	National Highway linking Sydney and Brisbane (Newcastle area)—Report by Commonwealth Bureau of Roads. Poverty—Commission of Inquiry—Third Main Report—Social/Medical Aspects of Poverty in Australia. Royal Australian Air Force—List of VIP flights.

APPENDIX C

Parliament of Australia House of Representatives	Parliament House Canberra, A.C.T. 2600 Telephone 705 4 August 1976
Dear Sir,	

In recent years Members have expressed concern at the increase in printed matter being delivered to their rooms; much of it is unwanted and often discarded. The Publications Committee and the Minister responsible for the Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS) have also expressed concern at the problem.

This letter seeks your assistance in reviewing your requirements for printed parliamentary material which comes from the Bills and Papers Office or from the AGPS.

Material from the Bills and Papers Office

It is present practice to automatically distribute copies of most reports presented to Members' rooms.

It is proposed that Members should have the option of (1) continuing to receive a copy of most reports that are presented, or (2) receiving only those reports which the Member indicates he wishes to receive.

Those Members taking up option (2) will receive each sitting day a slip listing the reports presented that day. Members using the slips will be required to tick the items they require and then leave the slip in the 'out' tray in their room, hand it to a House Attendant or request the reports required by phoning the Bills and Papers Office. Copies of all reports will be available in the Bills and Papers Office. An example of the request is attached.

If you wish to take up option (2) you will sign the enclosed reply form and return it to me. If no reply is received it will be assumed you wish to continue receiving a copy of most reports.

Material from AGPS

A form listing the various parliamentary publications and those publications you presently receive, is enclosed. Would you review your requirements and indicate those publications you wish to receive in future. When deciding the papers you require, it should be kept in mind that all these items are available from the Bills and Papers Office.

The early return of this form would be appreciated.

If you have any queries concerning these arrangements, please contact Mr R. Owens (Room L75—Ext. 6640) or Mr J. Hession (Room L78—Ext. 6374).

Yours faithfully,
N.J. PARKES
Clerk of the
House of Representatives

PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS
DISTRIBUTION BY AGPS IN WRAPPERS OR PARCELS

Publication	Present issue	Future requirements	
		Parl. House	Elect. Office
SENATE NOTICE PAPERS			
SENATE JOURNALS—			
Proof issue (published the day after the sitting)			
Final issue (published some days after the sitting)			
SENATE BILLS, AMENDMENTS, EXPLANATORY MEMORANDA, ETC.			
Note: These publications can be obtained from the Bills and Papers Office (Room L78).			
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NOTICE PAPERS			
Note: A Notice Paper is placed on your desk in the Chamber each sitting day and extra copies are available from the Bills and Papers Office.			
VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS—			
Proof issue (published the day after the sitting)			
Final issue (published some days after the sitting)			
Note: Members can obtain copies from the Bills and Papers Office.			
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILLS, AMENDMENTS, EXPLANATORY MEMORANDA, ETC.			
Note: Copies are circulated in the Chamber and can be obtained from the Bills and Papers Office.			
PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (i.e. the reports and other papers presented to Parliament and which are ordered to be printed). The series is divided into nine subject groups so that recipients may indicate whether they wish to receive all the papers or only those in specific groups.			
Group Subject			
A Tariff			
B Finance			
C Trade, Commerce, Primary Industry			
D Defence			
E Foreign Affairs			
F Scientific, Industrial Research			
G Territories			
H Internal Affairs			
I Miscellaneous			

Note: Most reports are in a printed form when presented and are available to Members on the day of their presentation.

Members may continue to receive a copy of these reports in their rooms automatically, or by completing the accompanying reply form, elect to receive only those reports they nominate.

A limited number of additional copies of most reports are available from the Bills and Papers Office (L78) or by asking any House Attendant to obtain a copy.

M.P.

EXAMPLE ONLY

REPORTS, ETC., REQUIRED Thursday 6 November 1975

The Papers listed below were tabled in the House today. Members requiring any paper to be delivered to their room should:

- tick the title of the Paper(s) required and return this slip to the Bills and Papers Office; or
- phone the Bills and Papers Office (Exts. 6046, 6987, 6269, 6374).

- Australian Wool Board—Annual Report 1974-75
- Bureau of Transport Economics Report—Brisbane Airport
- Health Insurance Commission—Annual Report 1974-75
- Laverton Area—Report of Royal Commission
- *Parliamentary Committee System—Report of Joint Committee

* Copies not available at present—Requests will be met as soon as copies are received.

Parliament of Australia
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
Telephone 72 1211

The Clerk of the House of Representatives,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,

I wish to receive a list of the papers presented each day so that I may indicate those papers I require.

Yours faithfully,

M.P.

APPENDIX D
Availability to Senators and Members of Parliamentary and Government Publications from AGPS Publications and Inquiry Centres.

ARRANGEMENTS

1. The publications available under these arrangements are limited to Australian Parliamentary and Government publications which are not case bound books.

2. Senators, Members, or staff acting on their behalf, can make use of these arrangements at any AGPS Publications and Inquiry Centre irrespective of whether or not it is located in the Member's home State.

3. Senators and Members will be required to identify themselves by showing the medallion issued to them by the Department of Services and Property. A member of staff can take delivery of publications on behalf of a Senator or Member on the production of an authority to do so signed by the Senator or Member.

4. Only two copies at a time of a publication are to be supplied under these arrangements.

5. No publication is to be supplied under these arrangements without a docket for it being signed by the Senator, Member, or member of staff taking delivery of the publication.

6. The cost of publications supplied to Senators is to be charged to the Accountant, The Senate, Canberra, and the

cost of publications supplied to Members of the House of Representatives is to be charged to the Accountant, House of Representatives, Canberra.

7. Accounts are to be submitted monthly and to be supported by the dockets signed by the Senator, Member, or member of staff taking delivery of the publication.

8. AGPS will not request payment for those Parliamentary publications supplied to Senators and Members for which the Publishing Service has not incurred any acquisition expenses—these publications being those for which the entire cost has been borne by a parliamentary department, namely:

- Bills
- Customs Tariff Proposals
- Hansard—Weekly Issues
- House of Representatives—Work of the Session
- Parliamentary Papers

Note: As at 12 July 1976 only 42 Members of the House of Representatives have made use of this facility.

APPENDIX E

Growth in Parliamentary Paper Series—1970-1975

Year	No. of papers printed	
	Year	No. of papers printed
1970	249	
1971	285	
1972	287	
1973	335	
1974	338	
1975	300	

APPENDIX F

Bound Volumes

- (i) Cost:
 - 1970—\$14,608 (132 sets of 13 volumes)
 - 1971—\$39,281 (200 sets of 17 volumes)
 - 1972—\$3,309 (Progress account—200 sets of 11 volumes)
 - 1973 (No accounts received—200 sets of 13 volumes)
- (ii) Production times:
 - 1970—14 months
 - 1971—14 months
 - 1972 in preparation
 - 1973 in preparation

APPENDIX G

Average time of production 1970-75

1970	6.4 months!
1971	5.7 months
1972	5.5 months
1973	7.8 months
1974	9.7 months!
1975	8.5 months!

- ¹ 2 papers still to be printed.
- ² 7 papers still to be printed.
- ³ 74 papers still to be printed.

APPENDIX H

Cost of Parliamentary Paper Series borne by House of Representatives—1970-71 to 1975-76

Fiscal year	\$
1970-71	61,358
1971-72	74,125
1972-73	88,160
1973-74	65,829
1974-75	150,719
1975-76	395,378

APPENDIX I

Notice Paper, Votes and Proceedings and Bills				
Number of Free issues	1903	1929	1971	1976*
Notice Paper	270	650	1160	1510
Votes and Proceedings				
Proof issue	271	125	383	536
Final issue	271	630	597	657
Bills	412	620	595	756

* As at 30 June 1976

CHAIRMAN—In the first 4 paragraphs of your submission you indicate that given the rationale behind the Parliamentary Papers series the printing principles followed by the Committee would appear to be adequate. There are 2 questions which come out of that. Firstly, do you believe that the rationale behind the series in preserving certain papers in a permanent, convenient and accessible form is still as relevant now as it was at the time of the Erwin Committee consideration?

Mr Browning—I start by saying that Mr Cochran was Secretary to the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications in 1963 and he could be considered our expert on parliamentary papers. Mr Owens is an expert on the day-to-day management of parliamentary papers. I am just here to look pretty, I think.

Mr Cochran—I think it is a very important question that you have posed. It is important that I reply as accurately and as straightforwardly as I possibly can, because so much else depends on whether we can give the Committee the right answer to this question.

As I see it, parliamentary papers have value in 2 respects. They have certain values in their pamphlet paper form and they have certain values when they come to be bound into an annual volume at the end of the year. The Erwin Committee felt, and the House in its submission reiterated that feeling, that documents presented to Parliament should be readily available at the time of tabling and, if possible, as readily available in 10 years' time or 50 years' time when researchers are looking back to see how some particular aspect of public policy or administration was formulated. It is important that they are

available firstly to senators and members and then to the community at large so that they are able to understand what it going on. I feel that for the senator, the member and for John Citizen in the street, whether they are in a numbered regular series or not is academic. But for the librarian attempting to help the senator, the member, the researcher or John Citizen in years to come, having the documents presented to Parliament in a known numbered series helps him to do his job; it is in this sense that the documents in a series form take on a particular worth.

Prior to World War II, so far as I can see, a high proportion of the papers presented to Parliament were present in typescript. The Minister presenting the paper tabled the original report that he received from a commission of inquiry or from the secretary of his department, signed personally by the commissioner or by the secretary. The general responsibility for printed copies of those documents to be made available really rested with the Parliament, which took the initiative to see that printing was undertaken and copies were generally available. But for the needs of the country there was always a delay, with the order to print and the actual printing taking place after presentation. But that was unsatisfactory. The pace of life has quickened so that today most documents presented to the Parliament are available in printed form at the time of presentation. When Parliament orders one of these documents to be printed as a parliamentary paper and it comes out in its loose pamphlet form much of the relevance of that action is, I feel, not there when senators, members and John Citizen, by going to the AGPS bookshop, are quite able to get the departmental or author printing of the document the day after tabling. There are exceptions to that general rule but that is generally the case.

The value of the series in this form in the immediate weeks following presentation is minimal. However, there is value in having the Series in pamphlet form as a greater period of time elapses. I am sure if the Committee were to take evidence from any librarian or anyone with any responsibility for providing information which is more than 12 months' old, they would be told that to have the documents presented to Parliament in an acknowledged, numbered, series is of the highest importance just as it is important to have the Acts passed by Parliament printed and published in a numbered, acknowledged, series and so many other Government publications published in a numbered series. It enables retrieval to be made so much more easily and simply and quickly.

At the time the Erwin Committee held its inquiry the Parliamentary Paper Series was very much more haphazard than it is now. There were historical reasons for this and quite accidental reasons for it as well. As I see it, the series of documents presented to Parliament in the first fifteen or sixteen years of federation was very comprehensive. With the outbreak of World War I, because of the need to economise in printing, a number of documents dropped out of the series. During the 1920s it became more comprehensive of the total number of papers presented to Parliament. Then with the Depression and World War II it again lost its comprehensive nature, so that you had quite extraordinary variations in the series. The Budget papers would be in the series but the report of the National Debt Commission would not be. The Erwin Committee's report gave further examples of that situation. There was a growth in Commonwealth activity after World War II but it really depended—and I do not want to stress this too much—on the personal interests of the members of the printing committees of the day whether a paper went into the series. There is an element of that in the series throughout the 1950s.

Now when the Erwin Committee carried out its investigation in the early 1960s it said that it took the view that if a paper was presented to Parliament, by that very nature, it was of sufficient importance to preserve so that it could be referred to with some ease later on. It is right and proper that this Committee should again be looking at that point of view and asking: 'Now, is that right or not? I think at the moment the series is more comprehensive and therefore a better series than it was in 1963. I would like to think that in any arrangements for the publication and preservation of the documents presented to Parliament the comprehensive nature of whatever those arrangements are is one that would be preserved.

CHAIRMAN—I have a technical question in relation to that bound book you have in front of you. At what stage are they prepared?

Mr Cochran—They are prepared annually—at the first opportunity it is possible to collate all the papers ordered to be printed in a calendar year. One of the recommendations of the Erwin Committee was that instead of binding parliamentary papers at the end of a session, as all our other parliamentary records are, it would facilitate production of the volumes if it was done annually like the Acts of the Parliament. The hopes of the Erwin Committee have not been fulfilled because it still takes three or four years before these volumes come out. The last one or two papers are

stragglers, either because they have run into difficulties of production or because the proofing of them has taken some time. That has meant that we have had to wait until the last paper is published before we can, under our present methods of producing these volumes, bring them out.

Senator MISSEN—What is the current number of volumes produced for the House of Representatives and the Senate? Are they separately printed?

Mr Cochran—No. The volumes are a joint exercise of both the Senate and the House of Representatives and include all papers that have been ordered to be printed by either the Senate or the House, or by both Houses.

Senator MISSEN—How many volumes does it run into?

Mr Cochran—Two hundred copies of every parliamentary paper are put aside for inclusion in volumes.

Senator MISSEN—That is not the question.

Mr Cochran—Of the 200 copies that are currently being put aside there is an effective use of a little over 100 copies.

Senator MISSEN—I think you must have misunderstood me. I am asking when you get the volumes for 1974, how many volumes are there?

Mr Cochran—That depends on the number of parliamentary papers ordered to be printed in 1974. It varies from about eight volumes to up to fourteen or fifteen volumes. I am sorry, I misunderstood your question.

CHAIRMAN—Are you getting any criticisms of the adequacy of the content of the series?

Mr Cochran—No. I know of no criticisms of the adequacy of the comprehensive nature of the series now, but before your Committee recommended that most of the reports should be printed, there were criticisms. We do get infrequent complaints from libraries saying: 'When are we going to see this particular paper? We have received some papers but there is obviously a gap. When are we going to receive the missing paper?' I take it, from getting this sort of inquiry, that they are using the series and that it has a value to them.

CHAIRMAN—Under the heading 'Continuity' on the first page of your submission you say that the problem of continuity concerns both statutory and non-statutory papers which are presented to the Parliament on a regular basis and are normally recommended for printing as parliamentary papers. Is your concern limited to

a desire to maintain consistency in the content of the Parliamentary Paper Series from year to year for the convenience of members of Parliament, librarians and so on, or are there other reasons for expressing this concern?

Mr Cochran—No, there are no other reasons. I think you have spent them out. If the series is to be maintained, it obviously has a greater value if the researcher or the librarian can go to the volumes and know that the Reserve Bank of Australia's annual report is going to be there in any year that he cares to turn to and not that it was in the volume for 1966 simply because the Bank in that year made several comments in its report which became matters of political controversy. Similarly, it has a value if, say, all reports of royal commissions are there simply because they are reports of royal commissions, whether in fact that royal commission has been on an esoteric topic which is of little concern to most people, or whether it is a report, such as the Coombs Report, which affects much of what we all do.

Senator MISSEN—In paragraph 10 of the submission it is stated, and I quote: 'It would appear necessary for (a) the Parliament to exercise some control over the presentation of annual reports by Departments and Instrumentalities and (b) some procedure should be set up to ensure that statutory tabling provisions are met.' If the Committee was to agree with these propositions, do you have any suggestions as to how they could be achieved?

Mr Browning—I will make a contribution here. I know that Mr Antony Whitlam, when the Senate was giving evidence, raised some doubts on this point. This is a thing that has concerned me for a number of years. I have been here for some 22 years and for most of that time I have been concerned about this point because over the years some departments and statutory authorities have not presented reports as they were required to do under statute. We, as parliamentary officers, had no real way of overcoming this problem. I can recollect at one stage that the Public Service Board Report was not presented one year. It was brought to one particular member's attention, a question was asked in the House and the report appeared some time later. As I say, we have no real control, but some control was exercised during the 1960s by a particular member, Mr E. G. Whitlam, who used to come to us in the Papers Office almost every year and ask: 'Which reports have not been presented this year?' We used to give him a list and he would chase them up through questions or letters; he played a particularly important part in

seeing that reports were tabled in that period. I think that this Committee would have the power under its present terms of reference to table a return and have it incorporated in *Hansard* each year, either on its own behalf or perhaps through the presiding officers, so that everyone would know just who has not been meeting the statutory requirements. I do not think there is any problem there.

Senator MISSEN—Would this be a standing thing for the Committee to table at the end of each year?

Mr Browning—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying is that it should not be left to the vigilance of one or more members to be sorting through and I remember recently Mr Gough Whitlam asking a question in the House in relation to the hospital benefits organisations' annual report which had not come forward for 1974-75, I think it was. I think a few days later the report appeared. Are you saying that these all should be listed at some stage or considered by the Committee and that you believe it is within the power of the Committee to do this?

Mr Browning—Also, I do not believe it should be left to the Ministers because in the past this has not worked out. In any case, a particular Minister may have twenty or thirty statutory authorities under his control. I do not know if any Minister has that many but I imagine that the Minister for Primary Industry, for instance, has a lot of statutory authorities under his control which are supposed to present reports. I would not leave it to the ministry because it has not been satisfactory in the past; I think your Committee could do this.

Senator MISSEN—Is there a fairly standard time of an annual report? I would imagine the end of June or some time after that. Is there a standard time by which when they should be submitted or is there no rule?

Mr Browning—I suppose if you took a particular instance it would probably follow a fairly regular pattern but I think departments run into problems in getting their reports printed. Because of this, many interim reports are presented at this time of the year so that the main part of a department's activities are available to members and senators at the time of the consideration of the Estimates. I suppose it follows a fairly regular pattern in most cases.

Senator MISSEN—The problem is that if this Committee were to, say, take November or some period to which it would draw attention, then

maybe the organisation would say: 'We do not need to do this. We are not required to do this until the end of December in a calendar year.' Therefore, they would object to being castigated indirectly by having been shown up as not putting their report in when in fact there is no requirement to do it until the end of the year. I wonder whether this Committee can adopt a common course if there is not a common time requirement for statutory reports of these organisations?

Mr Browning—You are quite right. Some reports are on a calendar year basis and some are on a financial year basis; and to add to that there are others for odd periods, say, from March one year to 28 February the following year or something like that.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The Advisory Council for Intergovernmental Relations annual report is for the year ending 31 August.

Mr Browning—Yes. In most cases it is after the end of the financial year but you may have to put in several returns during the year.

Mr MARTYR—This may not be one that you are prepared to elaborate on but what about a similar situation with other bodies which are spending public money and which may not, for one reason or another, be required at the moment to report to Parliament? I am talking about something along the lines of the command papers situation. Would you have any advice at all as to how that particular matter might be taken up by members who are interested?

Mr Browning—I suppose what you are referring to is something like that mentioned at the top of page 2 of our submission. There we talk about how the old Department of External Affairs presented annual reports for a couple of years but now the Department of Foreign Affairs does not present any report. It appears to be at the whim of the Permanent Head or the Minister at the time whether or not the reports are presented. I suppose in cases like that, all that the Committee could do is to suggest to the Minister that the report continue to be tabled, but we do not really have any authority over this at all.

Mr Cochran—I think sometimes the Minister, where it is up to him to decide whether a report should be made, takes the view that the preparation of the annual report is taking up more of the resources of his Department than the end result justifies and that it should be getting on with more important things. That type of consideration goes through a Minister's mind.

I think it might help the Committee if I return briefly to Senator Missen's previous question. The tabling provisions in statutes vary depending on when the statute first went on to the statute books. You will find in the provisions of the authorities that were set up in the 1920s that the wording of the Act is substantially different from, and generally much briefer than, the standard provisions relating to the tabling of papers that you find in Bills coming up for your consideration now. Again, provisions in some statutes say that such and such a body shall prepare and present to the Minister an annual report after the end of each financial year and then do not spell out whether it has to be within a particular time, while in other statutes the provision is quite specific and says that the body shall prepare and present to the Minister for presentation to Parliament a report, either by 30 July or within 3 months of the end of the financial year. In fairness to departments and authorities, there are some bodies operating under a statute of some years duration that has not been amended, which are required to prepare a report by such and such a date and in the intervening period, perhaps because of some international obligation, the financial operations of the body concerned have had to work to a different period of time. I am thinking particularly of primary producing boards which have had to adjust their accounting to a season or a harvest, although the Act has not caught up with the practical working of the body concerned and hence they are year by year not meeting the strict letter of the Act.

Senator MISSEN—My attention has been drawn to the question of growing delay. Senator Rae, in the adjournment debate in the Senate on 6 October 1976, page 1073, said:

Two of the reports that were tabled yesterday—the report of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board and the annual report of the Prices Justification Tribunal—exhibited a trend to which I believe attention should be drawn. The reports were presented on 5 October this year, on 30 December last year and on 19 September the year before. There is a tendency for a number of these reports to be presented later and later each year making it more and more difficult for those honourable senators who are interested in matters contained in those reports in relation to the Estimates committees to be able to have those reports taken into account when preparing for the examination of the Estimates. I simply take the opportunity to draw attention to the fact that there is a trend which should be stopped and reversed so that the Senate has the benefit of those annual reports when it is dealing with the Estimates in September or early in October each year.

Is the trend more universal than he refers to in that example? Perhaps the witness would like to comment on this?

Mr Cochran—No. I am unaware of it. It is a problem which has worried succeeding governments. I think everyone acknowledges the need to get these annual reports in time so that there can be proper parliamentary consideration of the related estimates. The growth in Commonwealth activity and the general reporting period, where most of these bodies report to 30 June, produces a bottleneck in July and August, and succeeding governments have tried to keep departments on their toes. There are very strict instructions as to what they should do and for all sorts of reasons some of them tend to not meet those deadlines. I think one of the important things the Committee might consider is just brevity in reports. I readily admit members are interested in the broad scope of policy and perhaps do not sit down and think: 'Is this annual report really telling me as a member what I want to know, or is it telling me far more than I need to know?' Little attention, because of the pressures of time, is given to the actual content of the reports—whether they are really meeting the need. The public servant has probably got very little guidance as to what is expected of him. He does his best, but he does not get much feedback as to whether it is hitting the nail on the head or not. But if reports were briefer the problem of their production by a certain time would be helped.

Senator MISSEN—You may, in fact, have been too kind to us, Mr Cochran, insofar as if they were briefer we might read them. If there were a mass of detail we would not read it all. May I turn to another point, in paragraph 12?

Mr Browning—Before we leave 8, 9 and 10, the statutory papers, I think we need to make an explanation. I think we have the Goldmines Development Assistance Act, and we say 'No reports'. That is a mistake.

Mr Cochran—The submission to the Committee is not correct and we must acknowledge this. The Goldmines Development Assistance Act was an Act of 1962. It is still on the statute book with the requirement that an annual statement be made to the Parliament. But, if you look at other provisions in that statute, it was to operate for only three or four years. So it is on the statute book but the Act ran its course, and without another Act to extend the operation of that Act, it is just not operative at the moment, and therefore that is the reason that there are no reports being presented. I might also add that in the Senate submission there was mention of no reports under various taxation laws. I can understand how the statement has been made that there have been no reports presented under these

Acts. The report of the Commissioner of Taxation, in fact, is an omnibus report in which the Commissioner fulfils his obligations to report, not only on the operations of the Income Tax Assessment Act but on all the other Acts which he administers—the Estate Duty Assessment Act and the other taxing measures. So there are reports being presented quite regularly under those Acts.

Senator MISSEN—In paragraph 12 you say that the fault may lie with the Parliament in regard to the requirement that members be entitled to a copy of each paper presented, even if the member is on the distribution list currently published. Why do you describe it as a fault? Do you agree that members, after all, are elected to represent all their electors? They may chose a group of subjects from which they want papers. If they stopped there they would not have the opportunity of deciding that a particular paper outside that is something in which they ought to take some interest. Do you agree with the proposition that members ought to receive more rather than fewer documents so that their fields of activity will widen or so that they will be in a position at least to make a judgment in regard to a particular paper when it comes along?

Mr Browning—I think what we meant in that paragraph was that there is a duplication.

Senator MISSEN—Yes.

Mr Browning—We are not questioning that every member, if he wants, should receive a copy of each paper. What we are saying in part (b) is that a member may be on the automatic distribution list for parliamentary papers and receive a second copy and so there may be some wastage.

Senator MISSEN—In appendix C you have the distribution arrangements. Can you tell us how many members have chosen to use the new House of Representatives document distribution arrangements as set out in that appendix? Is it too early to assess the success or otherwise of the revised arrangements? For example, what comments have been received from members or has there been any change in the amount of material being returned to the Bills and Papers Office?

Mr Cochran—We do have information on those points. Ninety members have returned the questionnaire to date. Of the 90 members, 41 members have indicated that they wish to continue to receive a copy of all papers presented automatically. Forty-nine members have indicated that they are happy to receive a daily list of the papers presented, and that have become available that day, on which they can indicate

the specific reports they require. On any sitting day we receive about 35 to 40 returns from the 50 members receiving this list to indicate particular reports they want. We have been surprised and delighted at the very favourable response from those members who have opted for the daily list. There have been some members who have been quite outspoken—this was quite unsolicited—and have said that they do not think the body of members should have the option of getting all the papers through this slip. They think that all members should receive the slip and indicate the ones they want.

Senator MISSEN—Following the implementation of this system does your Department still receive the full issue of all the tabled reports? If this is the case why do you feel that this is necessary?

Mr Cochran—We are still continuing to receive the 150-odd copies of each report which, over recent years, we have been receiving. We have continued to receive this number because we felt that the system was still new and we did not want to be caught without oil in our lamps by saying to departments: 'We can get by with twenty or thirty less' and then be embarrassed. The problem—which can be solved I am sure—is that we are having to feed our requirements into all the organisations of departments and statutory authorities. The parliamentary requirements have to go to 200–300 offices and have to cover a general situation. It has to cover a report that becomes quite unexpectedly highly contentious, a situation where a report is highly contentious right from the moment the first word is put down on paper and a situation on pig industry slaughter levy collections which is only of interest to a few members. For practical purposes we opted for the easiest course of saying that we want a standard figure which is really a maximum standard figure. We do return to departments as many copies as we possibly can, either those not issued or those returned to us by members.

Senator MISSEN—Who is responsible for the distribution of the tabled reports in Parliament House? How is it achieved? Is this a joint operation between you and the Senate? There has been some criticism in the Senate of delays in the distribution of *Hansard*. It may be the same people who distribute that. How is the distribution of the tabled reports achieved? Is this a joint operation?

Mr Cochran—No, I can speak only for the House of Representatives. The Government ensures that departments provide us with these

copies for distribution. The copies are in the building, if they are going to be provided, at the time a document is tabled. As soon as it is presented the House of Representatives receives its stock of 150 copies. That stock is divided up into the number required for each attendant's area. The attendant responsible for that area comes down to the Bills and Papers Office and takes up the number that meets the needs of the members he has to serve.

Senator MISSEN—Have you received any adverse comments from members when insufficient copies of a tabled report are available for distribution? In paragraph 14 you speak about occasions during the autumn sittings when there were insufficient copies of 14 reports presented to the Parliament. Do you receive any complaints about that?

Mr Cochran—Yes.

Senator MISSEN—Do you feel that the full supply of 330 copies is still generally desirable at all times?

Mr Cochran—For practical working purposes it solves most of our problems if we have that number.

Mr Browning—But I do not think the tabling of a report, and the report, should be held up just because copies are not available. There can be occasions when it is very important that a report be tabled and there may be only the one copy, but I think members and senators agree that generally it should not be held up.

Senator MISSEN—I was not implying that by and large. You say in paragraph 15 that 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the reports are returned to the Bills and Papers Office. I think the Senate figure was 10 per cent. Can you account for that very considerable discrepancy between the two?

Mr Cochran—I know there is a discrepancy but I cannot account for it. I did inquire again to check on that figure. A surprising number of copies are returned to us, not immediately, but at the end of a period of sittings, when members are cleaning their rooms and sorting things out before they return to their electorates for a long recess, when they have a good clean out of the reports. It would be that sort of return that perhaps bumps up our figure which we have accounted for.

Mr Browning—Our members are very quick readers.

Senator MISSEN—Perhaps we are slow thinkers. It could be, of course, the different type of work of a senator. The committee system may have something to do with this.

Mr Cochran—Quite so.

CHAIRMAN—I am rather intrigued, though, by the statement that 10 per cent approximately of the reports are returned from senators as against the 35 per cent to 40 per cent that are returned by members of the House of Representatives. Do you think it is due to the extra diligence of the senators, or to the fact that they have not got so much work to perform.

Senator MISSEN—They have not all the electoral work.

Mr Browning—Well, we know it is not extra diligence, do we not, Mr Chairman.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—On page 4 of your submission you inferred that the distribution of some of these papers by means of free distribution may require some re-evaluation. I would like to ask whether it is a fact that the 1971 recommendation of this Committee, which has not been adopted by the Parliament, is the reason why the distribution list cannot be used as a suitable guideline for administering a list, and if so, do you feel that any forthcoming recommendation would need the endorsement of Parliament to enable appropriate variations to take place?

Mr Cochran—The backing of the Houses, by their adoption of a report from this Committee, would certainly help where you have the situation of taking off the list a number of people—not a very large number—who have been receiving this service for many, many years. But the Houses' submission would not question the earlier recommendation of this Committee, made in 1971, that the few business houses, commercial organisations, employer and employee organisations, perhaps should not be receiving these things on a complimentary basis in this day and age.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—The last part of the question was: Do you think that any future recommendations of this Committee should be endorsed by the Parliament?

Mr Cochran—It would certainly help. I think—and I stress those words—the reason why the 1971 recommendation has not been implemented is this: That report dealt with the pricing and distribution of parliamentary publications. I think the adoption of the recommendations in relation to pricing and distribution got caught up in the problems with the main recommendation, which related to new pricing arrangements. There were problems in the adoption of the Committee's report on pricing, hence

the other recommendations were not followed through.

Senator MISSEN—Do you think it is possible that the Erwin recommendations are now out of date, and that the public view is that Parliament ought to more freely distribute or make available these sorts of documents? There may be a change in public opinion over the last few years that makes the Erwin recommendations perhaps outdated.

Mr Cochran—The Erwin recommendations were 1963-64 vintage, and for that reason—even more so—they need to be at least considered by this Committee now. But I would certainly say that you have taken up this task at this time and I would think it would be quite proper for you to consider again, without necessarily spending a lot of time on it, what was recommended in 1971.

CHAIRMAN—Do you believe we have a duty to the nation to see that information is disseminated as fully and as freely as possible, and what are the benefits in relation to costs?

Mr Cochran—I think it is important that John Citizen has fairly good access to government documents if he wants them. My interest in that situation really began when I started off in the Bills and Papers Office and I had to help members of Parliament who had to meet requests from constituents for documents. It seemed to me—and some of the members seemed to think so too—that if the man in the street could obtain the document by walking into a shop and putting his money on the counter and letting that talk for itself, and not having to ring or to write asking the member of Parliament to get the document for him, the member would be able to get on with more important work and the man in the street would be happier.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—On page 5, in paragraph 26 you state that the addressees regard the bound volumes as important items in their collections. Is there any reason why the binding of the series is not further advanced than 1971?

Mr Cochran—As I mentioned earlier the method under which we produce the volumes requires us to wait until the last parliamentary paper of the year is published before we can set to to put them together. It seems in each year there are always two or three papers that are slipping well behind. There are no papers of 1972 or 1973 outstanding now. There are 5 papers outstanding for 1974. Since Federation our method of producing the volumes has involved each volume being hand page numbered, manually numbering each alternate page so that the user of the

volume can have a ready reference to a particular paper from the index at the front or from the overall index to the papers presented. This has been by far the most time consuming, and also costly, item of the production of the volumes. We have this year asked the Printer: 'Is there any other way in which this can be done, which avoids the time loss and avoids the cost?' I am pleased to be able to say that we have come up with an arrangement which will not affect the use of the volumes, which will avoid all that manual work in the production, and which will be infinitely cheaper than it has been. We are simply going to put a coloured interleaving sheet between each 2 papers and number the sheets, so that when you go to the index you look for paper No. 5. You go to the green slip there and you have the paper immediately underneath it. This avoids the need in, say, the Coombs Report, to number by hand the 200 pages of the Coombs Report. You will have only one number, for the start of it.

Senator MISSEN—You mention 5 papers from 1974 to 1975 which are still to be printed. Surely that is a pretty outrageous situation. Every year that a volume is delayed means that it will be of less value when it comes out, surely. Why would there be any outstanding matters for 1974 to 1975? What would be the reason for the delay of 2 years?

Mr Cochran—These are Senate papers, as it happens in this case. They could well be House of Representatives papers.

Senator MISSEN—We agree.

Mr Cochran—I do not know whether in these particular cases, they are substantial documents—some of them are quite substantial—and whether the delay is from proofing times. I did say earlier that there can be delay simply from production problems. I will give you an illustration: AGFS, with the blessing of the presiding officers, set down certain standards for papers presented to Parliament. One of those standards is that a department shall not use a cover which folds out. If does have problems when you come to put it into a volume. This is a reasonable request, but on points such as that there are always one or two instances in the 300 papers published in the year where the department, either consciously or unconsciously, has not followed that direction. Then there is a delay. Sometimes it is significant delay in resolving that production problem.

Senator MISSEN—I think it might be useful to the Committee to have a short report on what is the reason for the long delay in regard to the

four to five papers from 1974 to 1975. It might be instructive to us.

Mr Browning—To be fair to the Senate, there was, for instance, in 1971 or before that, a Senate Committee on Off-Shore Petroleum Resources. The evidence of that Committee was ordered to be printed by the Senate. It ran into thousands of pages. Mr Bradshaw will be able to tell us the figure. They had to start from scratch to have it proofed, and then checked. It was quite a job that could take years, as it did.

Senator MISSEN—Whole volumes could be delayed in some cases. Perhaps it could be useful if we could have a subsequent letter on the real causes of the long delays.

Mr Browning—I think in that particular case we were able to leave that evidence to the last volume and go ahead with the production of the other volumes.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Is the time lag or delay in the binding of papers increasing or decreasing?

Mr Cochran—The time lag in the production of papers has been increasing.

Mr Browning—Are you talking about volumes?

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Yes.

Mr Cochran—No, I would say that is static; it is still too long. I mentioned earlier that the decision was made to bind the documents annually, rather than at the end of each session, in order to bring about the regular production of the volume hopefully at an earlier time. This has not been possible, but, as I just mentioned, we are eliminating the need for each alternate page to be manually numbered. I think that is going to make a very significant change and I believe that the production of the volumes will be much improved in the immediate future.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Is the free distribution of the bound volumes governed by the same guidelines associated with the parliamentary papers free distribution list?

Mr Cochran—It is a little more restrictive; it is limited to departments, State Parliaments, the main State libraries, university libraries, and either the national or parliamentary library in overseas countries.

Senator MISSEN—Who determines the free list for the bound volumes?

Mr Cochran—The presiding officers by decision many years ago determined that distribution.

CHAIRMAN—How many volumes are purchased, or are any purchased?

Mr Cochran—The volumes are not available for purchase now. If the man in the street wants to have a volume he places a standing order for all papers with AGPS and with these he will receive all the preliminary pages, the title page and contents page to each volume as part of that service. It is then up to him to take that material to his own bookbinder and have it bound as he wishes.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—If the free distribution list was pruned would it then be possible for the volumes to be purchased from the AGPS?

Mr Cochran—It is quite possible for the decision to be made that the volumes should be available for purchase. The Government is putting aside 200 copies of every document to make up the volumes eventually. Within that limit, of course, they could be available for sale. If the interest in the bound volumes was such, that number could be increased.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Are you aware of any other bodies or authorities that carry out their own binding?

Mr Cochran—No, I am not.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Paragraphs 27 and 34 deal with production times. You comment in paragraph 27 about the times taken to produce parliamentary papers and you give some interesting statistics there. Do you have any statistics yet for 1976 on the production time?

Mr Cochran—No, I am sorry, but we could get that for you. The 1976 figures will be very much influenced by the delay that occurred earlier in the year in the consideration of the new designs for the cover and title pages with which your Committee was concerned. It was not instrumental in any delay but the Committee was asked if it approved of certain new designs. These had as one of the main aims the object of speeding up the whole process.

That initial suggestion was made after the sittings began this year but before we were too far along the track. It was thought, 'Is there time to get a decision on this matter for the 1976 papers, or should it be left to 1977?' It was decided to try to get a decision for the 1976 papers. In fact the final decision did not occur until June, 1976. Therefore there was some hold-up in the papers that had been ordered to be printed during the first half of the year. So any delay figure for 1976 will be influenced by that fairly significant factor.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—But not by production delays at the printing level?

Mr Cochran—No.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—That question is mentioned particularly in paragraph 29, where you talk about the problems with revised proofs. This was something we put to the Senate witnesses too. Do you have anything to add on why this has been necessary?

Mr Cochran—Since the establishment of the publishing service, it has been instrumental in endeavouring to have the total printing requirements of the Commonwealth met as speedily and as efficiently as possible by sending out work to private contract printers wherever the Government Printing Office cannot cope with the volume. As a result a proportion of the work involved with parliamentary papers has been sent to private printers. Prior to that most of the papers were dealt with simply by the Government Printer. There were only 2 stages. We sent the copy to the printer; he provided us with a page proof; we looked at it and sent it back, and the job was run off.

With the proportion of work that is going to private printers, we find there has been an additional stage injected into that program. A copy goes to the publishing service; it is sent to the contract printer; he provides us with a galley proof first, which I understand is just normal commercial practice—I am subject to correction by the publishing service experts on this—we look at the galley proofs, return them, and subsequently receive a page proof. We return that and then the job is done. So there is one more proof stage, as a general rule, in all the work going to contract printers.

Senator MISSEN—I think we asked the Senate witnesses also about the use of contract printers and whether the need to request revised proofs was a regular occurrence. Would you comment on that?

Mr Cochran—The answer is yes. I do not think it is through any fault of the publishing service that the proof we get is deficient. If you were to look at any of the specifications for the work to be done that is sent out to private printers you would be impressed with the detail. Some of the delay, obviously, is incurred in writing those specifications in the first place. The specifications are specific and detailed. It is simply a fact that from time to time private printers do not read the fine text of the print and do not meet the specification. We are fussy and we like to have things right.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The delays that are occasioned by production problems are obviously of concern to people on the distribution lists for the parliamentary papers. Do they also particularly concern the House of Representatives staff, or members of Parliament?

Mr Cochran—Yes. If you remember my opening remarks, and if I expressed myself clearly, then perhaps the point I am going to make will be appreciated. As most reports are now in printed form when they are presented—and the order to print that document as a parliamentary paper is a subsequent action—I think there is a limit to the extent to which the parliamentary departments can push the AGPS to produce the second parliamentary copies, because generally original author copies are available. If they are not available then the point does not hold water and we can push and push to make sure that a particular parliamentary paper comes through as fast as it possibly can. But while there are adequate numbers of copies of the author print of a report available, I feel it is a little unreasonable for us to be insisting on our work taking priority over other jobs which have not yet seen the light of day.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Then is that not really going to directly concern the House Department or members of Parliament? Will it only mean that people who are on the distribution lists for parliamentary papers will be inconvenienced by the delay in production?

Mr Cochran—That is so.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The Senate witnesses seemed to indicate a preference for having all parliamentary paper work done by the Government Printer if that were possible. I mentioned to them the proposal in paragraph 34 of the House of Representatives submission, that if that were not possible then perhaps there could be a small select band of commercial printers who do this work. Do you have any preference for either of those proposals?

Mr Cochran—We would support the Senate in saying that there are obvious advantages to the Parliament if its work is done in Canberra, and more particularly at the Government Printing Office. The solution of day-to-day practical problems is easier if it is done at the Government Printing Office. But that objective is impractical considering the total volume of work, therefore the House suggested that if our work were done by a small group of contract printers who have become familiar with our work, then we should not have too many problems. I think it is desirable that it be in Canberra if at all possible. I

know that the Senate has had some unfortunate experiences with work that has been done—with due respect to Mr Hodges—in Brisbane because proofs have been misplaced on the way. In practical terms, I think we have to accept the fact that some of the work has to be done outside the government service.

CHAIRMAN—Can you say roughly at what stage or what year the work became too much for the Government Printer and a lot of contract work started to go out? Or has there always been some work going to contract printers? I can recall requesting and receiving a list from the Parliamentary Library of all of the reports since 1901 that have been done by both Houses—that is, specific reports by Senate select committees and so forth. From memory I think it was not until the 1940s that we started to see a great number of reports coming forward. Obviously in that first 40 years you could almost count them on the fingers of your 2 hands, but from 1940 onwards, particularly in the last 10 years to 12 years, a tremendous number of reports have come out. Do you have any idea as to when this problem really arose?

Mr Cochran—We are probably not the best people to answer that. I would venture to say that the problems started to become acute in the late 1960s but that is only a layman's answer.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—There was one other question I wanted to ask in relation to the parliamentary papers index. How often is it produced, what is its distribution, who gets it, and when is a final index produced?

Mr Cochran—The index is revised daily after each sitting. It is published twice a year at the end of each period of sittings in a proof form and is finally published at the end of the session. It is kept on a session basis, that is, a session in the strict parliamentary sense of the word which, depending on many considerations—politics play a part—may last for the full 3-year term of a House of Representatives. The final production of a sessional index in that case would take at least 3 years and possibly another year before all the information for the volumes was available to us. But I think it answers your question to say that the index is available and is published twice a year in June and December. It is distributed to people who receive either the Votes, the Journals or parliamentary papers. It would be later without the proof—but we hope it is better than nothing at all. Should any senator, member or library say that they would like to have a copy of the index in a shorter period than 6 months, we do our best to accommodate them.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—So at the end of each period of sittings a proof index is produced and it goes to everybody on the distribution list?

Mr Cochran—Yes.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—But there is not a final one until the end of the session?

Mr Cochran—That is correct.

Mr MARTYR—Are you still satisfied with the guidelines for the distribution of parliamentary papers?

Mr Cochran—Yes. If I interpret your question correctly, the House takes the view that the guidelines recommended by this Committee in 1971 are fair and right.

Mr MARTYR—Are notice papers or votes and proceedings available for sale or subscription or from the AGPS?

Mr Cochran—I should know the answer to that but I cannot answer that question at the moment. I can only suggest that if it pleases the Committee, we will endeavour to get the information.

Senator MISSEN—In your report you say that the free distribution list has not been seriously re-evaluated since 1930 and you say on another page that it seems to have fossilised. Are many things returned with out of date addresses and is there a big problem with out of date addresses?

Mr Cochran—No. Invariably in every month some are returned to the Publishing Service with a note saying that the secretary of such and such an association is no longer at this address. With research you can find that the Association has moved to another building and it continues to get the papers at its new address. They have not taken the trouble to advise us that they have moved. That is constantly going on. We make the point that the groups of people on the list have been standard for many years, but that is not to say that the details of the people and organisations are in any way more out of date than any other distribution list at any given time. It is kept up to date and corrected and adjusted all the time.

Senator MISSEN—How do you keep up to date. say a list of schools, tertiary institutions and other bodies? They are growing fast all over the country. Do you get regular lists from the Department?

Mr Cochran—Again, we are talking across the table and I think we both know what the situation is, but there is a gulf between us. The lists contain only those people in the accepted

category who take the initiative to ask for papers. The fact that there has been a new school established in a new suburb does not automatically mean that it will get any entitlement.

Senator MISSEN—There is no automatic entitlement, I see. The other question I would like to ask is about notice papers, votes and proceedings, journals and so forth? Should not there be a distinction between Bills, which may be of considerable interest because they are new, and notice papers? Are they not documents of a rather limited interest to, for example, schools or other bodies? Is there not a considerable difference between the interest you might find in new Bills that are presented and the rest of these documents, which are of interest to members of Parliament but of very little outside interest?

Mr Cochran—You are quite correct. Addressees, if they are within one of the accepted categories of persons who are able to get these things on a complimentary basis, are asked to indicate which of the publications they require. Sometimes we have difficulty in making the point that they are not really going to be interested in the journals of the Senate. It is human nature to think: 'We are entitled to it; we will have it.'

Mr MARTYR—It is common sense to take the journals of the Senate.

Mr Cochran—It is up to the recipient to indicate which of those publications he wants. If he asks for the lot, apart from trying to steer him in the right direction, if he insists, then that is his right.

Mr MARTYR—The really serious matter is the protection situation. It is clear from the submission that you are all concerned about being committed to the nearest penal establishment and it is a concern that all of us on the Committee share. You have made very plain in the submission what you would have us do and I think you have asked before that this proper protection be afforded you. Is there anything more that you would like to give us in the way of help in putting this forward to the Attorney-General so that you may all be properly protected in doing your duty?

Mr Browning—I do not think it is just a matter of us being protected, it is also a matter of being able to make certain papers available to researchers in the case of papers which have not been ordered to be printed by the House. Both angles come into it. We have had quite a few opinions from the Attorney-General's Department on this, and while I am not free to allow the

Committee to have the opinions without the consent of the Attorney-General's Department, I will just quote, if I may, to indicate what the problem is, if that suits the Committee.

CHAIRMAN—Yes.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Are these advicings from the Department, and not opinions of the Attorney-General?

Mr Browning—No, we are talking about advicings from the Solicitor-General, or the secretary of the department, yes.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—We are much happier with that.

CHAIRMAN—Proceed, Mr Browning. We will disregard that comment.

Mr Browning—We posed the question:

In the case of documents containing defamatory matter that have been presented to the House but have not been ordered to be printed, would the Clerk and other officers of the House enjoy any privilege in an action for defamation brought against them for allowing members of the public and, in particular, persons engaged in legal or historical research to inspect or obtain copies of these documents, either in accordance with standing order 320 of the House of Representatives or otherwise than in accordance with that standing order?

Standing order 320 of the House of Representatives reads:

All papers and documents presented to the House shall be considered public. Papers not ordered to be printed may be inspected at the offices of the House at any time by members, and, with permission of the Speaker, by other persons, and copies thereof or extracts therefrom may be made.

The answer was:

In the case of documents presented to the House after the adoption of the present Standing Orders, that is, 21 March, 1950, there is little doubt that these officers, whether or not they acted in accordance with standing order 320, would not enjoy any privilege by virtue of section 50 of the Constitution or under the Parliamentary Papers Act; even in the case of documents presented before the adoption of standing order 320, it is doubtful that this standing order represents an authorisation of publication for the purposes of section 2 (1) of the Parliamentary Papers Act; however, it is possible that these officers would be entitled to qualified privilege under the general law in respect of publication to persons bona fide engaged in research but the position is not clear.

This is the type of situation we are in. The next question is:

In the case of documents laid before the House and ordered to be printed, would an officer be entitled to any protection under the Parliamentary Papers Act, in the event of his giving a member or other person, either before or after the Government Printer has published the documents (i) copies of documents that were not printed by the Government Printer; or, (ii) copies printed by the Government Printer but not in Parliamentary Paper form, that is to say, not bearing particulars of presentation and order to print, and showing the Parliamentary Paper Number?

The answer to the first part of the question was:

Probably no.

And to the second part of the question:

On the understanding that any documents in this form would have been published by the Government Printer before the House ordered their publication—no.

He sums up later on on these points. He says:

... production of papers tabled in the House for the inspection of members within the precincts of the House would, I think, be protected by Article 9 of the Bill of Rights, whether or not these documents had been ordered to be printed but this protection would not extend to the production of papers for inspection by members of the public. Possibly production of the papers for perusal within the precincts of the House by a person bona fide engaged in research in the subject for academic purposes would be the subject of qualified privilege under the general law but, in the absence of judicial authority on the point, the matter must be regarded as uncertain.

Again:

My view is that the making available to members within the precincts of the House of documents presented to the House is probably protected by Article 9 of the Bill of Rights; this probably also applies to copies made for the use of members within the House. However, it would not apply to the publication of documents to members of the public.

Another problem which I mentioned was where you have reports presented containing defamatory matter which are not ordered to be printed by the House. We had a recent case, in 1974, of a report of an inquiry under the National Security (Enquiries) Regulations by Mr J. B. Barry, K.C. It concerned alleged illegal sales of liquor by certain officers of the Royal Australian Air Force during the Second World War, and applications lodged by 8 officers of the Air Force for permission to resign their commissions. The report was tabled in the House of Representatives but was not ordered to be printed. We received a request from someone to peruse that report. The examination of that report revealed that it contained a number of allegations relating to the conduct of certain officers of the RAAF, some of whom may still be alive, that are clearly defamatory in nature, that is to say, they would cause the persons in question to be held in hatred, ridicule or contempt.

The short reply to whether we could make it available or not was that he was unable to give any assurance that if the report were published by this particular person there would be no possible risk of a subsequent action for defamation. That gives you a general picture of the sort of thing we are running into, and why we think something should be done about it, and why we have been chasing it for the last 13 years. We were a little bit more hopeful, as we say in our report, in 1972 when a draft submission was ready for Cabinet, but it did not go beyond that.

CHAIRMAN—Mr Browning, I believe your concern is shared, as has been stated by Mr Martyr and right around the table. Is it possible that we could have that document, so that we could perhaps consider it in more detail?

Senator MISSEN—Or have we already got it from the extracts that have been read? Perhaps these are sufficient.

Mr Browning—If I may suggest a course of action to the Committee, I think it would be better if you were to call someone from the Attorney-General's Department on this particular matter. There is someone over there who has been handling the Parliamentary Papers Act in

recent years, and no doubt he would be able to give you the benefit of his advice on the present position.

Mr MARTYR—Free, we hope.

CHAIRMAN—Gentlemen, thank you very much. You have been very helpful to us, and I would like to thank you for appearing before the inquiry and for the contributions you have made.

Resolved:

That the Chairman be authorised to approve the supply of proof and/or corrected *Hansard* reports of public proceedings of the Committee's inquiry into the Parliamentary Paper Series, and of submissions presented thereat, to prospective witnesses.

Committee adjourned

CANBERRA

Tuesday, 19 October 1976

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

(Reference: Parliamentary Papers Series)

Present:

Mr Hodges (Chairman)

Senator Archer	Mr Martyr
Senator Donald Cameron	Mr Millar
Senator Missen	Mr Antony Whitlam

CHAIRMAN—Gentlemen, I declare open today's proceedings of the Publications Committee inquiry into the purpose, scope and distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series.

Before taking evidence from the representatives of the Australian Government Publishing Service who are fairly well known, I believe, to this Committee. I welcome you, Mr Nott and your supporting officers. Before we go any further, I do want to draw the attention of the Committee to this particular document that has resulted so soon after the taking of evidence on Friday, 8 October. I understand that this is the first ever committee transcript produced in Australia by means of the computer terminals and I want to offer my congratulations to you, Mr Nott, and to your officers, for producing this transcript in perhaps even slightly less than 4 working days. That must be a record. Thank you once again. It is an excellent production. I have had a look through it in some detail. I know that the other members of the Committee also are impressed by that document and by the time in which it was produced.

Mr Phillip Anthony NOTT, Controller, Australian Government Publishing Service,

Mr Christopher HEMINGWAY, Acting Director, Publishing, Australian Government Publishing Service, and

Mr Frank Derek ATKINSON, Government Printer, Australian Government Publishing Service, were called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—I want to thank Mr Nott for the submission that has been made and I ask whether members of the Committee agree that this submission be included in evidence. There being no objection the submission will be included.

The document read as follows—

Australian Government Publishing Service
Publishing Branch
109 Canberra Avenue, Griffith, A.C.T. 2603
P.O. Box 364, Kingston, A.C.T. 2604
Telephone 93 2022
Telex AAS2013
Reference: 76/654
13 August 1976

Mr J. Hodges, M.P.
Chairman
Joint Committee on Publications
Parliament House
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Mr Hodges

In answer to your letter of 18 June regarding the Joint Committee's inquiry into matters associated with the production of Parliamentary Papers, the Publishing Service offers the following observations:

- (a) We agree with principles as stated. The only kind of publication which might be missed under this definition is one which emanates from Parliament itself; perhaps this category could be added.

- The Publishing Service would not wish to amend the principles described in paras 1 (b), (c) and (d).
2. The Publishing Service is not in favour of decreasing the number of documents as in (a) nor of increasing the number as in (b). But it does believe that there is a case for the tabling of "Ministerial" papers as recommended by the Joint Committee. We see Ministerial Papers as falling into two categories: policy papers (white papers) and discussion papers (green papers). We envisage that they would be tabled but would not be included in the Parliamentary Paper series.
 3. At present the availability of Parliamentary Papers is not satisfactory because of the time lag which unavoidably exists between the publication of a document as a departmental publication and the publication of the Parliamentary Paper version. The recently introduced standardisation of cover and title page layouts of Parliamentary Papers will reduce the time lag—but will not obviate it altogether. A possible solution may lie in the suggestion discussed under 5 (a) below.
 4. (a) No comment.
 - (b) The average sales of Parliamentary Papers to the public are low compared with the free distribution, which varies from 380 to 455 copies according to distribution list. In the light of recent government directives on economies the number of free copies could probably be reduced, which in turn may increase the number of copies sold.
 - (c) No comment.
 - (d) The question of protection against civil or criminal proceedings was raised in 1974 with the Attorney-General's Department and the attached reply from the Department of Business and Consumer Affairs, which was at the time responsible for copyright matters, is relevant.
 5. (a) Some time ago discussions were held between officers from Parliament and AGPS on whether the Parliamentary Papers series should continue in its present form. The production of two versions of the same report, the "departmental" and "Parliamentary" versions, results in considerable duplication of effort by the printer, AGPS and Parliamentary officers. This in turn delays the availability of the Parliamentary Paper to the public. If a way could be found to place the necessary Parliamentary Paper identification (e.g. details of presentation and Parliamentary Paper number) on the departmental version when it was being printed, the extra cost and time would be saved. To adopt such a proposal would mean abandoning the distinctive blue Parliamentary Paper cover and the series would be less readily identifiable than it is at the moment; furthermore, changes in procedures in both Houses would be needed. Nevertheless, the Publishing Service would like the matter to be further investigated.
 - (b) In recent years there has been a marked increase in the number of reports presented to Parliament in typewritten form and reproduced as a printed document by photographically reproducing the typescript. The Joint Committee agreed in principle that where the standard was adequate Parliamentary Papers could be printed in this form and the Publishing Service issued its Circular No 24 in September 1975 to establish the principles to be followed and the standards to be

observed when preparing copy for reproduction in this manner. Publication of this circular is having two results: one, the standard of "camera-ready" copy submitted to AGPS is steadily improving; two, the number of reports so prepared is increasing even further. In many cases the Publishing Service has had to dissuade departments from having their reports reproduced directly from typewritten copy (particularly with long reports) because of increases in cost associated with this method of production. These arise because typewritten reports make substantially more pages than they would in printers' type. Furthermore, under existing pricing arrangements it is necessary to raise the selling price to a level far above what it would have been had the publication been typeset. It may be that further guidelines are needed to restrict the occasions where typewritten publications are acceptable, particularly as there is an expectation that an extension of the practice may draw serious adverse reactions from the printing trades union.

I appreciate the invitation for the Publishing Service to make submissions on copies outside the terms of reference of the present inquiry. At the present time there is no such matter we wish to raise.

Yours sincerely
JOHN PITSON
for (B. P. Shurman)
Director, Publishing

Department of Business and Consumer Affairs
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
Please Quote 74/2156

Your Ref:
Tel: 61 9111
19 Jan. 1976

The Director (Publishing),
Australian Government Publishing Service
P.O. Box 84
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

COPYRIGHT IN PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

I refer to discussions officers of the Publishing Service have had with Mr McKenzie of the Attorney-General's Department following his memorandum to the Publishing Service of 12 July 1974 on the above matter. The memorandum gave advice on the questions:

- (a) whether the provisions of the Copyright Act dealing with Crown copyright apply to Parliamentary papers and
 - (b) the duration of copyright in Australian Government publications published before 1969.
2. I wish to inform you, following further consideration of those questions, that the legal position is clarified further as follows:—
3. The short answers to your questions are:
 - (a) whether the provisions of the Copyright Act dealing with Crown copyright apply to Parliamentary papers will depend on the circumstances of the creation of the document
 - (b) the duration of copyright in Australian Government publications published before 1969 is 50 years from the date of first publication of the work.
 4. Assuming that each Parliamentary paper is an original work under the Copyright Act 1968-73, copyright in Parliamentary papers would normally reside in the authors of the papers or other copyright proprietors recognized in the Act, such as the Commonwealth of Australia. Whether the copyright resides in a person other than the individual author (or

authors) such as the employer of such an author (or authors) or in the Commonwealth, for example, will depend on the circumstances of the creation of the document. For instance, the Commonwealth will have copyright in original works made by, or under the direction or control of, the Commonwealth.

5. Copyright will normally subsist in a published work, including a published Parliamentary paper, for a period of the life of the author and 50 years after the expiration of the calendar year in which the author of the work died, but in the case of publications in which the Commonwealth has copyright, the period of protection is 50 years from the expiration of the year in which the work was first published. This latter period also applies to work in which the Commonwealth has copyright which were published before 1969.

6. Under section 2 of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1968-1963, it is lawful for a Committee of either House or both Houses of Parliament, or for the Senate or House of Representatives to authorize publication of any document laid before such a Committee for the House respectively, and by virtue of section 4, no action or proceeding, civil or criminal shall lie against any person for publishing any document or evidence published under an authority given in pursuance of section 2 of this Act. The effect of the Act is that the publication of a document authorized in the above way does not amount to an infringement of any copyright in the document. However, any subsequent reproduction or publication of the document by a person not so authorized would amount to an infringement of copyright in the document.

7. I confirm also the advice given in paragraph 6 of the memorandum of 12 July 1974.

J. S. GILCHRIST
for Secretary

CHAIRMAN—In the early part of your submission you state that with one small exception, namely, the inclusion of papers emanating from Parliament itself, the principles followed by the Committee when recommending certain reports to Parliament for printing do not require amendment. Is this an assessment of the Australian Government Publishing Service which your officers have been able to make as a result of their own considerable experience, or is it as a result of contact made with outside persons and institutions to which the AGPS distributes the Parliamentary Papers Series?

Mr Nott—I think it would be a little of both, and it is certainly put forward in the understanding that really the assessment of principles of this kind is a matter for people in the Parliament itself to a much greater extent than it is for the Publishing Service, which, to a great extent, simply carries out instructions given to it by the Parliament. In mentioning these principles may I say that the more we have thought about the whole matter of parliamentary papers, the more we have had some second thoughts. I do not know whether this would be the opportune moment to bring them forward.

The submission was made in August, at a time when I was not on duty, and there are just one or two thoughts that I might add, if the Committee

is interested in my doing so, either now, or later, as you wish.

CHAIRMAN—You may proceed now, if you like.

Mr Nott—The point that I think must be of considerable interest to the Committee—and from the evidence that has been given I see that some attention has been given to the point already—is whether or not the whole concept of Parliamentary papers is as appropriate today as it obviously was a number of years ago. There have been so many changes in arrangements and procedures that when I reconsider the fundamental purposes that the series is meant to serve I find myself in some doubt as to whether change has not caught up with the series to some extent. Certainly one can understand the necessity for Parliament to compile full sets and detailed records of all the papers being presented to Parliament and subsequently being ordered to be printed, but the availability of material of this nature to the general public and to interest groups throughout the community has certainly changed considerably over the years.

I imagine that when the Parliamentary Papers Series was started the general public would have had considerable difficulty, had it not been for the existence of that series, in discovering what papers were being tabled and when and where they could obtain copies of them. So at that time obviously there was a very clear argument for such a series. However, today we find that more and more departments are producing these reports and other documents which subsequently are tabled and then become part of the series, producing them in very considerable numbers and giving them a very wide circulation. Since the establishment of AGPS, through the opening of bookshops and further development of the mail order service, and so on, we have perhaps assisted this process of a wider distribution of many of the items that come before Parliament. So I think it is probably no longer true that the general public would have the same kind of difficulty in getting access to documents of this kind.

So long as the series is a requirement separate and distinct from the normal departmental requirement of producing numbers of copies for distribution, there must be some element of duplication, and this, of course, is the thing that gives me cause to reconsider the rationale of the series, and I wonder more and more whether an alternative arrangement might be feasible, if it were thoroughly explored. Let me say straight away that I have not thoroughly thought through

this, but I wonder whether it would not be possible for the parliamentary departments to make collections of documents as they are being tabled and to have them available. I imagine the existing numbers for tabling could be varied without a great deal of difficulty by contact with the tabling Ministers and their departments, and then for the Publishing Service merely to offer a binding service to people who collect these documents and need to have them in series. If they could get them bound conveniently, through some sort of a subscription service, and were able to get, either from Parliament or from ourselves, a full listing of the documents making up the series of tabled documents within a period of, say, a year, I wonder whether the public would not be as well served, in many cases, as it is now. Certainly this would eliminate the need for dual editions which, I think, have given the Committee quite some cause to reflect over the last few years and do cause some delays, some distribution problems, some duplications in distribution and maybe some unnecessary expense. If I have made that point clear, perhaps I could leave it, and I shall be very glad to answer any questions the Committee may ask on it.

CHAIRMAN—There are no questions at this stage; a little later we might get into that area. Recently AGPS have put out a number of circulars which in some way or other deal with the series. Have you had any feedback from departments or instrumentalities with regard to their inclusion, or perhaps even more importantly have they been critical that they have not had their reports included in the series?

Mr Nott—It is not general feedback about standards to which you are referring?

CHAIRMAN—No, more the inclusion or non-inclusion of reports in the Parliamentary Papers Series.

Mr Nott—I must confess I have not been aware of any specific feedback on that point, but I would like to refer to my colleagues, if I may.

Mr Hemingway—There has not been any.

Mr Nott—No, we have not had any complaints or references from departments on that point.

CHAIRMAN—Then do you feel that the important objectives of the series are appreciated or understood by departments and instrumentalities?

Mr Nott—I am not sure they appreciate the philosophical necessity for the series; they understand, of course, that it is a requirement of them

whenever their Minister decides to table a document to produce 330 copies for tabling and subsequently to enter into arrangements, mostly through AGPS, for production of a parliamentary papers version of the document they have tabled. It seems to me that the departments themselves, having produced a departmental edition, are probably less concerned with what will happen subsequently through the PP edition.

CHAIRMAN—There is obviously no shortage of pride insofar as the departments are concerned at the time of production of departmental copy. What you are saying is that they do not really show any great concern as to what happens thereafter?

Mr Nott—That is how it seems to me.

Senator TEHAN—In paragraph 2 of your submission you refer to a suggestion by the Erwin Committee, which recommended the creation of Ministerial Papers Series, which would consist of any document which individual Ministers would wish to be included and which after presentation would be printed as a ministerial paper. As I understand the position under the Erwin Report, the test of whether or not you would call it a ministerial paper would be whether the Minister himself personally declared that it should be included in the series. Am I correct in that assumption, or is some other test applied?

Mr Nott—I believe that is true. It is, of course, distinct from other papers which might be authorised for inclusion in the series by command; it is quite a different grouping of papers. Yes, I think you are correct.

Senator TEHAN—Are you recommending that the Committee should recommend to Ministers that such reports as you refer to in the submission should have the appropriate White Paper or Green Paper tag indicated? Excepting the large ministerial papers, how would you differentiate between a White Paper and a Green Paper tag? What is your suggested distinction?

Mr Nott—This is something which is currently receiving consideration through the workings of an interdepartmental committee, as you are probably aware, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has the carriage of the work of that committee. The committee has met once, I believe, and the members have gone away to think through the subject in more depth, and I believe that further formal meetings will be held. There has been a great deal of discussion at the first meeting, and in papers presented to that meeting concerning White Papers and Green Papers, and even Orange Papers, I believe, have

also been referred to. I think Canada produces Orange Papers. The distinction that I believe most people have in their minds is based on practice in Britain. That is that a White Paper represents a statement by the government of established policy. A Green Paper, on the contrary, is more of a discussion paper conveying options for discussion by all interested parties.

Senator TEHAN—That is the demarcation you suggested in your submission?

Mr Nott—I am not at all sure that out of the discussions of this interdepartmental committee will come recommendations, along the precise lines that there should be White and Green Papers. There has been a body of opinion suggesting that the whole thing is too confusing for the public, and the colour of the paper does not really have much significance. It might be better to use different descriptive titles for the series.

CHAIRMAN—You mention the appearance of Orange Papers. What do they normally involve?

Mr Nott—I did ask that. I think the answer was that it was somewhere between a White Paper and a Green Paper; I am afraid I cannot take you any further than that at the moment.

Senator TEHAN—Assuming that your demarcation categories were adopted, are you suggesting that the White Papers should be treated as ministerial papers within the meaning of the Erwin Report, and that the others would not fall into that category but would be called something else for the purpose of printing?

Mr Nott—That is so.

Senator TEHAN—We realise what happens with the ministerial papers as such. But what is your suggestion with regard to the Green Paper? How would you propose that it be dealt with?

Mr Nott—I would imagine the Green Papers would be produced on the authority of the relevant Minister in sufficient number to achieve a fairly wide circulation. This would mean that the department concerned would approach AGPS, give us the text of the paper and request us to print it. They would then, presumably, distribute it largely free, although we would hope that there would be a selling market for it too and that therefore we would have copies in the shops and in our normal distribution system for sale.

Senator TEHAN—They would in effect be a separate series, I take it.

Mr Nott—Yes, I think so.

Mr MARTYR—Do you feel that the low sales of parliamentary papers are the result of the frequent availability of the departmental versions?

Mr Nott—Partly, but there would be other reasons, also. I think there must be numbers of people in the community who would be interested only in certain subjects, and would not want to buy the entire range of parliamentary papers. In addition the price is perhaps to some people a minor deterrent, although they are not expensive; most of these documents come out in \$3, \$4 and \$5 ranges, and that should not be too much of a problem for a normal person who has an interest.

Mr MARTYR—Would a reason be that the parliamentary paper version is available only many months later?

Mr Nott—I would think it is. There is an element of causality in that. The immediate topicality of the subject matter may, in some cases, have vanished by the time the PP edition comes out. But it would be true in those cases that the availability of the earlier departmental version—in most but not all cases—should have enabled the public to become aware of the subject as they wished.

Mr MARTYR—Do you have any idea of the proportion of your sales which are due to direct subscription to you and the proportion of sales through the bookshops?

Mr Nott—Yes, I believe Mr Hemingway has some statistics of sales.

Mr MARTYR—Could we discover whether the bookshops actually gain subscribers? Do you have a delineation between the subscribers the bookshop bring in and the people who write directly to you, and do not use the bookshop?

Mr Nott—People may lodge a request at a bookshop and it will then be forwarded to Canberra to the mail order service where subscription arrangements are handled. Probably because the availability of these series is picked up in our promotional literature through monthly lists and so on, which are widely circulated through the mail, most of the requests are, in fact, lodged directly in Canberra.

Certainly people may inquire at a shop, indicate their interest and be given a subscription. I should perhaps explain also that at present the bookshops themselves do not handle any form of mail orders. They are not staffed or equipped to do so; they are entirely counter sales units and can do no more really than refer on to Canberra requests even for an individual title, and certainly that is true for subscriptions.

Mr Hemingway—At present subscription sales of parliamentary papers are not subscriptions in actual fact; they are forward orders. There is no current subscription to the Parliamentary Papers Series as such because of the high cost, so we have adopted a forward ordering procedure and currently there are 40 standing orders for parliamentary papers. The people lodging those 40 standing orders would receive a copy of each parliamentary paper as it is published and becomes available, for the normal recommended retail price, less a discount of 20 per cent.

Mr MARTYR—That is for the forward order?

Mr Hemingway—Yes. Though at present sales in bookshops are not high, according to a recent very quick survey we are selling, per month, about 350 to 360 parliamentary papers in all bookshops; a total of about 350 a month. The average number of copies sold per bookshop, of course, is very small—one copy per month in some instances. The greater sales were in Sydney. Probably 150 of the 350 sales would be from the Sydney area. They range from 20 sales per individual bookshop up to about 150 sales for the Sydney bookshop. The number is not very great compared with sales of other government publications.

Mr MARTYR—Do you have any opinion about the bookshops' function in the scheme of things? The sales do not seem to be much of a justification for what must be pretty high costs.

Mr Nott—The bookshops are not, of course, justified through sales of parliamentary papers alone; annually they are in fact selling publications of a total value of about \$700,000. Most of these would be departmental publications, reports of royal commissions and committees of inquiry—quite a wide range—including, of course, overseas agency items from HMSO, New Zealand, and Canada, and some United Nations publications too. So it is true that the contribution being made by sales of parliamentary papers is very small, and we would not rely on them as even a small justification for the existence of the shops.

Mr MARTYR—Do many subscribers take all parliamentary papers? You have told us about the 40 standing orders, so I suppose that would be the answer to that question, would it not?

Mr Nott—That is right.

Mr MARTYR—What sort of people are these? You have not the subscription list?

Mr Hemingway—No.

Mr MARTYR—There might be some shame for us all if we found out who they were.

Mr Nott—If the Committee needs information at that point we would be happy to analyse the advance orders.

Mr MARTYR—Do you purchase the sales copies of parliamentary papers in the normal manner, that is, at run-on cost?

Mr Hemingway—Yes.

Mr MARTYR—Is your sale price of the parliamentary papers calculated with your own selling formula of 3 times run on?

Mr Nott—Yes, it is, with the single exception that for people who give an advance order for the entire series we allow them 20 per cent discount off the total recommended retail price for all volumes.

Mr MARTYR—In your submission, in paragraph 4 you state:

In the light of recent government directives on economies the number of free copies could probably be reduced, which in turn may increase the number of copies sold.

Do you have any suggestions as to which category of recipient could be excluded?

Mr Nott—No. In my own mind this ties back to what I was saying before. I would want to make sure that recipients were not getting a double serve, one from the departmental issue and one from the blue copy parliamentary paper version later. I think that would be entirely wasteful. A little analysis would probably show some categories of people—maybe members and senators would be two such categories—who frequently receive 2 issues of the same document. Other than that, no. Free distribution is not something where in the past AGPS has been very deeply involved, although that does seem to be changing at the direction of the Government now. We are being asked to take a much more detailed interest in the make-up of distribution lists of papers issued and we are trying to persuade departments that there are other, and perhaps better, ways of achieving knowledge of publications throughout the community, particularly transferring from free issue more over to sale. I am not too sure we have identified any specific categories that we would say should be excluded completely from free issues.

Mr MARTYR—Could you give us some details of your report deposit system with university and other libraries?

Mr Nott—Certainly. For the last 18 months or 2 years perhaps we have provided a copy of every publication passing through the hands of AGPS to each university—I think there are 19 universities. That is done fairly automatically at the point where publications come off the press.

We ourselves package them and dispatch them under suitable labels, so that they are quickly recognised for what they are when the libraries or universities receive them. In addition to the 19 universities, we provide to each of the main State public libraries one free issue copy of every government publication passing through AGPS hands, and that would include the departmental version of many items which later become parliamentary papers.

Mr MARTYR—Would it include an extra copy if a university had 2 libraries?

Mr Nott—No, so far the scheme is only extended to one copy for the main library of each university.

Mr MARTYR—You will recall the 1971 recommendation of the Committee in which categories for the free distribution of parliamentary publications are lumped together as a common guideline. Do you feel the peculiarities of the Parliamentary Papers Series would warrant a separate guideline or do you feel that the conclusions reached by the Committee are still valid and should apply today?

Mr Nott—My feeling would be that the parliamentary papers distribution should be looked at separately in the full light of the objectives that they are intended to serve, the Committee's views on the proper target audiences for these documents and the Committee's assessment of the alternative availability of such documents to the people who are tending to receive them today.

Short adjournment

Mr MILLAR—In paragraph 5(a) of your submission you explore, to some extent, the possibilities of rationalisation of the departmental and parliamentary versions of the same report. You refer to the procedures of both Houses which would require change if the overprint system was to be implemented. Are you referring to departmental changes or parliamentary changes?

Mr Nott—May I ask Mr Hemingway to take that question. I am not too sure what was in the minds of AGPS people when that paragraph was written. Perhaps Mr Hemingway can help.

Mr Hemingway—We were, in part at least, referring to some changes that would be necessary on the part of departments in designing covers. This would be one aspect of the question. This can be done in several ways. There are some difficulties involved in this. It is a simple

enough operation as far as government departments are concerned, because government departments invariably publish their annual reports through AGPS in the proper manner as laid down in AGPS circulars. There would be difficulties with some of the statutory corporations whose annual reports also appear in the Parliamentary Papers Series. Statutory corporations do not come through AGPS in the first place for the production of their annual reports. Therefore we have no influence over the design of covers for annual reports of those statutory corporations which attend to their own printing requirements. On the matter of overprinting, we were not considering so much the overprinting of the covers of parliamentary papers as some other form of attachment to the cover. This would be an overprinted attachment, such as a label, carrying the parliamentary paper tabling details. It would be a much simpler operation. That would largely be the answer to the statutory corporations who produce quite fancy covers on their reports. We have some examples here. We have the Commonwealth Railways Annual Report, 1973-74, and the parliamentary paper edition of the same Report. If that edition were to be dropped, the parliamentary paper details could be incorporated on copies of the annual report as originally printed, and sufficient copies could be printed to cater for the parliamentary paper requirements, with that label attached to the cover.

CHAIRMAN—Could you describe what is on that label and its approximate size?

Mr Hemingway—Yes. The size, of course, is open to discussion. These are only samples that we have attached to these particular publications as an indication of the type of thing that could be done. The label would be designed to suit the wishes of the Committee and to incorporate the necessary details that would have to be attached to those copies of the original report to turn them into Parliamentary Papers Series. If such a system were adopted, the labels could be adhesive, printed immediately the report was tabled, or ordered to be printed by the Committee. Those details could then be printed very rapidly on the labels in the required quantities and attached to copies of the original document held in store for this purpose. There would be a great saving in time.

Mr MILLAR—I ask Mr Atkinson, I ask you as Government Printer, for a comment on the technical aspects of such a proposal.

Mr Atkinson—It is feasible to put self-adhesive labels on to many types of materials.

We are currently experimenting with an adhesive label which will attach to anything and not be able to be removed. But I wonder whether the Committee would wish to have this kind of label attached anyway, irrespective of the technical side of it. I do not know whether the attachment of a label would comply with the requirements for printing and publishing, as such, contained in the Act. Certainly it would save time because you are adhering a label only to a cover of a particular document. But it does not overcome the problem that you encounter with publications which are not prepared in the prescribed form, which have to be handled separately as parliamentary papers. You have to come up with some standard cover anyway. So this would overcome perhaps some of the problems associated with reports which are supplied and tabled in the House and need to be in sufficient quantities to be handled in the Parliamentary Papers Series as well as for the free distribution to members and so forth. But I do not know that it would overcome the last problem. Technically it can be done. I do not know whether the Committee would see this as being a means of lowering the standards of parliamentary publications. I think the Committee needs to take a broad look at this.

Mr MILLAR—The question remains as to whether the document might not be legitimate.

Mr Atkinson—I think you need to have a look at this, because it is quite a serious consideration. What does the word 'print' mean and what does the word 'publish' mean? If it means adhering a label to something and technically it is possible then it could be done.

Mr MILLAR—If the body of a document was incorporated into a parliamentary paper under this rationalisation, you would have options of attaching a second cover or perhaps removing entirely the original cover?

Mr Atkinson—No. I think removing the cover is going back a step. I would be in favour of enclosing any report with the parliamentary paper cover and title page. When you open it up you would have the necessary requirements for the Parliamentary Papers Act but you also have contained in it the original report complete with its glossy cover and any associated material. This would be one way of speeding up some of the existing arrangements where it is necessary to call the material in and to take off covers, or alternatively to hold material that has been printed by another printer and to overprint the

title pages and the covers and put them on separately. I think it would be better to receive a complete report and to attach to it, or to encase that report in, a parliamentary paper cover and title page rather than to try to do it as it is being done at the present time.

Mr MILLAR—If the rationalisation proposition is pursued, what cost and time savings would be effected, in your estimation, in co-ordinating the departmental publication with the parliamentary requirement, by substituting covers or by whatever practice might be adopted?

Mr Atkinson—That is not an easy one to answer. It depends on whether I am responsible for producing all of the material or not. At the moment it is certainly spread around. I can only answer for my own part. For those things that I undertake, it would make life a lot easier. We would be able to push the work through much more rapidly than we have been able to do before. I could not give you an estimate of time without getting right down into details, but I would be prepared to provide this sort of information to you.

Mr MILLAR—Would you be willing to describe the savings in both cost and time as substantial or significant?

Mr Atkinson—No. I prefer not to use those words. They are a little loose. By 'substantial' you and I may mean something entirely different. I prefer to come out with some hard facts and say: 'This is what it costs now and this is what it will cost by this technique or another technique'. Then you have something on which you can deliberate. But to say 'substantial' could be quite misleading.

Mr MILLAR—The figures are not available at this stage?

Mr Atkinson—We have not costed anything out along those lines because really we wanted to get the Committee's thoughts on what was the best way to go.

CHAIRMAN—Could you undertake to provide for the Committee some specific costs?

Mr Atkinson—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—Would you express a personal opinion on the appearance of the covers of these 2 reports—the original departmental version with the sticker, as against the standard blue cover printed with the Parliamentary Papers Series?

Mr Nott—I think two things are involved here: There is no doubt in my mind that from a librarian's point of view there is a lot to be said for

having an instantly recognisable series, recognisable simply by appearance, and some degree of standardisation of approach and appearance. But after all, librarians are only a small portion of the total interested groups who do receive these publications. In regard to the other side of it, when one gets from free issue to sale, I have no doubt at all that most of the jackets provided by designers at the request of departments are far more attractive and are more likely to influence people to pick up a copy in the shop and find out what is in it. I am sure that the sight of these very Public Service covers, if I might use that awkward adjective, in our shops puts people off—there are just so many, and you have to read the title very carefully to discover what the publication is about.

One picture tells more than 1000 words, and most of these other covers would, I think, induce people more and more to pick them up, browse and perhaps buy them. I think it boils down then to a question of whether one is considering the long-term archival and records value in the long term in this type of series, or whether one's main concern is to ensure that the general public values them, gets hold of them, takes them home, reads them and becomes familiar with the issues that are being discussed and so on.

Mr MILLAR—On that basis, then, you might expect some opposition, or a reluctance to co-operate, from the departments in having to meet some strictures on universal binding or cover presentation.

Mr Nott—I believe that is so. Departments do not mind very much so long as they are not prevented from producing the colourful version first, because their public relations requirements, their need to interest people in what they are saying on behalf of the government of the day can be met quite comfortably by that departmental version; but if we were to slap a standard blue cover around this and departments were forced, shall we say, to distribute only that blue covered copy, then I think they would object.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Mr Nott, at a recent hearing of the Committee we received submissions regarding the escalating costs of the Parliamentary Papers Series. Could you provide the Committee with the main reasons why the cost of producing the series has gone from approximately \$107,000 in 1970-71 to \$730,000 in 1975-76?

Mr Nott—There are a number of factors operating here. I believe the most important factor is the increasing size of individual parliamentary papers over the years. Let us pick just one

example, the Public Service Board report. Some years ago it was perhaps 120 to 140 pages, but in these years it is never under 240 pages, and I think the last one I saw had 260 pages; so you have more than doubled your costs straight away for things like typesetting, the quantity of paper that is being used, the printing process—and have probably increased the costs of binding as well. In addition to that, there has been some small increase in the number of parliamentary publications, which the Committee has noted, and the earlier submissions provide figures on that increase which is no more than perhaps 20 per cent over the years you are talking about.

On top of those two factors there has been a general increase in costs, with which we are all familiar, and the printing industry has been no exception. The costs of typesetting, printing and binding have increased very significantly, over the last few years in particular. It is not unusual to find that last year's contract, when re-let this year, is up by 30 per cent to 40 per cent when everything is taken into account.

If you need more detail on the effects of these costs, Mr Hemingway may be able to offer it, but I think those are the three most important things that would occur to me as influencing the total costs. One other thing, if I might bring it in also, is the increasing tendency of departments to table a typewritten version, which is then typeset from scratch and issued later as a fully typeset and printed parliamentary paper. This has meant that the cost to Parliament is considerably higher than it was. The proportion of reports or parliamentary papers treated in that way has increased significantly in the last 2 or 3 years. Maybe to some extent we have encouraged that by the issue of the standards document dealing with the method of preparing typewritten copy for inclusion in tabled documents, but, whatever the cause may be, certainly many more are being done in that way so that the burden of the cost is being shifted from the originating departments to Parliament. I think that is another factor that would have to be separately evaluated.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—We have heard evidence also on the time lag in the handling of parliamentary papers, which has been steadily increasing. Could you give the Committee an indication of why the average time taken to produce a parliamentary paper has gone from 2.7 months in 1964 to 6.4 months in 1970 and up to 8.5 months in 1975? It is probably obvious that some of the time lag is due to additional publication activity by the Commonwealth. Could you volunteer any other reasons that would account for the delay?

Mr Nott—Yes. Again there are many factors involved here. The process of producing one of these parliamentary papers might be divided into several different compartments. First of all, after the Committee or Parliament orders an item to be printed, there will be some time lag until authorisation reaches AGPS and the printer, and the final copy is made available. Sometimes that wait will be quite considerable; at other times it will be a week or two weeks. How long it may take before we can be authorised to go ahead even depends, of course, on the frequency of this Committee's meetings. Then, further time is taken during the design stages. One might think that not much design is involved—and there is not, in many of these publications—but AGPS has been at fault here, through lack of resources. At times there has been a bank up of papers awaiting the designs of covers, for example. Somebody has to arrange the typography, the disposition of the different items on the cover and the layout of the title page with its various imprints, and there have been times when our design unit has not been able to cope with a stream of these as well as all the other jobs that are going through design. We have been culpable there.

The contracting phase or placement with the Government Printer, whichever is done—and there is a lot of both—has not really held us up very much because, if we are dealing with the Government Printer, we do not have to specify in massive detail. He is familiar with the way in which these items are required and he can go ahead. Similarly, in the case of our commercial printers, we have adopted the practice of using bulk standing contracts with a number of printers in all States for homogeneous categories of printing, and this happens to be one of them. We have a contract for B5 size reports, mainly typed with not too much in the way of illustration but some illustrations can be included. We can go instantly to these people without having to go through the hoops of calling for quotations or tenders. They are already approved contractors, so it is simply a matter of getting the copy out to them, and away they go.

The printer himself will take several weeks, and a lot depends here on the general state of the industry. The statistics on this would vary, depending on which years you selected. There are times when these printers are really busy and our work cannot be handled quite as fast as at other times. The same thing applies of course to the Government Printer. But, generally speaking, that would account only for a matter of several weeks. Once the proofs start to flow back

again delays can take place. It would not be unusual for proofs to be held by one of the parliamentary departments for several months at times. There are often obstacles in the way of completing the preparation of the material even after it has reached proof stage. All sorts of political matters apparently can come into it. We do not always know the reasons. But we have on our books a surprising number of parliamentary papers still outstanding which have been with parliamentary departments for 6 months, 8 months or 10 months at proof stage. We could give examples if the Committee wanted them but I am sure you are aware of that side of it too.

Then after galleys and page proofs are cleared, the final printing goes ahead. At all of these stages some delays may occur. As I have said, the picture or the trend may change a little depending on the years selected. On top of this there have been problems of resources generally and an increasing tightening of the availability of people to handle these things. Perhaps the final point I would make is that the general atmosphere for producing parliamentary papers, regrettable though this is, is not one of urgency and speed, probably because, as we were saying earlier, of the prior availability of other versions of the same material. There is a tendency for everybody, whether in the parliamentary departments or in our printing office or in the publishing branch, to think: 'There is something of higher priority than this; we must attend to that first. We know that there is that large list of parliamentary papers still to be produced but nobody is pressing us terribly hard for them, they have been given due public circulation.' So this material just takes its turn. It is unfortunate, but that does tend to happen.

CHAIRMAN—On this matter of the tardiness of departments in relation to the return of proofs, do you think this is done deliberately? Obviously you people would like to get the job off your plate. Do you chase them up? Or does this result mainly from the delay from the time the material is submitted to you? Perhaps they receive the proofs and then perhaps Government thinking or policy changes and they hold them until certain matters are clarified. Obviously if the material is taken to you people it is correct at the particular time, or it should be.

Mr Nott—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—Then if you were to produce the proofs within a short space of time surely they could proof read them and return them to you and the job would proceed to completion. Could you elaborate a little on this problem?

Mr Nott—As I said, I am afraid we do not always know what the reasons are behind the delay. I have suspected that a lot of it is simply the massive flow of similar classes of work to be handled with no apparent degree of high urgency. But we do know of some individual cases where there have been, we are told, other factors intruding. You have mentioned changes of political direction or judgment. It is quite easy to have one or two publications missing out of a series, which is rather awkward when we are setting ourselves up to produce a series and to market it as a series. As you well know, there are some individual papers missing as far back as 1971 for all sorts of reasons. But the reasons, I think, would be far better known to the parliamentary departments. I am sure it is never deliberate in the sense of trying to hold back the flow of these things. All of us would like to see them moved through more quickly. But there do seem to be due reasons from time to time why the flow is interrupted.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—The Committee has been advised that on occasions some statutory authorities have ignored the AGPS directions contained in your circular 23 and this can often involve needless expenditure by the parliamentary departments in producing the Parliamentary Papers Series. Could you inform the Committee why your circular is ignored and which guidelines have been departed from? Is there anything the AGPS can do about the matter?

Mr Nott—I will ask Mr Hemingway to give one or two more specific points on this in a moment. All I could say is that I do not believe that the transgressions are very common these days. I think departments, generally speaking, are more prepared to accept these circulars and to follow them than perhaps they were 5 years ago. But there is always somebody who makes a mistake or does not take sufficient care and the result can be the same—a lot of unnecessary expense. Mr Hemingway, who sees the flow of these things coming through the Publishing Branch, might be in a better position to give you an assessment of what is happening and why.

Mr Hemingway—This question also has a bearing on the previous one. In recent times there has been an increasing tendency for departments to table reports of all kinds in duplicated format, not typeset in the traditional manner. This is for reasons of urgency. It sometimes means that departments do not follow even the directives issued by the Prime Minister's Department on the number of copies required in every case for tabling reports in the Parliament. I

think 333 copies is the official quantity. This has been referred to in previous submissions to the Committee. Sometimes these departments do not provide the right number of copies.

Therefore the Committee, when ordering these documents to be published in the Parliamentary Papers Series at a later date, have to order the printing and typesetting of the reports for inclusion in the series. Sometimes they are substantial documents. This means that the length of time taken to produce these reports is therefore longer than it would otherwise be. It also imposes on the parliamentary departments an additional task of proof reading. This may be one of the factors contributing to the 2 parliamentary departments concerned keeping proofs for a lengthy period of time. To that extent departments ignore AGPS circulars which have set down the procedures for producing copies of reports in correct quantities and in the correct formats for tabling in the House. Departments ignore these very often because they themselves are under pressure for various reasons. Ministers in charge of the departments require them to table reports quickly, and insufficient time is available to produce the documents otherwise. These are some of the main reasons for departing from instructions given in AGPS circulars and perhaps some of the contributory factors in the delay of the final production of parliamentary papers.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Are the departments that offend by not following the directions laid down usually identifiable because they do it often, or are there a number of departments that do not carry out the instructions?

Mr Hemingway—There would be more than one department. I could not easily identify departments off-hand, but obviously some departments which are required to table reports frequently would be more frequent offenders. For example, Industries Assistance Commission reports fall into this category, and frequently Industries Assistance Commission reports are tabled now in this duplicated format. But there would be other departments. I could not readily identify them now; but, of course, we could.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Is there anything that the AGPS can do about this?

Mr Hemingway—We have tried. We try very hard without a great deal of success at times. The kind of answer that we receive is: 'The Minister requires this document to be tabled tomorrow afternoon and that is the only way it can be produced'.

Mr Nott—I do not think we would be at all critical of that sort of happening. We do not particularly urge that something be done to stop it. We must fully accept that the urgencies of policy decisions and the dissemination of policy decisions must take priority over our printing problems. Unless there is some massive change in the whole arrangement for the production of parliamentary papers I do not think there is any easy solution to that aspect of the problem.

CHAIRMAN—I think that perhaps this Committee could intervene if there are consistent breaches in this regard. Would you agree?

Mr Nott—Certainly the Committee could make representations. Consider for example a recent Industries Assistance Commission report on the shipbuilding industry. I imagine that if the Government wanted that tabled very urgently representations would not have much effect.

CHAIRMAN—That would not come into the 'consistent' area. But I think your point is well taken. We would have to be rather selective in intervention.

Mr Nott—Yes.

Mr Atkinson—Is there another way of tackling this? The cost of producing these after the event is one of the problems that this Committee faces. Perhaps a department might be encouraged to meet half, if not all, of the extra cost over that which would have been incurred if they had proceeded along the normal lines instead of perhaps doing something rather quickly.

Because of expediency they may take another approach. I know that the money is all coming from the same money bag but it is your appropriation that you are worried about.

Mr Hemingway—Departments could of course not only be required to pay the cost of typesetting to satisfactory format at a later stage but also be asked to do their own proof reading, could they not?

Mr MILLAR—The ultimate deterrent suggestion.

Mr Atkinson—That might be a deterrent the other way. It might delay the production even further.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Mr Nott, you may have observed in a Senate submission a suggestion that this Committee might consider indicating its intention to recommend the printing of a document prior to tabling. I think you probably referred to this question before, but would this give the AGPS more authority and backing when dealing with statutory authorities?

Mr Nott—I am not too sure that it is a practicable solution and it is not one that I would be advocating today. The fact is that if departments were forced always to print in sufficient numbers of copies before tabling there would be some cost reductions, but I am not certain that that is a practical working solution, for the sorts of reasons we were just discussing. I think therefore it is one of those situations where either we keep chasing small adjustments to the system or the total system has to be completely changed taking into account these special problems that probably will continue to exist. So I would not be putting forward the idea of compelling departments to print before tabling as a workable hypothesis at all.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Would you like to elaborate on why you would not expect it?

Mr Nott—Because I feel that the priorities of government must come first, and if those priorities dictate an early tabling before there has been time to print, and I think that happens not infrequently, then I do not think the giving of any additional authority to AGPS to enforce pre-printing would be effective at all, nor would it be desired by governments.

CHAIRMAN—I want to go into your paragraph 5(b) more deeply. You talk there about the marked increase in the number of reports presented to the Parliament in typewritten form, and both you and Mr Hemingway have referred to this problem in the last few minutes. You are aware also that this Committee adopted the principle for use in the Parliamentary Papers Series of encouraging departments to produce in the typewritten form for presentation of reports to Parliament so that they could then be reproduced at a reduced cost, as we thought. We also emphasised this to Ministers. Recently I wrote to Ministers encouraging them and drawing their attention to Circular 24 and Circular 23. I am concerned about the economies of production that you mention in this particular paragraph. You say that there has been a flood of departments using this typewritten form for presentation of reports. Were you aware that this problem might arise when you issued the circular, or did you feel that this method of production was so much faster than typesetting, with the resultant savings in design and proof reading, etc?

Mr Nott—The circular was issued because there have always, I suppose, been some reports to Parliament produced in this way and it was felt to be desirable to standardise, to introduce

some ground rules which departments could follow which would help us through the printing process and would also help us to get a more standard product.

In addition to that, when the circular was being prepared it was felt that pressures from people anxious to table have been such that one fairly effective way of meeting them and speeding up the process of getting enough copies to give an immediate circulation was that of allowing departments to do some more of it. But I must confess, having said those 2 things, that we have been rather surprised at the alacrity with which departments have taken up the idea, but there is always—and we have known that this would be so—a cost penalty associated with it. As we said in this submission to you, the paper usage is perhaps twice or three times as much as it would be for a fully typeset report, and there are additional associated printing and binding problems and costs. So it really becomes a choice, I imagine, between speed of production and cost of production. There must be many cases in which, to gain that extra speed, one can justify a somewhat higher cost, but there would be other reports where that would not apply, and maybe we need a more discriminating approach to the method of production in particular cases.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying then is that not every report reproduced in this fashion would be more expensive?

Mr Nott—No, I am not exactly saying that. I think every report would be more expensive to print in this typewritten form than it would be in fully typeset form. I believe that that extra cost could be justified for some reports of outstanding urgency but not for the general run of reports.

CHAIRMAN—You are saying that we should be more discriminatory bearing in mind that we have issued a direction. I do not know whether you are indicating that directions are not usually adhered to, but in this particular case too many have taken note of one. How would you suggest that we change course in relation to your comment about being more discriminatory?

Mr Nott—Perhaps a supplementary circular might quite effectively be sent around to Ministers from the Committee. We could provide the Committee, if this is your wish, with some indication of the percentage increase in cost that is involved in printing from typewritten copy. Maybe the Committee would then feel disposed to incorporate those sorts of ideas into a general request to Ministers to make sure that their departments are a little bit more discriminating before incurring this extra cost.

CHAIRMAN—In the last sentence of paragraph 5(b) of your submission you talk about the printing trades union. It reads:

It may be that further guidelines are needed to restrict the occasions where typewritten publications are acceptable particularly as there is an expectation that an extension of the practice may draw serious adverse reactions from the printing trades union.

Have you had any reaction at this stage to back up that statement, or is it just anticipatory on your part?

Mr Nott—No, we have had representations from the printing trades union about the increasing use of printing from typewritten copy and, of course, pick up of copy in other ways, too, which the unions tend to see as taking traditional work away from compositors and in many cases allowing the typesetting part of the job to be done by ordinary typists in departments. They have not been terribly numerous. The Government Printer has had similar representations with regard to this class of work, part of which passes through his establishment, and he has had some discussions with the union representatives. If you would like him to do so, he might be able to give you a little more detail on just what the union feeling is currently.

Mr Atkinson—It is largely tied up with some of the problems in the major capital cities where the newspaper industry has been subjected to substantial technological change. The union is very sensitive about any further inroads being made into the traditional areas of typesetting by electronic devices as well as just the standard typewriter. Representations have been made from the PKIU, through the Minister, to look at the one particular set of circumstances surrounding the issue of awards associated with the national wage case. I believe that in spite of the representations, and perhaps in spite of the answers that have been given which may not have been completely satisfactory from the total union point of view, they have accepted the fact that typewritten material is something which is pretty hard to remove entirely from the scene and as long as it does not become a 100 per cent objective of all of the government departments, and so forth, then they go along with it.

It is interesting to note that what we did with the *Hansard* for this Committee was a reverse of the situation that was being experienced with typewritten material coming from departments. It has been customary to accept typewritten material for these minutes of evidence of committees and to run it off on a small offset press. By using the *Hansard* people through the audio system and then converting this data into typeset

form, we have changed the situation. I think because of this there has tended to be less objection to the activities that I undertake than perhaps to some of the things which are being undertaken by departments across the whole spectrum of government requirements. Certainly the union is very sensitive about it and will continue to be so for a number of years until this question of technological change is finally resolved.

Mr Nott—Mr Chairman, could I add one point to the answer to your question on costs? I should make it clear to the Committee that where a particular report goes through both processes—it is first set up from ordinary typing, plates are made and a limited edition is run, and then later there is a fully typeset and printed version—then really what is happening is that there is a shift again in cost, this time from the originating department to the parliamentary departments, which have to bear that full typesetting cost themselves; whereas, if it ran the other way and the departments had to produce a typeset version, then they, of course, would bear that cost. So that may be just one other influencing factor on the rather solid increase in the bill coming to Parliament each year.

CHAIRMAN—Mr Nott, it has been an objective of this Committee to endeavour to have the parliamentary papers produced in a fairly short space of time. I think you made the comment earlier that it was perhaps not quite so important, as there are frequently quite a number of reports produced by the department at the time of presentation. In the printing of the series do you take into consideration the demand and the lack of supply of the original quantity that is produced and available? In other words, in determining your priorities of printing do you look at such matters as the demand and the lack of supply?

Mr Nott—Yes, very definitely we do, and there have been some uncomfortable instances where we have been under very solid pressure from our clients to produce copies, and this has been taken into account and we have accelerated the production processes. But this, of course, tends to apply more to a small proportion of the total run of parliamentary papers which, for all sorts of reasons, including media interest and publicity given to a particular subject and public interest in that subject, are in very strong demand. I suppose it is true to say that the majority of parliamentary papers are reasonably comfortably handled—at least the initial surge of demand—by the number of copies that are available from the department concerned, except in those few instances in which there is a very rushed tabling of half a dozen copies.

CHAIRMAN—Then, for our reappraisal of this position in relation to the typewritten form, could you undertake to supply to the Committee some details of costs? Obviously we will have to look at this whole matter again.

Mr Nott—Yes, certainly.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—You referred earlier to the use of contract printers. Could you describe the procedures followed by AGPS when letting a contract to print a departmental report, where there is likely to be a parliamentary paper version?

Mr Nott—Yes, I can give you a quick run through on it. Mr Hemingway may have to correct me here and there or elaborate. The department would lodge its request to us at the earliest time at which they became aware of the requirement to print such a report. We would have discussions with the department about the content, size, format and so on. If there was any design involved, that would be attended to within the publishing branch of AGPS as early a stage as possible. We would then be in the hands of the department awaiting the provision of copy. This may come in in one complete batch, but more often it comes in in dribs and drabs. As soon as we had the essential details we would have been preparing a specification for the job, once a decision had been taken whether it was to be printed by the Government Printer in house or whether we would let it out to a commercial firm to print under contract.

As soon as we were satisfied that we had all the information we needed we would allocate it to a contractor. There are, of course, a number of ways of doing that. I mentioned earlier the existence of a standing contract for B5 reports and in many cases it is possible simply to send the specification details for this latest report coming forward to one of the printers on our approved list. They immediately get on with the typesetting and subsequently provide proofs and so on. In other cases the requirements of the job would be advised to the Government Printer and similarly he would undertake the work and put it through as fast as he could. A third category of cases would be some—I do not think very many—cases where for one reason or another it would not be feasible to use one of the existing contractors and where the Government Printer would be unable to supply the finished job within the time limits specified by the department concerned. In that case we would have to let a one-off contract. To do that, depending on the value involved, we would either call for quotations from suitable printers and then let it to the lowest suitable

printer, or, if it is over \$5,000 in total value, we would go to the lengths of calling tenders. That is a rather slower process and we try to avoid that in printing matters wherever it is feasible and within the regulations that exist at the moment.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—One of the situations I had in mind was where the Parliament ordered a report to be printed, and where it required a full type re-set because it was not originally envisaged that it might be printed as a parliamentary paper. Would that be the kind of situation where you would go to the letting of a particular contract rather than go to one of your usual contract printers?

Mr Nott—I think in many of those cases too we would still use the B5 contract. Let us say we have a dozen contractors at any one time on the list. We would try to find one of those who had a slot available in his production schedule which would enable him to produce the report within the time scale required.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—When that situation does emerge, what is the average time it then takes to let a contract of that sort?

Mr Nott—Through the B5 standing contract, or an *ad hoc* one-off contract?

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Let us say an *ad hoc* contract, or at least one where a report is ordered to be printed which requires a full typeset.

Mr Nott—If that cannot be handled through a B5 contractor and we have to call quotations, my guess would be—I am subject to confirmation or correction here—that the quotation process could take two to three weeks, depending on the urgency of it and the pressure behind it. It may be put through in less time. We have done some remarkable things at times, for example with the Medibank leaflets which were done in a matter of days. But normally it would take perhaps two to three weeks.

If, on the other hand, it has to go to tender it will take longer. It could take as long as 3 months to prepare a detailed specification, have that issued to all concerned, advertise it publicly, allow two or three weeks for tenderers to put in their bids, consider the offers received, reach a decision and allocate a contract.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—What is the formula or arrangement by which the AGPS allocates work to contract printers? Is there a standing arrangement to deal with that kind of work with which the Government Printer cannot cope?

Mr Nott—We more or less regard this as a day-to-day series of management decisions, I

suppose. There is no standard basis. It is a matter of taking into account the work load on the Government Printer at any point in time, his ability to complete the job quickly, and his ability to complete the job economically as compared with the likely offers that would be received from the trade. We must take into account also the availability of trade printers who are interested in undertaking our work. It is not always easy to get people to tender for government printing work, but we have enough to manage, and at the present time we have more than enough. We must consider all of these things, and particularly the nature of the job, how complex it is, how unfamiliar it might be to a printer, and the time scale defined for us by the department providing the copy. Facing all of these influences, the AGPS publishing branch would make the decision day-to-day either to place it with the Government Printer or let it out to contract.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—You may be aware that in their submissions to this inquiry both the Senate and the House of Representatives referred to the need on occasions to return proofs to contractors and seek a revised proof, and that neither one of those parliamentary departments sought to blame the AGPS for this, nor the adequacy of their specifications to the printers for that. What do you think are some of the reasons for that kind of problem?

Mr Nott—Here I think I should ask for a technical opinion. I remember the evidence referring to use of wrong type faces, for example, use of wrong style, wrong page size, and wrong paper, I think. I would have thought these would be very rare occurrences, although no doubt they have taken place, particularly with a contractor who is new to this class of work. Mr Hemingway may be able to enlarge on that answer.

Mr Hemingway—I do not quite understand that point in the evidence that was previously submitted. It is not completely clear to me what was meant. I imagine that when the parliamentary departments are proof reading they are proof reading material that has been typeset—I think that is the kind of material to which you are referring—and there is more and more of it. In other words, this material is being typeset for the first time. There is always some correction to be made. I would think in all my experience there have been very, very few publications that have been typeset on the first occasion, and galley proofs supplied, where there have not been some corrections necessary.

The extent of these corrections is, I think, the matter that is concerning you. In the main, the printers we are using, under our standard contract, for publications that become parliamentary papers are the standard contractors to whom Mr Nott has referred, and these people are, generally speaking, experienced in government work. There will be some printers who, responding to one of the *ad hoc* contracts, may be less experienced in government work, and these are the people who would, I think, fall into the category to which the previous evidence referred.

There would be more mistakes coming from that kind of contractor, rather than the regular contractors. This would worry the parliamentary departments more nowadays than it has in the past because more and more of these publications are being tabled in the first instance in duplicated form and are being typeset subsequently, so I think that is basically the reason for the point made in the previous evidence.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—How many contractors, both of what you call regular or standard contractors and the other contractors, would be involved in the production of the Parliamentary Papers Series?

Mr Hemingway—I could not put a figure to it.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Roughly?

Mr Hemingway—I would say very few. The standard contract was designed in particular to cover the needs of tabling, printing reports for tabling in the Parliament. Therefore, most of those publications that are printed by commercial contractors would go to one of these standard contractors, but not all. I could not put a figure to it.

Mr Nott—How many B5 contractors are there?

Mr Hemingway—We have just issued a new contract. There are about ten or twelve contractors under this particular standard contract. This is normally sufficient to cover the needs. At the busy part of the year, when most of the reports are being printed for tabling in the House, in the Budget Session of Parliament; there may be additional *ad hoc* contracting, but I would say less than 5 per cent. That is just a guess.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Are they mostly locally based?

Mr Hemingway—No, they are interstate.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—From all over?

Mr Hemingway—Well, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, and some in Adelaide; in the main, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—On the same point—I guess this question is to you Mr Atkinson—you may have seen that again both parliamentary departments expressed a very clear preference, I think, for the Government Printer, if it were at all possible, undertaking the completion of parliamentary paper versions of departmental reports and also, when necessary, typesetting parliamentary papers which have been tabled in duplicated form. Would you like to comment on that suggestion and particularly on the capacity of your establishment to carry this out when the Parliament is sitting?

Mr Atkinson—Let us take those that need to be fully typeset first: At the present time I have the capacity to undertake all of those. There is a familiarity with the Parliament's requirements which the people in the Printing Office have because they are doing it day in, day out, and they are certainly aware of styles and perhaps of some of the idiosyncrasies that occur during the course of Parliament and they have the contacts at Parliament whom they can ring up and perhaps chase up proofs, and so forth, quite quickly without having to worry about going through other hands. So, in answer to the first part, yes, I do have the capacity and I would see this capacity increasing rather than decreasing because of the technological developments which we are undertaking at the present time. With regard to the completion of all parliamentary papers that have been prepared by other printers—I am referring to departmental reports and the like—it depends on the outcome of the title page and the cover page. I have already indicated a preference for enclosing these reports with a title page and a cover page, and in those circumstances there would be no reason why outside contractors could not supply a completed document to us for this processing.

But I think the question that needs to be looked at is whether timing and costs are more favourable to the use of that method as opposed, say, to the labelling method and the present methods. So perhaps we could keep that one as a slightly separate issue, but I would see it as being very sensible for these to be undertaken at the Printing Office because of the familiarity that we have with the Parliament's requirements in processing the wide range of work.

I would also show a great preference for dealing directly with the parliamentary officers. We do this with such things as notice papers, Bills and *Hansard* in particular. If we are not getting a response we make sure we get a response. There is this sort of background, and we do have a preference for dealing directly with a customer

where there is a job that is comparatively straightforward. The Parliamentary Papers Series is one that could be seen to be straightforward in comparison with some of the more complex one-off jobs that occur from time to time.

Mr Nott—Could I express a reservation on one aspect of what my colleague has said? I think we have to bear in mind very carefully that we are talking about a fairly constant flow of documents to be printed, and it is not a uniform flow. It has a very conspicuous peak in the months of July, August and September, mainly because of the incidence of departmental annual reports and annual reports from statutory bodies. I believe there are over one hundred of those these days. A lot of consideration has to be given, when we are talking about capacity factors, to the question of incidence of the work. A lot would depend on whether the Government Printer under this suggestion were to be hit with 5, 10, 15 or 20 reports all within a week, and be expected to produce them to certain stated deadlines. I think, too, it should be said that the decision is not one simply of convenience in handling copy and proofs as between client and printer. One is always looking at a decision based on cost to produce commercially, as compared with cost to produce through our Government Printing Office, and also based on the relativity of the time factors in handling the work through these 2 sources. I would have to say that, as staffed at present and as equipped at present, it is not always possible for the Government Printer to compete cost-wise or time-wise with the figures we can obtain through commercial printers. I think I would be reluctant to see any total closure of the alternative supply source from commercial printers.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—There is a point on those 2 factors of cost and time in relation to the possible performance of these functions by the Government Printing Office. It has been suggested to the Committee that it is a normal practice for commercial printers to provide galley proofs in addition to page proofs, and that the Government Printer, by contrast, operates by producing page proofs only, or would be in a position to do that. That seems to me to represent some significant time saving. Another point, on which I rate as one I would like you both to comment on, is a suggestion that the Government Printing Office perhaps has a much better microfiche or micro-film capacity do many outside commercial printers.

Mr Nott—On the first question of proofs, this is largely a matter of client requirements. It happens to be standard trade practice to give most

clients galleys and then pages and, if required, subsequent revises. If, in practical experience, it turns out that parliamentary work can be handled quite comfortably by going directly to page proofs, I see no reason why commercial printers would insist on providing galleys at all. I think that point is open to change in the present arrangements, if they are as has been described.

On the second point about microfiche, the Government Printer has in the last few months been developing a very effective micro-filming facility, and we are finding increasing uses for it. But it has not as yet been utilised widely in relation to the production of the Parliamentary Papers Series. We are currently doing some work on the supporting evidence and commissioned papers produced for the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration. That is an obvious thing that can be handled effectively for academics, researchers and so on by the production of a microfiche edition only. I do not think in this case we are yet at the stage where we would be suggesting to the Committee that we should put all parliamentary papers on microfiche, either exclusively or as an alternative.

CHAIRMAN—I return to the matter of commercial printers carrying out contract work. Some of these people have probably as much experience in printing as you and your operators have. Some that come to mind are William Brooks, Watson Ferguson and Smith and Paterson, and no doubt there are lots of others. You mentioned that they are familiar with your contracts and your requirements and have been over many years. The thing that rather baffles me is why you would want to change the cover of the Parliamentary Papers Series and go back to standardised sized print and so forth. These people are experienced in the printing game and surely they could produce the cover satisfactorily without that sort of change. Can you elaborate on the reasons for this? Are these people so incompetent that they cannot handle the covers of the series without having to make these sorts of changes, or is it just a reduction in time that you are looking at?

Mr Hemingway—No, this relates to a previous meeting of the Committee at which we gave evidence on the change in the cover styles which are now currently applying to the 1976 parliamentary papers. It is not a matter of lack of competence on the part of those printers that you have mentioned. Watson Ferguson, for example, would be one of our top printers on this standard contract. They are extremely competent, they have a very large printery—one of the biggest in the country. They are very competent; they are

very quick; and incidentally, they are one of the cheapest. They are not alone in this; there are others on the contract who are equally competent. But the change that was made recently to the parliamentary papers cover style was not entirely to make it easier for those printers; it does make it easier, but not because they are not competent. We are working now with only one typeface which makes it easier and quicker for a printer to set that typeface. In the past there have been a multitude of typefaces and no one printer—not even the Government Printer—can expect to have all those typefaces. If there were a multitude of typefaces those printers would have to obtain that type from elsewhere. This takes time.

So the change certainly makes it easier and quicker for those contract printers, but not because they are incompetent. It makes it quicker in dealing with the copy in the first instance in our own office. This was one of the main points we made at the previous meeting. That if the new standards as they now apply were agreed to—and they were—there would be no need for the copy for the title page and the cover of parliamentary papers to go wandering through the design system in our own office for individual designs. It is now one single standard design applying to every parliamentary paper cover. The title pages and covers can be marked up—and I understand that they are now being marked—quite easily in the departments here, or in the Senate or the House of Representatives if that is where they come from. They are marked up by the parliamentary officials; we do not have to do any mark-up at all. It is a saving in time in our office as well. That was the main reason.

CHAIRMAN—I want to make it clear that I am not unhappy with the change that has been made.

Mr MILLAR—Some of Mr Hemingway's remarks lead me to put this question to Mr Nott: It was implied that the Government Printer was more expensive than commercial printers. I am interested to know why this is and what prospect there is of removing the impediment that might exist.

Mr Nott—There are very good reasons for this. It is not a question here either of incompetence or over-lavishness. The Government Printer has been required to attend to a very wide range of activities for Government and for Parliament and to provide a type of service which is perhaps not usually found in commercial experience.

One can think of several vital differences in his performance and procedures from those of commercial operators. For example, it is a 3-shift factory that works through the night on some classes of work, and that means the payment of shift penalties. Some work going through the factory is so urgent that it demands the working of considerable overtime at certain times of the year, and again the price is necessarily extended. Another point is that there are some types of work—*Hansard* is one of them—where an interruption to production, although it will still occasionally occur and has occurred fairly recently, is something to be avoided even at some additional cost by such means as keeping in reserve back-up capacity for our computers, our phototypesetting equipment and so on. Although one machine might be able to cope with the volume of work going through, it has been considered an essential form of insurance to have a second one there in case the first one breaks down. We recently had the experience where the second press broke down and that caused a delay. So one wonders how far one should insure.

There is also the fact that the Government Printer has to operate in Canberra and there are attraction wage rates paid, Canberra loadings, in ordinary wage packets. I suppose I could go on, if tested, with a number of other factors. All of these, we would say, are essential aspects of printing for government and for Parliament. They are not avoidable but they do mean that his general cost levels, while they are competitive in some fields, will not be competitive in some other fields where a specialist printer does nothing but the one type of thing over and over again and does not have to face up to some of the problems that our Government Printer has to face. It has always seemed to us that one of the functions of AGPS is to try to save the taxpayers' money by allocating work between these competing interests—the Government Printer where he is best suited and commercial printers where they can do the work equally effectively, perhaps quicker on occasions and at less expense.

CHAIRMAN—Would you care to add to that, Mr Atkinson?

Mr Atkinson—No, Mr Nott covered most of the points. It is really a penalty that is paid. Another factor is that it depends on what is happening on the commercial market. When the bottom has dropped out of the commercial market everybody is clamouring for government business, and when it is the other way around they do not want to know. It does not necessarily have a very high profit margin but it keeps the wheels turning. There is a bit of a problem there.

At times I am in and at other times I am out. At the moment I do not think I am highly favoured in the field of competition but I cannot do a great deal about it.

There is another point that ought to be considered and that is that the plant ought to be used to its maximum capacity at all times. Another penalty which is being incurred by the government if the capacity is not being used is that payment is being made for all of the materials, fixed expenses, wages and so forth; so there is another penalty out in the field when the capacity is not being fully utilised. It is a difficult one to balance out at times. On the night shift when we are meeting the Parliament's requirements, we are using our capacity, but on the day shift we may not necessarily be using it.

Mr MILLAR—Is that an essential reserve that must be held against that contingency?

Mr Atkinson—Yes. It is not an easy one. When you are sitting down as a department and trying to figure out the debits and the credits for appropriations, you are more inclined to use the cheapest possible means. That does not necessarily suit all government requirements as far as printing is concerned because the total bill includes whatever I have not been able to use.

Mr Nott—I would only add one point, and that is that the situation today is unusual in that government departments have had their appropriations for printing reduced and there is less work in total being put through our machinery. Therefore, not only are commercial printers complaining to us that they are not getting as much as they did a year or two ago but, of course, the Government Printer, too, has had to take a smaller slice of the total pie.

CHAIRMAN—How difficult is it for you people to apportion costs to the various productions—*Hansard*, for instance—out of your total cost of operations?

Mr Nott—It is not difficult. There is a day by day recording at the work face, by employees, of the time they spend on specific jobs. All of this is run through a computer, periodically, with materials cost and overheads added on to it, and we come out with a total bill. It is just a normal industrial or commercial style of job costing exercise.

CHAIRMAN—So that breakdown would be fairly accurate?

Mr Nott—It should be, yes.

CHAIRMAN—At the commencement of the hearings a suggestion was made that the printing of parliamentary papers be not carried out where

a departmental version exists. Firstly, can I confirm that you were referring to reports of which there are typeset versions available?

Mr Nott—I was not restricting the thought. I was wondering—not much more than wondering at this point—whether one could get by simply with copies of reports produced by departments for parliamentary and public purposes, whether they be first typewritten and run off on an in-house duplicating machine, or whether they be fully typeset and printed by the department, as some tend to be. But of course this would only cover a proportion of the total flow. I do not know off-hand what the percentage is of material which would not be easy to pick up because it consisted of an unexpected tabling of perhaps just one copy—a single copy tabling. That would represent a problem unless a prior arrangement could be made with the departments concerned that in such a case they would follow through the single copy or half a dozen copies—whatever was made available for primary tabling—with a full edition sufficient to cope with the needs of Parliament and also with public requirements.

CHAIRMAN—Would you then consider that your suggestion would involve a revision of the Parliamentary Papers Act to provide the protection normally afforded documents which are ordered to be printed?

Mr Nott—Yes, I think it would be essential to revise the entire Act and give expression to the different procedure, and also it would be necessary, of course, to issue very firm instructions from pretty high levels to Ministers and departments concerning the alternative procedures to be followed.

CHAIRMAN—Mr Atkinson, I want to ask you a question in relation to the Parliamentary Papers Act. Section 3 of the Parliamentary Papers Act provides:

(1) When either House of the Parliament or a Committee has ordered a document or evidence to be printed, that House or Committee shall be deemed, unless the contrary intention appears in the order, to have authorised the Government Printer to publish the document or evidence;

(2) Each House of the Parliament shall be deemed to have authorised the Government Printer to publish the reports of the debates and proceedings in that House.

Have you or Mr Nott received any legal advice as to whether you are not fulfilling your obligations under the Act when outside contract printers undertake the production of the parliamentary papers?

Mr Nott—No, we have not sought specific advice, because we are very conscious of the existence of a definition in the Acts Interpretation Act which says that work printed on behalf

of the Government by a commercial printer, if properly authorised—I have forgotten the exact words—shall be deemed to have been printed by the Government Printer. That, we would have imagined, covered the situation that we are in at the moment; that is, that a document, if properly authorised, may be printed either by the Government Printer or by a commercial printer and the coverage provided by the Parliamentary Papers Act would still extend to that material printed even through commercial sources.

CHAIRMAN—In relation to copyright and its relationship to the Parliamentary Papers Act, you refer the Committee to an opinion which you received which states that any reproduction or publication of a document by a person not authorised in accordance with the Parliamentary Papers Act would amount to an infringement of copyright. Was the original request to the AGPS for an opinion the result of an actual case?

Mr Nott—You are testing us, Mr Chairman. I cannot recall the circumstances of that opinion. Perhaps Mr Hemingway does.

Mr Hemingway—No, I do not think it was, Mr Chairman. I think it stemmed from our interest in the matter because of certain reports. For example, the Taxation Commissioner's report would be one of them, and the Auditor-General's report would be another.

In the case of the Taxation Commissioner's report there is no departmental edition, there is only a parliamentary paper. The reason for that is to ensure that parliamentary privilege extends to every copy that is published. That is not quite true. I think there are 4 copies, of the Report printed with a plain cover. They are the copies that are tabled in the House. Apart from those 4 copies there are no copies published, and therefore no one can get hold of a copy of the report that is not covered by parliamentary privilege. Our interest stems from that kind of activity.

CHAIRMAN—Are you aware of any copyright breaches?

Mr Atkinson—I am not.

Mr Nott—I know there have been occasions in the past when the Commissioner for Taxation has been very concerned about Press comment on some of the offenders under taxation law listed in his report. Whether those problems involve possible breaches of copyright I cannot be sure.

CHAIRMAN—So your interest in this matter has arisen out of internal discussions and fears rather than anything else?

Mr Nott—Yes.

Mr Hemingway—Not just our fears, but the fears of departmental people who are producing reports, such as the Taxation Commissioner.

Mr MILLAR—In the area of distribution, you are probably aware that the Clerk of the Senate in his submission to the Committee complained that the system of grouping parliamentary papers into subject groups needed substantial revision. Do you agree with this view and, if so, do you have any suggestions as to what the groupings should be or should be directed towards and how such a division might be achieved?

Mr Nott—While the breakdown into categories could no doubt be reviewed on the basis of improving the logic of the breakdowns and better matching the needs of some classes of people, I have a feeling that it is no longer as important an issue as perhaps it once was. I think I am right in saying that when we were under a subscription system for parliamentary papers it was possible for people to subscribe to certain categories only and not take the entire set. I think with the changeover to advance orders for parliamentary papers that facility has gone. I should probably check that for you. Perhaps I could give you something in writing a little later on, unless Mr Hemingway happens to be able to straighten me out straight away.

Mr Hemingway—Not really, but there was some question of duplication because of the groupings as they currently exist. That was not a matter of concern to the AGPS; it was more a matter of concern to the parliamentary departments. I think there have been complaints or comments made by some members to parliamentary departments on this question of duplication. That is all I would care to add at the moment. I am not too sure what effect the groups do have.

Mr Nott—Could we take that question on notice?

CHAIRMAN—Most certainly. It would be a good idea because it is important to our overall assessment.

Mr MILLAR—Are notice papers, journals, votes and Bills available on subscription?

Mr Nott—They are, but very few copies are in fact subscribed for. I think we have some details of the actual numbers. At the moment there are 116 subscribers to Bills; 14 subscribers to Journals of the Senate; Senate Notice Papers, nil; 2 subscribers to House of Representatives Notice Papers; 5 subscribers to complete sets of Notice Papers for both Houses—you will not be

interested in the *Hansard* numbers right now—and 8 subscribers to the Votes and Proceedings for the House of Representatives. This is very small in total, but this is obviously because there is adequate free distribution to those people who need to follow the business of both Houses.

Mr MILLAR—Could you provide details on how distribution is effected to subscribers, free lists and bookshops and give us some idea of the time involved in achieving that distribution?

Mr Nott—Most of the documents to be tabled in the House are embargoed until they are tabled. Our normal practice, where time permits, is to print and hold sufficient copies to meet the anticipated demand in Canberra or, in certain cases where it is obvious there will be a really instant demand, to send a limited number of copies out to shops prior to tabling and have them held in the safe until the managers can be told to release them. If we do the latter, distribution to the public is achieved very quickly after tabling, but space is very limited in the shops and there are so many embargoed documents floating through that it is not possible to handle more than a small percentage of the total in that way. In many cases it happens that tabling will take place at 2 o'clock this afternoon, say, and the authority then is immediately given to release from Canberra but there may be a lapse of 24 hours, perhaps 36 hours, before the shops receive them, unpack them and can make them available. That is on the question of selling through

shops. Through mail orders there is a facility for people to lodge advance orders with us. This is systematically recorded and the minute a publication is available it would be packaged and dispatched through the post.

The free distribution you mentioned is a matter for the departments concerned. If we are talking about the departmental version, the originating department for each document would handle it. I have no detailed information as to how expeditiously they handle it. If it is a case of a parliamentary department having produced the document and having a free distribution to attend to, then again it would be a matter for that department to handle the distribution. We have some facilities to help in the distribution, the physical facilities of packaging and labelling and so on, but they are very limited. There are many, many cases where publications are dispatched to people on free lists direct from the department concerned.

CHAIRMAN—That concludes our questions. I think it might be an idea if I were to write to you, Mr Nott, because a number of points have been raised that we would like you to make a submission on. It may be necessary to recall you, but I doubt very much if we can get the answers to some of the questions that have been raised. On behalf of the Committee I thank you for the frankness you have displayed.

Committee adjourned

CANBERRA

Tuesday, 9 November 1976

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

(Reference: Parliamentary Papers Series)

Present:

Mr Hodges (Chairman)

Senator Archer	Mr Martyr
Senator Donald Cameron	Mr Millar
Senator Missen	
Senator Robertson	
Senator Tehan	

Mr Andrew Leslie MOORE, Parliamentary Librarian, Parliamentary Library, Parliament House, Canberra, and

The document read as follows:

Parliament of Australia
Department of the Parliamentary Library
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
8 September 1976

Mr Michael John BRUDENALL, Principal Librarian, Legislative Reference Service, Parliamentary Library, Parliament House, Canberra,

Dear Mr Hodges,

were called and examined.

I refer to your letter of 18 June in which you ask for my views on various matters of interest to your Committee. I regret the delay in forwarding my comments to you; this has been due primarily to absences of senior staff during the Parliamentary winter recess.

CHAIRMAN—I declare open this public meeting of the Joint Committee on Publications, I welcome Mr Moore and Mr Brudenall. Gentlemen, you will not be asked to comment on the reasons for certain policy decisions or the advice you may have tendered in the formulation of policy or to express a personal opinion on matters of policy. You may at any time request that your evidence or part of your evidence or answers to specific questions be given in private, and the Committee will consider any such request. The Committee has before it your submission on this Parliamentary Papers Series inquiry. Are there any alterations or additions you wish to make at this stage?

As you said in your letter, the Parliamentary Library is an important user of Parliamentary Papers which it holds for the convenience of Senators and Members as part of the general library services and also as resource data for use by Reference Librarians and the Legislative Research Service.

The comments which I wish to make in response to the invitation contained in paragraph 6 of the Committee's Resolutions are not related to all the principles laid down by the Committee. Some of these principles relate specifically to Parliamentary procedures and are not within the administrative purview of the Department of the Parliamentary Library. For convenience I shall follow the paragraph references as set out in your letter.

1 (b) Interim Annual Reports

I note that the Committee has endorsed the earlier exclusion from publication of Interim Annual Reports of Departments and Authorities as recommended in paragraphs 233 and 234 of the Report of 13 May 1964. I should like to point out in this context that the Legislative Research Service makes use of Interim Reports as these may contain information not otherwise available from Departments and Authorities. It is useful for Library purposes to have some copies of such Interim Papers when they are first presented to Parliament and before the formal decision to publish them as Parliamentary Papers.

Mr Moore—No.

2. Principles related to the number of documents to be included in the series

CHAIRMAN—Is it the wish of the Committee that the document be incorporated in the record of proceedings? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

(a) **Desirable decreases:** The Committee may wish to clarify the distinction between Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary Papers—a distinction which would permit the exclusion of non-Parliamentary Papers from the annual series resulting in reduction in the bulk of some of the volumes. In making its distinction between Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary Papers the Committee would probably be guided by the Government's overall information policy and the basic principles relevant to the dissemination of Parliamentary information to ordinary citizens as well as Parliamentarians.

If non-Parliamentary Papers are defined as documents produced by Government Departments for use other than Parliamentary purposes alone there could be a reduction in the number of documents published as Parliamentary Papers. For instance some departmental and statutory annual reports need not be included in the series although such reports and other information about policies and programs would continue to be published as Government documents by the Australian Government Publishing Service and made available to the community through that service.

(b) **Desirable increases:** Among documents which may be included in Parliamentary Papers are those which Ministers consider desirable for publication and which are related to factors taken into consideration by Government in reaching its policy decisions. Other documents which might be included are 'Green Papers' and treaties and agreements between Australia and other nations, organisations and individuals.

3. **Distribution:** So far as the Department of the Parliamentary Library is concerned the current arrangements relating to the availability and distribution of Parliamentary Papers are generally satisfactory.

4 (b) (i) **Sales to public:** It is considered desirable for the monthly catalogue prepared by the Australian Government Publishing Service to include all Parliamentary Papers and provide adequate bibliographical description so that the community can be apprised of the availability of Parliamentary Papers.

(ii) **Free Distribution:** A model for the free distribution of Parliamentary publications is contained in the First Special Report of the Joint Committee on Publications (The Erwin Committee) relating to the Distribution and Pricing of Parliamentary Publications, 1971; paragraphs 54, 74, 81, 56, 73, 23 relate to free distribution lists; paragraphs 62, 64, 67, 73, 81, 55 and 75 relate to sale price of publications and paragraph 44 relates to daily Hansard sales.

(c) **Bound volumes:** The binding of Parliamentary Papers at the end of each year into a series of volumes would simplify the storage of the Papers and the retrieval of information. An important aspect of this is the desirability of having the papers collated and bound as speedily as possible. You will appreciate that there is considerable emphasis these days on recency of information and delays in binding reduce the benefits obtained according to the amount of time involved. The latest bound copy of Parliamentary Papers held by this Library is dated 1970. Your Committee might consider recommending something along the lines of the British system where recipients of the Parliamentary Paper series would receive printed indexes and title pages for each volume of the series. This would allow recipients to bind the material themselves in the style and quality of binding best suited to their particular needs. Such a modification should

mean that a recipient could have his papers bound within six months of the end of each calendar year.

5. **Other suggestions:** A suggestion not related to areas covered in paragraphs 1 to 4 of the Committee's principles concerns the publication of micrographic copies of Parliamentary Papers. Many libraries are now equipped with reader-printer-scanner equipment which enables them to make use of material produced in a micrographic form thereby improving the service to readers and effecting considerable saving in space to libraries. I suggest that your Committee may consider the production of Parliamentary Papers in microfiche which seems to be the most acceptable form.

Yours sincerely,
A. L. MOORE
Parliamentary Librarian

Mr John Hodges, M.P.,
Chairman,
Joint Committee on Publications,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

CHAIRMAN—On the first page of your submission you agree that the Parliamentary Library is an important user of the Parliamentary Papers Series. I think it is in paragraph 2. Do you feel that the value of the series to your library and its users has varied over the past 10 years or so?

Mr Moore—Yes, it has. From our point of view it is a better production than it was in that the volumes are not nearly so unmanageable as they used to be. I think we have had much more need of the series with the development of more advanced reference services by the librarians on the staff of the Library, and from the development of the research service in the Library.

Mr Brudenall—The series in the last 10 years has been more consistent in character and it is an advantage to be able to rely upon the same document appearing year after year in the Parliamentary Papers Series. You know that you can go to the series to find certain information, and this is an advantage.

CHAIRMAN—You may have noticed in the evidence from the House departments that they would like to encourage consistency in the tabling of reports. Does the fact that some departments may not regularly table their annual reports cause much if any inconvenience to the Library and its users?

Mr Moore—In the short term perhaps not as much as might be thought because we use the publications in the form in which they appear. The parliamentary papers, of course, do not become available to us in the blue form for quite some time and it is a long time before they are bound. But in the long term it is a disadvantage to us that some papers we would think ought to be tabled and become parliamentary papers are

not tabled, because we rely on the parliamentary papers for archival purposes.

That series brings together papers of significance to the Parliament and they are there grouped as such, whereas in their first form, papers are shelved according to their subjects. They are often in poor binding and they become lost, damaged and so on. Yes, it is a disadvantage that there are gaps in the papers that appear as Parliamentary Papers.

CHAIRMAN—Is there a tendency for your staff to want to get hold of the reports fairly regularly to do research and so forth?

Mr Moore—Yes, but I emphasise that our initial need is for the publication in its original form. For example, take the Public Service Board's annual report or the Fox report. We are working on those now for one reason or another. We cannot afford to wait for them to come out as parliamentary papers but we want them as parliamentary papers for the permanent record.

Mr Brudenall—I think if a report is dropped from a series of annual reports which has appeared for a considerable time, it would be of great help to have a note that in a particular year, such and such a document was not presented as a parliamentary paper. If people are using the series retrospectively and are looking year after year and then they come to a gap, instead of assuming that the document just was not published or it had ceased altogether, they would find a reference that it did not appear as a parliamentary paper. They would know that they could go and find the report, perhaps as an official document, and use some other means of getting hold of it.

CHAIRMAN—Are you suggesting that the bound series should have the missing ones listed in an appendix or somewhere in the preface area?

Mr Brudenall—Yes, it would list titles of reports which have appeared over a number of years but which are not appearing in the particular volume.

Senator ROBERTSON—Mr Moore used the example of the Ranger inquiry and the Public Service Board report. Why could that not be your copy? Why would you want to go to the series?

Mr Moore—It is bound, roughly like this, with a somewhat better cover. That is not going to last. That is the first point. We then prefer to have, for archival purposes, all of these papers of significance to the Parliament grouped together in bound volumes. Presumably we could do that with the copies as they come out but they tend to

be used copies, whereas we can save the parliamentary papers copies in their pristine form.

I am really much more interested in parliamentary papers as a record. That is the way things are now because of the delays. I am not querying the reasons for the delays. But we have had to wait for the Fox report as a parliamentary paper, for example, and the people in the research area have had to wait.

Mr MARTYR—We have had to wait a long time too for it.

Senator ROBERTSON—If we are trying to save money it would seem that there could be some device either for binding the copy you speak of, or binding a second or third copy of that for reference purposes, rather than going on to the papers. I take it that your point is archival in the first case, and concerns the starter volume in the second; they are the 2 reasons.

Mr Brudenall—I think that many libraries would find the parliamentary paper copy the one that is most easy to find in 20 or 30 years' time. Then you can go to the Parliamentary Papers Series and find these reports. In many libraries the individual copy that was received, read a lot, used and bound, may have been weeded from the collection because it was not used very much after it was five or six years old. When somebody is looking for it in 20 or 30 years' time a set like the parliamentary papers series will guarantee that it is still available.

Mr Moore—I would like to add a further point: I am not really here to speak on anyone else's behalf—I know that there are representatives of other libraries here—but it is true that we are in a privileged position in that we are part of this Parliament. It may well be that other libraries of significance in Australia do not receive the hot-off-the-Press publication and they really do rely on the parliamentary paper, not only as Mr Brudenall said, in 20 years' time; they may be relying on it in a year's time. So I think that the interests of libraries other than ours, with our privileged position with regard to these publications, should be considered.

Senator ROBERTSON—It should not be very difficult surely to make sure that the libraries to which you refer do receive the initial copies rather than waiting perhaps five or six months for the parliamentary paper copy. We are looking at procedures here and trying to streamline them, and that would seem to be not very difficult. Perhaps we can meet the second requirement that you mention also.

CHAIRMAN—It has been suggested to this Committee that at the commencement of each session there should be a list of papers that are likely to be printed in that year, and that this should be tabled. Would this be of considerable help to librarians, or do you think that the guidelines followed by the Committee at present are adequate?

Mr Moore—I cannot make the comparison because I am not sufficiently well aware of the guidelines. Perhaps I should be but I am not. Any list that gives an indication of what is likely to be tabled would be of great help to us. Any foreknowledge of what is coming, even if it is not realised, is worth while.

Mr Brudenall—I would add that knowing a document is likely to become available will help the Library greatly in ensuring that it gets a copy of it. This would assist with Senator Robertson's point. If you know it is becoming available then you can make sure your acquisition procedures take note of this, and at the appropriate time you seek out a copy and ensure that you add it to the collection. This would be of general advantage. In the Parliamentary Library, of course we would find it most useful because it would draw to our attention topics from which we can anticipate members' requests, so we can be putting in train anticipatory work which would again benefit senators and members.

CHAIRMAN—Does the Library and its users value the inclusion of biographical notes, photographs and perhaps some public relations material in an annual report? It has been suggested that the inclusion of such material may be unnecessary and really only adds to the cost.

Mr Moore—Do you mean biographical material etc. in an annual report?

CHAIRMAN—Yes. There is a tendency for annual reports to be produced with lots of glossy photographs that one might consider unnecessary from a purely reference or research point of view. In other words, they are going to be cluttered up with photographs and material of no great value.

Mr Moore—Shall I be polite and say they would be of peripheral value only.

Mr Brudenall—Certainly this is true in the immediate context within which we are working. I can only imagine that historians perhaps would give a different answer to this. They might value biographical information and photographs when they are researching the period. For example an extraneous but related situation would be the Electricity Authority in Canberra which has an

enormous collection of photographs of its undertakings going back thirty or forty years. These are now very valuable to people studying the history of the Australian Capital Territory. It is that sort of use that would be made of photographs and departmental annual reports rather than an immediate use in a reference sense. Photographs are also certainly good publicity.

CHAIRMAN—So although it may be expensive, you are saying there is some value in that for posterity's sake?

Mr Brudenall—Yes.

Senator ROBERTSON—If the photographs were included in the initial glossy version, would you leave them out of the parliamentary paper, if they could be left out?

Mr Brudenall—I would suggest perhaps the reverse, supporting the Parliamentary Papers Series as being the historical record, that photographs would be more important in the parliamentary paper bound set than in the initial copies.

Senator ROBERTSON—Surely a book of any sort, regardless of content, should be as attractive as possible?

Mr Brudenall—Particularly so in a government information publication when it needs to be presented attractively to encourage people to read it.

CHAIRMAN—You are saying that you place a deal of importance on an attractive presentation of a report?

Mr Brudenall—Yes. One of the purposes of government reports is to get information to the community at large and this will be aided if the report is written and presented in a style which will encourage people to read the document.

Senator ARCHER—You state that it may be possible to exclude some annual reports from the series. Presumably these are some of the typeset form. Could you enlarge on this a little?

Mr Moore—Perhaps I should say that we were not advocating either a decrease or an increase in these 2 paragraphs. We were responding to the suggestion in the letter we received to the fact that the Committee would be looking at the question of whether they might be decreased or increased. We took up that challenge, if you like, and said: 'If the Committee wishes to decrease, then it might look very carefully at what ought to be regarded as parliamentary papers as distinct from non-parliamentary papers.' I do not think it was our intention to advocate a decrease.

Mr Brudenall—That is correct.

Senator ARCHER—This comes back on to the point that Mr Brudenall raised a while ago that anything that is excluded needs to be listed as an exclusion.

Mr Moore—Yes, after having been in.

Senator TEHAN—Mr Moore, in paragraph 2(b) on page 2 of your submission you refer to the possibility of including Green Papers. This Committee, of course, would usually recommend that such documents be printed. However, you would have noted that in previous evidence the question of Green Papers, White Papers and even Orange papers has been brought to the Committee's attention and we would like to hear what comments you might make on the Erwin Committee recommendation of the creation of a second ministerial series.

Mr Moore—I think that we would see considerable value in a ministerial series. I suppose we could be accused of being voracious in our appetites for information but, saying this without considering the extra cost that might be involved, it would be valuable to have a series of ministerial statements. At the moment, if they are made in Parliament they tend to be in Hansard only. Sometimes, but not often, they are made outside Parliament, in which event they are not even in Hansard. So we would be in favour, in principle.

Senator TEHAN—Have you looked at the AGPS evidence in regard to this particular matter before? If so, would you like to comment on it?

Mr Moore—I am sorry. At this moment I am not able to comment on it. May I have a moment to look at it, if you want me to? Perhaps Senator Tehan could direct me to the page.

Senator TEHAN—It is on pages 40 and 41.

Mr Moore—On my reading of it, I think the significant fact in Mr Nott's evidence is towards the foot of column 1 on page 41, and I think that is consistent with what I said earlier.

Senator TEHAN—Yes, that is the passage commencing: 'I would imagine the Green Papers would be produced . . .'

Mr Moore—From our point of view that does not propose that it would be a separate series of parliamentary papers but it does suggest a vehicle for making such statements more widely available. I think there would be value in having these included in a separate series for the same archival reasons that we are interested in the bound volumes of parliamentary papers of the character with which we are more familiar.

CHAIRMAN—Would that be primarily for archival reasons or would you find it would facilitate the work of your library and librarians?

Mr Moore—Mr Nott proposed that AGPS would publish them on the say so of the responsible Minister. That would suit us for day-to-day work. It always comes back to that with us: the first one off the mark is what we want. But for archival purposes—posterity is another way of putting it—we like to think of the bound volumes of parliamentary papers. Ministerial statements are of tremendous importance as a guide to how certain government policies and government actions were put into effect.

Senator TEHAN—Your library, as well as other libraries, recommended that the Treaty series of documents should be included in the Parliamentary Papers Series. You may be aware that the Erwin Committee did not believe that these documents should be included as they were available and bound in a separate series. I understand that in addition to limited free distribution to university and State libraries, 100 copies of these documents are available for sale and 450 copies are distributed through the Department of Foreign Affairs. In the light of what I have just said, would you make a comment?

Mr Moore—I think that our attitude to this question was very largely determined by the figure of 100 for sale copies. We think that is very low indeed for the whole of Australia. The 450 copies distributed by the Department of Foreign Affairs go to a select list and would not necessarily reach people who might well be interested. Our support for putting the Treaty series in the Parliamentary Papers was because we did not think they were sufficiently available now.

Mr Brudenall—I think that the Treaty series, and many other papers too, are important to people in other countries. The Parliamentary Papers Series would be one of the sets of official documents which would be held by the major libraries throughout the world and used as a basic reference and research tool when considering Australian matters. I think it would be most important that the Treaty series be included for this purpose. I think it also supports the arguments for a ministerial series, which we were speaking about earlier, because that would bring together a lot of the key policy documents in a series. It would be very valuable for libraries in Australia and overseas.

That series in particular would be very valuable for senators and members who could quickly turn to ministerial statements, policy matters of last year or the year before, which

often would be required for comparative purposes.

Senator ROBERTSON—How many copies does the Library receive of each parliamentary paper and each tabled paper, and do you purchase these from the AGPS or are they free?

Mr Moore—They are free and we get them from the Bills and Papers Office or the corresponding office of the Senate. We receive a total of 16 tabled copies, and one copy of the blue cover series of the parliamentary papers which we keep in numerical order while waiting for the bound copies to arrive. Occasionally we get additional copies which we treat as separate items.

Senator ROBERTSON—Are these stored individually on the shelves or are they stored in tiers?

Mr Moore—Perhaps I should explain the distribution of the 16 copies which is a considerable number. Six of those go to the 6 directors of the Research Service; six go to 6 of the State parliamentary libraries; four we put on the shelves, and one of those goes with our Parliamentary Papers Series. And Mr Brudenall will give you details of how we treat them. The others are shelved as general stock and classified by subjects. We are rather proud of the arrangements we have made to assist the State parliamentary libraries to keep in touch with tabled documents, but, of course, it is an informal arrangement and we have no legal basis for it. It was agreed at a meeting of the parliamentary librarians—we meet every 2 years. Occasionally we do not get the numbers. We come to a report such as the Coombs Commission and we did not get 16 copies; there were very few indeed, and we were not able to send one to each of the 6 State parliamentary libraries, and there was nothing we could do about it. On that occasion on a very important report our arrangements fell down because there was no force behind it.

Senator ROBERTSON—Are you happy with that arrangement or would you prefer to have a formal arrangement with the parliamentary system sending the copies to each of the State parliamentary libraries?

Mr Moore—As always it is a case of 'swings and the roundabouts' in these things. But a formal arrangement would enable us to overcome difficulties such as when we get a refusal. I am not making any criticism because it just was not practicable to get additional copies of the Coombs report. But it would be useful to have a formal arrangement whereby we would be certain of our ground. I suppose it is a form of vanity, but we think we do give a quicker service to

the State parliamentary libraries than would be the case if it got caught up in a bigger machine. You will have other witnesses who can either support or contradict me on that, I do not know.

Senator ROBERTSON—Witnesses perhaps may not be appearing?

Mr Moore—That is right; they have been here.

Senator ROBERTSON—You do not refer in your submission to the delay in production of the individual papers in the series. Is there any reason why you did not comment and would you like to make one now? You have hinted at it in your earlier comments.

Mr Moore—I would like Mr Brudenall to deal with that because he has a more detailed knowledge of the delays.

Mr Brudenall—The Library generally avoids most of the problems associated with delays because of its arrangement to get copies immediately a document is tabled.

We receive the 16 copies on the day on which the paper is tabled in the Parliament, so we have working copies immediately. For our long term use and for many other libraries I think the delays are probably quite important. I think the 6 months' delay, or whatever it would be, before documents become available for sale, is a particular disadvantage. The most recent catalogue published by the AGPS for September lists 8 parliamentary papers, some of which were tabled in the Parliament last year. They appear in the catalogue now because they have become available for sale now. For people who are relying on this sort of system, this is really very poor indeed. I think other libraries, and in fact the community at large, probably suffer from the delays more than the Parliamentary Library does.

Senator ROBERTSON—I think we have to take that comment on board because that is a very important one. I think the long term one is not important, and perhaps that is why you have not drawn attention to it.

Mr Brudenall—We make our own arrangements to fit into the long term. We keep one of the 16 copies. We put it into a sort of 'interim' Parliamentary Papers Series. We give it a number of our own; it does not end up as being the PP number. We can keep a little set going and then replace it with the blue cover series and replace those with the bound volume subsequently.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—In paragraph 5 of your submission you refer to the possibility of producing parliamentary papers in

microfiche. Could you elaborate on the advantages which might be gained by producing the series in microfiche?

Mr Moore—The first and immediate advantage is in saving of space. The parliamentary papers are obviously bulky. Mr Brudenall has brought along some examples of microfiche. Here are about 5 sheets of microfiche and each one contains something like 100 pages of A4 paper. That is the equivalent of 500 pages. There is the immediate saving, but of course it carries with it the need for machines to enable you to read these. You have to be able to scan them and find what you want. This is not the only way in which these things can be done; there are other ways of treating them than microfiche, but that is a development that is bound to come—it is here now in many respects and the primary advantage is saving of space.

Senator MISSEN—Security in maintaining permanent records and preserving irreplaceable documents would be terribly important, with the fire dangers in this building, would it not?

Mr Moore—Yes, but of course you need the original hard copy to make these. These are photographed from the originals. But you are right, if these were the alternative and the only alternative to the bound copy, you would be left with only what I call the flimsies, the blue covers, and these. I think that a certain number of bound copies would still be necessary, but not perhaps in the number that we now have them.

Senator ROBERTSON—Firstly, how sturdy are they? Do they get dirty very quickly, or do sweaty fingers mess them up? Secondly, are they easy to catalogue, and so on, easy to find? Thirdly, does the researcher find these comparatively easy to work with?

Mr Moore—The only one of those questions I could answer confidently would be the third, so perhaps Mr Brudenall can deal with all three.

Senator ROBERTSON—Of course this seems to be development that we might look at.

Mr Brudenall—In relation to the first question it is useful to know that to copy one of these costs 10.5c so that even if they are damaged or scratched they are cheap to replace. Handling them does not really detract from the ability to read them in a microfiche reader. We have in the Library a desk-top reader which is quite small and does not take up much space, and even if you dropped it on the floor and stood on it or damaged it, you could get another one for 10.5c. So they are very cheap.

Senator ROBERTSON—It would be much cheaper than replacing 100 pages.

Mr Brudenall—Exactly, and it does mean people can have more than one copy. For example senators and members might like to have a set of papers in their electorate offices, at home, and here, and so on, and they can have them in this form in many locations without taking a lot of space; they are accessible and easy to use. On the second question, cataloguing is quite easy. In fact these have some advantages. The United States Congress produces microfiche and we have some examples of microfiche of congressional documents. These are catalogued by linking them to a very detailed index, so it can be done by taking the index to parliamentary papers and adding a number which is the number of the microfiche. So that with whatever index you are using you could just very simply add a number and you have immediately the fiche you want.

Senator ROBERTSON—And the filing within the storage again would be comparatively easy?

Mr Brudenall—It is quite easy. They can be filed in a numerical sequence; an alphabetic sequence; a sequence according to names of committees; whatever you want. Filming and retrieval is quite simple, and as far as reading them is concerned, most people prefer a negative fiche to a positive one. This is a positive microfiche and appears on the reader black-on-white. That tends to be firing in many people's view because you are looking at a lighted screen, and that is more tiring on the eyes than negative fiches which appear as white-on-black but are quite easy to read and not very tiring if you want to read a parliamentary paper in a fiche reader.

Senator ROBERTSON—So your research people have adapted very quickly to these?

Mr Brudenall—We are not yet using them to any great extent. We will be because like most libraries we are coping with the space problem by considering microforms. But obviously they are already very widely used in most reference and research libraries, academic libraries. University students and other library users are reading microforms all the time now and coping with them quite well.

Senator MISSEN—On that point about the light behind it and so forth, is it something which is useful to read to find a reference, but is it more tiring to read the whole paper than reading a parliamentary paper?

Mr Brudenall—The equipment is being improved all the time. The sort of fiche readers

which we would hope to have in the library project not to the front of the machine as we have at the moment, but have a rear projection so that it is on a little sloping screen and it is much like reading a book, and is not tiring or harmful to the eyes.

CHAIRMAN—Is there any resistance to the use of microfiche on the part of your staff?

Mr Moore—No. But it is important to bear in mind that we are making very little use of it yet. One of the dangers with microfiche is that there would be a tendency to avoid having to sit in front of the machine and read on the screen, but to take the next step which is to have the print-out because that is an accompanying advantage. The tendency may be for people to say: 'I am not going to read that on the screen; give me a print-out of those 10 pages and I will find what I want within those 10 pages'.

I suppose another generation will grow up that will be quite happy looking at the projection on a conveniently placed screen on their own desks as they now look at television.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would that be more expensive than an ordinary photocopy, to have that printout of a page?

Mr Moore—No, it is no more expensive.

CHAIRMAN—How practical, Mr Moore, is the use of microfiche just thrown on to a screen? So many times—if I could just put myself into the position of using one—I would want to make notes on the sheet, and perhaps I would want to take it into the House. Just how practical is it?

Mr Moore—I think you would always want the facility for printing, if for no other reason than that one reader/printer would serve the whole Committee by providing the printouts. But you would all need your own scanner, your own screen, which, of course, would greatly increase costs. I think the three things will go together—the fiche, the reader and the printer—with the reader and the printer in the one piece of equipment.

Mr Brudenall—The real advantage is, given microfiche, that you can have an enormous amount of information on your desk, much more than you can cope with and have readily accessible if you are relying on printed publications. You could fill up an office with 1,000 volumes, whereas the equivalent in this form would sit on your desk in a small box.

CHAIRMAN—The compactness of this method is undisputed.

Mr Brudenall—So you have immediate access to a lot of information, you can read it, and, with

a reader/printer, you can make a print of the pages you particularly want, on which you wish to make notes or take with you to a meeting.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Mr Moore, the papers index of the Parliament contains a list of all papers which are tabled, a reference to their date of tabling, their parliamentary paper number and reference to their position in the bound volumes. Would you like to comment on the contents of the papers index and its importance to the library and its users?

Mr Moore—The index is absolutely essential. There are different ways of indexing. I do not think we have given enough thought yet to the ways in which it can be improved. We do know it has defects, but, again, Mr Brudenall, as a librarian, can speak much more authoritatively on this than I can.

Mr Brudenall—I should say that I have not made a detailed study of the indexing of parliamentary papers, although I think such a study would be warranted and would be certain to come up with suggestions for improving the indexing to parliamentary papers. I should like to mention just two things. One is that similar documents are indexed in a different way in other parliaments, and I think this would warrant our looking at the way in which parliamentary papers are indexed, both officially and commercially, in Great Britain and in the United States. I have brought along a commercial index to congressional documents, the Congressional Information Service which is an important reference tool. This has detailed, very specific index entries to all sorts of topics related to the document, going as far, for example, as names of witnesses before committees, so that in 20 years' time, if I wanted to find the evidence being given now, I could find my name in an index. In addition to that there are abstracts. All I suggest is that these sorts of things could be used.

CHAIRMAN—Is there a complete cross reference in that index?

Mr Brudenall—Yes.

Senator ROBERTSON—Is that commercially produced?

Mr Brudenall—Yes, it is called the Congressional Information Service; it is a complete service in that it is a detailed index to congressional documents, supported by a microfiche set of every document with the index cross reference I mentioned before where the index entry refers to the fiche number.

CHAIRMAN—Is there any indication of the cost of producing this and the staff that would be necessary if it were to be introduced?

Mr Brudenall—It would be very considerable. This is done commercially and sells at a very considerable cost. We do not subscribe to the microfiche series yet, which alone is about \$3,000 a year. The indexes—the annual volumes like this—would probably cost about \$100; the monthly parts would add to the cost.

Senator MISSEN—Is that sold in big numbers in the United States?

Mr Brudenall—I think it would be sold in fairly significant numbers because most libraries in the world that use congressional documents to any extent could not do without it. It is a good index to American materials. I mention this as one extreme. A study would probably bring to light some points which could be used to improve the index in the parliamentary papers in this context. I have sessional indexes that the House of Commons prepares. They also could be looked at. It is a very different approach to indexing papers in the House of Commons than the approach used here. There could be points in this, too, that would improve the indexing of our own series. I do not have any specific suggestions to make at the moment but I think the Library would be prepared to look at this and to give the Committee some comments, if it wished.

CHAIRMAN—Do you feel that the index is an important document and that there is room for some improvements to be made?

Mr Brudenall—It is an absolutely essential part of the whole series; it is very important. The effective use of the series will depend largely on the adequacy of the indexing. I think that improvements are possible in all indexes. They can be constantly improved and made more specific and new approaches added to them.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—One of the suggestions put to the Committee for reducing the time taken to produce the individual papers of the series, is to overprint the parliamentary paper details on the original departmental cover and title pages. It has been suggested in evidence that librarians might not like to get away from the standard blue cover of the series. Would you like to comment on the proposal and the suggestions?

Mr Moore—I know we have an understanding in the library that the Senate is red, the House is green and the Library is blue, but these are a different blue from ours so we are not all that dependent on the blue cover. I do not think it would

greatly worry us but I think that I ought to enter a protective note about other libraries, which may find the distinctive blue cover useful to them for identification purposes.

Mr Brudenall—I cannot imagine why the blue cover is essential. I think it is probably valuable to many libraries to make sure that the size is consistently B5 or A4 or whatever size it might be. In many libraries it is easier to keep sets of documents together where the size is pretty much the same and to avoid great irregularities. Larger documents might have to be shelved separately.

I think that is the only aspect I could consider as being relevant to the blue cover aspect that has been raised. Overprinting does not detract from the appearance or the use of the document in a library.

Senator MISSEN—Providing there is room to put it somewhere—if they change the set-up or extend.

Mr Moore—Is that what is proposed?

CHAIRMAN—Not necessarily. It is one idea that has come before the Committee.

Mr Moore—I think that this is largely a technical matter and as far as we are concerned it is perfectly acceptable to us.

Mr Brudenall—Some libraries might find it difficult to separate this copy from its parliamentary paper set copy. At a quick glance the appearance will not be dissimilar whereas at the moment it is clearly belonging to a set. It would require only the exercise of a small amount of care to ensure that the set is kept intact.

CHAIRMAN—I take it Mr Brudenall you would like to see the standard blue cover retained for neatness? Nevertheless this has to be weighed up against cost obviously.

Mr Brudenall—I do not really have any arguments in favour of retaining the blue cover.

CHAIRMAN—I was trying to put the words into your mouth but you would not be in it.

Mr MARTYR—The Committee is aware of certain difficulties about copyright. How does a library presently interpret the copyright situation?

CHAIRMAN—Would you prefer to answer that in camera?

Mr Moore—I think so.

Evidence was then taken in camera.

CHAIRMAN—You are aware of the procedures of this Committee that all tabbed documents are looked at and we make a decision as to what is printed. Is there any criticism from your

Library, or have you heard of any criticism, of those documents that we leave out and for which we make the decision not to print?

Mr Moore—I personally do not know of any such criticism. Mr Brudenall in his position may know of some.

Mr Brudenall—In the last year or two quite a number of important documents have been tabled in the Parliament but not printed. They may have been reports commissioned by a government department, then tabled by the Minister but not printed. Sometimes copies are available through distribution channels organised by the department, but this is not always so. Some people have commented to me that there seems to be some very interesting information available, but it is very difficult to get. I am not sure of the procedure by which these particular types of publication were not printed as parliamentary papers. It seemed to me that they were being tabled by the Minister for the information of senators and members, and were not strictly parliamentary documents.

CHAIRMAN—If we were to diminish, by 25 per cent, or 30 per cent, or an even greater proportion, the number that we recommend, what sort of an outcry would there be? How would we be affecting the situation?

Mr Moore—I do not think that would be very welcome. As I have said we are not greatly dependent on parliamentary papers for what you might call our working copies, but I think a reduction of 20 per cent to 25 per cent in the traditional series would greatly reduce the archival value of the series. You say 20 per cent to 25 per cent and I just take it that that is a pretty significant figure.

CHAIRMAN—The reason I ask this question is that I have asked it of previous witnesses. In regard to the Committee's recommendations for printing, it seems to me that there has been little criticism of those documents that we have left out. If that is the case, maybe we are recommending too many and maybe we could reduce the cost here.

Mr Brudenall—I think one of the important factors is access to the information, whether or not it is in the Parliamentary Papers Series. If you were to cut the number of papers in the series by 25 per cent, as long as at the same time there was some reinforcement of, say, the AGPS monthly catalogue or other listings of government documents, and some reinforcement of the availability of these documents through government bookshops or other outlets, then the outcry

would be diminished to some extent. At the moment the AGPS list includes only documents which are for sale and I understand that the bookshops only handle documents which are for sale.

Some of the things which you might leave out might be free. This could mean that people are neither going to have the knowledge that the document exists, because it is not in an AGPS listing, nor get copies easily even if they find out, through a government bookshop, that the document does exist. So, I think these are important elements in any decision to cut back on parliamentary papers.

Senator ROBERTSON—Sometimes we do have difficulty in deciding whether or not a publication should be printed. Would your Library have the resources to advise us of the sort of material that might be acceptable or wanted by the public generally?

Mr Moore—I would say we would take a fairly conservative view, because we would provide the opinion of people who were, to some extent anyway, specialists in the subject of that paper. Somewhere in the research service there would be someone who thought this paper on agriculture or that paper on defence—

Senator ROBERTSON—Would find a market?

Mr Moore—Yes.

Senator ROBERTSON—That is the sort of information I was thinking about, and it would not be difficult, surely.

Mr Moore—We would be glad to contribute a view. We would not want to be put into a position of being the arbiter or the final adviser.

Senator ROBERTSON—But quite often one would say: "Would there be a call in the community for this article on agriculture?" Someone on your staff would have an opinion on this.

Mr Moore—Yes.

Short adjournment

Mr John Ferguson MACALLISTER, Assistant State Librarian (Technical Services), State Library of New South Wales, was called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—The Committee has your submission on the Parliamentary Papers Series before it. Are there any alterations of additions you wish to make?

Mr Macallister—I do not think so. I will just speak to it as you question.

CHAIRMAN—Is it the wish of the Committee that the document be incorporated in the transcript. There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

LIBRARY COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES STATE LIBRARY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Macquarie Street, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000

R. F. Doust, B.A., M.Lib., F.L.A.A. Telephone: 221 1388,
State Librarian Ext. 252
JM/LR

221 1150
STD. 02
Tel: 21150
in your reply please quote
ACQ/IC/549
19 August 1976

Mr T. Wharton,
Secretary,
Joint Committee on Publications,
Parliament of Australia,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600.

Dear Mr Wharton,

Thank you for your letter dated 12 July 1976, addressed to Mr Doust, and for your kind invitation to express views on the matters now the subject of inquiry by the Joint Committee on Publications, as well as to provide comment on matters which may be outside the immediate terms of the inquiry. As Mr Doust is at present overseas, I am answering on his behalf.

By way of general comment may I indicate that the reasons for publication of Parliamentary documents are twofold. Primarily to provide information to an interested, educated and involved electorate about the activities of government, so that being aware of the deliberations and activities of the prime organisation of government in our society, the community may be in a better position to benefit from these activities and to provide a firmer basis on which the society might work more efficiently to reach the goals set by the legislature. Secondly these publications provide invaluable source material on practically all facets of life, social, economic and industrial of the Australian community and thus are some of the major tools of the Australian research worker, both present and future. It is of great importance to the community therefore, that these publications be available on as wide a range of subjects as possible, that they be printed and distributed urgently to places of free access and that complete bound sets be available promptly to assist in the ready location of material required for current purposes and for research purposes.

May I now comment in particular on the points raised in your letter:

1.—

- (a) That all reports . . . presented to Parliament be recommended for printing.
- Because of the authority of these reports and their invaluable current and research uses, they should, on presentation to Parliament be automatically recommended for printing.

- (b) That 1 (a) is not intended to include the interim annual reports of departments and authorities.

These may be better excluded as an exception to 1 (a) above if they are to be superseded by a final report with full information: depends on the time lag between providing the facts and figures in the interim report and receiving the report proper and how much the accuracy and usefulness of the former would be affected by its interim nature. Para 234 and these

comments are limited to interim annual reports, only interim reports of committees, commissions etc, should continue to appear in the series.

- (c) 'nil' return. Yes, otherwise there would be no way of telling whether a report had been made. The very fact of being a 'nil' return is in itself informative.
- (d) The Auditor-General. This seems the most helpful arrangement.
2. To amend the principles to (a) decrease (b) increase the number of documents included in the Parliamentary Paper Series.

There is no doubt that the number of documents included in the series should be increased rather than reduced. When included in this series it makes the citation, ordering and obtaining of reports simpler than other categories of government publications which are very often difficult to trace, identify and obtain. There might be some small waste of duplication in this suggestion but on the grounds of the importance of Parliamentary Documents and the convenience in use, any duplication would be justified. The inclusion in the Parliamentary Paper Series would give the complete overall picture of Parliament's activities and ensures that all documentation concerning other bodies are printed and available.

3. Whether current arrangements of availability and distribution are satisfactory.

The present system proves to be unsatisfactory and meets with most criticism by the staff and users of the Library. Some general reactions might explain some of the 'user' problems, but at the same time let me say that I am aware of the major problems which must beset the compilers.

Much more needs to be done in:

- (i) Creating an awareness of their existence.
- (ii) Advertising their price.
- (iii) Advising the correct source for ordering.
- (iv) Better marketing techniques might be used—and expansion of AGPS sales agencies to major towns and suburbs in cities.
- (v) Issue frequent lists, say quarterly, which indicate the status of papers, i.e. which are printed, which are printing, which will be printed, which are out of print. Perhaps this list might also give the price, and some symbols to indicate source of supply.

Although the State Library receives Australian Government publications from the Australian Government Publishing Service by right of deposit, it is never certain what publications are included in the depository scheme.

Although we assume all publications issued by AGPS are deposited, we do miss some. If the suggested list could indicate deposit items, as does the United States Monthly Catalogue, this would be most helpful.

- (vi) Distribution of both the unbound and bound sets is haphazard. The Library is still receiving separate issues of some Parliamentary Papers issued or at least described as 1974, while the 1971 bound set of these Papers was received in July 1976. This five year delay means that the usefulness as a reference tool is much diminished. The deposit copies of the Coombes Report have not yet been received by the Library. This is expensive and should be available to those who cannot afford \$30 to purchase.

- (vii) There is some confusion when the same report is issued in a different format by the responsible department from that issued by the AGPS. This is a major cause of duplication, e.g.

THOMPSON, Norman I.

A Report to the Australian Minister for Education, Schemes of Assistance to school students. The means test.

We received three copies in the Parliamentary Paper format from the AGPS. We ordered two copies from the Australian Department of Education (not, at the time, realising the report has been issued as a PP.) and then we received three copies as a donation from the Department.

Had this been properly cited this duplication and work would have been unnecessary.

4.-

(b) At present university libraries are the only libraries which receive Parliamentary Papers etc., as a matter of right. May I press the argument that the State libraries as well as the National Library should, as the largest repositories of the permanent record of the history of Australia, which are available restriction restriction of any sort to the whole nation, also be declared depository libraries, as of right, for all Parliamentary publications as well as all other Australian government publications. It is important that these publications be freely available without restriction to the public at large, without delay, and without being dependent upon membership of a particular community. If State libraries had depository status as of right, we could then be more certain that publications were delivered without delay, while the status of eligibility to receive them free on request has inbuilt delays and disadvantages. As State libraries needed to keep permanently all these publications, it is more suitable that their depository status and receipt of material be as a matter of right. In the case of other types of libraries, it is important that they are able to obtain the material free on request, as required to meet particular demands.

(c) I have indicated above that the bound Parliamentary Paper Series for 1971 was received in July 1976. It is important to assist in access to this material that this delay be shortened to an absolute minimum. It could be worth considering whether this series be made available not only in the traditional paper format, but also in microfilm and/or microfiche format as well. There would be considerable space advantages to libraries, cost might be reduced and complete sets could be made more readily available at widely separate geographic centres.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MACALLISTER
Assistant State Librarian
(Technical Services)

CHAIRMAN—In your opening paragraphs you give a general comment on the value of the parliamentary publications. Amongst other things, the Committee is concerned to know whether the Parliamentary Papers Series has altered in value to your library, say, over the last 10 years or so?

Mr Macallister—The Parliamentary Papers Series has always been important in the State Library of New South Wales. You might know that this is divided into 2 particular libraries. One is the Mitchell Library which is a vast resource area in Australiana, and the other is the general reference library—the State Library. The Mitchell Library demands that readers use it

only with a reader's ticket, which means that they have to be vouched for before they go in. The general reference library is available to any member of the community. The Parliamentary Papers Series is used extensively in both of these areas. It is used in the general reference library, particularly for current use when people wish to find out about documents that are being presented or published by Parliament. The Mitchell Library sets are used for research purposes by university workers, professors and people who are doing general historical or social research. They are very valuable to both of these libraries.

CHAIRMAN—Is that in spite of the fact that the departmental version is fairly readily available at an early date in most instances?

Mr Macallister—For research purposes people do prefer to use the Parliamentary Papers Series set because they are more complete, they are better indexed and they are more readily available. With most serials—and the normal departmental set is what we call a serial or periodical—it is very difficult to ensure that you are going to have a complete run. The value of the set is enhanced greatly if you have a complete run from Volume 1 right through to the current date. Quite often you can miss, say the 1940 or the 1950 copy of an annual report just because they do not reach you from the Government Printer, or because they go out of print more readily. If they are available in the Parliamentary Papers Series they are much more easily checked. If you have the bound volume, and all of them are in there, then you are quite sure that you have a complete set. It is much easier to cite the Parliamentary Papers Series in literature than it would be to cite the normal departmental report.

CHAIRMAN—Does your State Library of New South Wales store the parliamentary papers as a series or are individual copies placed on the shelves for individuals to refer to?

Mr Macallister—We store both the unbound ones—the ones that are not yet bound as a series—and the bound ones as a series together on the shelf.

Senator MISSEN—In both the libraries or in one?

Mr Macallister—I think the Mitchell Library does not have the current issues; it keeps only the bound sets.

CHAIRMAN—You may have heard in the earlier evidence reference to the papers index of the Parliament which contains a full list of papers that are tabled and a reference to their

date of tabling. Would you like to comment on the papers index and its importance to your library and to the users of the library?

Mr Macallister—I did make some photostat copies of a couple of the indexes. I made a photostat copy of the 1971 bound parliamentary paper index and I also made an index to the loose index to papers presented to Parliament for the session 1970–71–72 and it was fairly obvious that these had been indexed quite differently. For instance, in the contents in the parliamentary papers 1971 bound set it gives the index for 1971 and under Aborigines it lists 2 things: The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the Commonwealth Capital Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises report. But in the index under Aborigines there is nothing. I would have thought that if we were indexing those 2 things we would have had an entry under Aborigines. It is perhaps all right for parliamentary officers who have some expertise and who handle these quite frequently to know there are such things as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the Commonwealth Capital Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises. In the State Library we are somewhat removed so it is to be expected that we have less expertise in these matters. In other libraries they are even more removed from parliamentary papers, so any help we can get in the indexing the better will be our service.

Senator MISSEN—Actually you are not even suggesting any elaborate cross-reference here. You are really suggesting the essence of that paper was Aborigines, and you are not really going very far in that, are you?

Mr Macallister—It is just a basic principle of indexing that references are listed under subjects. In the session 1970–71–72 there is an index, and I noticed that the Commonwealth Capital Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises report for the year 1970–71, which was in the parliamentary papers, is in fact indexed under Aboriginal Enterprises so that is a better index, so far I am concerned, for finding out things about Aborigines. Would you care to have a look at those?

CHAIRMAN—So in essence you are saying that the index could do with some revision and certainly it will need care in its preparation?

Mr Macallister—Yes, certainly. And to bring out the subject content of the reports rather than relying on the names of the reports. Under the Institute for Aboriginal Studies they do have a reference, but if you do not know there is such an institute you have to find out first before you find out what the Commonwealth Parliament is doing about Aborigines.

Senator ROBERTSON—Referring to the previous question, would there be many changes necessary in your organisation to make sure that we would have to print only one series? In other words, if the report came to you, could you change your organisation to make sure that it fitted into a series and was not lost? My point is that we are thinking in terms of cutting costs, and we must think perhaps of not having a second run of a report into the parliamentary series.

Mr Macallister—You are suggesting we do not have a parliamentary series at all?

Senator ROBERTSON—I am not suggesting; it is just a proposition to look at.

Mr Macallister—I would be most unhappy if that were to happen. Libraries are in the unfortunate position of having to accept whatever publishers put out, and this makes it very difficult for libraries. It means that instead of trying to complete one series we might then have to try to complete 200 separate series; the series for the annual report for each of the departments, for example. If the royal commissions were not put out in a series we would first have to find out what royal commissions were published, their availability and where we were going to get them. This would make it much more difficult from an acquisition point of view. It would also make it more difficult in some ways with a couple of them from a routine payments point of view, and I think eventually it also would make it more difficult in the reference use of this material.

Senator ROBERTSON—If this happened it would accept the service you are able to offer your users?

Mr Macallister—Yes, it is much better from a library's point of view to be able to say that the publications of parliament are incorporated in this one series and to be able to go there with some confidence to find the material that is available.

Senator ROBERTSON—To reinforce your point, would be most unhappy if this series was discontinued?

Mr Macallister—Yes.

Senator MISSEN—Taking it from the opposite, if you were going to do something and, if say, the annual reports or something had to fit within the Parliamentary Papers Series, would that be a lesser of the 2 evils? At least you would have the parliamentary series, even if you did not have the original publication.

Mr Macallister—Yes. I would prefer to have the Parliamentary Papers Series rather than the individual reports.

Senator ROBERTSON—Even if you have to wait five or six months for it?

Mr Macallister—Yes, but I would prefer not to have to wait five or six months. I think I mentioned in my submission that the Coombs report, when I wrote this document, had not been received by the State Library. We bought a copy at \$30 for the State Library. I am not quibbling about the \$30, but people were demanding that they be able to see it, so we had to send somebody down to the bookshop to buy it and put it through in a hurry. We got the depository copy on 2 September.

Senator ROBERTSON—So you follow the technique that Mr Moore is following, of putting out the working copy as soon as possible, and then replacing it later?

Mr Macallister—That is right. In fact we would probably keep one copy of the Coombs report in the Parliamentary Papers Series and another copy separately, because it is a very important document. I am not sure that the Coombs report is in fact going to be incorporated in the Parliamentary Papers Series and I do not know how I am going to find out until such time as we get a copy. This is a problem. I am not sure either whether just the report is going to be incorporated in the Parliamentary Papers Series or whether the appendices too are going to be incorporated.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would you like to make an input here? Would you like to make comment on what ought to be in and make a suggestion to the Committee?

Mr Macallister—I feel that all papers presented to the Parliament should be printed automatically. I know that might create difficulties. I do not know how the actual decision is made in Parliament. I know that your Committee eventually makes recommendations as to what is to be published. I would like to think that all of these things were published.

Senator ROBERTSON—Is there any value in sending you a list of the papers tabled and asking which of them you think ought to be printed? You would say they all ought to be printed. Would that be your blank case?

Mr Macallister—I would tend to do that, yes.

Senator MISSEN—Assuming you do not get that and assuming that this Committee will continue to recommend some and not others—this is a different point altogether—would there be any value to you to know which ones this Committee had decided to print, perhaps 6 months or so before they come out? Would it be any use to you to

know which ones this Committee had recommended and which were going to be printed by the Parliament?

Mr Macallister—Yes. I think I have said that in my submission.

Senator MISSEN—It would appear in Hansard because there is a report in each time, but it is not easy to find, is it?

Mr Macallister—It is very difficult to find, but at the bottom of page 2 I have said that it would be useful to issue frequent lists, say, quarterly, to indicate the status of papers—which are printed, which are being printed, which will be printed. It would be very useful if that were a separate document which could be put out. I have said quarterly—that would be useful—but it might even be considered monthly, depending on how you were going. I think it is very important to know which are being printed and which will be printed.

Senator ROBERTSON—So that is a service which the Committee could offer to a library of any sort?

Mr Macallister—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—Given your limited resources and obviously the limited resources of other major libraries in Australia, your suggestion is that this Parliament, as a central point, should be printing every document tabled so that they can be dispersed round the States?

Mr Macallister—That is right. For the last ten or fifteen years I have had criticisms from people who are doing studies, who are interested in what is happening in government, about the non-availability of this information, and it is very difficult, unless you get to a State reference library, to be able to get accurate information on the workings of parliament. For instance, I am not sure how complete parliamentary papers are in a centre like Newcastle. The Newcastle City Library might get the parliamentary papers as free copies; I would not be sure of that. Other centres, in major cities such as Wollongong, Bathurst, Orange and Wagga Wagga, should have good deposits of government publications. There are no bookshops available in country areas, of which I am aware. The only bookshop of which I am aware in New South Wales is the one in Sydney. I do not see how these people living in the country would be readily able to find out the available information without writing to a capital city.

CHAIRMAN—Mr Macallister, you are aware that in this index of papers presented, every paper that is presented is indexed, and in the

right hand column it goes on to state whether the paper is actually printed as a parliamentary paper and bound. Do you find that the ones that are not printed, that are not available in the series, cause difficulty for you and for the users of your Library? Do they sometimes want to refer to some of these documents that are just not in the series?

Mr Macallister—I do not work in the reference department at the moment. I have talked to the people in the reference department and they suggest that a lot of the things that are not printed should be printed and should be made available. That is the suggestion from the reference people, it is not my own observation; over the last few years I have not worked in reference departments.

CHAIRMAN—I do not know whether you have noticed, but we have received certain evidence and comments that suggest that we should encourage consistency in the tabling of reports. Does the fact that some departments do not produce regular annual reports cause any inconvenience to you and your users?

Mr Macallister—I noticed that in previous evidence they mentioned that sometimes the Foreign Affairs Department did produce a report and sometimes they did not. It is always difficult. If you find a report for one year, you assume that you are going to find it for the next year, and so on. The result is that you can waste a lot of time verifying the fact that something was not published. I certainly would like to see the Foreign Affairs Department put in an annual report every year, and, if that is not done, I think Mr Brudenell mentioned this morning that it would be useful to put in a 'nil return', which would indicate that it was not there.

Senator ROBERTSON—That nothing happened that year?

Mr Macallister—Not necessarily that something did not happen, but that a report of it was not published. It would be useful to show publication exempted this year, for some reason or other.

Senator TEHAN—It has been suggested that the tabling of a report by this Committee at the commencement of each session of Parliament, listing those papers that are likely to be printed that year, would be of considerable help to librarians, and would be of more assistance than a knowledge of the guidelines followed by the Committee. You would prefer the first one of those, I presume, from what you have said in reply to Senator Missen earlier.

Mr Macallister—I am sorry, I have missed your point.

Senator TEHAN—If the Committee, at the commencement of each session listed the papers likely to be printed, this would be more assistance than merely relying on a knowledge of the guidelines which the Committee follows.

Mr Macallister—The parliamentary librarians in the Commonwealth and in each of the States might be aware of the guidelines, but most of the librarians certainly would not be, and it is much better to have something on paper.

Senator TEHAN—Does the library and do its users value the inclusion of biographical notes, photographs and perhaps some public relations material in an annual report? You may possibly have seen some reference to this in evidence we have had. It has been suggested that the inclusion of such material which may be unnecessary can only add to the cost of producing the series. Would you care to comment on the inclusion of photographs, and so forth?

Mr Macallister—Generally I am of the opinion that any information that you can get is always worth having, and if there is biographical information available in one of the reports, I would not like to see it cut out of the Parliamentary Papers Series. I think it should be available to people. Quite often a research worker is interested in the biographical information on particular people who make reports or make up the personnel of a particular department. And sometimes it is interesting to see how work has developed along these lines which might be relevant to the biographical information given.

Senator ROBERTSON—Do you feel the parliamentary paper ought to be as attractive as the first issue—in other words, with the inclusion of photographs, and so on? You have partly answered the question.

Mr Macallister—I see no reason why the Parliamentary Papers Series should not be attractively produced. I think there is every reason why it should be. The more attractive it can be, the better.

Senator ROBERTSON—An argument could be advanced that it is used by researchers who are only interested in getting material from it.

Mr Macallister—I think the major use of the parliamentary papers is that of gaining information. The providing of the attractiveness should not take away from the information. If they are trying to get a beautiful layout, and produce a very attractive, expensive, brochure, which is not giving you the information, then I would much

rather go back to the dull format in which you got the information.

Senator ROBERTSON—That would be a criticism of the original report rather than of our printing of the papers?

Mr Macallister—That is right. I once worked in the Department of Health in New South Wales. When I was there the Journal of the American Medical Association, in reviewing the New South Wales Department of Health's annual report, said: 'We received by mail a 196 page large format book entitled 'Report of the Director—General of Public Health for 1968'. The report coming from the New South Wales Department of Health was a pleasant surprise.' They go on later to say: 'The report is so complete that it might well serve as a good example of how such reports should be written. It also could be used as a source of information on how an efficient structure of public health has been organised and how it works.'

I brought a copy of that journal along. Doubtless you have all seen that sort of format. That is the Journal of the American Medical Association. The Association has no quibbles about the actual format, but the information is very important to them. There is no reason why the publications should not be attractively presented, provided that the information is there.

Senator TEHAN—It has been suggested that where a report is presented annually, on an occasion on which it is of little consequence, perhaps it need not be printed as a parliamentary paper. This Committee has in the past followed the advice of the Erwin Committee and recommended that these reports be printed. I note that in paragraph 1(c) on page 2 of your letter you refer to nil returns. Perhaps you might care to expand on your comments there, or you may not have anything further to say.

Mr Macallister—The fact that there is a 'nil return' provides some information, depending on what the 'nil return' is. If it is a statistical analysis it might indicate that there has been very little work done. My main reason for this is from the point of view of the reference librarian.

Senator TEHAN—It is a series. In other words, you are certain of what you have.

Mr Macallister—It is there; you do not have to chase around and you do not have to convince a research worker that it is not there. Sometimes they take a lot of convincing.

Senator TEHAN—As a Committee, we are keen to discover how duplication of distribution can be avoided. An example of this duplication is

the supplying of libraries with a free copy of a parliamentary paper, when the library may already have received a previous copy in the departmental form. In your submission, at paragraph 2, you state that such duplication can be justified. Would you expand on that?

Mr Macallister—The point about that is that the Parliamentary Paper Series to a library such as ours is the important series. It is the one which has most authority, and is the one which is put out by Parliament. It is the one with Parliament's endorsement. It is the one which we can check to see that it is complete and that the documentation is there. It is the one on which we put most of our store when we are trying to find out information about parliaments. We do, on occasions buy, or have donated from the Government Printer, separate reports which we bind. We cannot guarantee without a lot of work that these are going to be necessarily kept complete. Because of this, I think it is worthwhile having a little duplication. I think that, apart from the printing costs—and I know that is the sort of thing in which this Committee is really interested—there has been a lot of expenditure of moneys, firstly in doing the work reports and compiling the reports. The printing costs are only a part of the total cost. I know that you quote \$530,000 for the cost of the Parliamentary Papers Series, and that is a lot of money. In the overall cost perhaps it is less than for not making this information available when you consider the amount of cost that has already gone into the compilation of the report. That is the way I see it.

Senator MISSEN—Can I put it to you that perhaps you are seeing it from the opposite point of view. When the parliamentary paper edition finally comes out it may not be of much importance whereas the original one is. I will give you an example: In the parliament recently the IAC draft report on culture and the arts—a matter of great controversy—was not available. Senator Melzer, for example, was very indignant that members of Parliament were the last to get copies of it. That report is the one that is going to be argued over. The Government may reject it. By the time it gets to the Parliamentary Papers Series it may no longer be of much importance, but it has been argued over in the original report. This is the opposite point of view—that there may be occasions when it is important to duplicate because the first is the controversial and useful one and the second one may be historical.

Mr Macallister—I think the current usefulness of the first one is certainly the purpose for which it is being printed. The purpose of the paper is to present information to Parliament for its debate

and for its purposes. I think the other uses of the thing are subsidiary to that. But because they are subsidiary does not suggest that they are not important. They are different and therefore they are very important. Almost immediately, within 12 months, people are going to want to look at that and so assess it. In twenty, thirty or fifty years time people will want to be able to say: 'What did we say in 1976 about the arts? What was the debate and what was the information?' That is a very important document for historical purposes.

Senator MISSEN—In fact both documents are important?

Mr Macallister—Yes, and they do have different uses.

Senator ROBERTSON—But the point must be accepted that the first document is the one that is going to have the wider interest.

Senator MISSEN—In this case.

Senator ROBERTSON—I would reinforce your point here that the researcher later on will want this, but at present there are a lot of people who want access to the document.

Mr Macallister—I do not understand your use of the phrase wider interest. At present there will be wide interest, but if you take it over a number of years there will be very wide interest in it, will there not?

Senator ROBERTSON—I am talking of the quantum of people who would be searching out that information now, and I suggest it would be much broader than even the accumulation over the next 50 years.

Senator MISSEN—In this particular example.

Senator ROBERTSON—Yes.

Mr Macallister—Maybe.

Mr MARTYR—You have indicated pretty definitely that you believe everything we handle ought to be published, and I think you have indicated that you would like a list, or at least you would appreciate that if there was any advertising conducted you and all other librarians were given copies of it so that you could see what is available. You have also given us the benefit of your experience in a few suggestions about how we could improve matters. So I found you a most excellent witness. You have anticipated everything that I wished to raise.

Senator ROBERTSON—Going to the current situation, you said you would want certain things. Could you explain how you find out at present what has been tabled; secondly, how

many copies of each report does your Library receive, and thirdly, could you comment on the value to your Library of the deposit system of the AGPS.

Mr Macallister—We generally find out about parliamentary papers through the monthly and weekly publications lists of AGPS. If people ask for specific reports that have not been received we will chase those up independently. We might ring the Australian Government bookshop in Sydney and ask for copies and if they do not have them we ask where we can get copies. During the last week or so I have had a look at the 1974 parliamentary papers which were issued and although this is not 100 per cent accurate, it is accurate enough to give some indication as to the amount of delay we experience in the receipt of these publications, and I can pass this to you. I am sorry I do not have sufficient copies. I checked first the weekly and monthly lists of the AGPS and noted down the dates on which particular parliamentary papers were listed in their weekly list. Then I noted against each of those the date on which we put an accession stamp on the actual item received. You can see that we are not perfect either because four out of these 330 items were not stamped. A number of them were not listed in the weekly lists and not received and others were not listed and received.

Senator ROBERTSON—That is an unusual one, the twenty-seventh, received but not listed.

Mr Macallister—That is right. I also have a table indicating the actual issues I checked, and I noticed that in 1974 we had received the December 6 and December 13 issues but we did not have any after that during December, so there might be one or two issues of their weekly list missing. Also in June 1975 I think there was one missing issue.

Senator ROBERTSON—That you may not have received.

Mr Macallister—We may not have received it so it may be that the exercise was not accurate to that extent and they might have been published in other lists that I did not actually check.

CHAIRMAN—Could we have this sheet incorporated in the transcript of proceedings?

Mr Macallister—Yes.

CHAIRMAN—There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

Receipt of 1974 Parliamentary Papers in relation to table listed in Australian Government Publications Weekly List, and date of receipt stamped by State Library of New South Wales.

Attached is the list of Australian Government Publishing Service, Weekly and Monthly lists checked.

	No.	Percent
Not stamped	4	1.19
Not listed and not received	6(198 b-d)	1.79
Not listed and received	27	8.06
Received before listing	21	6.25
Received day of listing	8	2.38
Listed and not received	12	3.57
Received within 7 days of listing	66	19.64
Received within 14 days of listing	41	12.20
Received within 1 month of listing	88	26.19
Received within 2 months of listing	40	11.90
Received within 3 months of listing	12	3.71
Received within 4 months of listing	5	1.49
Received within 5 months of listing	4	1.19
Received within 7 months of listing	1	0.30
Received within 9 months of listing	1	0.30
	336	98.97

Senator ROBERTSON—Have you any further comment on that subject?

Mr Macallister—It is interesting that there is considerable delay in relation to a fair percentage of the material there.

Senator ROBERTSON—You speak on page 3 of the matter of confusion when the same report is issued in a different format. Is this a regular occurrence?

Mr Macallister—It does happen often. One of the problems is in citing this information, and it is perhaps one of the problems I could foresee if you were just going to overprint with some plastic device on the normal departmental reports. The only way of being certain you have not received the same report is that you make on each copy a note saying that this is the Parliamentary Papers Series of such and such, or on the departmental series to say that this is also issued as parliamentary paper so and so.

Senator ROBERTSON—Of course they would not know that when they were printing them so it would have to be the other way, would it not?

Mr Macallister—I just wonder why, in the case of the annual reports of the various departments you could not state for the next 10 years that all of those were to be published. You are going to publish the annual report of each of the departments, I assume, so why could that not be automatic. That is the question I ask myself.

Senator ROBERTSON—It is just a matter of procedure. The set-up at the moment is that this Committee actually considers it and it could well be that exactly what you say will happen and that each paper is considered.

Senator MISSEN—With respect, if we did that and did not list it on our reports, you would not know that the annual report had arrived at a department and this can be months or years late. You would not get much comfort from the fact that you knew it was going to be done every year if in fact some of them came out very late and you missed them.

Mr Macallister—The other point is that all of these parliamentary papers are given an individual number and yet in the bound volumes they are not bound in relation to that number. I would have thought the easiest way to find Parliamentary Paper No. 210 would be to get the parliamentary papers for 1971 and get 210 or 220 to 250, whatever it was, that you wanted. It has always baffled me why we have it bound in this peculiar way. No doubt the officers of Parliament understand it, but it defeats me.

Senator MISSEN—That would hold up all the volumes for the year, would it not? If you did it that way you could not print Volume 1 until you had got the whole of Volume 1, whereas I take it it is done the other way so that you can finish some volumes leaving a last one to be finished with the late stragglers.

Mr Macallister—I would have thought it was more logical to bind them in the numbers in the parliamentary papers. That would obviate the necessity for going through and stamping each page in the Parliamentary Papers Series because you could refer to Paper No. 21, page so and so, and you have an automatic reference in your pagination.

CHAIRMAN—Is the monthly list of publications put out by the AGPS satisfactory for the purposes of your library?

Mr Macallister—In relation to the Parliamentary Paper Series it does list them. They are listing the publications which are placed on sale. It is not in fact a list of the AGPS publications as such. So that if any of the parliamentary papers were free I think they would not be listed. Maybe that refers back to this material here, received but not listed.

Senator MISSEN—I have been informed since I asked that question about the logic of the binding that it has to do rather with the subject index from A to D and so forth. Apparently that is the logic of it; it is not the one I suggested to you.

Mr Macallister—If we look at the photostats I tabled with the contents list you can see it is more or less alphabetic in relation to the title of the reports. I feel that if you have a number you could use that as your binding reference number and it would make it more simple to refer to all the time. It would certainly be easier to find material in the bound set.

Senator ROBERTSON—Certainly that suggestion could be passed on because the compilation of that is not our responsibility, is it?

Senator DONALD CAMERON—You are probably aware that a previous Publications Committee recommended that State and municipal libraries receive free copies of parliamentary papers on request. In your submission in paragraph 4(b), you suggest that State libraries should receive parliamentary papers as of right. I understand from the House records that your library is on the free distribution list, possibly following a request from your library, and that accordingly you should be receiving copies in the same manner as a university library. Why are you concerned that a State library should receive parliamentary papers as of right rather than be required to indicate interest in the series in order to be placed on the list?

Mr Macallister—The State library is one institution to which all members of the community have access. Not all members of the community have access to parliamentary libraries, neither do they necessarily have access to university libraries. I know that in some cases it would be quite simple to get into a university library, access by right, and the parliamentary papers of the country should be available to people in any instance. This is why State libraries particularly should have a deposit set as of right rather than by request. I know that in practice it means very little because we do get all of the parliamentary papers we need, but it is a matter of interest that we should have it by right rather than having to ask for them, so that the material can be available to the electorate.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—Does the fact that you have to make a request for the papers mean any delay rather than having them as a right?

Mr Macallister—I would not think that it causes delays because the AGPS probably has been instructed to deliver copies of the parliamentary papers to State libraries and they do that automatically. I do not think it would make much difference to delays. It is very difficult to know what would and what would not.

CHAIRMAN—You are suggesting that the State libraries are not discriminatory at all, that the publications contained therein are available for general public use and therefore, if anything, you should be the first people to receive the copies without having to request them.

Mr Macallister—They are open to all members of the community, just the same as the National Library, whereas other libraries who have these by right are not open to all members of the community.

Senator DONALD CAMERON—One of the suggestions put to the Committee for reducing the time taken to produce individual papers of the series is to overprint the parliamentary paper details on the original departmental cover and title pages. It has been suggested in evidence that librarians might not like to get away from the standard blue cover of the series. A similar question was put to the previous witness. I would like to hear your comment on this matter.

Mr Macallister—I do not think librarians have any real concern that it must be a pale blue cover and in a particular format. Certainly it makes it easier to identify. We have inexperienced staff handling these at the entry point and certainly it does make it easier for them to do some of their work. But that is only a matter of convenience. The real problem is to ensure that we do get them. The overprinting and the samples that I have seen here this morning with a piece of plastic stuck on the cover would not be sufficient, as far as I am concerned. The plastic would certainly come off. I am aware that the Government Printer has said in his evidence that he can get adhesive which would make sure that they would stick forever.

I would prefer that parliamentary paper numbers be printed on the title page of each report. That might make for difficulties. I would much rather have that information printed on rather than stuck on. Quite a number of publishers overseas, both in England and America, stick a piece of plastic across one imprint and sell it under a different publishers name. This causes problems when you are trying to describe a particular book. You are not quite sure whether it is the English or American edition that is being described.

Senator ROBERTSON—Is it simply the cover and not the fly inside? Is it just a simple cover that goes on the outside in the case you just pointed out?

Mr Macallister—No, it is just a piece of plastic that they stick over the imprint on the title page that is all.

Senator MISSEN—Is it important for a report that is not stapled to have the number on the spine?

Mr Macallister—I do not think it is important but if you are putting something away or you are looking for something on the shelf, it is much easier to find. That is the advantage of it. If you were using parliamentary papers for 1974 and you had 330 of them, then you could glance along a shelf and see that that is 310. It is much easier to do that than it is to pick up each individual one and look at it. It is a matter of convenience; it is an advantage.

Mr MARTYR—How do you think we can make the public more aware of the content of the Parliamentary Papers Series? Do you have any ideas?

Mr Macallister—Yes. I think it is very difficult. I was very disappointed to hear that the information services were to be closed. I have had a lot of people talk to me about the closing of that because it provided a useful function.

Senator MISSEN—Is this something that you have recently learnt?

Mr Macallister—I am referring to the information services that operated in conjunction with the AGPS bookshops.

CHAIRMAN—The Australian Information Service was operating in conjunction with the AGPS.

Mr Macallister—That is right. They were closed, were they not, about March or April this year. I am not sure whether it is fair for me to criticise on this.

CHAIRMAN—The Committee will be inquiring at some future date into the operations of the Australian Government Publishing Service and looking in some detail at the operation of the bookshops, so please continue.

Mr Macallister—I heard a lot of criticism from people saying that it was one avenue of information about government publications which was no longer available to them. Many people thought that there should be a greater number of bookshops available. As far as I know—I might easily be wrong—there is only one bookshop in New South Wales and that is in Sydney. I would have thought that we could have had one in Newcastle, Wollongong and in some of the larger cities. People have suggested that there should even be some in some of the Sydney suburbs.

Mr MARTYR—Principal booksellers in country towns might possibly be used as agents in the circumstances. What sort of people have made these complaints to you? Would you say that they were and I know this is perhaps a euphemism—professional readers of government papers, such as university departments and the like?

Mr Macallister—There are certainly those people. I think there are others as well who have an interest in particular parliamentary papers. I think, for instance, there are probably a lot of fairly junior public servants who are interested in the Coombs report and who want to know what is being said and what goes on. Unless they are in Sydney they would have great difficulty in getting a copy of the Coombs report. They would have fair difficulty in finding out where they could get it.

Mr MARTYR—Taking this a little bit further, do you think some use might be made of the resident member of Federal Parliament who has an electorate office? All of us have offices in our electorates. Do you think any possible use could be made of those individual members of Parliament, or even the senators, at the central location, if there are complaints like this. I know I asked you for suggestions but it occurs to me that perhaps the reference might be made to the individual member of Parliament who generally has available a duplicate set of everything that he gets here. At least he has the service available to him if he wants to make use of it.

Senator ROBERTSON—I thought for one horrible moment that you were going to suggest that we start selling publications.

Mr MARTYR—Oh, no.

Mr Macallister—I think that would be an extra burden to place on members of Parliament, and on senators. The other point is that I think that should be available more generally. Many people might not like to go up and ask you for copies of your papers. I just think that they should be available. Maybe it can be done through the public library systems which are well established. If local members or the AGPS were willing to deposit their copies in local public libraries, they could be well and truly available there.

Senator ROBERTSON—I think you would get a lot of support for that proposition. The library must be the place for people to go. They certainly come to offices looking for information but they should go, in the first instance, to the library. I would support strongly your suggestion that the man in the street should be able to go to the library for anything that has been published in Australia.

Mr Macallister—The microfiche was mentioned earlier. I think local public libraries would be very interested in a microfiche edition, because most of them are starved for building space, as is the State library at the moment. If they had a large set of parliamentary papers it would be much more convenient to have them on microfiche, from which the information would be available.

Senator ROBERTSON—And cheaper than the normal issue of some of the papers.

Mr Macallister—Probably in the long run. You would have to do fairly detailed costings, but most libraries are now looking at the cost of microfiche copies of nearly all periodicals and are comparing that cost with binding costs.

Senator MISSEN—In your own library are you handling microfiche, and, if so, can you expand on its advantages for you?

Mr Macallister—We do have some microfiche. I do not think at the moment we are using it to the greatest advantage. Certainly within the next five or ten years we will be using it more and more. You may not be aware of this but some libraries in Australia are producing their catalogues on microfiche. For instance, the New South Wales Institute of Technology is doing so. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, while not doing so on microfiche, is putting them on microfilm, on 16mm film. You were asking an earlier witness about the acceptability of this form. The readers there are using the catalogue quite willingly and with no problems at all. They are transferring to that sort of information with no difficulty.

Senator ROBERTSON—They are accepting the microfilm procedures, and microfiche?

Mr Macallister—Yes, they are quite happy with it. The students and staff of those institutions have not had any problems with it at all. I thought I would comment on that.

Senator MISSEN—Do you feel that eventually it will replace the loose papers, or even the bound volumes of the parliamentary papers, or both of them?

Mr Macallister—I would hate to see them go—that is my personal comment—because I think they are very valuable. I think it is quite possible in the future that it will replace them. I think major libraries, like the National Library and the State libraries, would want to keep them anyhow.

Mr MARTYR—Mr Macallister, you were here previously when Mr Moore and Mr Bradenall were talking about the microfiche. Would your costing be the same as theirs?

Mr Macallister—For running off, yes.

Mr MARTYR—A few cents for running off a 5 by 3?

Mr Macallister—Once you have made the negative of the microfiche you can run off copies very, very cheaply.

Mr MARTYR—Are the negatives expensive?

Mr Macallister—It depends on the process by which it is done. I do not know the technicalities of how it is or is not done, but if you are typing things from computer typesetting it might be that you can use the computer tapes on which you are printing to prepare what they call 'COM', which is 'computer output microfiche', and you can print straight from computer to microfiche. That is a very inexpensive way of doing it, provided that you have the computer tape done first. If that is part of your normal costs in producing your printed copy, it is not very difficult to produce the 'COM' copy from that. I know there are a lot of technical problems that I have sidestepped but it should be able to be done.

CHAIRMAN—Thank you, Mr Macallister, for giving evidence to the Committee.

Mr Roger James Nicholas BANNENBERG, Parliamentary Librarian in the Queensland Parliamentary Library, was called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—Mr Bannenberg, the Committee has before it your submission on the Parliamentary Papers Series. Are there any alterations or additions you wish to make?

Mr Bannenberg—No.

CHAIRMAN—Is it the wish of the Committee that the submission be incorporated in the evidence? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

Parliament House,
Brisbane,
9 August 1976.

Mr T. Wharton,
Secretary,
Joint Committee on Publications,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Mr Wharton,

Thank you for your letter of 12 July seeking comment on your committee's inquiry on parliamentary publications.

I would agree with your view that Parliamentary libraries are important users of reports because they serve a large clientele of informed and influential members of the community who are often the first to feel the effect of the initial thrust of government policy.

I am perturbed by the attached summary relating to free distribution which gives university libraries the sole right to a free copy of material without request. This is reminiscent of what happened with government publications generally, which once were automatically dispensed to parliamentary libraries, and now are only selectively received on request. Surely the parliamentary libraries should receive official backing to the right to free access to parliamentary publications even if they did not receive them (as I understand as is presently the case) in exchange for a set of the state publications.

Another matter I would like to raise is the possibility of receiving papers presented to parliament (whether subsequently printed or not) as soon as possible after they are tabled. It frequently happens that a report of a controversial nature, or having a major impact on government policy frequently is unobtainable for State members to peruse for many weeks or even months after presentation. This still occurs despite the very great help given us by the Australian Parliamentary Library in obtaining and despatching where possible relevant reports.

Our business is information processing and dissemination, and the service we produce for our members is only as good as availability of source material allows. You would be well aware of the natural reluctance of a responsible member of parliament to comment on a report when the only indication of what its contents may be is in the daily press.

Concerning the items 1-4, generally speaking, I feel that if reports are not going to be printed as parliamentary papers, the committee should ascertain that they will be readily available and published in a different form. It is significant to compare the volume of material printed by both Commonwealth and State parliaments at the beginning of the century with that of today. The growth does not in my opinion reflect the increase both in area and complexity of governmental function, and yet this is supposed to be an era favouring 'open government'.

I am in favour of the guideline set out in 1 (d) which proposes that reports from the Auditor-General relevant to a subject be published with the document in question.

Hoping these brief comments will be of some interest to your committee.

Yours sincerely,
for R. J. N. Bannenberg
Parliamentary Librarian

CHAIRMAN—Mr Bannenberg, this is a question we have asked, and you may have heard it previously, but we are interested in having your comments on the value of the parliamentary

publications. Amongst other things, the Committee is concerned to know whether the Parliamentary Papers Series has altered in value over the last 10 years or so.

Mr Bannenberg—I would say that so far as we are concerned the parliamentary papers have definitely altered in value, in that they are far more valuable to us now than they were 10 years ago. A factor associated with this has been the increase in the staff able to use the information. We have doubled our staff, I suppose, in the last four or five years. Another factor has been the availability of the parliamentary papers since about 1972 or 1973 in the form in which they are tabled—that is, not in the Parliamentary Papers Series but as departmental reports. Mr Moore has previously referred to the private arrangement that we have regarding this. Apart from the use of these papers in their departmental form, we still use the parliamentary series, which is received much later, as an additional copy of the material—sometimes it is not an additional copy because we do not have the one as tabled—and as a back-up copy when something is lost, or, as is frequently the occasion, is out on loan. Apart from the traditional use that we were making of the series 10 years ago, we are making much more use of the current information as it is now available.

CHAIRMAN—What is your staff in the Queensland Parliamentary Library?

Mr Bannenberg—We have fifteen at present including myself. I think ours is the second largest of the State parliamentary libraries. I think Victoria has the same as we do and New South Wales has about another 4 people.

Senator MISSEN—Do you know the size of the parliamentary library here?

Mr Bannenberg—I could give you an indication. I think it would be around about 135 to 140.

CHAIRMAN—Just for the record, I was speaking to Mr Moore in the recess and he said it was 130 people.

Mr Bannenberg—I was being a little optimistic.

CHAIRMAN—I distinctly recall, when I came here in early 1974, being told that there were 127 members on the staff, and I think something like thirty of those are in the research section. Have you a research section?

Mr Bannenberg—We have what is known as a research and reference service, which is staffed by 5 graduate librarians. Perhaps we combine in the one service some of the activities that Mr Moore has in 2 separate services. I understand that his researchers are not librarians and that his reference staff is staffed by librarians. We do a considerable amount of research in our research and reference section, and that is the reason for its title. Only in the last few years have we had the staff available to make more use of the information contained in the Parliamentary Papers Series. They are very important to us.

CHAIRMAN—Now I know why those Queensland parliamentarians are becoming more proficient at attacking Federal parliamentarians.

Mr Bannenberg—I do not know that that is entirely the situation but I would like to think perhaps we could be of help to them.

CHAIRMAN—Does your library store parliamentary papers as a series?

Mr Bannenberg—Yes, indeed. Probably back in the mists of time the original arrangements were made concerning exchanges of publications between the various State Parliaments and the Commonwealth Parliament, and, because of this, we get the loose papers as they are published, and the bound volumes eventually. As you know, some considerable time lag is involved. The loose papers which we get we keep in a numbered series, and they are also subject indexed as they come in, so they are immediately available to us for research and reference. The bound volumes replace these loose papers. Our normal practice is to extract the various unbound reports which we consider to be of considerable importance. I do not mean the annual reports of departments; we rely on the bound copy for them. We keep the other reports as a separate item in the library, as a pamphlet, or as a monograph, as the case may be, according to its size. It is placed in the normal manner around the library as a second or additional copy.

But we always note, when we treat these as monographs, that they are also contained as a numbered paper in the series, so should the copy be lost our catalogue would immediately refer us to the bound volumes for a support copy.

CHAIRMAN—So you value them as a series and also individually?

Mr Bannenberg—We do indeed. Might I also add that because of the upsurge in the amount of research being done, apart from reference work,

the bound volumes of the report—the departmental reports, for instance—become of considerable importance when somebody is trying to do a comparative analysis of a movement over a period. For instance, to take the Public Service Board report to find out what has happened there over the last 15 years—the percentage increase and that sort of thing—one has to go back to the bound volumes. They are not just archival in that respect. They are being used for research; it is not as though they are going to be kept for 50 years before they are looked at; they are looked at all along the way. For instance, I had to look up the Erwin Report recently and it was in the parliamentary papers set. It was there, it was bound and it was available.

CHAIRMAN—How readily do you receive departmental versions of reports?

Mr Bannenberg—That is a very sore point. I have here a photocopy of the report of the Erwin Committee which recommended that the parliamentary libraries should receive government publications on what is known as 'the free list' along with university, national and State reference libraries. For some reason which I have never been able to ascertain, that was not put into operation. Previously we used to get a considerable number of publications from the Federal Government, either as a depository or a free set, according to the terminology used; it was suddenly cut off, and we were left in a rather desperate situation. We were getting loose issues of the parliamentary papers, but the delay was considerable. Mr Moore, at one of the conferences of parliamentary librarians, or subsequent to it, offered to do what he could to make sure that at least the parliamentary papers or the government publications which were tabled as parliamentary papers, were immediately forwarded to the State parliamentary libraries. We very much appreciated this but it was still not the optimum.

The situation occurs where the media get publications at the time of tabling, or even prior to it, with an embargo, and the details of some important matter will appear in print the next day, or even that afternoon. Quite often we have State members trying to find out what exactly has been said in the official report because they do not wish particularly to depend on what may have appeared in the media, but we just do not have it available, nor is it usually available in Brisbane. It is general, not just us. I understand that some important publications—I think the Fraser Island mining one, and perhaps the Ranger report—were printed in advance and distributed very shortly after release, but I gather that was the

exception rather than the rule. When I inquired from our local AGPS bookshop about the availability of, I think, the Green report on the ABC, as an instance of what would happen were a paper tabled, I was told that 4 weeks to 6 weeks would be the normal time.

CHAIRMAN—It has been tabled. It is here today.

Mr Bannenberg—They told me that 4 weeks to 6 weeks would be the time that they would expect to get it in as part of their normal consignment. They said it was most unusual to have material available so soon. Twenty-four hours, or something like that, was most extraordinary. I saw in previous evidence that the AGPS was sending to the university and State libraries, I think, certain material as it came off the press. I do not know how soon that would appear in the libraries, but the point I make is that we process our material immediately on receipt. I think you would find, as a general observation, that large organisations can have material lying about not processed for some time. It can be awaiting processing. But we consider that if we get publications in one day, they should be available that day or the next day to members, properly catalogued and normally processed. Our immediate problem is immediacy of supply. The sooner we can get it, the better we are able to discharge our function.

Senator MISSEN—Do you regard the supplying of parliamentary papers and other reports to your parliamentary library as one of the most obvious and elementary parts of co-operative federalism?

Mr Bannenberg—I would think that with the structure of government the way it is now, with the inter-relationship of the federal and State and local tiers of government in various aspects such as health and education—it flows right through—Federal Government policies have a tremendous impact on the State instrumentalities. They often carry out the programs with Federal funding and that sort of thing. So, it is only natural that not only the Minister responsible, whom I assume will be looked after under these circumstances, but the backbench members of any Party would like to know just what is going on. They want to be able to say that they are in favour or they are not in favour of something and to say why they support or do not support certain things. I think it is very important.

CHAIRMAN—I want to assure that there is nothing diabolical on the part of the Commonwealth in relation to this. I am sure there is no plot to withhold information from the States.

Mr Bannenberg—I very much hope that I have not presented that as my particular problem. I was just illustrating the problems that we have. We very seriously consider ourselves as an information centre; dissemination of information is what we are all about. We are not just a library. I think that parliamentary libraries all over the country in the States and also in the national sphere are not just libraries with books that members may consult. They are information services for the members. They have to be able to provide the information from any source—whether it is by telephone or by printed publication or by analysis of what is available.

CHAIRMAN—I made that comment in jest actually, but I do take the seriousness of the point that you are making. I think that Senator Missen, in raising the matter of co-operative federalism and the comments that have been made in relation to Commonwealth, State and local government—the 3 tiers of government—have raised an extremely important point. We must have the dissemination of knowledge as quickly as possible. So I think that point is well taken.

Mr Bannenberg—Perhaps I am a little sensitive about that sort of comment.

Senator ROBERTSON—It is a point which involves the ready availability of all material.

Senator TEHAN—I suppose the optimum situation so far as you are concerned, and indeed what you would suggest for all State parliamentary libraries, is that they should be automatically recipients of parliamentary papers as soon as they are available in Canberra.

Mr Bannenberg—That, obviously, would be the optimum solution. But I think there are going to be communication problems involved in that. There are 2 observations I would like to make about that and perhaps I should take the more general point first: Perhaps some way could be found, perhaps through some liaison committee between yourselves and government departments to find out what departmental publications are likely to be parliamentary publications. It would not be necessary to know the full details of them—just the sphere of investigation and whether they are standard reports and whether they are likely to be parliamentary publications. Perhaps then they could be printed in the format that has been suggested previously this morning to allow the overprinting of the standard identification to be used in the Parliamentary Papers Series. Having arrived at that situation and if departmental publications are printed in an acceptable format to conform with the Parliamentary Papers Series, they should be

available in advance of tabling. If something is to be embargoed to a certain release date, this could be done, or it could be consigned to the various places which receive it to arrive on the day following. It would seem to me that this would in most instances cut down the time in which the information became available. I realise that quite a lot of publications do not appear in that form of the parliamentary series. But certainly some of them would seem to me to lend themselves to that sort of an arrangement.

Senator TEHAN—What you are suggesting really is that a department or the Minister should say a fortnight ahead whether he is likely to be tabling any statements in the next fortnight and should indicate the subject matter of the statement without giving any detail.

Mr Bannenberg—I was not thinking so much in terms of ministerial statements. I think that is probably getting on to the business of the Second Series and things like that. I was thinking more in the terms of the normal accepted parliamentary papers which are printed at the present time. You can have a fair indication with government department reports that they are going to be required. I think it probably would be a good thing if all reports were treated that way. But obviously there are urgent matters arising at times which cannot be foreseen.

Senator TEHAN—I refer now to distribution: Could you explain to the Committee how the Australian system of publication operates between State and Commonwealth? Do you know whether it takes in all State parliamentary and university libraries?

Mr Bannenberg—I am somewhat reluctant to comment a great deal on this because I do not know. From what I understand it is done by the officers of the House concerned and not the libraries. The Parliament of Queensland has, as no doubt the Commonwealth Parliament has, a free list of bound and unbound parliamentary publications. In return for sending to the Parliamentary Library in Canberra a set of our publications we receive from the Parliament a set of parliamentary publications of the Commonwealth. That in broad terms, as I understand it, is the situation.

Senator TEHAN—What about universities?

Mr Bannenberg—This is once again outside my sphere. From what I understand the clerk of the Parliament does have quite a number of the major universities—at least the old established universities—on the list. As the newer ones and the colleges of advanced education spring up I

do not know whether they do automatically receive the full bound set. Certainly the university libraries which have been going for quite some time would receive a full set of parliamentary papers and Bills and Acts and that sort of thing. We do not in return receive a lot of exchange publications but our library is a copyright depository library for publications printed in the State. Our State universities—James Cook in Townsville and the University of Queensland, St Lucia—give us publications under a Copyright Act. It is not an exchange situation.

CHAIRMAN—Could you give the Committee an indication of the number of publications that would come from the Queensland Parliament?

Mr Bannenberg—As a matter of fact I can. I thought on reflection that a comment I made in my submission could perhaps have been misinterpreted. In the third last paragraph concerning the items 1–4 generally speaking, I said: 'It is significant to compare the volume of material printed by both Commonwealth and State parliaments at the beginning of the century with that of today'. What I was trying to convey was that I feel quite concerned that the State parliaments, and our Parliament in particular, seem to be printing fewer and fewer parliamentary publications. I know, for instance, that the Justice Department report is not printed as a parliamentary publication. The local government report of our State, if there is a report of the local government department, is not printed as a parliamentary paper. The situation has changed considerably. At the beginning of the century, obviously the States were still involved in handing over powers to the Commonwealth. The Queensland Parliamentary papers from 1900 are: in 1900, 223; in 1901, 176; in 1902, 113; in 1908, 160; in 1909, 106; and in 1910, 124. The current situation from 1970 in our State is: in 1970–71, 73; in 1971, 73; in 1972, 83; in 1973–74, 87; in 1974, 68; and in 1975, 24. Perhaps they may run over into a sessional period. On the other hand I think that the Commonwealth publications, as you have seen in evidence before, have grown quite considerably. My figures here for that same earlier period for Australia are: in 1901–02, 116; in 1903, 67; in 1904, 69; in 1905, 91. It looks as if 1907 was a pretty big year as there were 229. But the point I wish to make is that the Commonwealth papers have grown accordingly. I do not think we should be considering cutting down the amount of material that is in the parliamentary papers. I think they are such important vehicles of both public relations and research that, with the process of government being expanded

so much, we should be making sure that they reflect this increased activity. Perhaps one way of doing this without making the parliamentary series grow greater in volume and expense would be to have a separate series for the ministerial series, as previously suggested, with perhaps Green Papers and White Papers and statements made in the House by Ministers. My submission would be that serious reflection should be given to what is going to happen if the parliamentary series is cut down. You may, in fact, achieve a more efficient process but will you have a more democratic process?

The point should be taken that if you are going to have freely available information and democratic government it is going to cost more. It can be done more expeditiously, but there is some damage likely to evolve.

CHAIRMAN—Are you happy with the present format of the Parliamentary Papers when one considers that the government printers, certainly in Queensland and Victoria and probably in the other States, seem to go for the longer foolscap size production?

Mr Bannenberg—I am quite happy with it. It is a swings and merry-go-round situation. You are gaining on the amount of material on the shelf. It makes them more easily manageable within the general library, speaking from a library viewpoint. It can fit into the normal shelf far more easily than a foolscap will. I think it is rather traditional more than anything else. Most parliamentary and other publications, including the English ones, started as foolscap size and gradually did get down to the A4 size we are using at present. I think they are more manageable. I do not know what technical problems are involved. I presume it has been easier to produce that way too. But I would not be surprised if the format did change with time. Also, concerning the availability of information on the papers, in the same way as I pointed out I was concerned about the State publications not perhaps growing in volume commensurate with the increase in complexity of government even at State level, Queensland does not have any bibliographical control at present of government publications. I think Queensland is alone among the States in this particular situation. Once again I am more concerned, because of my background in this area, that sufficient notice is given of what papers are printed. Somebody suggested earlier that if some pamphlet-type information could be issued in advance saying: 'This is what is going to be printed' people would be able to perhaps gain

better knowledge of what was available and take steps to get it.

Senator MISSEN—When you say there is no bibliographical control you mean that Queensland does not receive any list from, say, the Commonwealth or from the other States about what is coming out?

Mr Bannenberg—No, I mean the reverse. I mean that Queensland does not have a list of government publications put out by the Government Printer; a list of publications put out by the Queensland Parliament; a list of government department publications which are put out by the government departments outside of the Government Printer. I was merely setting out the situation to explain why I am particularly concerned with the Commonwealth situation. I feel very strongly that one should not reduce the availability of information and also notice of what is available; 2 particular things.

CHAIRMAN—Am I correct in saying you made the point earlier that there was a diminishing number of papers being made available, parliamentary papers being made in Queensland?

Mr Bannenberg—I said that a diminishing number were printed.

CHAIRMAN—Yes. Do you mean printed?

Mr Bannenberg—As a parliamentary paper.

CHAIRMAN—I see. But the ones that were previously being printed obviously are being done by departments but are not coming through as parliamentary papers? Is that correct?

Mr Bannenberg—Perhaps so; perhaps not. I do not believe the Department of Local Government publishes an annual report as any sort of a paper. The Department of Justice has a publication which is something like an annual report, but irrespective of being presented to Parliament, it is not available as a departmental report.

Senator MISSEN—Is there a committee like this one in Queensland which decided whether a report will be published as a parliamentary paper?

Mr Bannenberg—That is a little outside my knowledge. The clerks participate in this area. But there is a printing committee which decides which papers are to be published and which papers are not. I should imagine the situation would be analogous this Parliament where papers are tabled and a selection is made of what is going to be printed or not printed.

Senator MISSEN—Could the reduction in numbers be a reflection of the fact that in the early part of the century there were 2 Houses of

Parliament for committees and so forth, whereas there is now only one?

Mr Bannenberg—It is quite a valid point. There were joint volumes so it is quite possible that was the case. But usually the case with joint volumes is that two Houses would not double the amount. Only a certain proportion of papers would belong to one House and not to the other.

I do not know. You would be more aware of this. I think there would be more joint papers than individual papers of either House.

Senator MISSEN—Far be it from me as a southern radical to justify something that is happening in Queensland.

CHAIRMAN—I think that you have indicated to the Committee, by the example of Queensland, that it would be a retrograde step.

Mr Bannenberg—I consider that would be the situation. In defence of what has happened in Queensland, I think that finance has probably been one important factor that has caused it. The States have been, I suppose, relatively impoverished as time has gone by and I guess one indication of this has been a cut back in cost. But I think that the area of government and the amount of government involvement in the community has expanded, and that you cannot get an adequate reflection of this because of the cut back in the parliamentary series, which is meant to acquaint the members of whatever parliament is involved, of the basic documents involved in government.

CHAIRMAN—Notwithstanding the point that Senator Missen made about Queensland now having one House instead of two, I think you have indicated from those figures that well after the abolition of the Upper House, a diminishing number of papers has been published.

Mr Bannenberg—I think my figures were prior to the abolition of the Upper House originally; in fact, 1922 was the date of abolition.

CHAIRMAN—Did you give fairly recent figures that show a decline as well?

Mr Bannenberg—Yes, but I think that was contributing to the comparison.

Senator MISSEN—They were early figures, up to 1907. There were later ones quoted.

CHAIRMAN—But was there not a decline even in the latter years?

Mr Bannenberg—I did not have time to go in depth into the whole series. I only took it up to 1910 for both the Commonwealth and the State as an indication of the growth in volume.

Senator MISSEN—Does your library receive free copies of the Commonwealth parliamentary papers and if so, how many? I think you have really answered that to an extent, have you not?

Mr Bannenberg—Yes, I have answered that. At present we receive the parliamentary papers but I would like to see a formal acknowledgement that we should receive all the parliamentary papers. According to the Erwin Committee's recommendations we were to get them but in fact we are not, as of right, getting them. It is a technicality. We are getting them in exchange but we are not getting them as of right. It is only a technicality.

What I am more concerned with are the government publications, not only the ones that are tabled as parliamentary publications but the ones that are not, which we do not get. For instance, recently we had reason to try to get the Fourth Report of the Royal Commission on Petroleum on marketing and pricing. We had not become aware of its availability quickly enough or we had an inquiry subsequent to the first batch being sold out. I gathered that public servants, members of Parliament and a whole lot of people in Brisbane were interested in buying this particular publication but we were told that it would be at least 2 weeks before we could possibly get it from the south. In fact, what happened was, we approached the Shell Company in Brisbane on the basis that perhaps they had the report and they flew up a copy for us from Melbourne. We got service from an unexpected source. If we had received that publication as it came off the press, which according to AGPS is the way that the university and State libraries receive it, we would have had it available.

Senator MISSEN—To what extent do you use the parliamentary papers index? Does this give you any guide as to what is happening in Canberra or do you obtain your information about publication from other sources?

Mr Bannenberg—Because of the situation at present, whereby we process incoming tabled documents by subject as we get them from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, we are probably able to retrieve them more readily than most people. They are more important to us, perhaps, than they are to most libraries.

We use them quite a lot. Although the publication of the index takes place quite a long time after receipt of the majority of the reports which we already have indexed it is an important subsidiary document and one which would be very

valuable to the other libraries. You cannot effectively use the series unless you have a good index to it.

Senator MISSEN—Turning to the departmental versions of reports, it has been put to the Committee that there is a departmental printed version readily available through the AGPS and this paper might be excluded from the Parliamentary Papers Series. In other words, is the parliamentary paper edition necessary in this case?

Mr Bannenberg—Previous witnesses have said they wished to see the Parliamentary Papers Series preserved for future research purposes, and I have indicated that for current research purposes we would like to see them retained in the bound volumes. We should not forget that a lot of them go to overseas libraries and to that extent represent public relations of government in Australia, being disseminated through the bound volumes. If the format of departmental publications is going to conform to that of parliamentary papers or the Parliamentary Paper is going to conform to the other, whichever way it happens, and sufficient copies are printed, it seems to be a moot point whether you should have 4,000 copies printed as a departmental report or 3,000 as departmental and 1,000 as parliamentary papers. You are going to print that number of copies anyway, and if you can use the overprint that was suggested as a ready means of identification—which is necessary—it would seem there is no problem, provided you indicate on the outside and perhaps on the inside, but certainly so long as there is an indication on the publication that it is part of the parliamentary series. Perhaps if you printed a coloured strip or a coloured band somewhere on the publication to distinguish the parliamentary publication from the departmental publication, not only would the number serve to differentiate the 2 publications, but you could tell at a glance if all parliamentary publications had a certain coloured mark on them that they were a parliamentary publications and you could see what number they were. If the numbers appeared on the spines so much the better. So the overprinting, if it can be used, would be worthwhile considering, especially in conformity with the format rationalisation I talked of before. In regard to labels, notwithstanding the Government Printer's assurance that you can get permanent labels, I am not particularly enthused about it, not only because it can perhaps be lost, but also because I do not think it adds in any way to the publication, and it is going to be put in different places according to the format of the paper originally presented. I know that artwork on the

cover probably will lead to problems, but if, as has been suggested, a certain area be put aside for the stamping on of the information required, I do think that printing or stamping rather than gluing on of a label would be the better course to follow.

Senator ROBERTSON—What about a plastic cover around the outside, processed on? That could contain the additional information. Would that meet your purpose?

Mr Bannenberg—That seems reasonable. When AGPS was giving evidence regarding the blue cover I think there was some misconception about how librarians feel about having a particular piece of paper attached to the thing. What we want is the information and the identification. If the publication is identified in some distinctive way so that we can immediately ascertain that it is part of the series, it does not matter how it is done; that is all that is important.

Senator ROBERTSON—The shape and the colour is not important?

Mr Bannenberg—As long as it is visible, I do not think it is important.

Senator ROBERTSON—I meant the shape and colour of the publication.

Mr Bannenberg—Conformity of publications is a good thing. If you are going to have a bound set of parliamentary papers obviously they will have to be of the one format.

Senator ROBERTSON—We are talking about this sort of document, though. Would you would be happy to see this sort of proposition brought forward. The problem is that the AGPS would not want to print a document for sale which carried on it a rectangular blank space.

Mr Bannenberg—We are not talking about rectangles. We are talking about blank space, are we not? It does not have to be a rectangle, just so long as space is available.

Senator ROBERTSON—If it is going to be in the same place in each publication, then you are talking about a blank space on the one that is being sold.

Mr Bannenberg—You are talking about a blank space, but not necessarily a bordered blank space, are you?

Senator ROBERTSON—Yes.

Mr Bannenberg—I see what you mean—on a coloured publication.

Senator ROBERTSON—Take the one you have in front of you. That is being sold to the public. They have turned out a document which they feel is attractive. To meet your requirement,

somewhere it would have to have a space on it which was left blank for later overprinting.

Mr Bannenberg—I think all I can do is run for cover with your suggestion—a bonded cover over the top with the information on it. If that can be done, I think that would probably serve the purpose.

Senator ROBERTSON—Either would meet your requirements, as long as it is readily distinguishable?

Mr Bannenberg—If it is readily distinguishable, in the same place and it is bonded so that the adhesion will stick, I do not see any problems.

Senator ROBERTSON—You have heard the comments made by the others on microfiche. Have you the capacity now, or in the near future you have the capacity, to make use of microfiche?

Mr Bannenberg—We have no capacity at the present, but I should imagine that some time in 1978 we will be moving into an entirely new building with proper facilities available for all sorts of audio/visual communication and certainly we will have the capacity for microfiche.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would you like to make a comment on the general acceptability of it? You have heard what the others have said. Would you support what has been said?

Mr Bannenberg—I would certainly support what has been said. I would think that there would still be a need for a certain base set of bound parliamentary papers. For instance, the State libraries and perhaps the parliamentary libraries and the university libraries and the National Library—the major libraries or even some of them—should have a base set of the bound parliamentary series so that it is available in print. I think that will still have to be done. Whether they do their own binding, or whether the binding is done by the Commonwealth or not, I do not know, but, having established that a base set does exist, I would certainly think that any volume of publication could easily be done in microfilm.

Senator ROBERTSON—So we might do without the second—perhaps have the initial parliamentary paper and the bound volume?

Mr Bannenberg—I think somewhere between the two. I was supposing that the format is that the parliamentary paper is the same as the departmental report with the overprint. I would see that only a few of the bound volumes of the series would need to be produced and that the

vast majority of the parliamentary series could be in microfilm.

Senator ROBERTSON—That is the point I made.

CHAIRMAN—Privately Mr Moore mentioned to me that there was a biennial meeting, I think, of the Commonwealth Chief Parliamentary Librarian and the State Parliamentary Librarians. I think some reference was made to it also during evidence. I take it you have attended these meetings?

Mr Bannenberg—I think there have been three to date, all of which I have attended. The next one is to be held in Queensland some time next year.

CHAIRMAN—I would imagine these would be rather valuable. Speaking privately to the secretary of this Committee he informed me that to the best of his knowledge there had never been any submission from you people. I was wondering whether, if points come forward at these meetings, you would consider writing officially and putting a submission to this Committee.

Mr Bannenberg—You give me a wonderful opportunity. Something which I had hoped to comment on was brought up at the last meeting of the Conference of Parliamentary Librarians. It concerned the content of annual reports, both the Parliamentary Papers Series and the others. I cannot speak knowledgeably of the Commonwealth, once again I have to revert to the Queensland situation; I know of 2 papers there where a calendar year is covered in the annual report and all the fiscal information is on financial year basis. That is one thing. It makes it awfully difficult to try to compare—as we are continually doing—outputs, economics and all such matters involved in departmental operations. It is awfully difficult if you are trying to juggle on the one hand, the expenditure in a financial year and, on the other hand, the output during a calendar year. I would like to see some sort of regularity in that.

I would also like to see regularity in terms of reporting so that we see fiscal years reported on, and not years from 1 March or 24 April or something like that. Where you do have variations changes will undoubtedly cause a backup at a particular point in the year, presumably from August to November when all these reports are coming out at the same time. I think that is probably unavoidable. But in the interests of availability of information and of uniformity I think this is very desirable.

The second point also involved in this is the use of statistics in publications. In some publications the statistics once again, are in the two different set-ups of the calendar year and the financial year. The availability of statistics is very important in trying to gauge how a department is running and what use is being made of the resources and that sort of thing. I would be strongly in favour of that sort of material being published in reports. What is more important is that the format continues unchanged. The problem becomes more readily appreciable if you consider perhaps, as an example, a police department report where you have crimes set out under one heading one year and under another heading in the next year. If the offenders arrested are set out under different formats, you cannot compare one year with another to know just exactly what is going on and what decline or what increase has occurred in a period.

Also in connection with this the availability of biographical material and pictures was raised earlier. I think that generally speaking there probably would be, as far as the Parliament is concerned, room for economies in cutting down the provision of this sort of information. On the other hand, as I think Mr Brudenall said, it does become of value later on to people doing research on the era or on the people and what was achieved. But I am more concerned that it

may go too far the other way. Pictorial representation in annual reports can so much better show changes over a period than can any amount of description. If you have the visual evidence before you of something as it was at one date, and then as it was at another date, you can very easily see the change. I think that this is a good way to show people, including members of Parliament, the impact of change. In summing up I would say that the use of pictorial illustration can be a worthwhile exercise in publications if it is used discreetly.

CHAIRMAN—From the point of view of a librarian and a research officer would you say that standardisation of format is fairly important?

Mr Bannenberg—I would say that it is extremely important because it is impossible to compare unlike with like. This is usually the process of analogy that most arguments will follow in any speech or submission. You have to establish a pattern of some sort if you are going to either predict or suggest changes.

CHAIRMAN—Thank you very much, Mr Bannenberg. I think it has been well worthwhile bringing you down from Queensland. I declare closed this public hearing of the Parliamentary Papers Series inquiry.

Committee adjourned

CANBERRA

Tuesday, 30 November 1976

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

(Reference: Parliamentary Papers Series)

Present:

Mr Hodges (Chairman)

Senator Missen
Senator Robertson

Mr Martyr
Mr Millar
Mr Antony Whitlam

Mr William Darbyshire THORN, Director, Australian National Social Sciences Library, National Library of Australia, Canberra, was called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—I call the Committee to order and declare open this public meeting of the Joint Committee on Publications. I welcome Mr Thorn who is appearing, of course, in connection with the evidence we are taking on this inquiry into the Parliamentary Papers Series. Would you please state the capacity in which you are appearing?

Mr Thorn—I am appearing on behalf of the National Library of Australia.

CHAIRMAN—At any time you may request that your evidence be given in camera and the Committee will consider any such request. The Committee has before it a submission from you dealing with the inquiry. I would like you to state whether there are any alterations or additions you wish to make to that submission.

Mr Thorn—No. You have the letter of the Director-General written on 5 August to which we have appended an earlier letter. We do not wish to make any alterations to that submission but I would like to add some remarks to what we said then. In the Director-General's submission he stressed the importance of the Parliamentary Papers Series to libraries for current reference and for future research. He expressed the

opinion that it would be most undesirable to curtail their present scope from this point of view. I believe that the evidence that you have already heard and which I have been shown covers these aspects fairly well. We are in agreement, basically, with what has been said by other librarians.

There are, however, some other matters to which I would like to draw the attention of the Committee. The first is the value of the international exchange of Australian parliamentary papers with other countries. Secondly, I would like to discuss the role of that the National Library plays, and can play, in further publicising and assisting in the distribution of the parliamentary papers.

CHAIRMAN—Is it the wish of the Committee that the documents dated 5 August 1976 and 29 September 1975 be incorporated in the record of proceedings? There being no objection it is so ordered.

The documents read as follows—

National Library of Australia
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600
Telephone 62 1111
Telegraphic Code Address: Natlibaust Canberra
Telex Code No. 62100
Reference: 181/24/3

5 August 1976

Director-General: Dr G. Chandler, M.A., A.L.A.A., F.L.A., F.R.Hist.S.

Mr John Hodges M.P.
Chairman
Joint Committee on Publications
Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Mr Hodges

I refer to your letter of 18 June 1976 in which you invited the National Library to submit its views on those matters being examined by your Committee in its inquiry into the scope, distribution and purpose of the Parliamentary Papers series. In September last year the Library wrote to the previous Joint Committee on Publications concerning the annual reports of Australian Government departments and authorities. As this letter was in part relevant to your present enquiry I enclose a copy.

In the Library's view, the present principles followed by the Committee when recommending to the Parliament that certain tabled reports be printed as Parliamentary Papers, are satisfactory and we would not wish to see any alteration in them. The Parliamentary Papers series contains many papers which contain information of importance to libraries for current reference and for future research. For this reason the Parliamentary Papers are of great value and it would be undesirable to curtail their present scope.

With regard to paragraphs 3 and 4 of your letter I would draw your Committee's attention to the references to government publications in the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries, Canberra, 1976. In particular I would draw your attention to paragraphs 3.33, 3.34 and 3.35 and to Recommendation 21 of that Report. There is a real problem in ensuring that the information disseminated by the Parliament and the Government generally reaches those members of the public who need it. It is desirable that relevant Commonwealth (and State) Parliamentary and Government publications should be distributed without charge to municipal libraries. The National Library supports *inter alia* part (c) of Recommendation 21 which deals with this matter.

For many years sets of the Parliamentary Papers have been sent to overseas libraries as part of the overall international exchange of official publications. The major recipient of the publications of overseas governments which come in return for sets of Parliamentary Papers and other Parliamentary publications is the National Library of Australia. Over the last 70 years important collections of library material, which would not otherwise have been easy to acquire by other means, have been built up in the National Library from these international exchanges of Parliamentary publications. The material has been of considerable use to the Parliament and to the public generally and has become an important resource for research. The acquisition of material in this way is cost effective, the value in monetary terms of material received on exchange has, over the years, exceeded the value of the Australian material dispatched.

It will be happy to provide elaboration of these comments if the Joint Committee should require it.

Yours sincerely
(G. Chandler)
Director-General

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29 September 1975
Director-General: Dr G. Chandler, M.A., A.L.A., F.L.A., F.R.Hist.S.

Mr T. H. Wharton,
Secretary,
Joint Committee on Publications,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Mr Wharton,

1. I refer to the two letters dated 22 July 1974 from Mr David McKenzie, Acting Chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Publications addressed to the Chairman of the National Library Council and the Director-General of the National Library.

2. The National Library is both a producer of an annual report which is furnished to the Minister for presentation to the Parliament, and a collector (user) of annual reports. There is some possible conflict between these roles, therefore in the following response to the Acting Chairman's request for comments on the Terms of Reference of your Committee's current inquiry into annual reports of the Australian Government departments and authorities there may be some equivocation.

3. Annual reports of government departments and authorities are important sources of information for current reference and future research in libraries. For this reason detailed factual reports are of great value: it would be a pity to curtail them. However, the great and growing length of departmental reports, some of which extend over 100 pages, is such that Members of Parliament must find it impossible to absorb their contents. It is so then the reports are failing in their purpose.

4. The suggestion by the Controller of the Australian Government Publishing Service that some of the information in some annual reports could be the subject of separate publications would be an acceptable compromise from the point of view of the Library as a user. If reasonable limits were set to the length of departmental reports it is perhaps unlikely that any information of importance would go unrecorded. What would happen is that information would be conveyed more concisely and this would be a gain rather than a loss.

5. The tendency for some annual reports to become exercises in public relations has become very marked in recent years. But the admirable goals of making reports clear and attractive can easily lead to a state in which the form seems to count for more than the substance. Over-design and over-production have become a characteristic of some reports and the extravagant and largely meaningless use of colour illustrations is one sign of this tendency.

6. The standards for documents contained in the draft AGPS circular No. 18 seem entirely reasonable. It should be a condition of their acceptance that they are universally adhered to, which means that all departments and authorities should be made aware into which of the classes, I, II and III their annual reports fall.

7. The scheduling of the production of annual reports presents many difficulties. The necessity of presenting reports in advance of or during the Budget debate lends weight to the argument that they should be brief. If they were briefer the problems of AGPS would not be so great. Even so, the requirement that some reporting authorities must include audited financial statements in their annual reports may make it impossible, as the National Library itself is well aware, to table them by the desired date.

8. The Library is of the opinion that in the interests of the economy, departmental and parliamentary versions of annual reports should continue to be produced simultaneously.

9. The value of an annual report to a reader is greatly enhanced if it has a comprehensive index: all reports of more than a few pages should have one.

10. The National Library is in the habit of listing in its annual reports the names of the senior members of its staff. This information is considered to be of interest and value to the library community. It seems doubtful if the interest of reports would be enhanced by the inclusion of photographs, except where these are desirable to illustrate the text, but this is something that could perhaps be left to the discretion of individual departments and authorities.

11. As some libraries retain annual reports permanently, it is desirable that they should be printed on permanent acid free paper.

12. Illustrations unless they are directly pertinent to the subject matter of the report are, generally speaking, unnecessary. Certainly illustrations of a decorative nature only are not required.

13. I will be happy to provide elaboration of these comments if the Joint Committee should require it.

Yours sincerely,
G. CHANDLER
(G. Chandler)
Director-General

CHAIRMAN—We have asked, I think, all of the witnesses who have appeared before this inquiry their opinions on the importance of the Parliamentary Papers Series. In your opinion has the value of the series to your library altered over, say the last 10 years?

Mr Thorn—We have always considered that they have had great importance. In my opinion the series has certainly not lessened in value and has perhaps increased in value because the scope has increased marginally over the years. By and large, we at the National Library are quite happy with the scope of the papers. Insofar as what is presented to Parliament goes into the printed parliamentary papers, we are perfectly happy.

CHAIRMAN—You say that the scope has increased. What you are saying here is that we have included more papers in recent years than we had. You agree with that principle?

Mr Thorn—We certainly agree with that principle.

CHAIRMAN—Could you then tell me how the National Library views the bound volumes? Are they important, and are they more important than, say, the single parliamentary paper issue?

Mr Thorn—I think that because of the delays which occur between the printing of the loose issues and the supply of the bound volumes, they serve almost 2 distinct functions. For current or semi-current reference we use the loose issues. But for historical or record purposes we certainly want to have and need to have, the bound volumes.

That large long set of bound volumes is of great value to us in helping researchers in their work.

We would not wish to see it dispensed with and if, in fact, the bound volumes were not supplied, we would have to bind them up in some way because we would keep them in that way.

CHAIRMAN—The delays that you refer to have been referred to in previous evidence. Do you have any suggestions as to how these delays could be diminished?

Mr Thorn—I feel that this has been traversed pretty well in the other evidence. No, I think the Committee and the parliamentary departments are well aware of the problems and will do what they can to alleviate them. I cannot make any bright suggestion which would, by a magic wand, get over that problem.

CHAIRMAN—The point you make, though, is that it is causing you, and the people who use the researchers and the people who use the bound volume, some concern.

Mr Thorn—Yes.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would it not be better if you bound them yourself?

Senator MISSEN—They would all be in a different order if everybody did that, would they not?

Senator ROBERTSON—I know there would be a problem of sequence, but this could be overcome.

Mr Thorn—That might be a solution, but we would still, from the point of view of the National Library, want to obtain sets bound up in the way that the parliamentary departments were doing it and I imagine that the parliamentary departments would still wish and need to bind up sets for their own purposes. I might say that in actual practice we have bound some of the material as we have received it, just to ensure that we preserve it. But we do that in a comparatively cheap binding.

Senator ROBERTSON—You say that the guidelines that the Committee has been following up to date have been satisfactory. The Committee has received suggestions on the one hand that the Treaty Series should be incorporated in the Parliamentary Papers Series, and on the other hand that where a departmental version of a report is readily available, then it might be desirable to exclude that report from the series. Do you have any comments to make on those suggestions?

Mr Thorn—With regard to the Treaty Series, we would be quite happy if the status quo is retained, that is, that they are not included. I think the present arrangement for the Treaty

Series is satisfactory. With regard to the departmental reports, I think that they are vital to the parliamentary papers and that they should be included, even though there are departmental versions.

Senator MISSEN—In paragraph 3 of your first account you state that it is desirable that relevant Commonwealth and State parliamentary and government publications should be distributed without charge to the municipal libraries.

At the moment, municipal libraries are entitled to receive free copies of parliamentary papers on request. The reason why they are not automatically supplied is that many would be unable to store and provide ready access for their users. Do you think the same problem would occur if government reports were automatically forwarded to all municipal libraries?

Mr Thorn—There is a grave danger, I suppose, that if everything were supplied to municipal libraries they would be swamped with some material for which they would have no use. In our evidence there we were drawing the Committee's attention to the Horton Committee's recommendation and to our own feeling that a lot of government publications are not readily available, but it is important that government reports are made available readily to the public at large. I think that it might be necessary to have some form of selection for some municipal libraries. On the other hand, there are certain large municipal libraries serving large areas—such as Newcastle and Wollongong and some of the Victorian regional libraries—which could well, I think, take much of the output of government publications and certainly parliamentary publications.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—In Dr Chandler's next paragraph he refers to the international exchange of official publications. Could you provide the Committee with a broader description of that program, particularly the part played in it by the Parliamentary Papers Series.

Mr Thorn—Yes. For many years the sets of parliamentary papers have been sent to overseas libraries as part of an international exchange of official publications and some of these exchanges are of very long standing. They were started very soon after the Commonwealth Parliament came together for the first time at the beginning of the century. Because of these exchanges the National Library and the library that went before—as you know the National Library grew out of the Parliamentary Library—we were able to obtain a great deal of material that we would not have

been able to obtain otherwise. Since the National Library was established in 1961 it has become the centre of the exchange of publications. For example, we have received since 1903 the United States Parliamentary Papers, the serial number set, in exchange and we have had a long standing exchange with the Swedish Parliament, with Canada and with many others. I have some further details if you would like a list of countries.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—A general description will be fine.

Mr Thorn—We have of course had exchange with the British Parliament, New Zealand, South Africa and most of the British Commonwealth and former British Commonwealth governments, and some other overseas governments for a long time. In the last 20 years this has been extended to many of the European and American governments. Quite frankly, we feel that this exchange has been very worth while because we have been getting material which is difficult to get through normal commercial channels. By exchanging Australian publications for those of overseas governments we have actually had a net benefit.

CHAIRMAN—Dr Chandler's letter states that the value in monetary terms of material received on exchange has over the years exceeded the value of the Australian material dispatched.

Mr Thorn—I believe that and I think we could show this. Certainly, in terms of volumes, we have had the net benefit.

CHAIRMAN—Are you saying that there is more coming from the countries with which Australia has these reciprocal arrangements than we are dispatching to them?

Mr Thorn—Yes, that is the overall position. In one or two exchanges it might be the other way round but overall I think Australia has done better from the exchanges.

CHAIRMAN—Is the material that comes in this exchange program used quite extensively?

Mr Thorn—It depends on the country. Material from English-speaking countries, of course, is used a great deal more than material from some other countries. The value of the British, New Zealand, South African and American material is undoubted.

Senator MISSEN—Some, noticeably in the United States and Britain, are of very much larger extent than the Australian publications.

Mr Thorn—Yes, but then Britain has a unitary government.

Senator MISSEN—Yes.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—In Australia is there any program for the exchange of publications between Australian libraries?

Mr Thorn—Yes, there certainly is, but some of them are somewhat informal arrangements. Australian Government publications are supplied to the State libraries, the parliamentary libraries and the university libraries and the publications of the State Parliaments come to the National Library and, I think, to the Parliamentary Library here. There is a publications exchange program. Universities are also involved very much in this.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Who is the net beneficiary of the proposal?

Mr Thorn—That is a bit hard to say. I think this is a question of swings and roundabouts. If you are talking strict monetary terms perhaps the Commonwealth Parliament's Papers are a net loser. But then the national Parliament has definite responsibilities to ensure that the publications that are before it are available to the public at large, and by distributing them to libraries throughout the country this function is performed. And I would not like to express that in an economic way. There are much more valuable benefits that flow on from the distribution of Par-pub publications.

Mr MILLAR—To what extent is the National Library involved in the process of standard book numbering and what is its purpose?

Mr Thorn—The National Library is the international agency for standard book numbers and this little booklet which I have asked Mr Wharton to give out describes in simple terms what international standard book numbers are and the advantages that flow from them. About 15 years ago there was an investigation in Britain which suggested there would be considerable advantages if all books were given a standard and unique number, and from this would flow benefits, from how we could identify titles; it would be of value to the trade; it would enable swift communication of bibliographical information from publishers to libraries and the trade. We also believe it will be of great assistance in the interlibrary loans and in cataloguing and reporting. Eventually book ordering will be done universally by international standard book numbers. This is being done to an extent now. This program has been adopted by AGPS and we are very pleased with the reception that ISBNs have had in Australia. It has been taken up enthusiastically by the book trade and by the Government publisher, and we felt that it was important that this Committee was aware of this

development. There is a parallel development with relation to serials or periodicals called ISSN and you can see there that it is a very similar scheme for serial publications in which a unique number is given to each serial title as an identifier. This will have benefits too in union catalogues—that is catalogues of the holdings of more than one library.

Mr MILLAR—To what extent has the National Library implemented this system?

Mr Thorn—As far as ISBNs are concerned, we have been doing this now for about 3 years, and it appears in the national bibliographies. I would say that most of the trade publications, most of the publications which people think of as books are covered now by ISBNs.

Mr MILLAR—Was there any retrospectivity there?

Mr Thorn—Yes. Publishers backlists—they are the publications that were in print—have at the request of the publisher been allocated ISBNs.

Mr MARTYR—I understand the National Library publishes a bibliography. Can you tell us a little about it?

Mr Thorn—The National Library publishes 2 bibliographies which are of direct relevance to the work of this Committee. I have here some sample issues which I can leave with the Committee, and if you want any more samples I can have them supplied. We have the Australian National Bibliography which lists books and pamphlets published in Australia and items of Australian association published overseas within the current and preceding 2 years. It includes also the first issues of new serial titles and those issued with changes in the bibliographical details.

The monographic, that is individual publications of the Australian State and territorial governments, with the exceptions of individual Acts, Bills and ordinances, also are listed; pamphlets of fewer than 5 pages are excluded. The Australian National Bibliography lists about 25 per cent of Australian Government publications. I have here the 1975 volume, which is the latest one, and you can see it is a fairly bulky volume. The National Bibliography is published 4 times a month and it is accumulated monthly, then 4-monthly, and annually. We publish also Australian Government Publications which is a fairly comprehensive listing of Australian State and territorial government publications. In this we do include individual Acts, Bills and ordinances as well as the annual volumes. And in this annual volume we do include details of

periodicals that have been issued during the year. There is a slight difference in emphasis in the way we list material. In Australian Government Publications we tend to list material under the issuing department or authority.

Senator ROBERTSON—Do you list separately in those the departmental annual report and the parliamentary annual report?

Mr Thorn—We list both, unless they happen to be the one and the same. The Australian National Bibliography has a very wide distribution. About one thousand copies are distributed within Australia and about 850 overseas. Of Australian Government Publications we distribute about 600 copies within Australia and 500 copies overseas. It is used by libraries as an aid to reference and as a selection tool and is one way of making known what is being published.

Mr MARTYR—Do you make a charge for those things?

Mr Thorn—Yes. They are on subscription.

CHAIRMAN—I want to go back to page 2 of Dr Chandler's submission of 29 September. It refers to the style of publications and the first 2 lines talk about the tendency for annual reports to become exercises in public relations. This has become very marked over recent years—the sort of thing we see with lots of glossy photographs and so forth. Do you agree there has to be some balance, that the publication has to be fairly attractive so that people will read it and use it, or do you think we should discourage the use of glossy photographs and glossy material?

Mr Thorn—I think some balance has to be struck. When we wrote this last year we did have in mind one or two reports containing a lot of coloured photographs which seemed to have very little direct relevance to the text of the report. There are many annual reports or other reports which do have a market and which should be produced attractively. But we feel that some restraint must be shown in going completely overboard with unnecessary colour work and so forth.

Senator ROBERTSON—Still, the point is that the books should be attractive; they should be appealing.

Mr Thorn—Yes, they should be attractive. This can often be achieved by good typography and careful layout as well as by glossy colour work and so forth.

Senator ROBERTSON—Like our Chairman, I underlined a couple of your comments:

It seems doubtful if the interest of reports would be enhanced by the inclusion of photographs, . . .

But I see what you mean. You are talking simply about photographs which do not add anything to the text.

Mr Thorn—This is certainly what we had in mind.

Senator ROBERTSON—But you would agree that both reports and parliamentary papers should be as attractive as any other publications?

Mr Thorn—Undoubtedly.

Senator MISSEN—Not just showing a picture of the Minister from different angles.

CHAIRMAN—Paragraph 11 talks about the desirability that printing should be done on permanent acid free paper. Could you expand on that? Do you have certain publications which, after a number of years, fall to bits, or what is the reason?

Mr Thorn—Yes, we have had certain publications falling to bits after a period. This is something that I believe is highly desirable. It is often knocked back on the basis of cost, but I think that good permanent paper—that is paper that will not rot away—is not very much more expensive. You have only to look at the sets of the Government Gazettes which were published during war time, in both the First World War and the Second World War, to see the problems of acid paper. The paper becomes so brittle that it is in danger of crumbling when you consult the volumes. With photocopying now it becomes a real problem. Once you put in onto a photocopier and apply a bit of pressure for a good image, suddenly you find that the page has fallen out, or 4 pages have fallen out. We do feel that for records purposes—and we would put the Parliamentary Papers Series into this class—a good quality permanent acid free paper is highly desirable. This is something that should perhaps be taken up with the printer. The more of this type of publication that can be put onto the better paper, the better we will be pleased.

CHAIRMAN—Are you aware of any variations in costs?

Mr Thorn—No I am sorry I cannot give you those figures. I could perhaps get them for the Committee if you wanted them. The Library's publisher does have some figures on acid free paper.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying though is that it is not much good to print documents on paper that is going to fall apart when you need it for thirty, forty or fifty years or longer?

Mr Thorn—Yes. I have a booklet here on the Australian Cataloguing-in-Publication Program. This is another program in which the National

Library is involved. The purpose of CIP, cataloguing in publication, is to provide the cataloguing data with the book. We arrange with publishers to supply details of books and, if possible, to provide us with proofs so that the cataloguing information can be provided to the publisher and included in the book. In this way the book and the cataloguing data are brought together and are available simultaneously to libraries, booksellers, bibliographers and any others who need such data. As you will all know, most libraries catalogue the books in their collection. If the cataloguing data is in the front of the book, much time and effort is saved. This program has been joined by most of the commercial publishers in Australia, and we are at present having discussions with the Australian Government Publishing Service with a view to its general adoption for Australian Government publications. We do have some Australian Government publications with CIP entries, but we are hoping that we will have more in the future.

This is a program which we are very keen to have extended and which we wish to draw to the attention of this Committee. One thing that is brought up sometimes in relation to government publications, particularly parliamentary publications, is the confidential nature of the report until it is actually tabled or published. I think this problem could be overcome because not very much data are required for a cataloguing-in-publication entry. In the case of royal commission reports and such like, we could dispense with seeing the proofs because what we need is the author and the title, which could be supplied, and some idea of the subject matter. The subject matter of a royal commission or an inquiry is normally given in the terms of reference, which are public. We could do any subject cataloguing on the basis of the terms of reference and we need not have reference to the report itself. The CIP brochure has a cataloguing-in-publication entry in the front; that is the sort of thing I am talking about.

Senator ROBERTSON—Referring back to the attractiveness of parliamentary reports and so on, no doubt you have noticed the suggestion in the evidence, that adhesive labels might be put on them or plastic covers slipped over them and so on, to save putting on the full parliamentary paper cover. What is your reaction to this suggestion?

Mr Thorn—I have had an unfortunate experience with adhesive labels. I appreciate why the suggestion was made but I am not particularly happy with the idea of an adhesive label because I have an inbuilt suspicion of adhesives. The idea

of a cover which was added to it, or the actual data printed on the title page itself, I think it would be perfectly acceptable from the Library's point of view.

Senator ROBERTSON—But the adhesive label would slip off?

Mr Thorn—I suspect that it would slip off. Perhaps the Publishing Service has in mind an extremely good adhesive, but I do not know.

CHAIRMAN—Is there any other matter that you would like to bring to our attention?

Mr Thorn—No, I do not think I have anything more to add.

CHAIRMAN—Thank you very much for coming before the Committee and for your frankness. I am sure we have learnt a great deal from your submission and from the questioning we have been able to carry out this morning.

Short adjournment

Mr Dietrich Hans BORCHARDT, Chief Librarian, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, and

Miss Ann Elizabeth MILLER, Government Publications Librarian, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria,

were called and examined.

CHAIRMAN—Would you please the capacity in which you appear?

Mr Borchardt—I do not appear on behalf of the university. I am appearing as a private citizen.

Miss Miller—I also am appearing as a private citizen.

CHAIRMAN—At any time you may request that part of your evidence or answers to specific questions be given in private and the Committee will consider any such request. We have a submission from you, Mr Borchardt, dated 8 September 1976. Do you wish to make any additions or alterations to that submission?

Mr Borchardt—No.

CHAIRMAN—Is it the wish of the Committee that the submission be included in the transcript of evidence? There being no objection it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

La Trobe University
The Library Telephone 4783122
Mr T. Wharton,
Secretary,
Joint Committee on Publications,
Parliament of Australia,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

8 September 1976

Dear Mr Wharton,

Thank you for your letter of 12 July and your comments of 10 August on the questions raised by Miss Ann Miller on 27 July. I am also obliged to you for sending me a copy of your letter to Mr G. Jones, of 11 August, in which you describe the activities of your Committee.

I trust I am not too late in replying now to the two major questions raised in your letter of 12 July. My views on those issues are:

- (1) contents of the *Parliamentary Papers series*. There can be no doubt that Parliamentary Papers represent the most important series of documents emanating from the Legislature, since they represent considered opinions, statements of policy, programmes and planning data for the socio-political life of the nation. All unclassified documents tabled in either House and not already included in another series should be issued in the *Parliamentary Papers series*. While it has been long standing practice to print and include in the series special reports from Federal Departments, the findings of most Royal Commissions and Boards of Inquiry, the findings of Select Committees, and a good many reports presented by Ministers including the Annual Reports of their Departments, it has come to my notice that:
 - (a) reports by some ad hoc Committees of Investigation (including Royal Commissions and similar tribunals of inquiry) have not been published for reasons which could be interpreted as "political", i.e. the findings may not have agreed with the views of the government of the day, or the findings might have been thought to divulge confidential information.
 - (b) reports by Interdepartmental Committees do not appear to be ordered to be printed and included in the *Parliamentary Papers series*, e.g. the IDC Report on the Computerisation of Criminal Data, the IDC Report on the Australian Library Based Information System—to name only two.
 - (c) reports by specialist committees, e.g. the Report on Museums and National Collections, 1975, are nowadays not always included in the *Parliamentary Papers series*, though this type of Report used to be tabled and included in the Papers before the 1950s unless there were compelling reasons of state, e.g. the Report on the Brisbane Line presented during World War II, for not printing it. (I refer to my Checklist of Royal Commissions, *Select Committees of Parliament, and Boards of Inquiry Part I—Commonwealth of Australia* item 153 and others, such as item 164).
 - (d) reports emanating from Departmental Inquiries tend to be treated as less deserving than is, in my view, warranted; some of these inquiries, though initiated by Ministers under their statutory powers, are no less important than inquiries by specialist committees set up by Cabinet or by either House, and if the findings are deemed

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worthy of being tabled in Parliament, they should be printed as *Parliamentary Papers*.

A special case is represented by the Australian Treaty Series. This Series is issued separately and is obtainable on application to the Department of Foreign Affairs. It is my own view that, given the small number of slim documents involved, the Treaty Series should be incorporated in the *Parliamentary Papers Series* in order to ensure easier access to an important set of documents. It may be worth noting that treaties between Great Britain and other countries are issued as *Command Papers* and therefore form part of the British *Parliamentary Papers series*.

- (2) The current arrangement with the Australian universities relating to the distribution and availability of all *Parliamentary Papers* seem to me perfectly adequate. The supply of *Parliamentary Papers*, free of charge, to all university libraries should continue because no social science inquiry can proceed far without these documents.

It has been claimed by some colleges of advanced education and some municipal/public libraries that they too ought to be placed on a free distribution list for all *Parliamentary Papers*. This request has self-evident merit; if, as I firmly believe, *Parliamentary Papers* should be widely available in libraries which offer ready access to *John Cluses*, individual public libraries and regional public library services certainly ought to be placed on the free distribution list. However, it should be recognized that at present few libraries in these categories have either the staff or the accommodation to service and store a continuous stream of *Parliamentary Papers* to provide adequate permanent storage for them. Yet in view of the costs involved, both in printing and distribution, a condition of gratis supply ought to be an obligation of permanent retention and an undertaking to provide ready access to *Parliamentary Papers* for all.

Though there exists already provisions for the free distribution to public and college libraries of *Parliamentary Papers* on demand, this provision is not as well known as it should be. At a recent seminar on government documents for librarians in small college libraries, held at La Trobe, it transpired that most of the thirty participants were unaware of their institutional entitlement.

While ignorance in this regard can probably be dispelled fairly easily by means of leaflets and other informational documents distributed to college and public libraries, there remains the more genuine problem that bibliographic data regarding current *Parliamentary Papers* needs to be made more widely available. This problem requires thorough examination if for the practical reasons referred to above, "blind" distribution of *Parliamentary Papers* is at present undesirable, "availability on request" should be made possible through better publicity regarding the documents that emanate from the Parliament.

A good deal still remains to be done with regard to making the community aware of the availability of *Parliamentary Papers*, both through libraries and through the AGPS outlets. It is not only important that AGPS ensures an adequate supply of those documents which are likely to arouse wide public interest, but AGPS should also take steps to bring news of the publication of such documents before the public through advertisements in metropolitan and rural newspapers.

I strongly recommend that AGPS be asked to provide wide publicity for the sale and distribution of individual *Parliamentary Papers* through advertising leaflets and announcements in the mass media.

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- (3) With reference to item 5 in your letter of 12 July, and to a statement in the Senate by Senator Withers on 5 May 1976, I suggest that the Joint Committee make some inquiry into the present state of public awareness of government documents in general and of *Parliamentary Papers* in particular. I have been asked by the Standing Committee of AACOBs to proceed as best I can with an investigation of the present state of public awareness of and access to Australian Government publications. Lack of finance will greatly restrict this investigation and I suggest that the Joint Committee on Publications consider the possibility of funding this small project. I should be glad to supply a program for action.

I trust you find these comments useful.

Yours sincerely,
D. H. Borchardt
Chief Librarian

CHAIRMAN—Firstly I draw to your attention the following words in your submission: 'The most important series of documents emanating from the legislature is the *Parliamentary Papers Series*'. Would you care to expand on that statement? Do you believe that the importance of the series has varied to any great extent over the last 10 years.

Mr Borchardt—Perhaps I should first say that while I am the Chief Librarian, Miss Miller has a good deal of expertise in particular aspects of government publications management. I trust it will be accepted by the Committee that if I cannot answer a technical question she may be allowed to speak on my behalf.

CHAIRMAN—That is understood, welcomed and accepted.

Mr Borchardt—I do not think I can add much to the words carefully chosen in my document, but I could perhaps add to that part of the question which relates to possible changes in the value of the *Parliamentary Papers Series*. The additional comment I would like to make is based partly on the evidence you have received that the usefulness of the series depends on its completeness, on the reliability one can place upon having in it at all times the reports which have been tabled in one way or another. On behalf of library users I would like to stress that the danger of not including documents in the series is of considerable concern to all who are interested in the democratic working of this country and the accuracy of any research that might be based on these papers.

CHAIRMAN—I refer now to your paragraph (1) and sub-paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) in particular. You talk about reports by inter-departmental committees not appearing in the series. You talk also about reports of specialist committees, and you give as an example the report on museums and national collections of

1975 not always being included in the *Parliamentary Papers Series*. You talk also in (1)(a) about reports of some ad hoc committees not being included. Would you suggest, though, that such things as VIP flight manuscripts which would be of little interest to the general public should be included in the series because these are actually presented and tabled in the Parliament.

Mr Borchardt—I do not know the particular type of document to which you are now referring. If it did contain musings of members of the Cabinet while they are in transit, it might be of great interest. However, I do think that we have quite a number of examples and I will ask Miss Miller to give more than I have cited, but the two I have listed in my submission just happened to become known to me. While the Committee may feel that the IDC report on the Australian Library Based Information System is something that I have a vested interest in, the IDC Report on the Computerisation of Criminal Data is certainly something which affects the country as a whole and I have noted with regret that that report was not available. Perhaps Miss Miller would like to give some other examples.

Miss Miller—Other reports I would have hoped to see in the series—and I think I am right in saying that none of these has subsequently appeared—were: Museums and National Collections, the committee of inquiry report; Manpower Policy in Australia, which was a report to the OECD; the Integration of Medical Services of Armed Forces, which was a report of the committee of inquiry in 1971; and quite a number of reports on the Electronic Components Industry which were tabled in Parliament. They are just a few examples. I went through the index and saw papers tabled and not subsequently printed.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying is that you would like to see in particular the type of report that you have mentioned; that even if to have them printed meant a little greater expense to the Parliament the printing of them would be well worth while. For instance, the departmental versions of these are often available in abundant quantities and therefore this Committee, in considering whether papers that are tabled should be printed or not, does tend to look at the expense, naturally. Perhaps some method could be adopted to put a cover around the departmental version readily, without much expense, and they could be included in the series. Would that be satisfactory, to your way of thinking?

Miss Miller—Yes, it would be. This is getting on to the question of over-printing. Even if there is a departmental copy available, if it does not

get into the Parliamentary Papers Series one's chance of finding it in twenty or thirty years' time is much less, whereas if it is bound into the series it is very safe and secure.

Senator MISSEN—It is true that many of these papers have been tabled in Parliament, but they are really reports done by an outside body which perhaps go to a Minister and happen to be tabled in Parliament. Is there not a sort of unlimited area that you could expand it to? I am not talking about the interdepartmental committee reports, which are close to Parliament; but a lot of these others are very far away from Parliament, are they not?

Miss Miller—I would think that if they are important enough to be tabled in Parliament, they are important enough to become part of the series.

Senator MISSEN—All kind of things get landed in Parliament, that we do not authorise for publication. Perhaps only half of the things that come before us on a list get published. We could have an enormous amount of stuff if everything tabled in Parliament were published.

Mr Borchardt—I do feel that Parliament is responsible to the people and if Parliament is going to make decisions on evidence submitted to it, then in general terms, granted that there are areas which are minutiae of administration, they ought to be known at some time somewhere. I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the Erwin report itself, in which in paragraph 2.11 the then National Librarian emphasised that the more that can be mobilised into series which become well known and therefore indexed and bibliographically controlled as a whole, the easier it is for serious inquirers to get access to it. I would at no time doubt the statement made by Senator Missen, but it is a matter of making a decision on what is purely administrative and what is likely to lead to policy decisions of some kind which affect the country in its general affairs.

CHAIRMAN—Generally speaking, I believe it is true to say that the witnesses we have had before us at this inquiry so far have stated that they believe the series is adequate. I do not know whether you have studied the evidence. Basically, what you are doing in your first paragraph and what you have said this morning is that you are putting a different view.

Mr Borchardt—Yes, it is slightly different. I think it is not quite adequate. For instance, I have been engaged in some kind of research—if you will forgive the word, because it means so many useless things—into various aspects of social policy and I have sometimes found that

important documents are simply not available, though they are referred to in *Hansard* and have been discussed. I do not think that is fair.

Mr MILLAR—Philosophically there is a good deal of merit in what you say, if I might presume to say so. But when it comes down to practicalities there must be a point at which a judgment has to be applied and that is naturally where there could be a variance of opinion as to what qualifies to meet this philosophical ambition of yours. Clearly, if we gave a blanket approval to the publication of all literature, we would certainly be swamped with a great deal of superfluous material and we would have to sustain the considerable expense attaching thereto.

Mr Borchardt—Yes, I would quite agree with that. I would not like to see everything published. But I think, with regard to publication, one also has to consider the question of cost. I think we are hung up on the idea that everything must be printed in the standard form. References have been made in the evidence before you to having things appear beautiful and to their being adorned with illustrations. I am very old fashioned; I think that if something cannot be expressed in words it is probably very difficult to get any meaning out of it. A picture is not a substitute for a decent report. And with regard to the cost of publishing, I am inclined to the view that we ought to look at this very carefully without so much bias as we have had in the past and look at microform publishing, a method to which Mr Brudenell referred. After all, it is now possible to read microforms very easily. If I had the choice between a printed, hard-cover document and a microform, I would take the hard cover because I can take it home. But you can also have a small microform reader at home; it is only a matter of convention. If possible, I might come back to that later on.

CHAIRMAN—Certainly.

Senator ROBERTSON—I would like to ask a question about microfiche later on. I will not buy into your argument about the attractiveness of reports. I think you fall into the small group within the community which would be quite happy with just the printed word. I think most of us would rather see an attractive volume. You have talked about wanting the guidelines for what should be printed broadened. I mentioned to the previous witness about using an adhesive label on the front of a book to put it into the Parliamentary Papers Series. Perhaps another suggestion would be simply to have the parliamentary cover stapled over, or perhaps put in a plastic cover. What are your comments about

this method of putting things into the Parliamentary Papers Series?

Miss Miller—I have no objection to that whatsoever.

Senator ROBERTSON—None at all?

Miss Miller—As far as the adhesive label goes, if there can be a written guarantee that it will stay on for 5 years or however long it takes the bound volumes to come out, I would find it acceptable. It must stay on. I think that is essential. Otherwise, a blue cover being put over the top would be quite satisfactory.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would this be quite acceptable?

Miss Miller—Yes.

Senator ROBERTSON—I suppose the obvious thing to ask is why the cataloguing you have is not able to cope with the simple act of recording a thing as a parliamentary paper and looking for it on the shelf. I cannot see why you could not find that in 30 years. But perhaps that is a question of the cataloguing system.

Mr Borchardt—Miss Miller is a cataloguer, I am not.

Miss Miller—I am not a cataloguer.

Senator ROBERTSON—Perhaps that was an unkind one; we will leave it. You draw attention to the desirability of including the Treaty Series in the Parliamentary Papers Series. The recommendation of the Erwin Committee Report of 1964 has been followed by this Committee, namely, that since the Treaty Series is readily available and is indeed bound by the department then there is little need to include it in the Parliamentary Papers Series. Would you care to comment on that?

Miss Miller—I feel that it is an important series. It is a separate series and it is approachable through the Treaty Series. In the index to the parliamentary papers, where they are listed, it is does not actually state that they are part of the Treaty Series. You get a reference for treaties. There is a whole list of them. For instance, it says 'Tariff and trade preferences, agreement between Australia and New Zealand' and so on and you get the reference to the Journals and the Votes. There is no Treaty Series number. It does not actually say that it is in the Treaty Series. This is something that could be tidied up in the indexing.

Senator ROBERTSON—Yes, that could be done.

Miss Miller—That could be done. I think it is an important series. It has thirty-five to forty

items per year. The sum total is usually about one and a half inches; there is not very much volume in it. That includes a fairly firm cover as well, which in a bound volume would be omitted. It would not amount to very much.

Senator ROBERTSON—What about the IAC reports? Do you think they should fall into the same sort of category?

Miss Miller—They are already part of the series.

Senator ROBERTSON—Would you have them as part of the series?

Miss Miller—Yes, I would. The Temporary Assistance Authority is already in a series yet it appears in the Parliamentary Papers Series so it is a double series. They are in a numbered series of their own.

Mr Borchardt—One could go but the parliamentary one should stay.

CHAIRMAN—Following on the question Senator Robertson asked about the Australian Treaty Series, you state in your submission that treaties between Great Britain and other countries are issued as Command Papers and therefore they form part of the Parliamentary Papers Series. Are you suggesting that we should do the same in this Parliament?

Miss Miller—Yes, you should follow that practice and include them in the Australian Parliamentary Papers Series.

Mr MILLAR—In paragraph 2 you suggest that municipal libraries and colleges of advanced education should not automatically receive copies of the series but should be entitled to receive them on request, so long as they can fulfil the condition of ready access by their users. Is it a common problem of municipal libraries and advanced education libraries that they cannot always cope with a series such as the Parliamentary Papers Series? Could you offer a percentage to the Committee?

Mr Borchardt—For some years I have been a member of the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services which has repeatedly received requests to extend the FISAUL agreement.

Miss Miller—That is the Free Issue Scheme to Australian University Libraries.

Mr Borchardt—It is known as FISAUL. It fisauls in and fisauls out. This scheme provides university libraries with all these documents and I think it is correct to say that university libraries, because of their size and consequent number of staff, are quite able to handle the material that

arrives, and that includes Parliamentary Papers Series. In a variety of capacities in which I have served in Victoria, I have become very much aware of the size of the operation of colleges of advanced education in the country as well as in the metropolitan areas, and I know the public library situation reasonably well. I think I am not exaggerating if I say that if by some stroke of the pen these libraries were suddenly presented with the whole set of parliamentary papers, they would have to remove most of their other stock and they would probably have to take on at least one specialist to deal with the material. It is not easy to handle as far as organisation is concerned. I do not think that it is a very viable proposition to include these libraries on an automatic free issue list.

I think the problem is whether you call this free issue list a deposit arrangement or not. If it is to be a deposit arrangement, then there is an obligation to retain—that is usually part of a deposit arrangement—and I do not think the public libraries, even in such provincial centres as Ballarat and Bendigo, to take two, could handle it. I have been there and know the staff. It is not a matter of not being willing, it is a matter of volume and of complexity of bibliographic control. However, I do believe that they ought to have the right to request material which is of particular relevance to their readers. Material on agricultural matters, industrial affairs and so on, which is of special interest, should be available to them. But I am quite sure that they cannot handle everything else as well.

As far as the public libraries in the cities and the CAE libraries in the cities and the metropolitan areas are concerned, I think the position is quite different. There it is a question of how much duplication should be sought and practised when there are already in Melbourne, 3 university libraries and one State library which have a complete set. The universities are willing, in general terms, to let the public use these documents; certainly the State Library is. I cannot see that there would be a great deal of benefit in—if I may stick to Melbourne—the Prahran College of Advanced Education or Footscray having another complete set. I think it would be a waste of public money. Again, if they have particular fields of interest and if some member of their staff wants a particular document, I think it should be handed to them free because strictly speaking, the documents are in the public domain.

With regard to public libraries, the same applies. How the particular library, say at Essendon-Broadmeadows or wherever it might be,

would determine what is of importance to it or not, I do not quite know. I am not sufficiently *au fait* with the practices of book selection in public libraries. But I can see that there are reports, such as the report on public libraries that came out of a committee of inquiry earlier this year, which ought to be available because there is public interest in them. There must be many of that kind.

As far as a percentage is concerned, I do not think I could give even an intelligent guess on this. But if we take the rural areas as distinct from the metropolitan areas, there are very few public libraries at present in the non-metropolitan parts of Victoria and the same is sadly true of other parts of Australia. So even if we were to have a scheme under which these libraries could choose and receive free any material they have selected, I do not think the increase in cost would be very great. There are about 500 public libraries in Australia that would really qualify within this—that would be about all—and they would not all want the same thing, by and large. I hope that answers your question; I am sorry I cannot be more precise.

Mr MILLAR—You have virtually foreshadowed a suggestion about how an undertaking could be provided to give access to these libraries which seek information. To give a specific scheme would possibly take some little thought and time.

Mr Borchardt—Yes. It is important that the man in the street, even if it is an unpaved street in Nhill, should be able to get that material which is of importance to him.

Mr MILLAR—Referring again to your comments in paragraph 2, how would you suggest that librarians be made more fully aware of the recommendations of this Committee?

Mr Borchardt—I suppose the recommendations of this Committee could be published in sufficiently large numbers to send copies to every librarian in the country. That would probably be a very cheap proposition. I am more distressed by the point raised by Mr Thorn earlier this morning that only 500 or 600 copies of *Australian Government Publications*, this blue document which Mr Thorn showed, are distributed. I take it some of those go overseas, and at the most there would be distributed in this country only about 500 copies of the most important bibliographic reference works relating to Australian Government publications. I am very distressed by that. There is nothing I can do about it, but it just indicates how little interest there still is in the activities of our legislators. I think it is very bad. I

have referred to the whole problem of awareness of government publications. It is something that has interested me for a long time. Perhaps we should suggest that the National Library distribute that publication free to all properly established libraries in the country. I am not suggesting who is going to pay for that, but that is how it ought to be.

Mr MILLAR—The Committee has received a great deal of comment on the depository system of the AGPS. Some have praised the system and others have condemned it. Would you be good enough to offer your comments on this system?

Mr Borchardt—I would like to say in general terms that I think it is a good system, that it works well. I have a little interest in every system. There are always some people who are not quite perfect and make mistakes. I think Miss Miller might be able to comment much more adequately on this because she has looked into it for some time on behalf of the Committee of Australian University Librarians. If the Committee is agreeable, I think Miss Miller should talk about this.

Miss Miller—I think it is working well. There were considerable problems to start with in consignments, in duplication, in missing issues, and so on. This is ironing out piece by piece and we are now getting a very high proportion of what AGPS publishes. The scheme only relates to AGPS publications and not to the whole host of other departmental publications, an area which still remains a problem. It is now very much clearer what are AGPS publications. This may sound silly, but AGPS lists until the middle of this year listed all their material plus a selection of departmental publications, and there was no way of telling, from that list, which were theirs and which were the departmental ones. The list has now been considerably improved and it is clear from the imprint who has published what, so that we can now check and know precisely what we should expect from AGPS, and then make other arrangements for the remainder.

Mr MILLAR—So you are encouraged by the progress being made?

Miss Miller—Yes, very encouraged. I spent part of yesterday morning at AGPS talking to Mr Wainwright. There are a number of little things, but they are little things and they are just in the day to day working of FISALU. It is not a policy thing or anything like that.

Mr MILLAR—You find AGPS responsive to the points you put forward?

Miss Miller—Very much more so, yes. I do not mean that they were unresponsive before, but we are finding it much easier. Maybe as the scheme has gone further on they have resolved problems and we have resolved problems, and I think we are working more closely together than we were. We are probably more able to see each other's point of view, having talked. This all helps.

Mr Borchardt—I would like to add one little comment to this. Those who accept the AGPS free distribution scheme are under an obligation to retain for ever the material that is supplied. One university library found that to be a problem and chose not to be in the scheme. I thought it was of interest that they have chosen to retain their right to choose what they want and to retain what they want.

Senator MISSEN—The suggestion which has been put to the Committee is one involving the issuing of frequent lists which indicate the status of papers which are printed—those which are being printed and those which will be printed and so on. Would you support the suggestion and if so could you expand on its advantages to librarians? I refer to lists of publications which indicate that things will be printed in the future—forward advance notice of publications.

Mr Borchardt—I think that would be useful.

Miss Miller—If it is possible.

Senator MISSEN—We know very often that reports and things will come out in 2 months time, for example.

Mr Borchardt—There was a suggestion at the beginning of the year that the Publications Committee should make a list of things which are about to be printed. I do not know really how Parliament works in this regard, but I receive the impression that this would be a very difficult task for the Publications Committee to undertake. The difficulty which I can see is that on the one hand the mere fact that a document is supposed to be tabled, does not mean that it will be tabled. It may not even be tabled in that session of Parliament. I also understand that there are some problems in obliging departments to present reports. If the committee says we are going to publish the annual report of departments A to Z and the departments, in fact, do not publish them, I think we would have a very great problem. The final compilation of the bound volumes would be removed to a point which could not be foretold at all.

Senator MISSEN—Some can be. At a certain stage we authorise the printing of reports that have already been tabled. Therefore we know

that they are here already and it is a matter of having them printed.

Mr Borchardt—That would be useful.

Senator MISSEN—Also there could be, for example, massive reports such as the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration which are known to be coming and on which advance warning can be given. Apart from that there are, of course, those which we have authorised for publication. That list could be advised.

Mr Borchardt—That would be very useful.

Miss Miller—I am aware of that list and the decision of your Committee, appearing in the journals and in the *Votes and Proceedings*. But probably this is not very well known and that could be circulated more widely. That could be extracted and circulated. We have to make a rather negative approach to this. We can see what has been tabled by going through *Votes and Proceedings* and *Hansard* and so on. Then we can eliminate the ones that you decide to print because we know that they will appear as parliamentary papers. If we want anything from the remainder, then we must pursue such items independently.

Senator MISSEN—Of course what you do not know is whether it is a large report or a significant one. There is only the heading of the report and even that, perhaps, could be obscure. Would you be better off if you had, say, two or three lines of summary of the things which come out, or of the things which are not going to be printed so that you have, at least, some idea of what they are.

Miss Miller—This would be a great help. If a report is not going to be printed, we sometimes have to go to the issuing department. Sometimes it is very difficult to tell which department is responsible.

Senator MISSEN—What you cannot tell is whether it is a superficial little summary of a report or whether it is a major document which will be of value to you.

Miss Miller—Right.

Mr MARTYR—The monthly catalogue prepared by the AGPS has come in for some criticism by some librarians. Do you believe that catalogue is fulfilling adequately its purpose?

Miss Miller—It has in the past come in for a lot of criticism, and I have been strongly behind that. The new list is completely different and is more comprehensive, it is better laid out, the format is improved, and the title is changed so that no longer do we have 2 different publications

entitled *Australian Government Publications*. The imprint is there so that we can tell whether AGPS has published it, or whether the department has published it. There is a lot more bibliographical information included. It is vastly improved.

Senator MISSEN—You suggest that in addition to the usual AGPS advertising, more should be done to make the public aware of the documents which are available. In particular you refer to newspaper advertisements and announcements in the mass media. Do you not feel that the media's comments on a published report, for example, the Fox report, draw sufficient attention to such a publication rather than going through the costly process of advertising in newspapers or other media?

Mr Borchardt—When I made this suggestion I was not thinking of anything else but some more accurate statement about what the thing is called, where it can be procured, maybe even the cost of purchasing it, and that sort of thing. The media are thoroughly unreliable—you can put that into the records—and sometimes misleading. I do think that AGPS ought to make a simple statement which says that the Fox report, the Rae report or what have you, consisting of 4 volumes, is available. So much money is spent on publishing these documents that it seems a pity that the man in the street is left wondering where he can get this. Knowledge of where to get these is very, very vague and poor—I would not suggest that university people are that much better than most—people do not know where they can get such a report, they just have no idea. I think some money ought to be spent on this sort of thing; in my opinion it would be much better to spend it on this than to spend it on glossy covers.

Senator MISSEN—Even though you are critical of the Press, at least you are suggesting for the Press a new source of revenue, are not you? At least the Press will get the advertisements.

Mr Borchardt—No comment.

CHAIRMAN—Do you believe that the example that Senator Missen gave in relation to the Fox report was rather an extreme case and that this does not necessarily apply with most?

Mr Borchardt—Very many do not achieve that kind of notoriety.

CHAIRMAN—You mentioned earlier that you were disappointed that there were only 500 copies of the production that was tabled before. You have a very fertile and inquiring mind. I am just wondering whether the Australian public at large have the desire to know what is available.

Mr Borchardt—Perhaps every librarian is somehow also a bit of an educator, or he thinks he ought to be, or he has a social conscience which urges him that he should share his inquisitiveness with the public at large. I have strong feelings about the importance of the democratic process—this has nothing to do with any particular political view, it is just the democratic process itself—and I cannot see how we can overcome the inertia with regard to politics which does abound in so many countries, including Australia, without taking some steps at least to make it possible for people to find out more about what government is about. I understand that this is a philosophical view, but I do think it is an important one which has some bearing on librarianship in general. That is what libraries are about—trying to bring information and people together—and unless people know that the information can be obtained in libraries, or can be purchased if they prefer to purchase it, the whole thing seems to be futile.

CHAIRMAN—You are saying it is part of the process of a library and librarians to bring this information to the public's notice. In other words, if they are left to their own devices many of them will not bother.

Mr Borchardt—This has one further implication because very few people know how to use government publications. I have had some thoughts about this and I think something ought to be done to instruct people on really how to get at this information and how to make use of it; it is a step further I think. But the library should go beyond its walls and not just sit there and wait for something to happen.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—On the subject of bound volumes, the suggestion was put earlier by Mr Thorn that rather than libraries receiving bound volumes they could arrange the binding of the single pamphlet copies they had previously received when the final index and title pages for the different volumes became available. Do you have any comments on that suggestion?

Miss Miller—We would need to obtain a second set of those issues of the pamphlet copies. By the time the indexes come out we tend to have lost quite a few issues—when I say 'lost' I mean they have been removed. So we would have the problem of replacement copies, and if we left it until the binding stage we might run the risk of particular parliamentary papers being out of print. So as a guarantee we would need to get a second set, put it to one side where no one could

get their hands on it, and preserve this for binding. I would prefer to wait the extra time, and I would hope it would not be as much as 5 years or more as it is going to be, because although the 1971 volumes are mainly out there are still 2 volumes outstanding; volume 9 and volume 10 still are not out. I understand from conversation yesterday that they will not be out this year so it will be 1977 before volume 9 and volume 10 come out. There is a very long time lag. I would prefer to have the volumes bound in the same way as they are bound by Parliament.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—University libraries can eventually receive up to 3 versions of a document—a departmental tabling copy, the parliamentary paper version, and the bound volume.

Miss Miller—Right.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—Can you inform the Committee of the respective value of each or could the middle stage of receiving the parliamentary paper be avoided completely if you had the departmental copy?

Miss Miller—If we had the departmental copy, which we would not always have, I suppose we could make a point of this. In many cases we do have a departmental copy. We have runs of annual reports of government departments which are used, so that it is easier for people who want to consult a 10-year run to have a departmental copy. Those are used also for lending purposes. The loose issues of the Parliamentary Papers Series are kept in numerical order, and they are a reference set; they do not go out of the library legally. It is our intention to keep the Parliamentary Papers Series in the Library for reference purposes and everyone in the university library hopes they can depend on it being there. But we will tend from the departmental set so that people can consult them in their offices or at home.

Senator ROBERTSON—It is my impression that a good many university students leave university with quite a substantial library which is not their own.

Miss Miller—This is a separate problem.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—It is hard to walk away with bound volumes.

Miss Miller—It has been done, of course; or even sections of bound volumes which is more distressing.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—You may recall that earlier this month Mr Macallister of the New South Wales State Library referred to the loose indexing of bound volumes. Do you share

Mr Macallister's concern on the adequacy of the loose index to the bound volume?

Miss Miller—Not so much. I think overall the indexing is satisfactory. I think that was an example of bad indexing. I think one of those items was under Aborigines but not the other one. That was unfortunate and I do not think that should happen. But overall the indexing is quite reasonable. I find it satisfactory. I am not an expert on indexing but I usually can find what I want fairly quickly.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—That would be a pretty reasonable assessment.

Mr Borchardt—The indexing of parliamentary papers has improved quite remarkably since the 1950s. I was an assiduous user of these indexes, especially when I did my work on royal commissions, check lists and so on. Without a great deal of ingenuity you could not find much in the earlier indexes. There was a great deal of Joe Blow remembers and Tom Smith is likely to be his successor so you can always ask Tom Smith.

I would like, if I may, to make one very brief additional comment on Mr Whitlam's question regarding multiple copies. All university libraries and CAE libraries buy multiple copies of certain books. It is very useful to have at least 2 copies of the annual reports of departments, just to take one example, because if you are interested in, say, the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Defence or whatever it might be, you want to see the work over the years and it is very difficult to do that unless you have the annual reports side by side. Of course you can do it; it is just a matter of wasting more time going through all the annual volumes. But since Miss Miller stressed, and quite rightly, that until the bound volumes are in our possession we must retain the unbound pamphlet publication as our deposit copy and users are somewhat restricted. You must remember that sometimes whole classes are referred to a particular type of government activity and we would be unable to retain these copies if we let all of them be used. They would wear out in no time, so 2 copies are essential. Their importance seems to increase rather than decrease as time marches on. If we end up with 3 copies—one bound set, one set in the departmental annual reports or whatever it might be, and one other one—we are not overstocked with copies.

Miss Miller—But we would not recommend the exclusion of annual reports from the Parliamentary Papers Series.

Mr Borchardt—No.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying is that if a whole class is referred to a particular report, then there is going to be great demand for it. If it was a current report then maybe they could go to a bookshop or apply by mail to the relevant authority.

Mr Borchardt—We would buy more copies to solve that problem, but as things recede into the past it becomes more difficult.

Mr ANTONY WHITLAM—The papers contained in the bound volumes are in alphabetical order but it has been put to the Committee that they should be bound in parliamentary paper number order. Do you have an opinion on that suggestion?

Miss Miller—No, I use the index. To me it is totally irrelevant so long as the index takes me to a particular page in a particular volume. I do not use them for browsing. I have no feelings on the subject.

Mr Borchardt—The New Zealand papers are differently organised in subject groups. There is some advantage in that, but I do not think it is important because either system will do.

Mr MARTYR—On the matter of the index, are you both reasonably satisfied with the present index which is prepared by people here? Are you familiar with the United States Congress detailed indexing system, which is far more comprehensive than the way we do it here?

Miss Miller—I am not familiar with the United States Congress system.

Mr Borchardt—I have seen it but I think it is so complex that it is very difficult to find your way through it.

Miss Miller—I am familiar with several types of document indexing but not with that of the Congress.

Mr MARTYR—You would find ours reasonably satisfactory then?

Miss Miller—Yes.

Mr MARTYR—I think we all have become aware of Mr Thorn's comprehensive indexing system. Are you inclined to use that more than our index?

Miss Miller—For different reasons. If I am looking for something I assume will be a parliamentary paper I will start here. If I am looking for something about which I have no idea I will use the Australian Government Publications.

Mr Borchardt—The Australian Government Publications contain Commonwealth and State material so that gives it particular value.

Miss Miller—But there is a lot of material in Australian Government Publications that naturally you would not expect to find in an index to the parliamentary papers series.

Mr MARTYR—We have received a number of suggestions that if a document is tabled in Parliament and it is not going to be printed then a clear indication of this ought to be given. Do you think that a clear indication in the papers index would be sufficient notification?

Miss Miller—It is implicit, is it not, in the papers index if there is no parliamentary paper number. I know I see it at the 6-monthly proof stage, I do not see it earlier. But by this stage it is implicit there is no parliamentary paper number. Am I right in this or not?

Mr MARTYR—That is right. But not everyone would know. Do we need to make it perhaps a bit more specific?

Mr Borchardt—I suppose it could be made clearer. One of the difficulties would be a very practical one of how to do that. You are going to say such and such was tabled and is not going to be printed, this sort of information ought to be given separately and not in this index. It ought to be in the beginning or something like that.

Senator MISSEN—By using an asterisk?

Mr Borchardt—Yes, an asterisk or some such device.

Miss Miller—That would involve a lot more typesetting in order to indicate a number of items on each page whereas an introductory comment would save a lot of work.

Mr Borchardt—You would think that if something was listed in the proceedings as having been tabled and there was no number here then there was no paper and that would be that, even though they may jump up and down and say there ought to be one.

Mr MARTYR—So, you think that is a clear enough indication?

Mr Borchardt—Yes.

Mr MARTYR—Good. That will save us a lot of difficulty anyway.

Miss Miller—But in view of your comment it would not hurt to make an introductory remark about these things in case it is not clear. That would involve very little work.

Senator ROBERTSON—If we can we come back to microfiche, how much do you use this?

Mr Borchardt—We use it quite a lot. I think all university libraries do. The point I would like to

raise is one which relates to certain types of documents and associated material that comes before Parliament. I am thinking in particular of such things as evidence given before select committees of the House and before royal commissions, etc. The reports that emanate from committees usually are quite brief and to the point. They may be 10 pages or they may be 50 pages but that is some of the average size of the report. Long ago, certainly before the Second World War, a lot of evidence was printed and included in the papers of the House. That is simply not on now for reasons of cost. But it would not be very expensive to include evidence in microform. It could be done fairly easily. Supposing this was the size of your report, you could add at the end a couple of pockets, or as many pockets as required, as one has with, for instance, some geological survey-type publications where there is a map in the back. That pocket could contain in microform, or microfiche more precisely, the evidence that was submitted.

I am interested in this because having looked for some years now at reports from select committees of Parliament, courts of inquiry and royal commissions and tried to index them and analyse them I have become aware that a good deal of the evidence is important and interesting for 2 reasons.

On the one hand it does indicate, by implication, the nature of the decision which the committee makes. Secondly, I have a suspicion that later generations might have come to a different conclusion based on the same evidence. This is no criticism of any committee, or of any royal commission. It is simply inherent in the changing socio-political climate of the country. For the historian it would be very interesting always to have this evidence in some permanent form. I have not studied the evidence specifically in order to produce my lists, but I have become aware of this problem and I would very much like to urge that this be considered by the Committee.

Senator ROBERTSON—Do you envisage the departmental reports being put on microfiche or still being published?

Mr Borchardt—I would be quite happy to have them on microfiche, but there could be some difficulties for the members of Parliament sitting with a little reader to examine in session. So they have to be printed at some time. Once you have to print them, it is easier to have a run on and then to go to another form of publication. If the departmental report were brief and factual, with very few pictures in it, then it could perhaps be supplemented with a great deal of

statistical and other data which could well be in some microform.

Senator ROBERTSON—The AGPS people tell us that you can actually produce the microfiche as you are producing the report.

Mr Borchardt—That is right. If they have computer printing—and I believe that they have—that could be done quite cheaply. You would certainly be able to distribute it widely and libraries would benefit by not having to house such bulky material.

Senator ROBERTSON—Following your comment about parliamentarians having difficulty reading the microfiche, how do the students and the researchers react to this? Does it take them long to become used to using the microfiche?

Mr Borchardt—I do not think so. No, it does not take long. We do provide minimum lighting so that they do not have glare, and the readers are getting better. It has taken us a long time to get a man on the moon; it has taken us even longer to get some really good microform reading equipment. But things are looking up and there is better and much cheaper equipment coming onto the market now. I am sure that the students and researchers are becoming used to them and are really availing themselves of this form of publication.

Senator ROBERTSON—Do you see the time when the bound volumes, perhaps, could be completely replaced with microfiche?

Mr Borchardt—I am not a futurist. I do believe that in this present age the 2 things will have to stand side by side. I think for practical purposes the undergraduate who is a first year student in botany is really better off with a hard cover than with the microform. But in the year 2500 or something like that things may be quite different.

Senator ROBERTSON—I would like to hear Miss Miller's comments.

Mr MARTYR—She will not be here either in 2500.

Miss Miller—I would see a use for a backup set in microform of the parliamentary papers. We have quite a lot of microform and microfiche in the library. We tend to buy back sets in microform but not so much current material. For instance we have runs of the statistical year books of quite a lot of the European countries from whenever they started last century up to about 1965, and then we go into hard copy. It just happens that this is what they have put onto fiche. The idea is that we have the current material, which has probably a higher use, in

hard copy and the lower use material in fiche. You can have 100 years of a year book in one little box. It is useful for something that has lower use. I would not put the Australian parliamentary papers into this category. I think that for those ideally there should always be a hard copy available.

Senator ROBERTSON—So there is a need for that.

Miss Miller—The fiche form would be very useful. It is readily portable. The microfiche readers also are quite portable now.

Senator ROBERTSON—Perhaps the students would not take them quite so readily.

Mr Borchardt—You can have machines which will give you the photocopy. By pressing a button and putting in a certain amount of money you can get a printoff of a page very quickly. It is very good now.

Miss Miller—But you could have much wider and cheap distribution of parliamentary papers if you had the fiche.

CHAIRMAN—You are aware that we have Australian Government Publishing Service bookshops in the 6 State capitals, Canberra and Albury. This Committee will be looking at and inquiring into the operation of these bookshops in the near future. How important do you believe the Melbourne bookshop is to your library and to the users of your library?

Miss Miller—I find it hard to comment. We get the AGPS material through the free issue scheme to Australian University Libraries. We purchase additional copies of a selection of material from the AGPS bookshop. But we do not use the bookshop a great deal, but I certainly refer some of our library users to the bookshop. It is very good having this in Melbourne and having the material readily available. But I cannot comment as a user of the bookshop.

CHAIRMAN—Have you any experience in relation to the mail order service? How prompt is it?

Mr Borchardt—We are all very glad that these bookshops exist. I do use them; Miss Miller might not, but I do. I go there in distress because Miss Miller has not a copy of something or other or it has been stolen and I want to get another one or I want to send one to a friend overseas who is anxious to know what is going on. And I find it annoying that the people who serve in these bookshops are not terribly well informed about the material they are selling, that they are not sufficiently well-versed in the nature of the

governmental process because that unfortunately is essential in selling the material. The man in the street does not come in and say 'I would like the report of the select committee on this, that or the other on, say, brucellosis'. The farmer does not come in and give them the name of the chairman and the date on which it was presented. He comes in and says: 'Have you that brucellosis report?' And they do not know. I just give that as an example. I do not want to be held up on this and hung on it but I have several times had this kind of difficulty. They do not know what is what.

The other problem is that with, for instance, the Rae report on Securities and Exchange, we were aware that it was coming out—as was everybody else. And of course, it takes some time for copies to be distributed under the FISAAL scheme. That is fair enough. I do not object to that. I can see the problems in it. So, we send our driver with an instruction to the shop on the day on which we think it ought to be there and we tell him to just wait in the queue—sometimes there may be quite a few people who are waiting for an important report—until it arrives. The bookshop then makes it available and sometimes there are not enough copies to go around. That is a different kind of problem but it is related to service and satisfaction of the customer. They do not have enough for everybody to have one. I do not know how they can gauge demand; it is very difficult to gauge. But I think it should be noted that this is a problem AGPS should have a look at.

Miss Miller—I realise that their prime concern is for federal government publications, but I would like to see a little more liaison with the selling of State Government publications. I was in the bookshop one day and an inquirer came in asking about a government publication which I recognised; it happened to be a Victorian one. The person was sent away by the AGPS people. I would like to see more liaison in each State between the AGPS and the State Government printers' outlets. Hopefully the State people would refer queries about Federal publications to the AGPS bookshop; it should work both ways.

CHAIRMAN—What you are saying bears out what I have been saying for many years—that people cannot differentiate between the various levels of government. If there is a government report on something, people are often not aware of whether it is a State or a Commonwealth report. Indeed they tend to become confused with local government reports at times.

Mr Borchardt—It would be most desirable to have that clarified, and to have some operation established.

CHAIRMAN—I refer to page 3, paragraph 3 of your submission: You suggest that the Joint Committee on Publications consider the possibility of funding a small inquiry into the present state of public awareness of government documents in general and the parliamentary papers in particular. You have talked about this earlier in the evidence that you have given. You also refer to AACOBS. Could you tell us what AACOBS is?

Mr Borchardt—It is the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services which for many years has operated under the wonderful and inspiring chairmanship of Sir Alister McMullin who was President of the Senate. He certainly lent a great deal of weight to the deliberations of that council.

CHAIRMAN—Would you care perhaps to expand on that paragraph and to inform the Committee of any preliminary findings of your inquiry?

Mr Borchardt—I refer to my earlier comments regarding the importance of government documents, the lack of recognition these receive from the public at large, and the significance of improving the awareness of the man in the street to government documents, simply in order to improve the democratic process. There seems to me to be 3 areas which are of concern to librarians. There is firstly the problem of the awareness of the existence of government documents in general terms. Secondly there is the problem of access to government documents through public institutions, for instance libraries. The third area concerns the techniques of exploitation.

On the first point we have already commented on the need to distribute Australian Government publications and National Library publications more widely and the need to try to draw attention to the work of AGPS and to the availability of documents which emanate from Parliament to the man in the street. Secondly there is the question of deposit, either total or selective, in public institutions. The third point concerns the manner in which this material can or should be used in order to ensure that those who cast their votes at elections know what they are talking about or voting about. It seemed to me, at the time of presenting this note about this project, that however much we talk about this, we really have very little real data to go on. The problem affects all types of government publications, both Federal and State.

I would have liked to set up some sort of investigation to try to assess the real problems in bibliographic control, in public availability and in use made of these documents in libraries other than in the big university and research libraries.

I think it is the man in the street, particularly the man in the unpaved street, who ought to be looked at. I think there is too much emphasis in most of our thinking on the metropolitan areas and the universities, which are quite well catered for because of a variety of reasons inherent in their own structure. But the public libraries are not adequately involved. They have problems which relate to staffing and space; we have gone over this before. My colleague, Mr Doust, the State Librarian in New South Wales, and I prepared a paper for the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services in which we estimated that such an investigation would take about five months and cost about \$10,000, if properly staffed. So far nobody has given us a cheque for that money. It may be that either people are not sufficiently convinced of the need for this or else they recognise that it is something very difficult to do. I am still plugging along and trying to get this investigation carried out but so far I have not had much success. Some time ago Senator Withers made a statement in Parliament in which he commented on the very same problem. In the Senate on 5 May 1976 Senator Harradine asked a question without notice about Public Libraries: Documents and Statistics. He said, if I may read:

I ask the Minister for Administrative Services whether he is aware of the difficulties being experienced by public libraries in obtaining government documents and statistics. Is he aware of the difficulties that this creates, particularly in provincial areas, for trade unionists, lawyers and others who rely on government documents, to a certain extent, and on statistics and who have no access to Australian Government publication services? Will the Minister undertake to make an investigation as to why these documents and statistics are not freely available to public libraries?

Senator Withers replied:

I am prepared to make such an investigation. If the honourable senator were able to supply me with more specific details as to the public libraries in question, their locations and the actual statistics and publications which they are not receiving, that would also be of value.

I wrote to Senator Withers offering my services to do this very job but I have not had a great deal of success. I have discussed this with colleagues, Miss Miller and others. I do not know whether this Committee is in fact in any position to organise such an investigation or not. That is a matter of how parliamentary committees operate in this regard. But I still do think that it ought to be done. If the Committee were interested, I would

be quite happy to draw up a more specific program for such an investigation.

CHAIRMAN—Thank you for that. It clarifies the position for the Committee and no doubt it is something the Committee will look at in the future. I thank you for the offer of assistance if we do undertake it.

Miss Miller—An item that has not been discussed is in Mr Borchardt's letter on page 2, the second last paragraph about the free distribution to CAEs. I am concerned about the lack of knowledge and awareness of distribution to CAEs. There was a one-day workshop held at La Trobe University last August, arranged by the Library Association of Australia; there were 30 participants, a lot of them from country CAEs plus others from the metropolitan area. I raised this matter of the recommendation in the first special report regarding distribution of parliamentary papers and so on and people were not aware of what they might ask for. Also in the evidence on page 16, Mr Bradshaw, when asked by Mr Martyr had university libraries, colleges, etc., taken up their entitlement, replied: 'No, I cannot say we have done this. Possibly it is because they have not been invited to. The 1971 report reported to the Parliament that universities, colleges, etc., be entitled to receive one copy, but we have not acted on that', and so on. Last week I got in touch with a few CAEs outside of Melbourne on this matter and I had several replies. Unfortunately I did not answer the phone so a message was left for me, but in only one case was there a very clear reply. The library of Ballarat College of Advanced Education told me they were getting the loose issues of parliamentary papers and paying for them. They had tried to get them free. They had written to the Minister for the Media, which is unfortunate, and had received a reply from AOPS saying that universities could get them free but colleges could not. Now obviously AOPS was referring to the free issue scheme to universities. This probably is a matter of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing because had they approached Parliament they would have been put on the free mailing list, and it is just unfortunate that the Department of the Media did not refer them, and now they are paying for something they are entitled to receive free. And a lot of other CAEs just do not know they may receive them free and probably are put off by the cost, so I would like to suggest that this information be made more readily available.

CHAIRMAN—I do not wish to reflect on any of the previous witnesses because we have had some excellent witnesses and evidence given, but

I would say you people probably are two of the most interesting we have had, and I want to

thank you very much for your attendance at this inquiry.

Committee adjourned

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

INQUIRY INTO THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS SERIES

TABLING STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN

Mr President -

This is the 4th Special Report presented to the Parliament by the Joint Committee on Publications since its investigatory powers were conferred upon it by amendments to the Standing Orders in 1970.

The Inquiry was initiated by the Committee in June 1976 to ascertain whether, in the opinion of the Committee, the Parliamentary Papers Series of the Commonwealth Parliament was fulfilling adequately its intended purpose and, if so, whether this was being achieved in the most economic and efficient manner. The Committee noted that no thorough investigation of the content and effectiveness of the Series had taken place since the presentation of the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications in 1964 often referred to as the Erwin Report after its Chairman, the Hon. Dudley Erwin.

Content of the Parliamentary Papers Series

Since 1967 the content of the Parliamentary Papers Series has been determined, in the main, by the Joint Committee on Publications, following the recommendations of the 1964 Erwin Committee Report. In that report certain guidelines were laid down to encourage future Publications Committees to establish and maintain a comprehensive and consistent Series. The main advantage of a consistent Series remains unchanged

from 1964, namely that researchers, librarians and other users of the Series can anticipate, with relative confidence, the likely content of the Series from year to year. More recently, the establishment of a consistent Series has enabled the Australian Government Publishing Service, on advice from the Parliament, to arrange the simultaneous printing of the departmental and Parliamentary Paper versions of a report. The resulting cost savings from undertaking only one production run for two separate jobs are considerable. The Committee reaffirms the general conclusions of the Erwin Committee with regard to the consistency of the Series and has made a recommendation designed to reinforce this aspect of the Series. The Committee has added only slightly to the Erwin Committee content guidelines by including documents which comprise the Australian Treaty Series and Reports of Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry.

Distribution

In 1971, in its report on Distribution and Pricing of Parliamentary Publications, the Committee recommended that the free distribution list for the principal Parliamentary publications be rationalised and up-dated. It recommended that each addressee be limited to the receipt of one copy only of each of the principal Parliamentary publications, e.g. Parliamentary Papers, Hansard, Notice Papers, upon request. The Committee examined its 1971 recommendation and found that, in the main, its previous recommendations on this matter were still sound and only minor variations to up-date the recommendation were considered necessary. The Committee did not make any recommendations concerning the free distribution of Hansard in this report. It took the view that any examination of the extent of free distribution of Hansard should be the subject of a separate investigation by the Committee at a later date.

Duplication of Distribution and Wastage

The Committee was informed that the cost of producing the Parliamentary Papers Series in the financial year 1977-78 is likely to reach \$1,000,000. With this in mind the Committee was most concerned to remove any duplication of distribution or any wastage which might occur under the present distribution arrangements. The Committee was pleased to discover that in the main such wastage was minimal. In only one area did the Committee determine that it was necessary to amend the distribution arrangements of the Series to avoid wastage, namely, where Members of Parliament receive a copy of a report on tabling, duplication should be avoided by excluding Members from receipt of the Parliamentary Paper version.

Cost of Producing Series

One of the prime concerns of the Committee relates to the increasing cost involved in producing the Series, for example, it was informed that in 1970-71 the cost of producing the Series was \$107,580; in 1975-76 that cost had increased to \$729,716. As previously mentioned, the cost in 1977-78 will approach \$1,000,000. The Committee was keen to determine the principal factors involved with the increasing cost of producing the Series and whether any action taken by the Committee could reduce that cost or at least slow down the rate of increase. It narrowed the increasing cost to four main factors, namely, (a) the increased size of the individual publications included in the Series, (b) escalating costs involved with printing, binding etc. and the supply of labour, (c) a tendency for more reports to be prepared by certain more expedient but relatively expensive processes, and (d) a failure by author bodies to observe production guidelines and procedures laid down by the Australian Government Publishing Service when producing simultaneously the departmental and Parliamentary Paper versions of reports.

The Committee determined that the first two factors, namely, the size of individual publications and increasing costs of production, were outside the Terms of its Inquiry and that it would be in a position to comment on these matters in the course of future Inquiries. It has, however, made recommendations which are designed to encourage departments to make greater use of less expensive production processes. The Committee also recommended enforcing AGPS production procedures laid down by AGPS Circulars. It recommends that, in the event of an author body failing to follow AGPS procedures and, as a result, additional costs flow on to the production of the Parliamentary Paper version, those additional costs be met by the originating department rather than by the Parliamentary House Departments as is the present situation. The Committee hopes that the implementation of this recommendation will provide an incentive for author bodies to avoid the use of unnecessarily costly methods and material during the production process.

Delay in Publication of the Series

The other main concern of the Committee was the delay in the publication of the Parliamentary Papers Series. The Committee found that the present procedures which apply following the tabling of a report in Parliament and leading to the eventual printing of that document as a Parliamentary Paper are cumbersome and require streamlining. Under present arrangements the Parliamentary Paper version of a report normally does not become available for some eight to nine months after the original tabling. The Committee feels that such a situation is intolerable. Such delays reduce the practical use of the Series to that of an archival research tool rather than offering a Series which provides the community with current and up-to-date information on the affairs of Parliament and government.

Ordinarily, the completion of the Parliamentary Paper version of a tabled report is undertaken by the printer who produced the original departmental tabling version. In

most cases, these are contract printers employed by the Australian Government Publishing Service. The Committee has recommended that the Government Printer undertake the completion of the Series from the beginning of 1978. The implementation of this recommendation would co-ordinate and simplify the procedures involved in completing the Series. Its implementation would shorten delays caused by the preparation of design specifications and setting type because of the familiarity of the Government Printer with this type of work, would certainly reduce considerably the delays associated with the movement of proofs between the AGPS, the contract printer and the Parliament, and would enable direct contact to take place between the Government Printer and Parliamentary officers. The implementation of these recommendations would bring the production of the Series into line with the production of the other principal Parliamentary publications.

In past years, the Committee consistently has expressed concern over the late tabling of many of the reports presented to Parliament. Members of both Houses, particularly in recent times, have complained of this growing trend. Because of the Committee's concern in this area and the fact that late tabling necessarily means that the currency of the Parliamentary Papers Series is adversely affected, the Committee has recommended the establishment of Parliamentary machinery which is designed to encourage the more timely tabling of reports in Parliament. If the recommendations are implemented, Members of Parliament will be advised of those reports of government which have not been tabled within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the period to which each report refers. It would also ensure a continuing involvement by the Committee in this most important area of executive accountability to Parliament.

The Committee feels that greater use should be made of the photo-typesetting equipment recently installed at the Government Printing Office. It feels that the time taken to produce most publications could be reduced by employing this equipment. At this stage the Committee suggests that the extension of the use of this equipment be limited to the production of Parliamentary Committee reports which make up part of the Parliamentary Papers Series and the transcripts of committee evidence.

Other Matters

Evidence was given to the Committee that a reduction in the costs involved in the storage, distribution, ease of retrieval of information, etc. of the Parliamentary Papers Series could be achieved if the Series was reproduced in a microform. The Committee accepts the evidence given on this subject and recommends that when production and financial considerations permit, the Parliamentary Papers Series be produced in a microform version as well as in hard copy.

One factor which was brought out in evidence revealed, in the Committee's opinion, an inconsistency with the distribution of government publications through the AGPS deposit. Currently there are 25 recipients of the AGPS deposit, namely, national, university, and Commonwealth Parliamentary librarians. The Committee feels that the category of State Parliamentary librarian should be added to the AGPS deposit and has recommended accordingly.

In conclusion, as deputy Chairman of the Committee, I would like to join the Chairman (Mr John Hodges, M.P.) in thanking the other Members of the Committee for the work which they have undertaken to complete this Inquiry. It is the first of its type for a number of years carried out by the Joint Committee on Publications and I feel sure that all Members of the Committee enjoyed the experience.

I commend the Report to Honourable Senators.