

Parliament

Aim

The aim of the Parliament vote is to enable Parliament to fulfil its constitutional function.

Policy developments

In 1999 Parliament commissioned research on its oversight and accountability role; this was funded by the European Union Parliamentary Support Programme (EUPSP). The study recommended that legislation on accountability standards be introduced and that the accountability and independence of constitutional institutions be strengthened.

A second EUPSP study was commissioned by the Speaker's Forum to assess the extent to which Parliament and the nine provincial legislators conform to the Constitution in their establishment and functions. This study is expected to identify the key problems experienced by these institutions in furthering the objectives of the Constitution and to make recommendations on addressing any shortcomings.

A research project was conducted to clarify the powers and privileges of members of Parliament and to establish whether the 1963 Act on Powers and Privileges of Parliament was still relevant. The report recommended that this Act should be replaced by new legislation.

Table 2.1 Expenditure by programme

R million	Expenditure outcome			Revised estimate 1999/00	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99		2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Office of the Secretary	6,0	4,6	4,9	6,2	76,5	72,4	75,2
National Assembly	7,6	7,9	8,8	5,2	5,9	6,3	6,6
National Council of Provinces division	3,6	3,7	4,8	6,4	6,7	7,2	7,6
Legislation and oversight division	28,4	23,9	28,6	35,6	44,1	47,1	49,8
Finance and administration division	26,2	22,0	29,6	30,5	28,5	30,5	32,2
Institutional support division	34,3	28,8	24,4	27,6	53,0	33,1	35,0
Members' facilities	125,0	104,9	108,2	102,2	55,8	58,3	60,6
Salaries: National Assembly	97,2	115,7	120,2	118,4	123,7	129,1	134,8
Salaries: National Council of Provinces	17,2	20,5	21,3	20,3	21,9	23,1	24,1
Departmental vote	345,4	331,95	350,5	348,8	416,0	407,0	425,9
Public Works ¹							
Total	345,4	331,95	350,5	348,8	416,0	407,0	425,9
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	–	–	7,1	39,3	10,0	–

¹ Appropriated on Vote 26: Public Works.

- The *Office of the Secretary* ensures that sufficient resources are available to provide legislative and institutional support services to Parliament.
- The *National Assembly* division renders procedural and legal advisory services.
- The *National Council of Provinces* division provides procedural and legal advisory services and liaises with provincial legislatures and local government.
- Within the *Legislation and oversight* division, procedural, legislative and support services are provided to Parliament and parliamentary committees. The programme also provides a transcription service for debates and a general language support and development service.
- The *Institutional support* division promotes public understanding of democratic practice, provides information technology and technical systems services, manages parliamentary accommodation and provides security services.
- The *Finance and administration* division provides financial and human resources administration services and catering services.
- *Members' facilities* provides telephone and travel facilities for members of Parliament. The programme also funds benefits for former members of Parliament.

Table 2.2 Economic classification of expenditure

R million	Expenditure outcome			Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Current							
Personnel	174,1	199,7	223,6	217,2	234,9	245,3	256,6
Transfer payments	43,3	47,8	45,2	39,8	58,3	59,7	62,5
Other	124,1	77,2	80,2	87,9	94,2	96,9	101,6
Capital							
Transfer payments	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Acquisition of capital assets	3,9	7,2	1,5	3,9	28,6	5,0	5,3
Total	345,4	331,9	350,5	348,8	416,0	407,0	425,9

Spending on personnel is the largest component of the parliamentary vote and accounted for 50,4 per cent of total spending in 1996/97, rising to 60,2 per cent in 2002/03. Spending on the acquisition of capital assets rises notably from R1,5 million in 1999/00 to R28,6 million in 2000/01, owing to the upgrading of broadcasting equipment in Parliament. It is again reduced to R5,0 million in the following year.

Programme 1: Office of the Secretary to Parliament

Table 2.3 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
		1999/00		2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	6,2	6,2	6,2	6,7	7,1	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	76,5	72,4	75,2
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	–	–	69,8	65,3	–

The *Secretary to Parliament* is the chief executive officer and accounting officer of the Parliamentary Services. The programme is responsible for the general management of the service, the law advice office, the international relations office and the members' interest office.

Sharp increases in the baseline estimates to R75,6 million in 2000/01, R72,4 million in 2001/02 and R75,2 million in 2002/03 are due to the inclusion of transfer payments, party support fees and constituencies' allowances functions, previously included in the programme *Members' facilities*.

Outputs and service delivery trends

Table 2.4 Secretary to Parliament: Key activities and outputs

Key activities	Outputs
Human resources development	Completion of human resources development plan
Joint Rules Committee activities	Management of practices and procedures regarding services to members of Parliament
Policy development	Development of comprehensive policy regarding procedures that govern parliamentary services

The key elements of the integrated human resource development plan include job evaluation, performance management, skills audit, training and development, succession planning, promotion policy and employment equity, in line with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act of 1998. External assistance will be employed to accelerate implementation of the plan.

The Joint Rules Committee instructed the Secretary in November 1999 to review all administration and management practices and procedures to ensure the best possible service. This follows an amendment to the rules that removed the ambiguity about control and management of the Parliamentary Services.

The EU has donated R6,5 million to support Parliament in staff and member training, research, public participation, publications, website installation and technological development. This grant should have expired in November 1999, but was extended for another 18 months.

Parliament has put together a draft policy manual regarding implementation of the procedures and directives that govern parliamentary services and member and party support facilities.

Programme 2: National Assembly division

Table 2.5 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	5,1	5,1	5,1	5,5	5,9	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	5,9	6,3	6,6
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	–	–	0,4	0,4	–

The *National Assembly* programme facilitates the work of the National Assembly and provides the presiding officers and members with impartial advice on parliamentary procedures. Spending on the programme rises marginally above the 1999 estimates to R5,9 million in 2000/01, increasing to R6,6 million in 2002/03.

Outputs and service delivery trends

Table 2.6 National Assembly division: Key activities and outputs

Key activities	Outputs
National Assembly Table	Support of internal National Assembly Committees
National Assembly Procedural division	Oath of Affirmation
	Election of new President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker
	Briefing of new members
	Formation of committees

The National Assembly Table supports internal committees such as the National Assembly Rules Committee, the Programming Committee and committees that may be established on procedural matters such as powers and privileges, scrutiny of delegated legislation and disciplinary committees. The programme is also responsible for other functions entrusted to Parliament, such as the appointment of certain office bearers.

The 1999 elections held a number of challenges for the National Assembly procedural division:

- It had the responsibility for swearing in new members of Parliament after the 1999 elections. All members must subscribe to the Oath of Affirmation, in the language of their choice. Special arrangements were made for disabled members.
- It oversaw the election of the new President, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.
- It introduced and briefed new members on revised parliamentary rules and procedures.
- It facilitated the formation of committees, taking into account the increased number of parties in the Assembly.

Programme 3: National Council of Provinces division

Table 2.7 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	6,4	6,4	6,4	6,8	7,3	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	6,7	7,2	7,6
Change to 1999 budget estimate	–	–	–	(0,1)	(0,1)	–

The *National Council of Provinces* division facilitates the work of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and manages liaison services between provinces and the Council.

Outputs and service delivery trends

Table 2.8 National Council of Provinces: Key activities and outputs

Key activities	Outputs
Training activities	Quality of training provided
	Enhanced capacity of the NCOP to participate in the legislative process

Due to the specific functions of the NCOP and the fact that the NCOP was only constituted in June 1999, a training programme was arranged for permanent delegates. This programme covered the following areas:

- Cooperative governance and the role of the NCOP
- Structure and functioning of the NCOP
- Legislative process and 4-week cycles
- Role of permanent and special delegates
- NCOP Information Management System.

The training programme was well received by members and the attendance register indicated up to 140 members per session. The training was not a once-off event, but forms a part of a continuing programme.

Programme 4: Legislation and oversight

Table 2.9 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	35,6	35,6	35,6	38,3	41,0	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	44,1	47,1	49,8
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	–	–	5,8	6,1	–

The Legislation and oversight division includes:

- The Legislation and proceeding session, which receives and processes incoming Bills and manages documentation for both Houses, in consultation with the Chief Whips, the Committee section and the Table Divisions. The section also supports the Table Offices in many of their functions.
- The Committee section supports the committees dealing with legislation and oversight.
- The Language services section records, interprets and translates debates.
- The Question unit manages questions to ministers at question time and deals with written questions.
- The information and research services section provides a library and a research service to the ministers.

The medium-term allocations have been increased to R44,1 million in 2000/01, R47,1 million in 2001/02 and R49,8 million in 2002/03 due to the appointment of specialised researchers.

Outputs and service delivery trends

Table 2.10 Legislation and oversight: Key activities and outputs

Key activities	Outputs
Legislation management and processing	Efficient and effective management of legislation in the National Assembly and the NCOP
Processing parliamentary questions	Timely and efficient processing of questions of the National Assembly and NCOP

During 1999/00, the *Legislation and oversight* division was responsible for managing 66 pieces of legislation: 37 bills were passed before the 1999 election and 29 afterwards. The programme also processed 1 955 questions in the National Assembly and 104 questions in the NCOP.

Programme 5: Institutional support division

Table 2.11 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	27,2	27,6	27,6	29,2	31,3	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	53,0	33,1	35,0
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	0,4	0,4	23,8	1,8	–

The *Institutional support* division promotes public understanding of democratic practice, provides information technology and technical systems service, manages parliamentary accommodation and provides security services.

Outputs and service delivery trends

Table 2.12 Institutional support division: Key activities and outputs

Key activities	Outputs
Public participation and information activities	Conducting tours of Parliament
Media liaison	Monthly meetings with press
Management of information technology	Efficient and effective management of information technology systems in Parliament
	Effective display of electronic information concerning Parliament's activities

The Public participation and information service subprogramme promotes public understanding of the democratic process and is responsible for public and media relations, as well as ceremonial services and official functions.

Guided tours of the Parliament complex continued to be popular. A total of 21 374 people visited Parliament during 1999, averaging 1 781 visitors per month or 58 per day. The highest volume of visitors was recorded in September 1999 when the Public Relations Unit guided 3 708 people through the complex.

A draft media strategy was introduced and discussions were held with the chairpersons of committees. A new internal clipping service, "Press on Parliament" was introduced, summarising the daily press coverage of Parliament. The staff also met the press gallery in Parliament and plan to hold monthly meetings with the gallery. Informal relations were established with the Government Communications and Information Service.

The Management information technology section is responsible for technical support, including the computer system, sound and video facilities. During 1999/00 the section completed the following activities:

- It launched a website on Parliament.
- The NCOP launched a new information management system that is linked to the website.
- The NCOP building was cabled; cabling will now proceed in the Old Assembly and throughout the Parliament complex.
- New systems are being installed in the finance and human resources sections, with the assistance of the Department of Finance and Sita. The new Persal system will be used for salaries.

Parliament extended its television broadcasting facilities by equipping a third large committee room with television cameras. In 1999, the unit produced 172 live broadcasts of parliamentary plenary and committee sittings. Additional equipment was bought and all the microphones in the National Assembly Chamber were replaced.

The Household services subprogramme manages parliamentary accommodation and provides general support to Parliament. Restoration of the parliamentary complex continued during 1999, while additional SAPS personnel and caretakers were appointed. The provision of occupational health services was taken over from the Cape Town Metropolitan Council. Parliament also appointed an occupational nurse and health officer to provide a comprehensive primary health care service to parliamentarians. Moreover, staff were trained in emergency evacuation procedures, in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1993.

Programme 6: Finance and administration division

Table 2.13 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	26,8	30,5	30,5	28,8	30,9	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	28,5	30,5	32,2
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	3,7	3,7	(0,3)	(0,4)	–

The *Finance and administration* division includes:

- the finance section, which is responsible for providing a financial, procurement and human resources service to Parliament
- the human resources section, which is responsible for staffing and general human resources services to the parliamentary administration.

Programme 7: Members' facilities

Table 2.14 Programme expenditure

R million	Budget estimate	Adjusted appropriation 1999/00	Revised estimate	Medium-term expenditure estimate		
				2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1999 Budget	99,0	102,2	102,2	115,7	120,7	–
2000 Budget	–	–	–	52,9	33,0	34,9
Change to 1999 Budget estimate	–	3,2	–	(62,8)	(87,7)	–

Members' facilities provides telephone and travel facilities for members of Parliament. The programme also funds benefits for former members of Parliament. The change from the 1999 Budget estimate is due to transfer payments, party support fees and constituencies' allowances that now form part of the *Office of the Secretary*.

