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Dr Scott Brenton

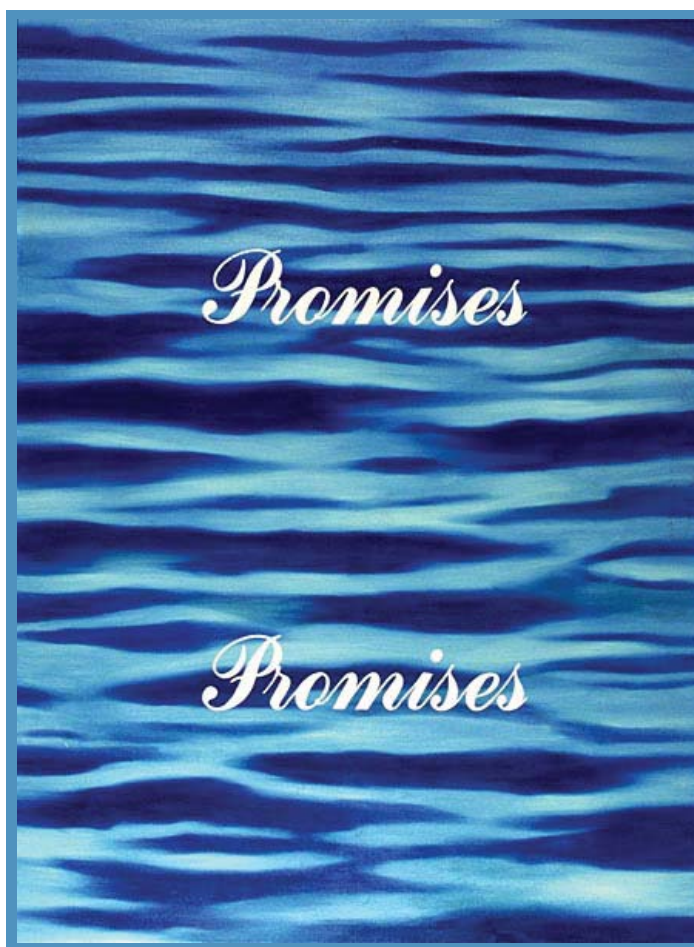
What lies beneath: the work of senators and members in the Australian Parliament

Parliamentary Library

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THE WORK OF SENATORS AND MEMBERS
IN THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT

Dr Scott Brenton
2009 Australian Parliamentary Fellow



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Presiding Officers' foreword

Since its establishment in 1971, the Australian Parliamentary Fellowship has provided an opportunity for researchers to investigate and analyse aspects of the working of the Australian Parliament and the parliamentary process. The work of Dr Scott Brenton, the 2009 Australian Parliamentary Fellow, compares Senators and Members of the House of Representatives to assess the similarities and differences between their work, their roles and responsibilities, and their conceptions of representation.

Dr Brenton surveyed and interviewed over 200 current and former parliamentarians. The monograph presents a comprehensive account of the state of politics as a profession from a parliamentary perspective, while noting major changes over time. In challenging some negative perceptions of politics, this study outlines a successful and stable Australian model of bicameralism in practice.



HARRY JENKINS
Speaker of the House of Representatives

March 2010



JOHN HOGG
President of the Senate

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Abstract

This study compares senators as a group of political representatives with members of the House of Representatives as another group to assess the similarities and differences between their work, their roles and responsibilities, and their conceptions of representation. Drawing on surveys of 233 current and former parliamentarians and 29 interviews with prominent politicians, this study finds that the profession has changed with technological and communication developments, increases in staff and constituents, increased media intrusions, and challenges to balance work and family. Most fundamentally, the stature of the Senate has grown from out of the shadow of the House of Representatives, while senators have also raised their profiles and become important campaign agents. While the House still seats the most powerful politicians and retains the interest of the media with its theatrics, the Senate has carved out a strong policy and legislative focus. The Senate has also been more successful in attracting a more diverse cross-section of the Australian community into the chamber and is now challenging the lower house as the *real* house of representatives.

Background

In October 2008, Parliament House hosted a Contemporary Bicameralism Conference, assembling politicians, parliamentary officers and academics around the theme of Australian Bicameralism in Comparative Context. So how did Australia compare? From an international perspective, Australian bicameralism compared favourably, particularly against other Westminster-derived parliaments such as in Britain and Canada. Indeed, Australia's system of government stands as a stable, working model for future democratic reform of their upper houses. Yet from an inward-looking domestic perspective, there was still a sense of illegitimacy attached to Australia's upper house, the Senate. What is its proper role? As current and former members of parliament debated this question, it became clear that while the institution of the Senate has attempted to establish an identity in recent decades, the role of senators has not been clarified. The common sentiment was that senators just do committee work and that they do not have constituents. While senators disagreed it became clear that both members of the House of Representatives (hereafter referred to simply as members) and senators have different understandings of the work of their colleagues on the other side of Parliament House.

Yet if parliamentary participants are unsure of their colleagues work patterns, then how can voters know what their representatives, both senators and members, actually do? Only about 16 per cent of Australians report having had some form of contact with a federal member of parliament,¹ with the media providing a skewed focus on the party leaders and frontbenchers, often in the theatre of the House of Representatives during Question Time. With parliament sitting for less than a quarter of the year and questions without notice taking up only about one-and-a-half hours of each sitting day, this is not a particularly useful snapshot. Considerably less media attention is given to the Senate except when there is contentious legislation and crossbench votes are needed by the government, or when a parliamentary committee is probing a scandal or something sensational.

This superficial understanding of the work of politicians comes to the fore during recurring debates on the issue of politicians' pay. Public perceptions of politicians are

1. P Norris, *Are Australian MPs in touch with constituents*, Audit paper, Democratic Audit of Australia, Australian National University, Canberra, 2004.

universally and overwhelmingly negative.² Thus, at a very basic level, this study is attempting to challenge some of those negative perceptions by quantifying the different types of work that senators and members do, while also exploring the diverse range of roles and responsibilities that they have, particularly away from the public and media gaze.

Previous research and basis of this study

While members of the House of Representatives have identifiable *constituents*, given the strict party discipline that exists in Australian politics and the diversity of large electorates, do they primarily represent a party or a constituency? If senators are not always directly representing their states, then who or what do they represent? Much of the focus in the political science literature has been on democratic *institutions* and the expected behaviour of representatives, rather than how political actors engage in democratic representation.³ There is extensive literature comparing the powers and functions of the different houses,⁴ but considerably less comparing the functions of the representatives within the different houses. With both senators and members representing people living in defined geographic areas (albeit of varying sizes) and sitting in houses with almost the same powers, do they actually differ in terms of their representative roles and responsibilities? The focus of this study is on the political actors and the work of politicians in carrying out their representative duties, by examining the similarities and differences between senators and members in terms of

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2. S Brenton, *Bicameralism: Australia in a comparative context*, Report of the Conference, 14 January 2009, viewed at http://www.parliamentarystudies.anu.edu.au/papers_etc/2008/Bicameralism%20Report.pdf
 3. See S Dovi, *The good representative*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2007.
 4. E.g. HW Blom, 'Ethos and interests. Arguments for a representational differentiation in a changing society', in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *Bicameralisme: Tweekamerstelsel vroeger en nu*, Sdu Uitgeverij Koninginnegracht, 's Gravenhage, 1992; EE Hewitt, *Cameral government: unicameral and bicameral legislatures*, Viridia Books, Melbourne, 1992; J Uhr, 'Generating divided government: the Australian Senate', in SC Patterson and A Mughan (eds), *Senates: bicameralism in the contemporary world*, Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 1999; G Tsebelis and J Money, *Bicameralism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997; SC Patterson and A Mughan, 'Senates and the theory of bicameralism', in SC Patterson and A Mughan (eds), *Senates: bicameralism in the contemporary world*, Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 1999; D Shell, 'The history of bicameralism', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2001; and S Bach, *Platypus and parliament: the Australian Senate in theory and practice*, Department of the Senate, Canberra, 2003.

their understandings of their representative roles and responsibilities. This monograph will question who (or what) senators and members represent in contemporary Australian politics.

It is interesting to note that some of the most detailed work on the Australian Senate in particular has been done by ‘foreign’ scholars — Stanley Bach and Wilfried Swenden. American political scientist, Stanley Bach in producing the most comprehensive book so far on the Australian Senate, suggested possible lines of future inquiry, including the attitudes of senators toward the institution.⁵ Thus, the focus of this monograph is on the political actors and their perceptions, but is broader in also including members. Swenden in his study on regional representation in parliamentary federations through second chambers, compared the Australian Senate and the German Bundesrat, and used questionnaires to examine how senators assess the Senate as a states’ house.⁶ The questionnaire also explored aspects of the different party organisations and their nomination processes, as well as the senators’ relationships with other state senators and state party leaders, and their positions in relation to key bills.

Swenden found that a majority of senators perceive scrutiny of legislation as their most important function, followed by reviewing and improving government policies.⁷ Of the six functions included in the survey, representing state interests did not feature among their top three priorities. However, Liberal senators valued the representation of state interests more than Labor senators, as did senators from the smaller states of Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, compared to senators from the larger states.⁸ Finally, state senators rarely meet with their colleagues from other parties, although Western Australian and Tasmanian senators were more likely to.⁹ This study adopts a similar approach in surveying parliamentarians and seeks to further explore perceived legislative responsibilities and conceptions of representation, while once again also including members. However, this is not to suggest that conceptions of representation and the work of parliamentarians have been completely ignored in the Australian political science literature, with John Uhr, Marian Sawer, John Warhurst and previous

5. S Bach, *ibid.*, pp. 191–2.

6. W Swenden, *Federalism and second chambers: regional representation in parliamentary federations: the Australian Senate and German Bundesrat compared*, P. I. E. – Peter Lang, Brussels, 2004.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 204–5.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 215–6.

parliamentary fellows Trish Payne and Gianni Zappalà among many others contributing to this growing field.¹⁰ Rather, the distinctiveness of this study rests with the methodological approach and its comparative nature combined with the range of questions.

10. See M Sawyer, *Speaking for the people: representation in Australian politics*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001; J Uhr, *The Senate and proportional representation: public policy justification of minority representation*, Public Policy Program Discussion Paper no. 69, Australian National University, Canberra, 1999; J Uhr, *Redesigning representation: making sense of the Senate*, Draft paper prepared for conference: Consensual Policy Making and Multi-Party Politics, Australian National University, Canberra, 25–26 November, 1993; J Warhurst, *Behind closed doors: politics, scandals and the lobbying industry*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2007; T Payne, *The Canberra press gallery and the backbench of the 38th Parliament 1996–98*, Australian Parliamentary Fellow monograph, 1997, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 1999; and G Zappalà, *Four weddings, a funeral and a family reunion: ethnicity and representation in Australian federal politics*, Australian Parliamentary Fellow monograph, 1996, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 1997.

Methodology

‘Senators and members are completely different animals’ – current senator

‘Being a member is not harder than being a senator—it’s just different, like being a man or a woman’ – current parliamentarian who has served in both houses

Comparing the work of senators and members

While one senator argued that comparing the work of senators and members was like ‘apples and oranges’, with each having their own worth, it became clear through this study that senators and members do compare themselves to each other and tend to undervalue the contributions of the other group. Through surveys and interviews of current and former parliamentarians from all parties and all states and territories, this study reveals how senators and members perceive their own roles and responsibilities in comparison to parliamentarians from the other chamber. The principal research question is what are the similarities and differences between members of the House of Representatives and senators in terms of their own understanding of their representative roles and responsibilities? Supplementing this main research question is who (or what) are they representing?

Survey

All current senators and members of the 42nd Commonwealth Parliament (226 in total) were emailed a link to an electronic survey, followed by a paper copy mailed to their Parliament House office. Of the 150 current members of the House of Representatives, 54 responded to the survey (39 responded using a paper copy while 15 responded electronically), giving a response rate of 36 per cent. Twenty-six of the current 76 senators responded (23 paper; three electronic), which is a response rate of 34 per cent. This compares favourably with previous surveys of serving parliamentarians, which had response rates of between 26 and 40 per cent.¹¹ Over 450 surveys were mailed to former parliamentarians, of which 153 were completed and returned. While an exact response rate is difficult to determine as the address database of former parliamentarians is not completely accurate, it appears to be similar to current parliamentarians. Former parliamentarians were included to provide a more

11. E.g. W Swenden, *Federalism and second chambers*, op. cit.; T Kendall, *Within China’s orbit: China through the eyes of the Australian Parliament*, Australian Parliamentary Fellow monograph, 2007, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2008.

comprehensive set of results, but also to ascertain whether there have been changes over time. However, it should be noted that this is an imperfect measure as the time periods served by former parliamentarians vary considerably, as it does for current parliamentarians. The results are presented for the purposes of basic comparison but should be interpreted with caution.

Representativeness of the responses

Figure 1a shows the current distribution of the 150 seats in the House of Representatives across the states and territories, based on population and minimum seat provisions in the Constitution. Each seat contains a similar number of voters, with the more populous states containing the most seats.¹² Figure 1b shows the state distributions of current members of the House of Representatives who responded to the survey. As 11 of the 54 respondents did not disclose their state/territory it is difficult to accurately assess the representativeness of the sample, but based on the available information, there appears to be an overrepresentation of New South Wales' members and absence of Tasmanians and members from the Northern Territory (although these members may not have indicated a state/territory to preserve their anonymity, given the small number of members from these regions).

12. While all states have the same number of seats regardless of population, there is a moderate gerrymander in the House of Representatives, with Tasmania overrepresented and the Australian Capital Territory underrepresented.

Figure 1a: House seats by state

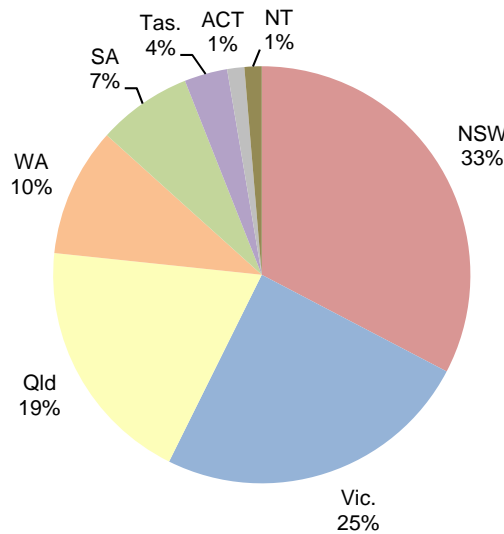
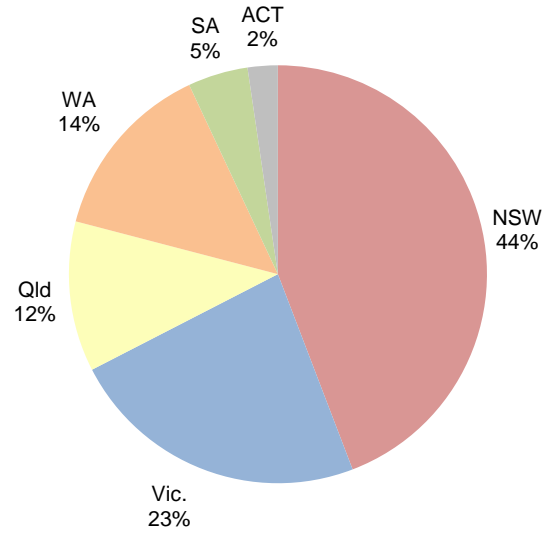


Figure 1b: Respondents* by state



*11 Members did not disclose their state/territory

Figure 1c shows the corresponding distribution of the 76 Senate seats, with the Constitution guaranteeing an equal number of seats for all the original states. All senators who responded indicated their state/territory, with New South Wales underrepresented in the sample, and Tasmania overrepresented (see Figure 1d).

Figure 1c: Senate seats by state

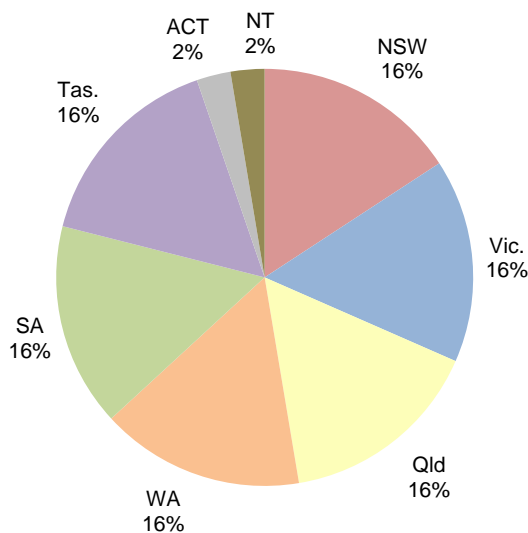


Figure 1d: Respondents by state

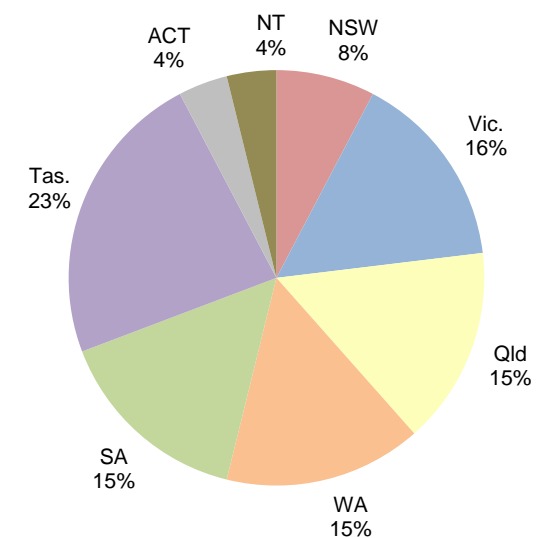


Figure 2a shows the proportions of seats in the House of Representatives each party holds, while Figure 2b shows the party affiliations of members who responded. Labor (the current governing party) is underrepresented in the sample, while the Liberals and Nationals (the current opposition) are overrepresented, although again 11 members did not disclose their party.

Figure 2a: House seats by party

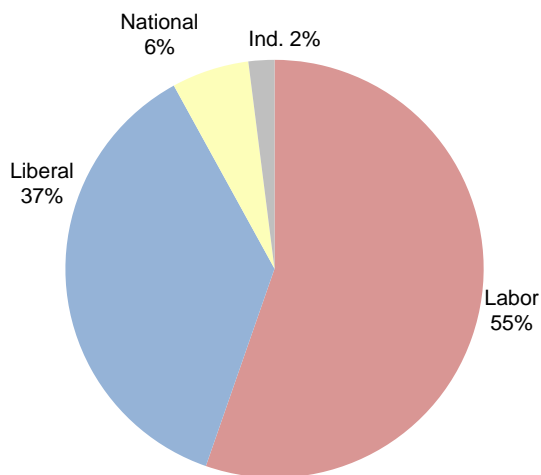
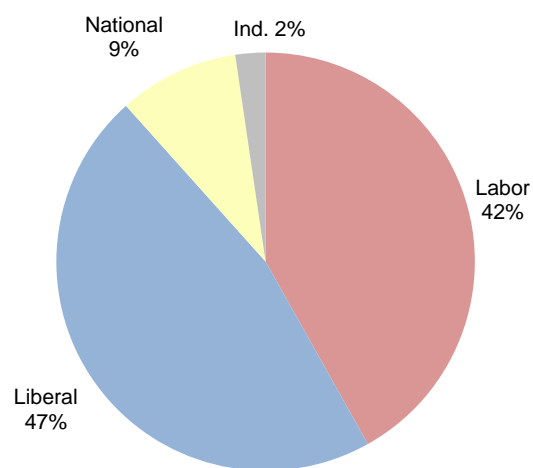


Figure 2b: Respondents* by party



*11 Members did not disclose their party

Figure 2c shows the proportions of Senate seats each party holds, while Figure 2d shows the party affiliations of the Senate respondents, with only two senators choosing not to disclose their party. In terms of party affiliation, the survey sample is fairly representative of the current composition of the Senate, particularly in relation to the Labor and Liberal parties.

Figure 2c: Senate seats by party

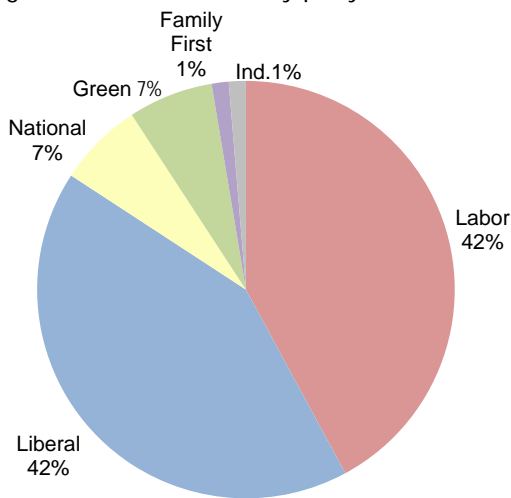
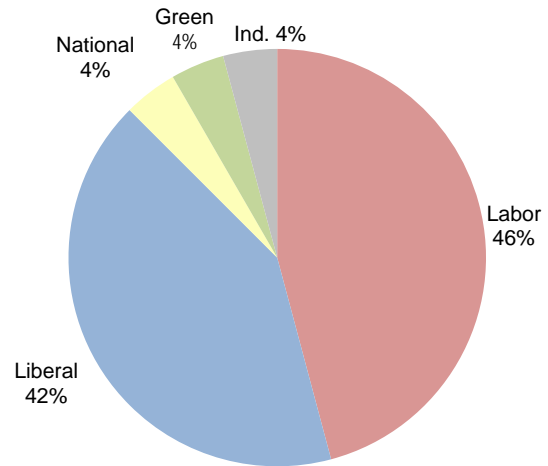


Figure 2d: Respondents* by party



* 2 Senators did not disclose their party

Finally, the representativeness of the sample is assessed in terms of executive membership within political parties. The survey did not define this criterion, and could be interpreted as the ministry or frontbench or other party leadership positions. Only 17 of the respondents reported being in an executive position, with some of the respondents choosing not to disclose this information.

Figure 3a: House respondents by position

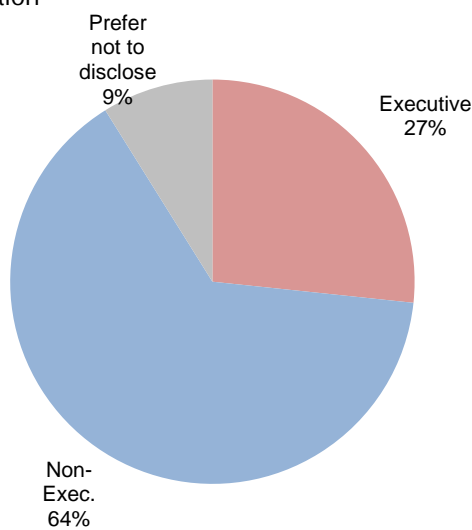
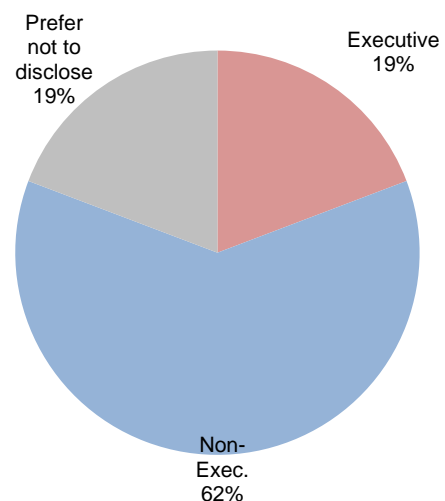


Figure 3b: Senate respondents by position



Figures 4a to 4f present similar information for former senators and members who responded to the survey.

Figure 4a: Former members* by state

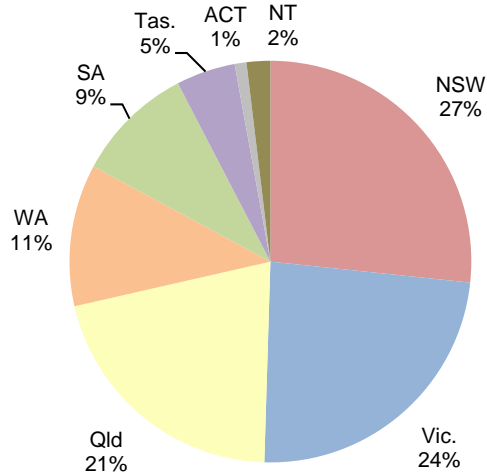
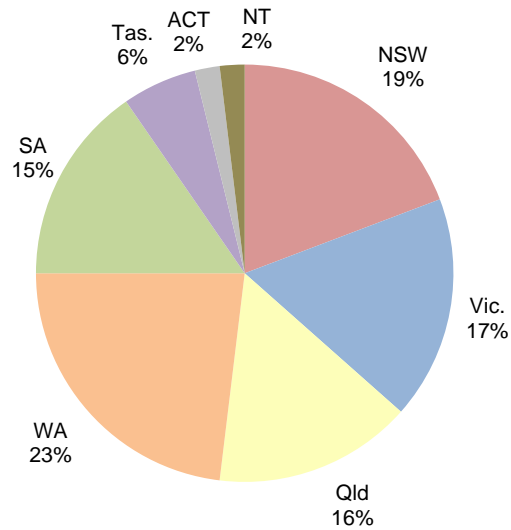


Figure 4b: Former senators by state



*11 Members did not disclose their state/territory

Figure 4c: Former members* by party

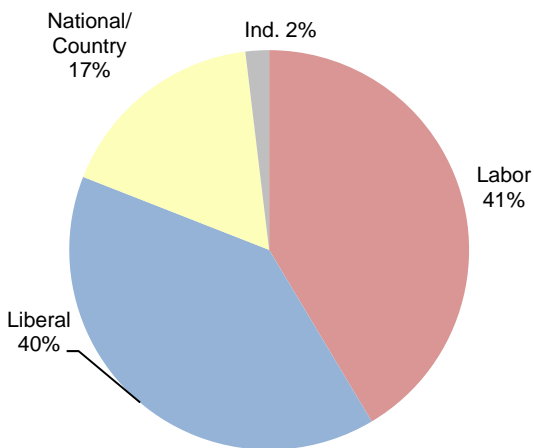
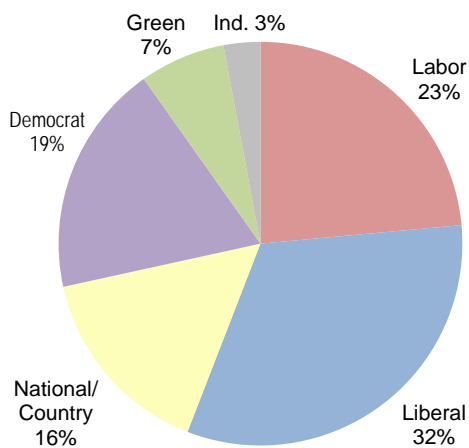


Figure 4d: Former senators by party*



* 1 Labor Member and 1 Liberal became independents

* 1 Senator did not disclose their party, and 3 changed party affiliation during their terms

Figure 4e: Former members by position

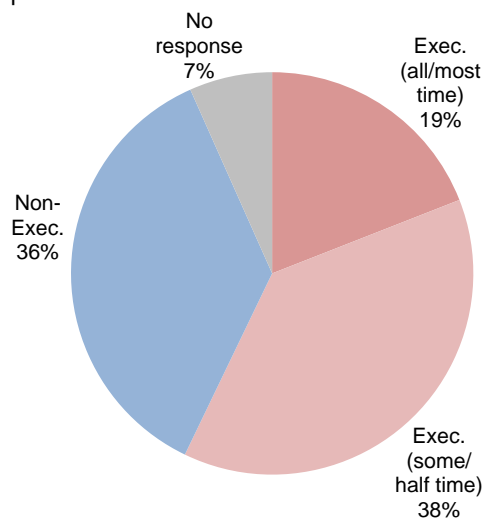
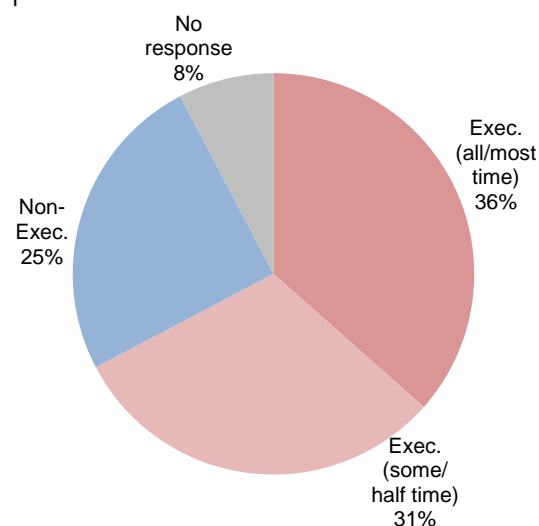


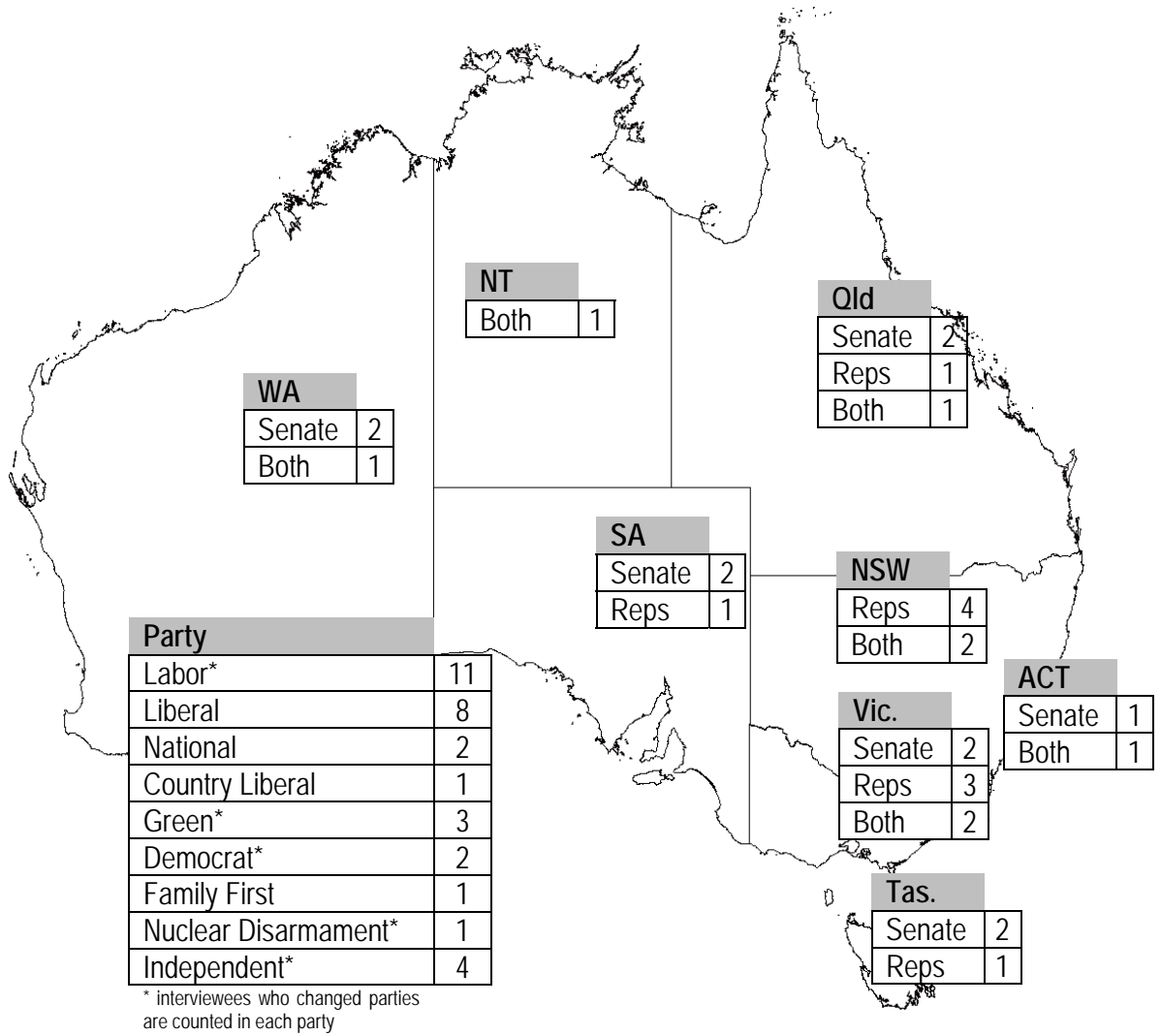
Figure 4f: Former senators by position



Interviews

Twenty-nine interviews, both telephone and face-to-face in Parliament House, were conducted with selected current and former parliamentarians. Parliamentarians were chosen on the basis of whether they had served in both an upper and lower house, at a federal level or a federal and state level, in addition to ensuring representatives from all parties (and independents) and all states and territories were included. Although most interviewees provided quotable ‘on the record’ responses, for ease of reporting the material, anonymity is provided for all interviewees. Therefore, given the relatively small number of interviewees, often no distinction is made between former and current parliamentarians unless relevant and gendered pronouns are also avoided to prevent identification. A full list of interviewees is shown in the Appendix.

Figure 5: Party of affiliation, state/territory, and chamber of interviewees



The Senate versus the House

Choice of chamber

The House of Representatives is generally considered the ‘main game’ in politics for most of the media and the public, as government is formed in the lower house. The ‘nexus’ provision of the Constitution (Section 24) stipulates that the membership of the House of Representatives ‘shall be, as nearly as practicable, twice the number of senators’, which Uhr notes is a reflection of the original understanding of the political weight of the two houses.¹³ Members of the House of Representatives enjoy pre-eminence, in contrast to the United States. Bach observes:

In Washington, members of the two houses often have different ambitions. Many Representatives hope to become Senators or perhaps state governors; many Senators hope to become President and some believe that is their destiny. In Canberra too, members of the two houses have different ambitions, but Representatives hope to become ministers, not Senators, and some easily can envision themselves as prime minister. Australian Senators also seek ministerial appointments, but fewer of these positions are available for Senators, so Senators may seek election to the House in their quest for political advancement. Only once has a Senator been chosen as prime minister and he quickly sought election to the House. So in Washington, the movement within Congress is from the House to the Senate; in Canberra, not surprisingly, it is the reverse. A US Senator has not voluntarily relinquished his seat to run for a seat in the House since well before the American Civil War.¹⁴

The stature of United States’ senators is reinforced by their longer terms (three times the length of House terms) and exclusivity of their membership. With only two senators per state and only one vacancy (if that) at an election, Senate races are very competitive. While Australian senators also enjoy longer terms than members (six years to, at most, three years),¹⁵ there are usually six vacancies per state at an election filled using proportional representation. The comparatively lower thresholds for election mean that it can be easier to be elected to the Australian Senate with party endorsement than the House, hence the election of minor parties to the Senate. Furthermore, while the Senate is the more common breeding ground for Presidential aspirants in the United

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13. J Uhr, ‘Generating divided government: the Australian Senate’, in SC Patterson and A Mughan (eds), *Senates: bicameralism in the contemporary world*, op. cit., p. 104.
 14. S Bach, *Platypus and parliament: the Australian Senate in theory and practice*, op. cit., p. 248.
 15. Territory senators do not enjoy fixed terms, with their terms the same as for members.

States, it is the House of Representatives where prime ministers and treasurers traditionally sit.

When Liberal Senator John Gorton became Prime Minister he resigned from the Senate and contested a lower house seat.¹⁶ High-profile senators who are touted as potential future prime ministers have switched to the House of Representatives, for example Liberals Fred Chaney and Bronwyn Bishop, Labor's Gareth Evans, and Democrat-turned-Labor Party member Cheryl Kernot. Yet constitutionally there is no requirement for this to occur; after all the Prime Minister is not even mentioned in the Constitution. It is only by convention that the leader of the majority party (or parties) in the lower house becomes Prime Minister. This Westminster convention is largely based on the democratic legitimacy of Britain's elected lower house, even though British prime ministers have sat in the unelected upper house. However, both Australian houses are popularly elected.

Treasurers have also traditionally sat in the House of Representatives, as appropriation bills can only originate in the lower house. However, in practice this is not necessary, as Treasurers have served in the upper houses of New South Wales (Michael Egan, Michael Costa and Eric Roozendaal), Victoria (John Lenders) and Tasmania (Michael Aird). Furthermore, while members of the House of Representatives (including its ministers) are accountable (in the context of parliament) only in the House, and senators are accountable only to the Senate, there are provisions in the Standing Orders to enable ministers from one house appearing before the other or its committees. For example, Tasmanian upper house ministers regularly appear before the lower house to answer questions in relation to their portfolios.¹⁷ Although unusual, there have been Deputy Leaders in the major parties from the Senate. Furthermore, minor parties such as the Greens do not automatically presume that their leader has to be based in the House.¹⁸ Despite these innovations, the perception exists that more ambitious politicians contest the lower house. Survey respondents were asked to indicate their main reasons for seeking election to the House or the Senate, rather than the other chamber. Respondents were given the following options:

16. See M Mackerras, 'From the senate to the Lodge', *The Australian*, 28 May 2009, p. 12.

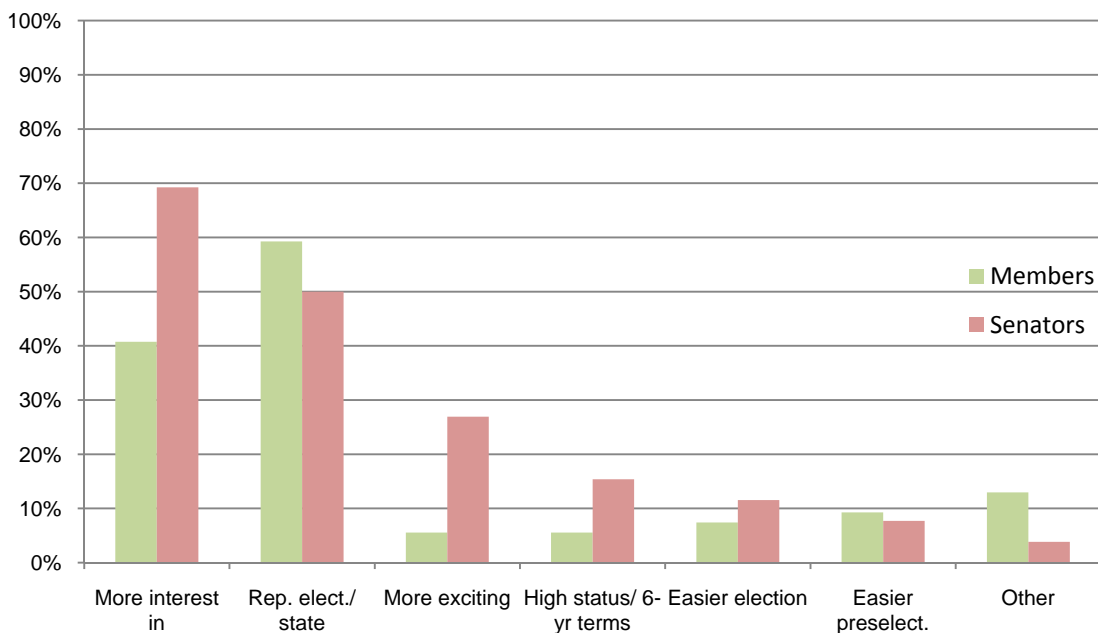
17. See Ibid. and D Bartlett, MP (Tasmanian Premier), *Another step in open government*, media release, 23 March 2009, viewed 23 March 2009, <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/print.php?id=26266>.

18. Unlike the major parties the Greens leader can (and does) sit in the upper house even when they also have lower house representation. This is incorporated in the official party room rules.

- more interested in the House's/Senate's work
- wanted to represent a defined electorate (in the House) / the whole state/territory (in the Senate)
- House/Senate is more exciting
- higher status (for members) / prefer six-year terms (for senators)
- more confident of election
- easier preselection or House/Senate seats were already filled
- easier to become a Minister, and
- an open-ended 'other' category.

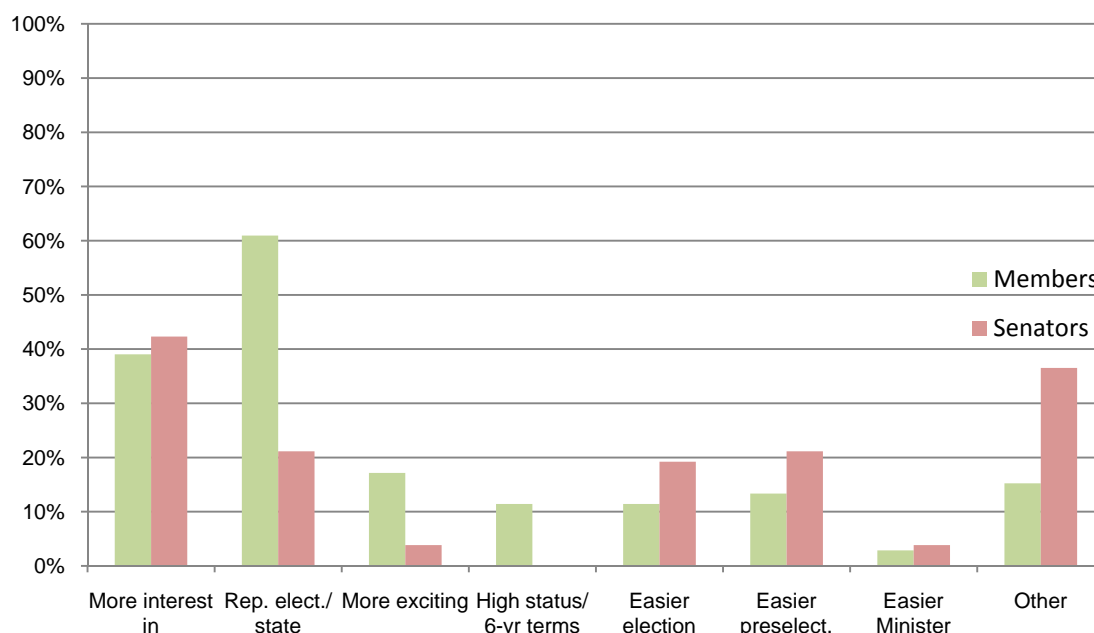
The results for current parliamentarians are shown in Figure 6a, followed by the survey responses of former parliamentarians in Figure 6b.

Figure 6a: Main reasons current parliamentarians sought election to a particular chamber



None of the current parliamentary respondents chose 'easier to become a Minister'.

Figure 6b: Main reasons former parliamentarians sought election to a particular chamber



Among current parliamentarians, the most noticeable differences between respondents can be seen in terms of interest and excitement. Much higher proportions of Senate respondents found their chamber more exciting and were more interested in the work of a senator. A current senator found that there was more of a national focus in the Senate, along with more excitement and ability to set the agenda. Another crossbench senator saw the ability to influence government policy as the attraction of the upper house. Interestingly, this appears to be a more recent development, as the response of former senators did not reveal a similar level of interest and excitement. Indeed, higher proportions of former members found their chamber more exciting while the proportions of respondents in both the House and Senate who were interested in their work were similar. The key difference among former parliamentarians was that members were more attracted to the House in order to represent a defined electorate. Again, this seems to have changed over time, with comparatively higher proportions of current Senate respondents seeking to represent a state/territory than in the past. These findings suggest a change in the role of the Senate and the work of senators, and will be further explored later in this monograph.

While the option ‘easier to become a Minister’ registered limited support, during the interviews a one-time senator admitting switching to the House with leadership ambitions because that is where government is formed and where the Prime Minister

sits. However, they acknowledged that it was a hard transition and that their high Senate profile did not easily translate to the lower house. For minor parties, the chances of winning are greater in the Senate, and therefore more ambitious minor party politicians run for the Senate. Minor party candidates have often only run for the lower house to support the Senate ticket. Many minor party senators mentioned the lower electoral thresholds for a Senate seat as the main attraction.

Other reasons

‘[I] wanted to be Parliamentarian rather than Politician’ – former senator on why the Senate was their chamber of choice

Among both current and former members, ‘other’ responses generally related to wanting more contact with ‘the people’ and that the House was (then) more powerful and where government is formed. ‘Other’ responses by current and former senators seemed to come mainly from minor party representatives, who due to the different electoral systems have experienced more success in the Senate, whilst also attracted to the review role of the Senate. One interviewee described becoming a politician as ‘a spiritual calling’.

‘Often politics is being in the right place at the right time’ – current senator

Another common reason given by survey respondents and interviewees from both houses was opportunity, with many simply contesting an available, or winnable, seat. Some politicians lived in areas with high levels of support for an opposing party, and therefore opted for the Senate. Some were requested to stand in a certain seat by their parties. One senator changed to the House for electoral reasons, using their high profile to consolidate support for the party. Others found that only certain seats had open preselections, and therefore did not make a conscious choice of one chamber over the other. The next section provides an overview of internal party preselection processes.

Getting preselected

While free and fair elections provide the ultimate open and transparent job interview for politicians in a democracy, the process of ‘shortlisting’ candidates for that interview is relatively closed and generally contained within the parties. Many former parliamentarians were particularly critical of internal party preselection processes and the influence on their final choice of chamber. It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the processes from outside the parties, as written rules only seem to guide the practices,

which can also vary from state to state. The following were some of the recurring observations made by the survey respondents and interviewees, but should only be regarded as informed opinion of the practices rather than the written rules.

Many major party interviewees, from both the Senate and House, commented on the difficulties in gaining preselection for the Senate. One senator argued that it is as tough to get preselected for winnable Senate seats as it is for safe lower house seats. In the Labor Party, the top two positions are divided between the Left and Right factions in a predetermined order, even though it can result with a higher-profile (and as many argued, a harder-working) senator in the second, or even third position. One Labor senator described Senate preselections as much less onerous than having to build a profile in a local electorate, although this senator had a profile within the party and the support of unions controlling half of the preselection votes. House seats are also often divided between the factions, and while often decided by local electorate preselectors, the party's executive and leadership can intervene. Labor also has an affirmative action quota requiring that women are preselected in at least 40 per cent of winnable seats.

While the Liberal Party does not have such organised or formalised factions, their Senate preselections operate in similar manner. A Liberal parliamentarian argued that Senate preselection requires a much higher profile within the party organisation and the state division as it is a state-wide contest. However, one Liberal questioned the preselection process, arguing that the panels were not necessarily representative of the party or the community. Liberal Senate preselection panels also draw from local electorates, and in Tasmania, for example, efforts are made to draw candidates from across the regions. House preselections in the Liberal Party are generally conducted by local party committees with panels as few as 100 people. One former Liberal who crossed the floor many times was never threatened with deselection, believing that putting the electorate first would ensure re-election with or without party endorsement. A senator (and former party president) noted that sitting members rarely get challenged for preselection but sitting senators have to stand for preselection at the end of every term (and often for a place on a full Senate ticket when a double dissolution is a possibility). While incumbent members have an advantage over challengers, incumbent senators usually face competition from other incumbents in the same party and therefore maintaining one's place on the Senate ticket is difficult. There have been many occasions where sitting senators have been moved to unwinnable positions.

Minor party senators in particular (supported by many former major party parliamentarians) were critical of these methods, arguing that the major parties use

seats as rewards for party loyalty. One senator viewed Senate positions as prizes for factional wins, with party preselectors retaining power over the senators and forcing them to vote in certain ways. Another saw the Senate as a two-tiered structure, likening it to a kind of cricket team with a first eleven and second eleven in the major parties. This senator argued that Senate seats are used as a reward system (particularly within the Labor factions) for long and loyal service and to make up the numbers on committees. The first eleven are careerists, interested in ministries and wanting to rise through the ranks. The second eleven are at the end of their careers. Senators rewarded with 'safe' seats (i.e. at the top of their party's tickets) are not there because of what the electorate thinks but what the party thinks, with preselection being more important than the election. While a strong supporter of proportional representation and multi-member electorates, in this senator's view the current system does not result in electing the best parliamentarians.

However, minor parties such as the Greens are not above criticism. One Greens senator raised concerns that the party was primarily drawing candidates from a relatively small party membership rather than their million supporters. However, the senator conceded that at the moment you have to be active in the party, and it is natural that those with political ambitions will want to work for the party. The Greens senator suggested that the party needed to do more outreach as previous parliamentarians have come from a tradition of community activism.

One innovative change to these closed preselection processes has been proposed by the National Party, following the American tradition of open and contested preselections and drawing supporters from outside the party membership.¹⁹ The Nationals have proposed open primaries as means of providing the local community with a sense of 'ownership' over the candidate, and assisting the party against popular local mayors running as independents. One National claimed it was great for democracy.

Getting elected

'If I was ever reincarnated I would come back as a senator' – former member who held a marginal seat

19. See NSW Nationals, *A party of community champions: A new system for The Nationals, community preselections briefing paper*, January 2009, viewed 7 December 2009, <http://nsw.nationals.org.au/policies/community-preselections-briefing-paper.aspx>.

One interviewee with experience in an upper and lower house found that lower house members are kept locally accountable to the constituency everyday and have to be very responsive. Campaigning is also very different with more pressure and daily accountability to the electorate, which is the priority. This interviewee argued that it is all up to the individual candidate and there is no hiding behind a party ticket, although upper house candidates are also on the ground campaigning for the party. Another interviewee who served in both houses agreed that campaigning for the two houses is very different, as a senator is elected on a party ticket. However, senators do become involved in campaigning, often in marginal seats. For minor parties, senators discussed having to work hard to build a state-wide profile as achieving just one quota is a challenge. Name recognition, as much as party profile, is crucial for minor party senators. Crossbench senators felt that they were constantly in campaign mode, like being a marginal-seat holder. Ever after the election there are different challenges for senators and members due to Constitutional anomalies. A minor party senator noted that being a senator-elect as the most difficult role, as unlike members, senators often take their seats months after being elected and in that time do not have access to an office, staff or salary and yet they can be expected by supporters to work immediately.

Perceptions of the 'dark' side

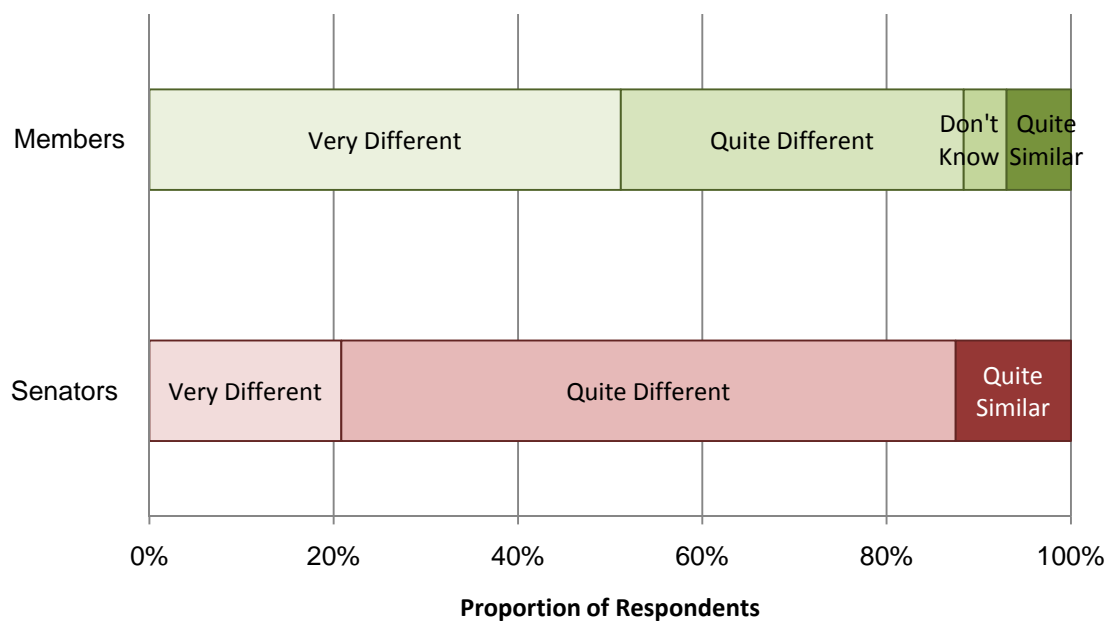
'The chambers are only about 70 metres apart [in Parliament House], but it could be a kilometre' – current parliamentarian who has served in both houses

Parliament House symmetrically divides the Senate and the House of Representatives, with the occupants of each side often jokingly referring to the 'other side' as the 'dark side'. With the Ministerial Wing (and Senators and Members Dining Room) conveniently located in the middle, the only requirement for (major party) senators to 'cross over' is to attend party room meetings, while for members, the Canberra Press Galley is located on the Senate side. This separation is symbolic of the limited understandings and appreciation of the work of their colleagues, and critical sentiments were frequently expressed in both the surveys and interviews. The House was derided as the 'Monkey' house with bad behaviour and shouting, a focus on politics rather than policy, and boring predictability with the government in control. Yet even more negatively, the Senate has been regarded in the past as a retirement home for time-servers in the major parties, once exemplified by media articles of the time describing the Senate as 'a comfortable Home for Old Men' with their 'weak, arthritic wrists and

wheezing voices'.²⁰ The televising of parliament, with many debates occurring in the smaller and often empty chamber, could also contribute to negative perceptions. Former Prime Minister Paul Keating famously described the Senate as 'a spoiling chamber ... usurping the responsibilities of the executive drawn from the representative chamber'²¹ while ridiculing senators as 'unrepresentative swill'.²²

Survey respondents were asked whether the types of work that they do and the balance between them was similar or different to their colleagues (in an equivalent position) in the other chamber. The opinions of current parliamentarians are presented in Figure 7a and former parliamentarians in Figure 7b. Clear majorities of both House and Senate respondents thought that the work patterns of their colleagues in the other chamber were very different or quite different. Only one former member and one former senator thought the work patterns were very similar.

Figure 7a: Current parliamentarians' perceptions of the work patterns of their colleagues in the other chamber

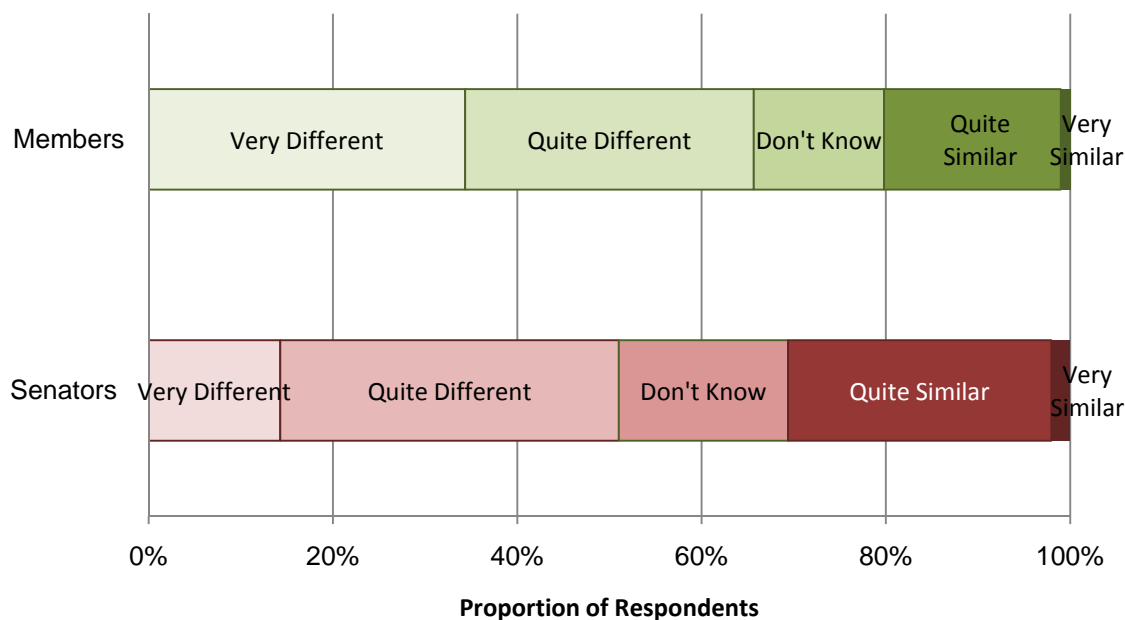


20. R Hughes, 1944, cited in S Bennett, *The Australian Senate*, Research Paper, no. 6, 2003–04, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2004, p. 8.

21. P Keating, Prime Minister, 'Questions without notice: Senate voting system', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 3 March 1994, p. 1746.

22. P Keating, Prime Minister, 'Questions without notice: Loan Council arrangements', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 November 1992, p. 2547.

Figure 7b: Former parliamentarians' perceptions of the work patterns of their colleagues in the other chamber



There also appears to have been a slight change over time, with higher proportions of both current senators and members perceiving the work of their opposite chamber colleagues as being different. One member saw the Senate as a House of Review with a more considered view, where they do extra work on committees compared with members, who have single-member constituencies. An interviewee who served in both houses argued that the Senate was more about policy than politics, although there is not the same connection with local people in the Senate. Another interviewee who served in both houses suggested that the difference is that as a member you have to be aware of the constituency from a survival point of view whereas in the Senate one could approach issues from a wider perspective.

Respondents were also asked a series of questions about their attitudes towards the other chamber including:

- whether they had contested, or seriously considered contesting, a seat in the other chamber (responses shown in the left-hand column of Figures 8a and 8b)
- whether they would have considered standing for a seat in the other chamber if they had not been elected (responses shown in the middle columns), and

- whether they would feel confident of being able to perform the duties of their colleagues in the other chamber (responses shown in the right-hand column).

The responses of current and former parliamentarians are shown in Figures 8a and 8b respectively.

Figure 8a: Current parliamentarians' consideration of a career in the other chamber

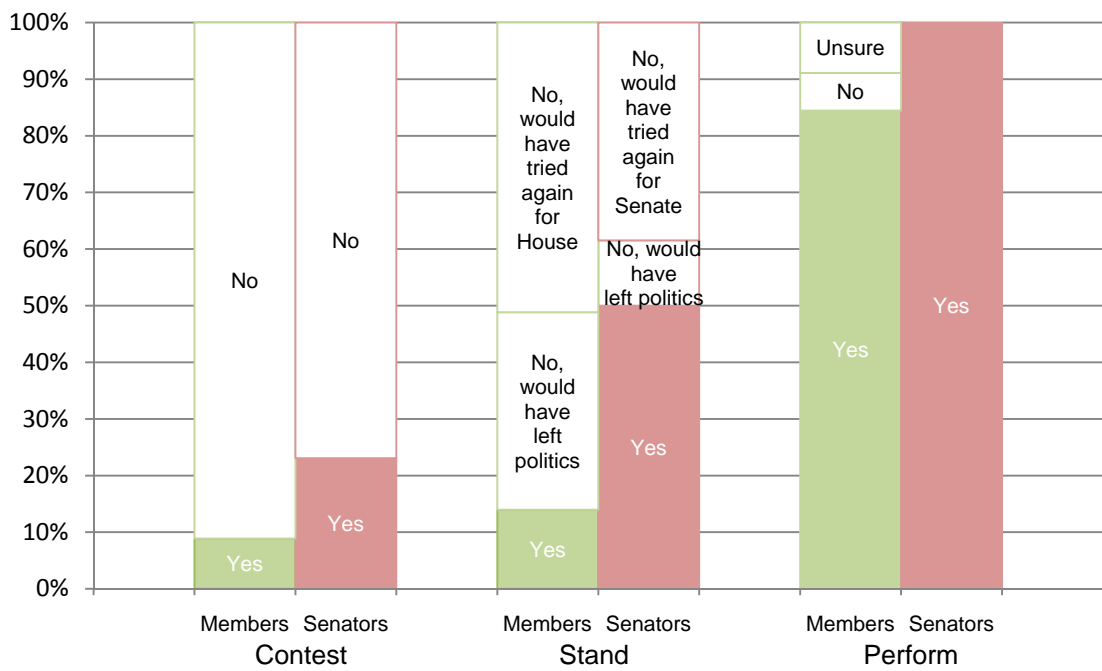
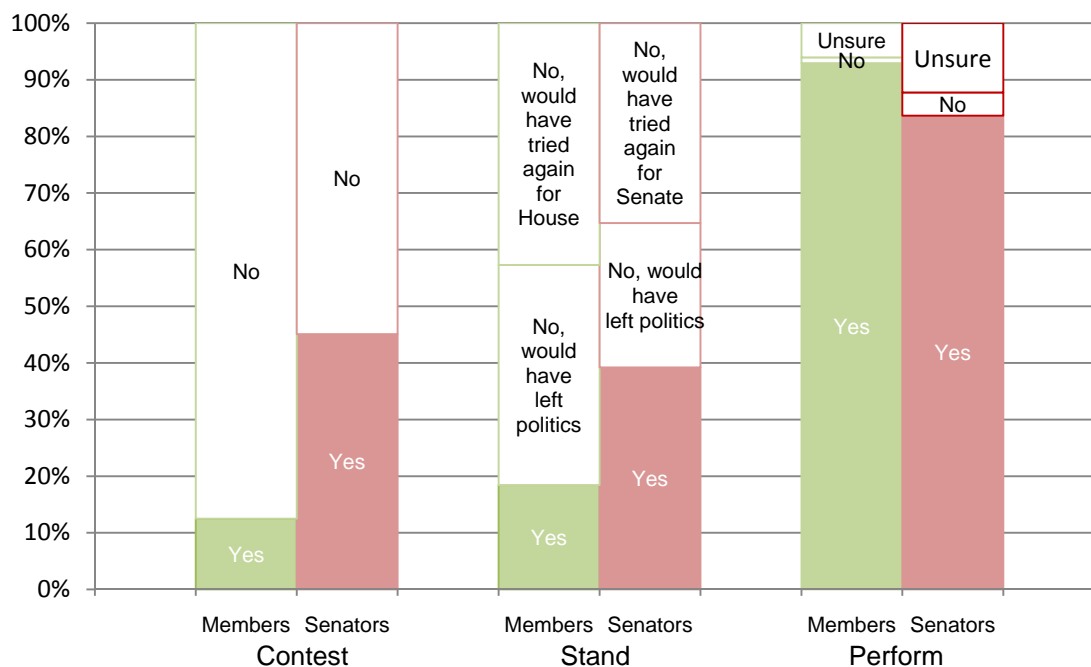


Figure 8b: Former parliamentarians' consideration of a career in the other chamber



Senators were generally more open to the idea of contesting and standing for the House, and despite perceiving the work of their opposite chamber colleagues as being different, high proportions of current and former senators and members felt confident that they could switch houses. In the interviews, crossbench senators were more adamant that they would never switch houses, while major party senators were more open to the idea. One minor party senator believed that switching to the lower house was political suicide, due to the different electoral systems, which is discussed later.

Misconceptions

While many senators and members were quite critical of their colleagues in the other chamber and both House and Senate respondents thought that the work patterns were very different or quite different, it became clear during this study that these perceptions were based on ignorance rather than fact. Partly, it is because senators and members are so consumed in their own work to even think about the ‘other’ side and partly because Parliament House, particularly ‘new’ Parliament House, separates senators and members rather than encouraging interaction. Many interviewees remarked that new Parliament House is a wonderful new building, but very sterile and you do not get to know many other occupants. Surprisingly, most politicians do not know everyone in their own party or even their own state, and this could be the source of the

misconceptions. Figures 9a to 9d show the responses of current and former senators and members, in terms of how many of their colleagues they know or knew well.

Figure 9a: Responses of current members in terms of how many of their colleagues they know well

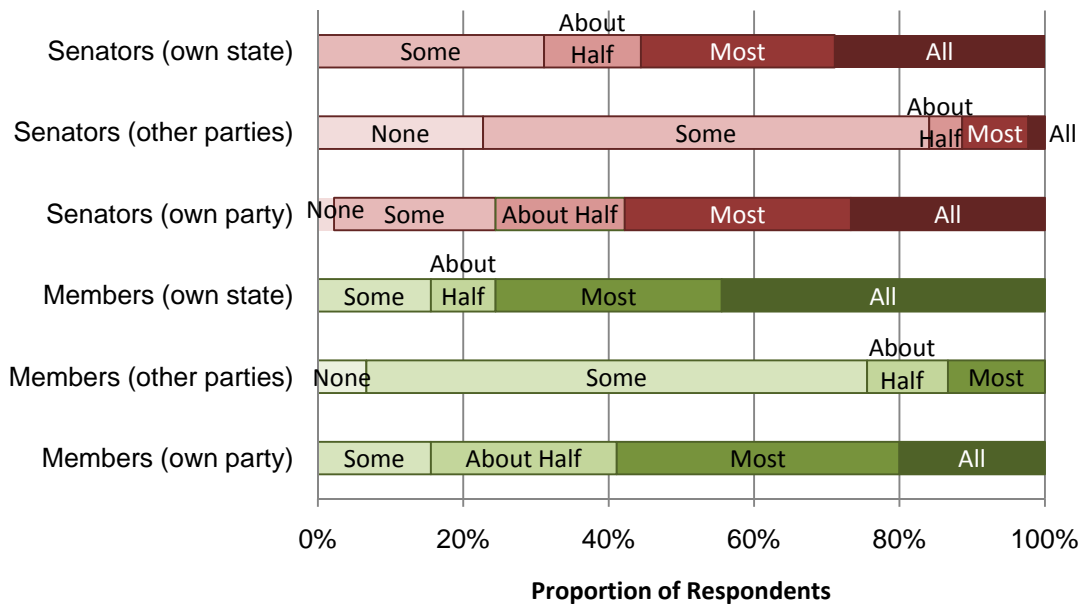


Figure 9b: Responses of current senators in terms of how many of their colleagues they know well

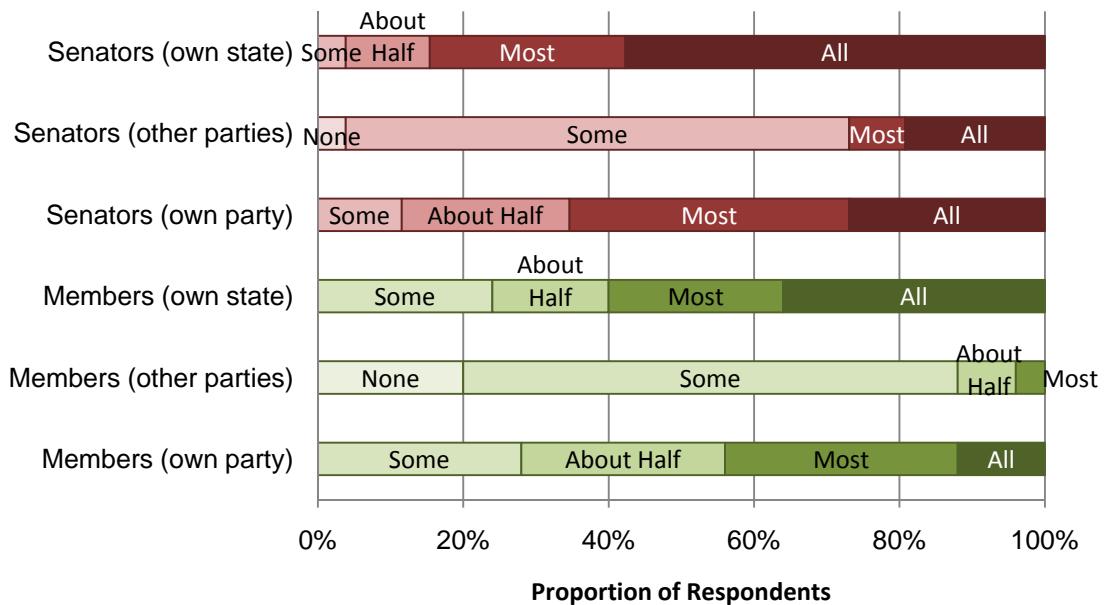


Figure 9c: Responses of former members in terms of how many of their colleagues they knew well

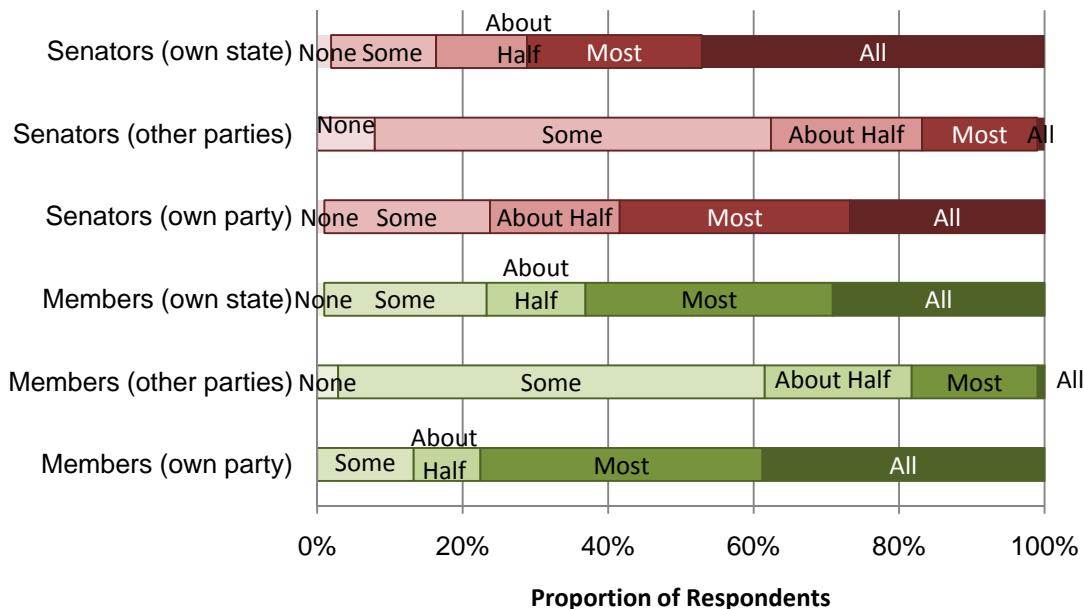
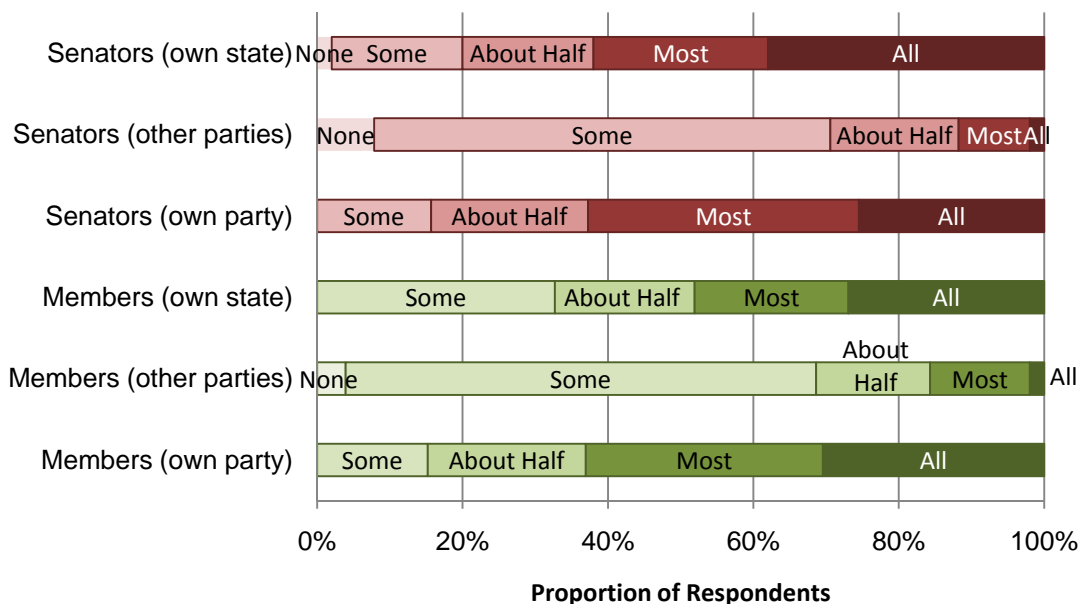


Figure 9d: Responses of former senators in terms of how many of their colleagues they knew well

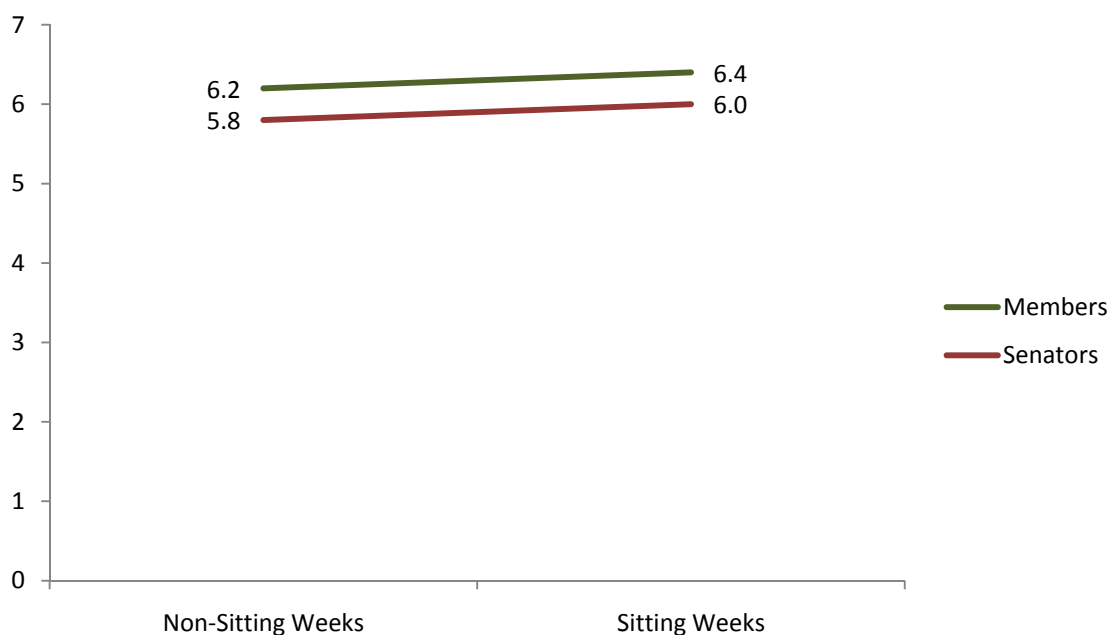


Work/life imbalance

Given that not only public and media perceptions are negative, but that politicians themselves can also be dismissive of the worth of their parliamentary colleagues in the other chamber, the first aim of this study is to provide a more accurate and fair account of the work of senators and members by quantifying the working time of politicians. While this measure is imperfect due to its reliance on self-reporting and possible tendency to over-estimate to counter negative perceptions, the inclusion of former members of parliament in the survey at least provides a fuller, and often more critical, perspective. The results, presented in Figures 10a, 10b, 11a and 11b, also align with months of personal observations inside Parliament House and discussions with political staffers and more impartial Senate and House departmental officers. From the demands of the 24-hour news cycle from ‘Sunrise’ to ‘Lateline’, to the pressure to fundraise and fulfil party obligations, in addition to the commonly expected tasks of legislating and attending to constituents, community events and public functions, criticisms of lazy politicians are unjustified (despite the occasional exceptions). A parliamentarian’s work life is broadly structured into either sitting weeks or non-sitting weeks, and many often speak of living double lives. Thus the following findings are also broadly separated between sittings in Canberra and non-sittings in home electorates.

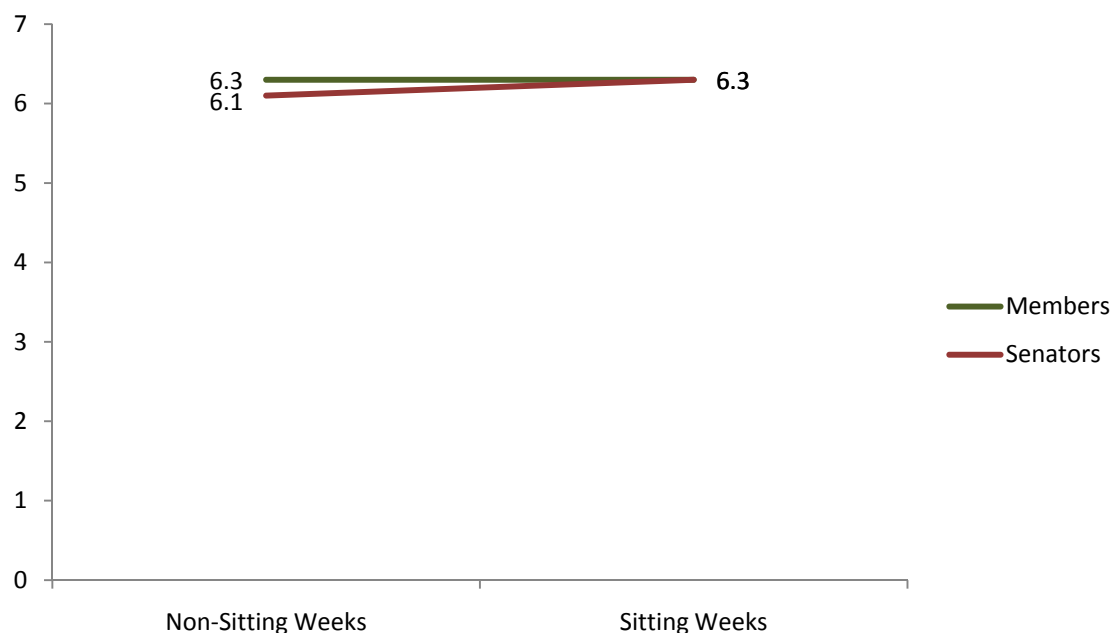
House respondents in the current parliament report working on average 6.2 days per non-sitting week and 6.4 days per sitting week, compared with 5.8 days per non-sitting week and 6.0 days per sitting week for Senate respondents (see Figure 10a).

Figure 10a: Average number of days per week current parliamentarians work



Former parliamentarians also reported working in excess of a regular five-day working week, with the responses of former senators displaying a similar pattern to current parliamentarians in working more days on average during sitting weeks (see Figure 10b). While one long-serving member reflected on how the workload has increased (with the number of electors increasing by about 50 per cent since the expansion of parliament in 1984), there does not appear to be any large differences between current and former parliamentarians. Furthermore, the number of staff has also increased to cope, to some extent, with increases in the workload.

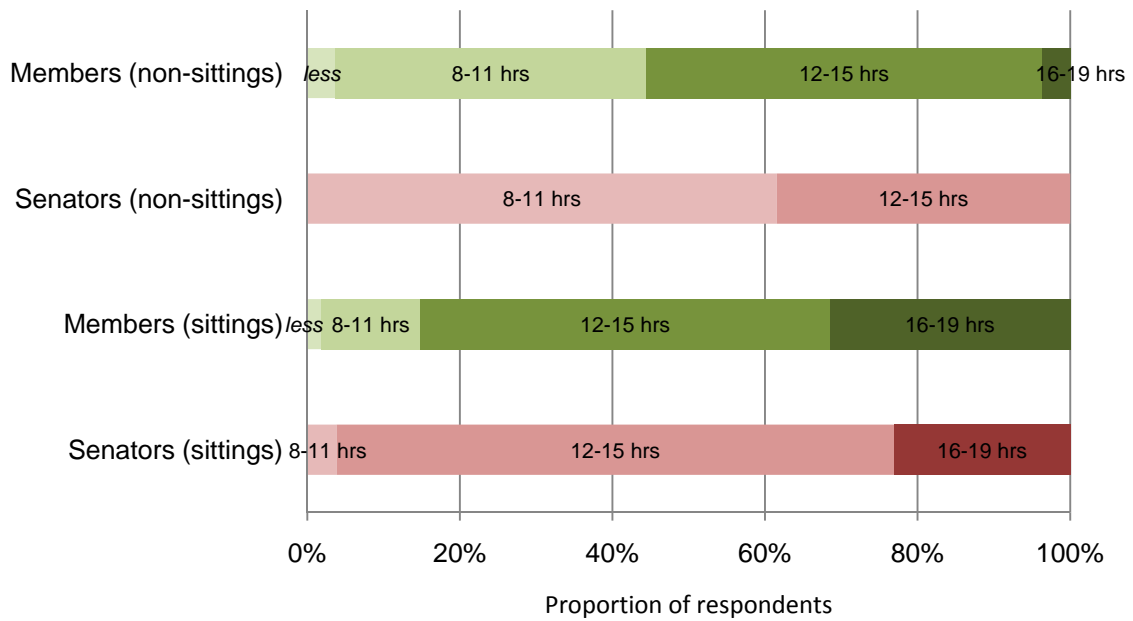
Figure 10b: Average number of days per week former parliamentarians worked



Many interviewees explained that the reason for working more days on average during sitting weeks is because in addition to attending parliament in Canberra from Monday to Thursday, they return to their home electorates to work on Friday and Saturday, which are important days to ‘be seen’ in the community and attend events. There is also the pressure to compensate for absences in the electorate during the previous four days, and to explain (or criticise) parliamentary proceedings to the electorate, while also gauging public reaction to the debates and issues raised.

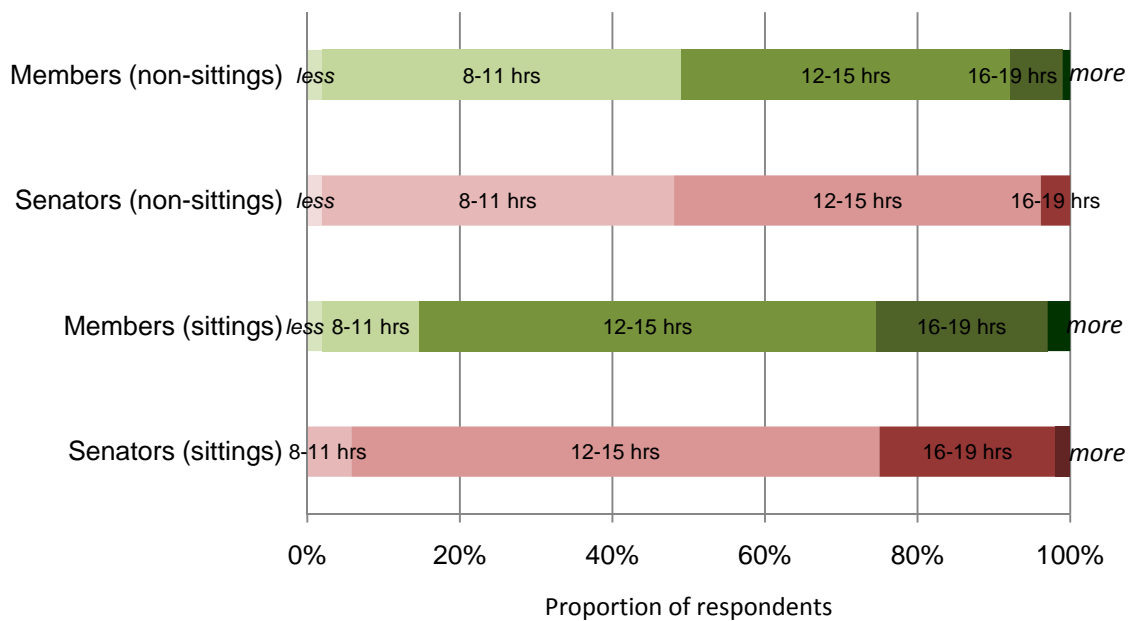
Figures 11a and 11b provide breakdowns of the average number of hours worked during weekdays. Among current parliamentarians, about half of House respondents work between 12 and 15 hours a day during both sitting and non-sitting weeks. A further third report working between 16 and 19 hours a day during sittings and about a third report working between eight and eleven hours during non-sittings. About two-thirds of Senate respondents work between eight and eleven hours a day during non-sitting weeks and the rest work between 12 and 15 hours. About three-quarters work between 12 and 15 hours a day during sittings and about a quarter work between 16 and 19 hours a day.

Figure 11a: Average number of hours per weekday current parliamentarians work



A broadly similar pattern is evident in the responses of former parliamentarians. Almost all former House and Senate respondents worked between eight and fifteen hours a day during non-sittings, and between twelve and nineteen hours during sittings.

Figure 11b: Average number of hours per weekday former parliamentarians worked



Thus the evidence does not support the stereotype of the Senate as a retirement home. While on average current House respondents reported working about half a day more than Senate respondents, the averages were much closer for former members and senators, and all averages were well above the typical five-day working week. Furthermore, the averages were significantly above the standard eight-hour day. The major difference was between sittings and non-sittings, rather than between senators and members, although in broad terms the balance of longer hours tipped towards members in non-sitting weeks and senators during sitting weeks. Although one interviewee who served in both houses conceded that it was easier to get away with not working hard in the Senate (at least as a state senator) and that you had to actively look for a role to build a profile.

Changes over time

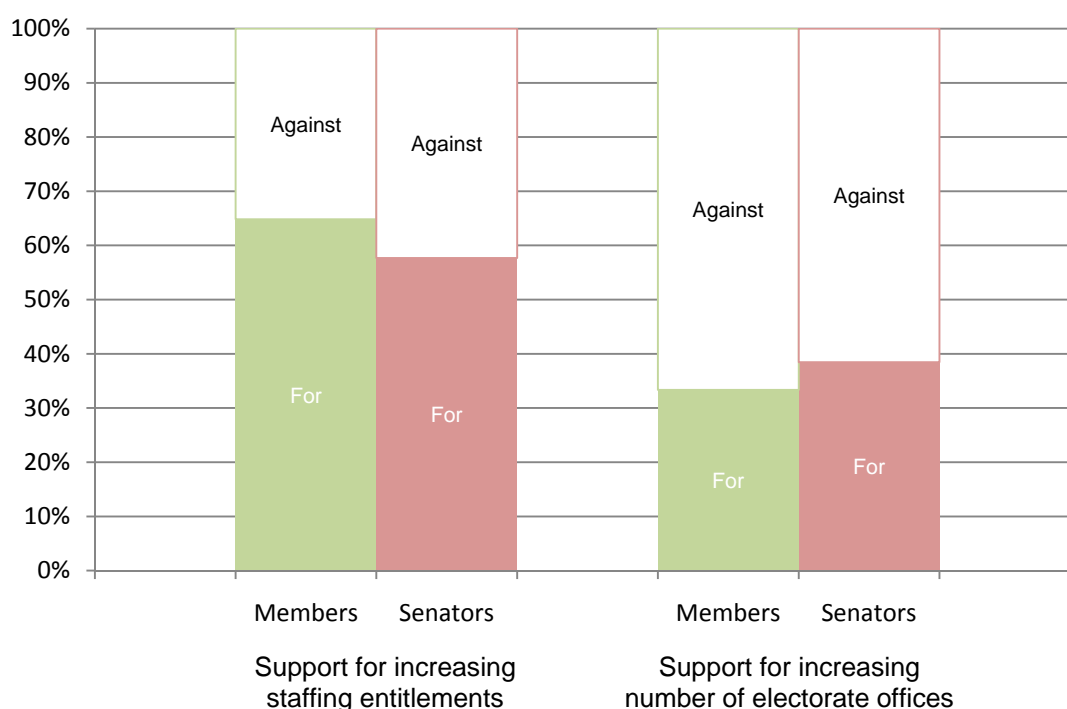
While the work may not have changed in terms of the time-demands, many former politicians in particular were sympathetic to the more modern pressures facing current politicians. One long-serving member reflected on technological developments and how modern technology has proved to be a double-edged sword. While the ability to communicate has improved there can be information overload with so many different ways to communicate with constituents, particularly through the internet. Another parliamentarian concurred, and argued that the 24-hour news cycle has changed lifestyles. Furthermore, high-profile politicians have to always be on guard; for example, after-work drinks do not mix well with late night news interviews. Another long-serving member observed the modern pressures of 30-second grabs for the media, and family pressures, particularly for younger members, and increasing numbers of women and primary carers.

Future parliaments

Parliamentarians were asked about possible future reforms of parliament, particularly in relation to alleviating the workloads and providing greater representation to the growing population. Overall, there was strong support for the status quo, with high levels of pride in the current system, particularly in its stability and innovative design. One parliamentarian argued that because Australian democracy is so young, 'it was able to pick the eye out of other systems' and create 'a Westminster cocktail of the British and American systems'. Another argued for breaking the 'nexus' provision in the Constitution, while one senator proposed online voting to reduce the amount of sittings in Canberra and enable parliamentarians to spend more time in their electorates.

Other possible reforms were canvassed in the survey. Leaving aside the Constitutional constraints, there was negligible support for increasing the membership of the houses of parliament: only 4 per cent of senators and 6 per cent of members supported increasing the size of both houses; only 13 per cent of members and 4 per cent of senators supported increasing the number of seats in the House of Representatives; while 8 per cent of senators and no members supported increasing the number of seats in the Senate. There was greater support for increasing resources through more staff and offices, particularly in larger electorates and states and territories (see Figure 12a).

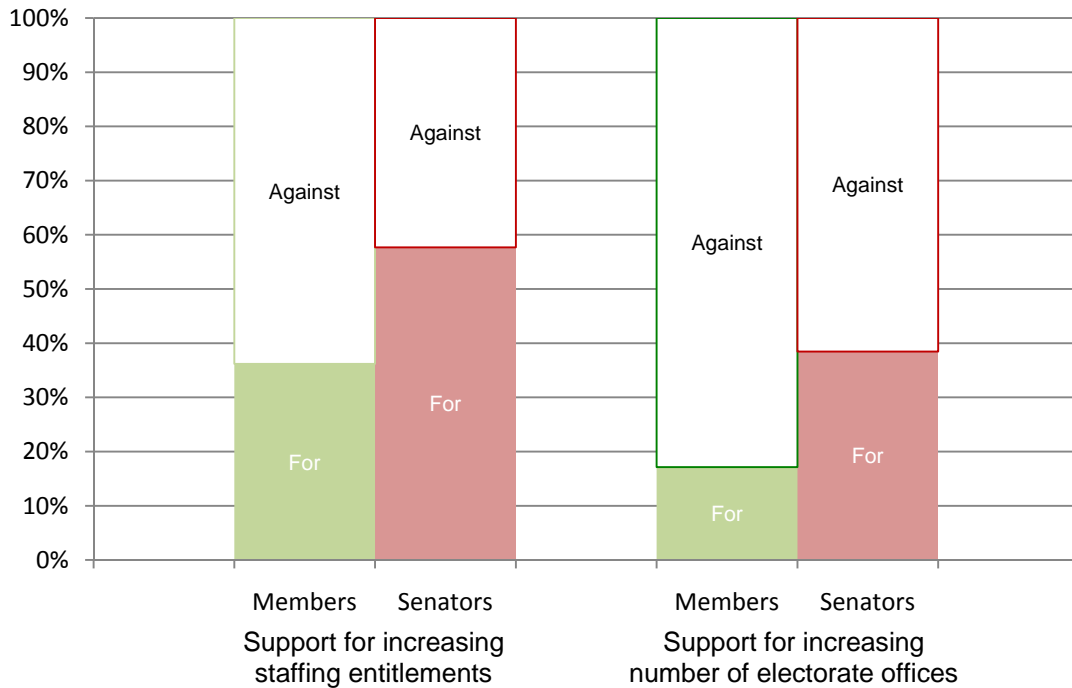
Figure 12a: Levels of support among current parliamentarians for increasing resources



Among former parliamentarians there was also negligible support for increasing the membership of the houses of parliament: only 6 per cent of former senators and 5 per cent of former members supported increasing the size of both houses; only 22 per cent of members and 12 per cent of former senators supported increasing the number of seats in the House of Representatives; while 6 per cent of former senators and 1 per cent of members supported increasing the number of seats in the Senate. There was not much support amongst former parliamentarians for increasing resources (see Figure 12b), although most did concede that the size of a parliamentarian’s workload has increased over time. Forty per cent of former parliamentarians believed that it has increased significantly while a further 28 per cent thought that it has only increased marginally. Furthermore, many former parliamentarians pointed out that even if the

workload has increased, so have staffing levels. Many recalled having only one-and-a-half full-time equivalent staff compared to the current allocation of four staff.

Figure 12b: Levels of support among former parliamentarians for increasing resources



Travel

Given the size of Australia and many of the electorates, and limited direct flights to and from Canberra, simply servicing an electorate and attending Parliament necessitates significant amounts of travel for most senators and members. While current parliamentarians appear to be travelling slightly more of the time, the differences are not pronounced (see Figures 13a and 13b). Most respondents reported spending between 5 and 10 per cent of their time on travelling.

Figure 13a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on travel

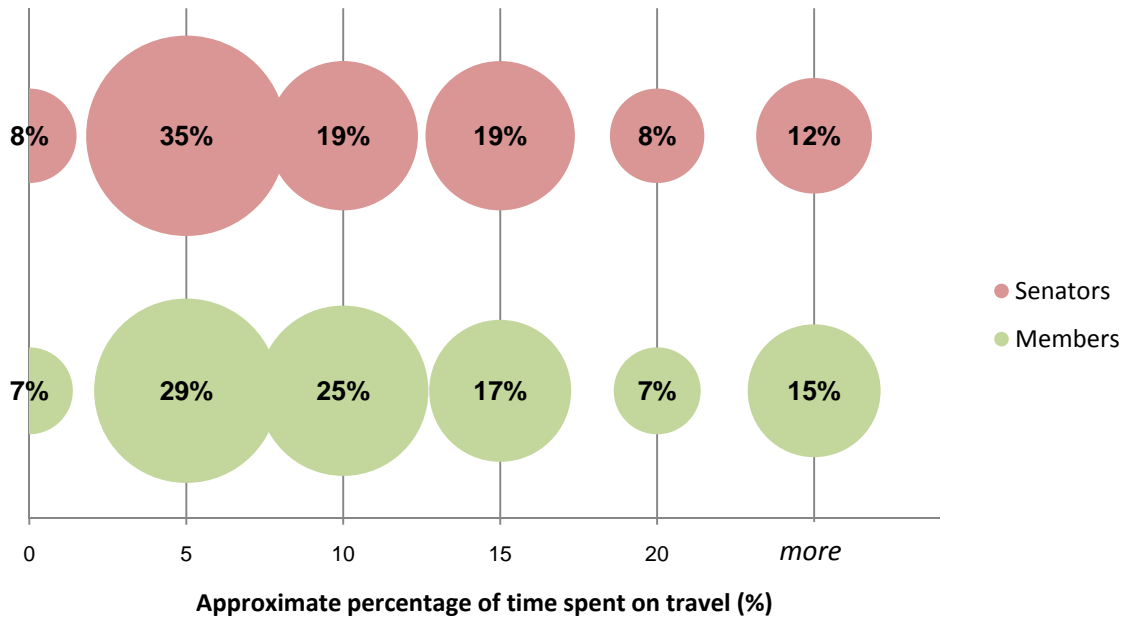
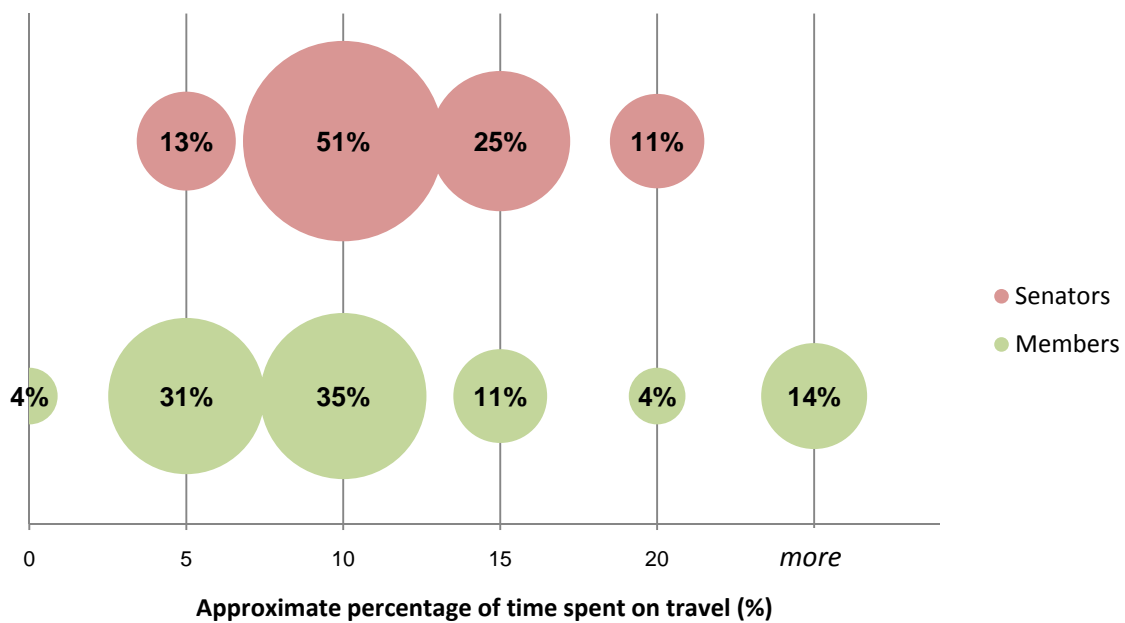


Figure 13b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on travel



The breakdowns of the time spent travelling around the electorate and across the nation during a non-sitting month reveal more noticeable differences between senators and members (see Figures 14a and 14b). The majority of House respondents spent 12 or more days a month travelling around their electorate during non-sitting weeks, while the majority of Senate respondents spent less than 12 days travelling around their state/territory. In terms of national travel, overall Senate respondents spent much more time compared to members during non-sitting weeks outside their home state/territory. More than 70 per cent of current Senate respondents and 90 per cent of former senators spent eight or more days travelling compared with only a third of current House respondents and half of former members. Senate respondents did travel more than House respondents, consistent with the Senate’s focus on committees. Committee hearings are held throughout the country and necessitate frequent national travel. Members (at least backbenchers) are perhaps also more reluctant to travel extensively around the nation at the expense of spending time in their local electorates, particularly those in marginal electorates. While most senators are dependent on their party’s performance for re-election, members are ultimately dependent on the support of their local electorate.

Figure 14a: Average number of days per month current parliamentarians spent on travelling during non-sitting weeks

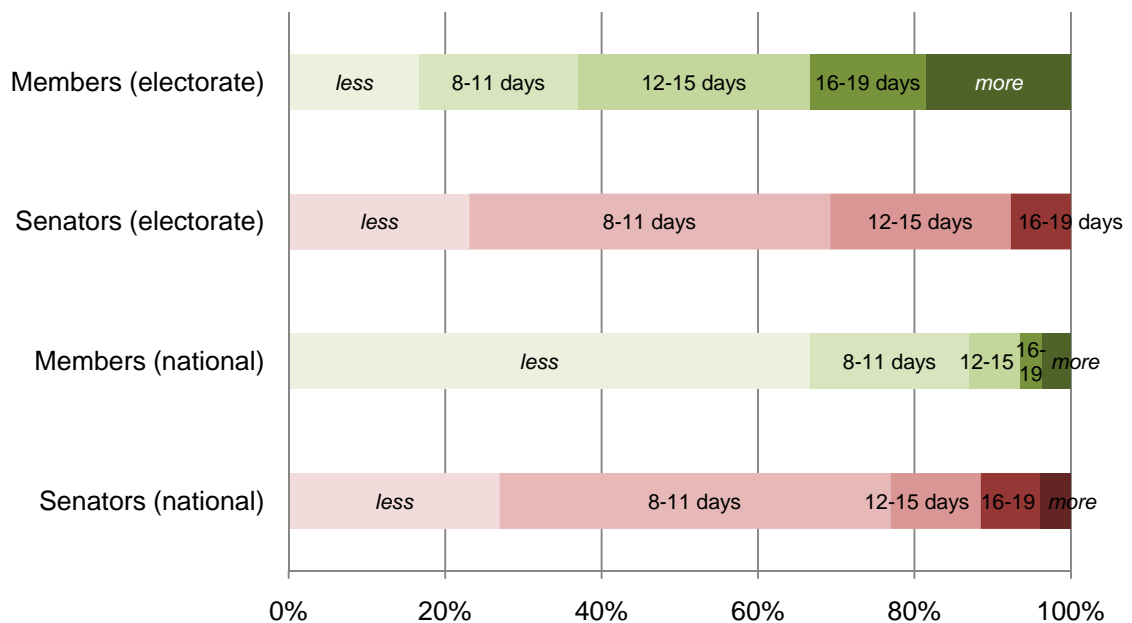
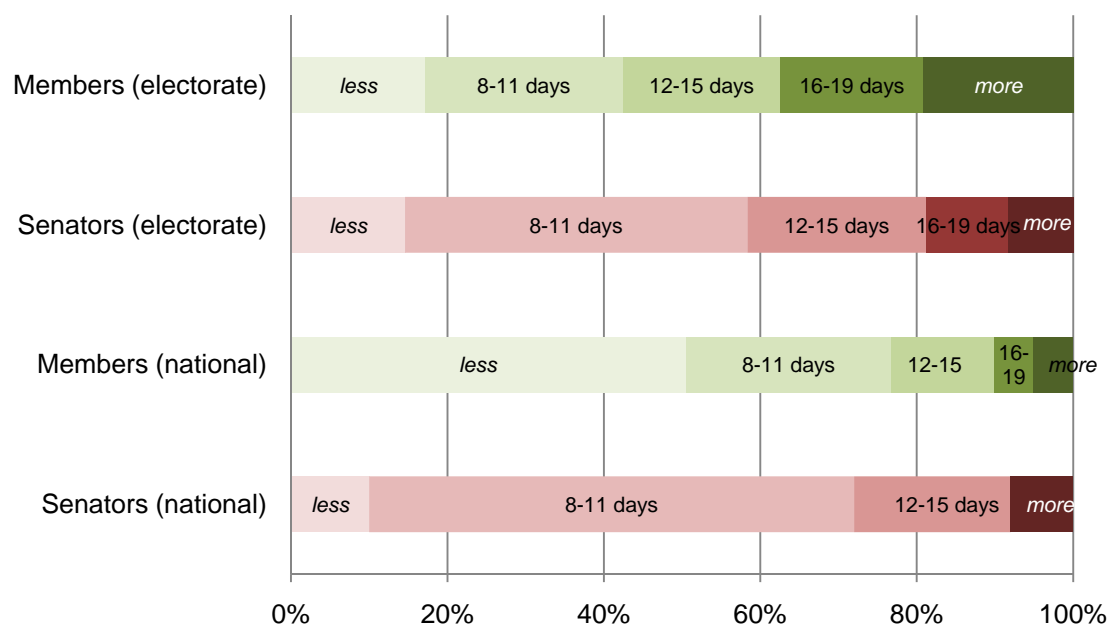


Figure 14b: Average number of days per month former parliamentarians spent on travelling during non-sitting weeks



While most states and territories are geographically large and require significant amounts of travel to facilitate direct face-to-face contact with constituents, the size of many lower house electorates is also significant. A rural representative argued that more staff and extra travelling allowance would help in servicing large and remote electorates. This interviewee also proposed exploring options for statutory minimum seats for rural and regional areas, such as in the case of Tasmania where the Constitution guarantees the state a minimum of five seats despite their small population.

Indeed some electorates, such as Kalgoorlie and Grey, are bigger than the smaller states and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Therefore, it is not surprising that the differences between senators and members in relation to electorate travel are not pronounced. There is probably more variation within these groups, as an ACT senator would presumably travel much less than a Western Australian or Queensland senator, while the Member for Kalgoorlie (the largest single-member electorate in the world) would presumably travel much more around the electorate than an inner-city Sydney MP.²³ However, travel need not be an inefficient use of a parliamentarian's time. One

23. Although ACT senators also have to represent the geographically detached coastal enclave of Jervis Bay.

Western Australian interviewee found the plane to be a good office, providing a rare opportunity of uninterrupted time to get through paperwork, particularly as a Minister.

Types of work

One interviewee who served in both houses found that they spent the same amount of time being a member as being a senator, but it is allocated differently. They did more electorate and constituent work as a member and more committee work as a senator. Thus senators often spend less time in their electorate office and more time travelling, as committee work takes place in multiple locations. Another interviewee who also served in both houses found Senate committees more active and in general found that there was more parliamentary activity in the Senate.

Leaving aside the negative stereotypes of politicians, a dominant perception is that members are active parliamentarians with constituents and represent those concerns in the national parliament. The corollary is that senators do not have constituents as they do not represent the people but the states, even if this myth has been debunked, which will be further explored later in this study. However, these stereotypes of senators are more powerful as senators have less recognition in the community, with voters often unsure of their representative function.²⁴ Occasionally, close Senate votes and Senate Estimates committees receive media attention, contributing to the perception that senators are more chamber and committee-focused.

Media

Most interviewees, both senators and members, expressed a belief that in general members receive more media attention. However, figures 15a and 15b show no major discernible differences between Senate and House respondents in relation to media work. About half of current parliamentarians and former members spent 5 to 10 per cent of their time with the media, while about half of former senators spent 10 per cent of their time.

24. See J Curtin, *The voice and the vote of the bush: the representation of rural and regional Australia in the Federal Parliament*, Australian Parliamentary Fellow monograph, 2000, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2004, p. 48.

Figure 15a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on media

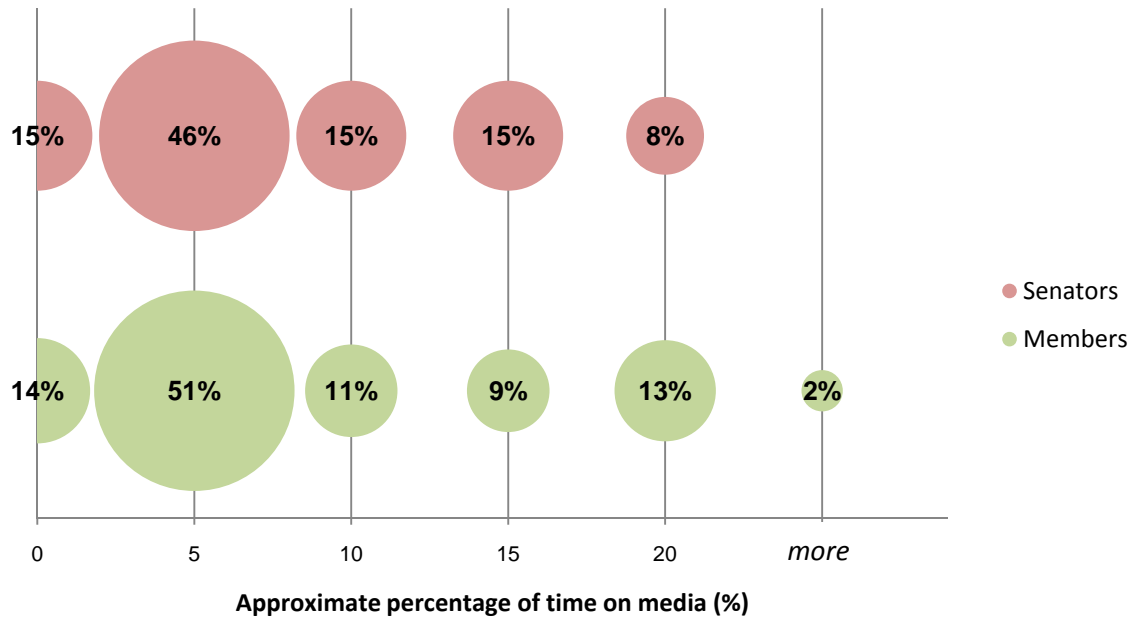
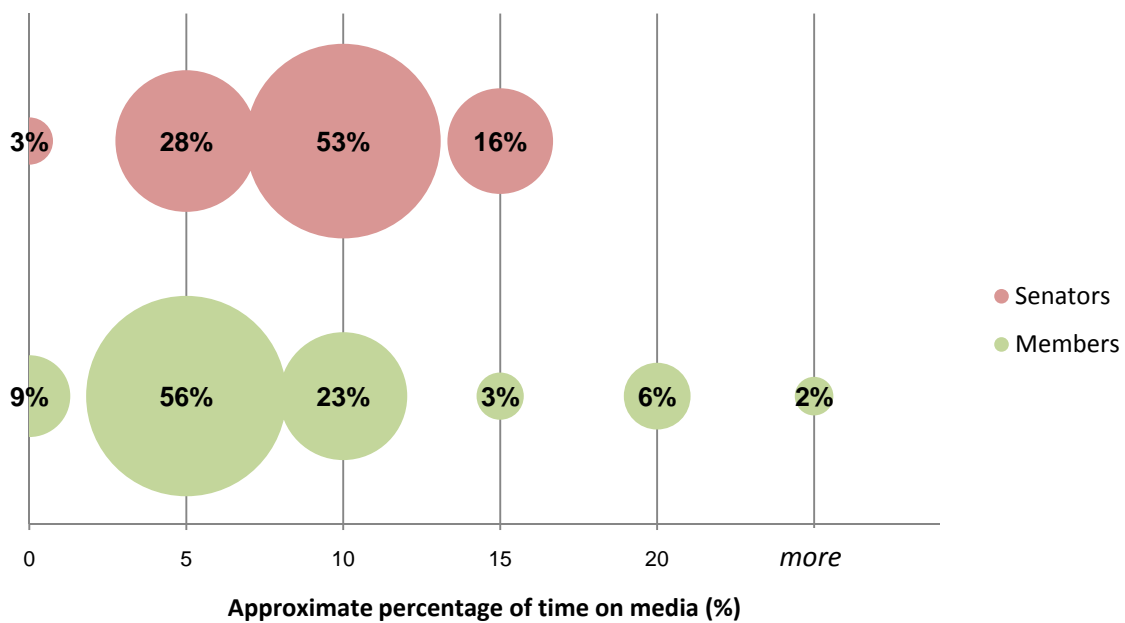


Figure 15b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on media



Again, there appear to be greater differences within the broad groups. Rural and regional members discussed increased media scrutiny with multiple newspapers, radio and television stations in the local area focused on one federal member—as opposed to metropolitan members who must compete for media coverage. However this is also beneficial in assisting rural and regional members develop a strong profile. One member revealed that resource-starved country newspapers are open to accurate information from the local member and come to rely on it (often repeating media releases verbatim). If the member can develop credibility in this area, it can be a great method of communicating with the electorate. There was also regional cooperation, for example, ACT Labor members and their senator often work as a team and issue joint media releases.

While minor parties struggle to gain media attention in Australia, one minor party parliamentarian noted that they constantly receive media requests from international media to comment on international issues, and in many respects CNN, BBC, AFP are more comprehensive in their coverage and more balanced than the local pack-mentality of the Canberra Press Gallery. Major party politicians were also critical of the Australian media. One long-serving current parliamentarian argued that the modern media has killed political skills and now everything is carefully stage-managed. Reactions used to be spontaneous but are now programmed and strategically determined. However, this ignores the role that political parties and their strategists have played.

Constituents and constituencies

‘My constituency is everything this side of the moon’ – a Greens politician who describes himself as a ‘planetarian’

One member represents each local electorate, which is a clearly definable constituency, with the residents the constituents. The majority of the voters elect the member. If a constituent has a problem they can contact their local member, who often lives, or at least has an office in their constituency. However, twelve senators represent each state and, due to the electoral system, often only a minority of voters elect each senator. Most senators live in the capital cities and many senators’ offices are located in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices in the central business district. The connection to constituents is more obscure, but senators *do* have constituencies, they are just not necessarily geographically contained. One senator made the distinction between a constituency and an electorate (which is the state).

Stilborn typologises the contemporary roles of parliamentarians into four major activities: the traditional roles of *legislative activity* and *surveillance activity* and the more recent roles of *constituency service activity* and *party responsibilities*.²⁵ Stilborn observes:

The emergence of constituency service activity as a major occupation of Members of Parliament presents a paradox. On the one hand, such activity, unlike the intra-parliamentary activities discussed elsewhere in the paper, is carried out by virtually all Members and reflects a set of expectations consistently applicable to all. In this sense it is a generic role, deriving from the status of having been elected to membership in the House. On the other hand, constituency service activity has no necessary and specific connection with Parliament, and could in principle be performed by public servants appointed to perform “ombudsman” or citizen-liaison functions. Members need not rely on assistance from Parliament in carrying out these services, although at times they may find it useful to do so. Equally, while ombudsman activity may at times furnish a Member with information better enabling him or her to engage in policy work, the refinement of legislation or the surveillance of the Government, it need not do so. While constituency service activity may make a coincidental contribution to the Member’s ability to participate within Parliament, it more typically competes with parliamentary participation for a Member’s time.²⁶

25. J Stilborn, *The roles of the Member of Parliament in Canada: are they changing?*, Research paper, no. 02-04E, Library of Parliament/Bibliothèque du Parlement, Ottawa, 2002, p. 6.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Indeed, one interviewee saw being a senator as an opportunity to focus on issues rather than individual constituents more appealing, and found that the issues the Senate deals with are broader and more interesting. Senators often have particular policy interest areas or through their committee work develop such interests. Thus many senators become important political allies of particular groups in the wider community pursuing similar policy outcomes, be it groups interested in tax reform, or refugee advocates, rural organisations or tertiary education unions. For example, one senator built connections with major ethnic communities, which became their constituency to some extent. Another senator felt an obligation as a feminist to represent women across the country and show them women could be effective politicians. At the same time some senators were conscious of being labelled as one-issue politicians. Successful minor party senators appear better at defining a constituency, while other crossbench senators identified ordinary people as being their constituents, as opposed to big business or big unions.

One interviewee who served in both houses found that constituency issues tend to be national issues anyway, or at least regional, and that it was difficult to confine it to a single electorate. However, there are occasionally issues, such as airport noise and or employment generation, which have different impacts on different electorates. One parliamentarian who served in both houses found the day-to-day work completely different, and while senators still get constituent inquiries, they tend to be more issues of the day. For most senators, constituent inquiries often came from groups and were generally national issues of the day.

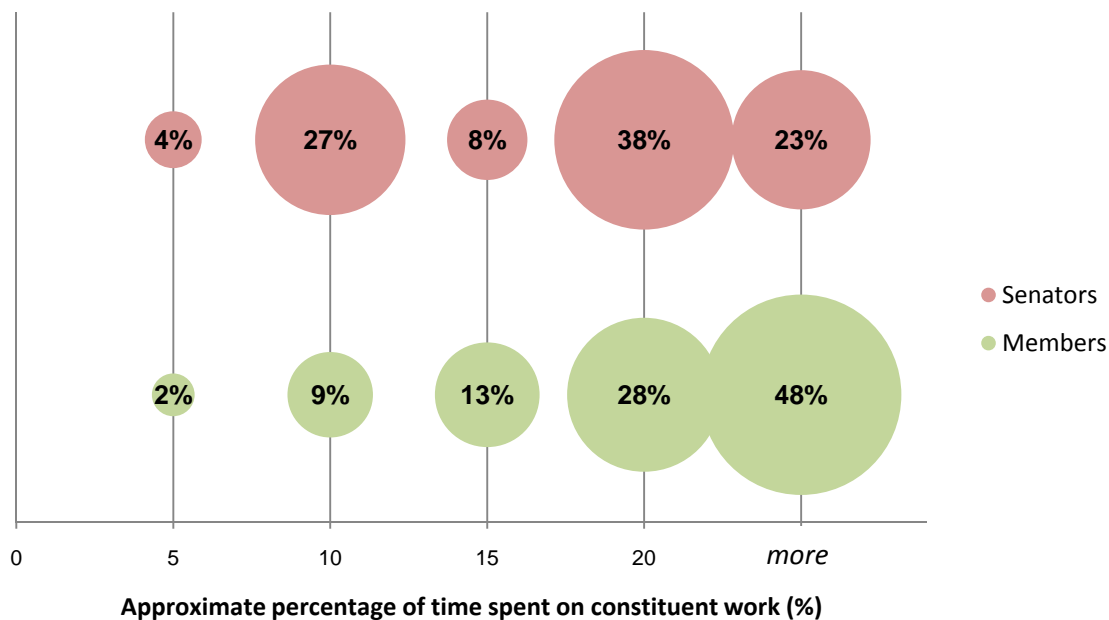
Interviewees with ministerial or party leadership experience, while not discounting the importance of simultaneous local representation, tended to take a more national view of their responsibilities. One senator saw their constituency as going beyond their state, in a similar manner to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition going beyond their local constituencies. This senator made the distinction between backbenchers with the interests of their local electorates, and party leaders and frontbenchers who must appeal more broadly. Indeed party leaders and high-profile senators received constituent inquiries from across Australia, and crossbench senators appeared to receive the most constituent correspondence, as they hold the balance of power. Territory senators, from both the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory also appear to receive a higher level of constituent inquiries, with only two senators for each territory. Particularly before self-government in the ACT, residents seemed to regard senators as local members.

While senators have less individual constituent issues than members, they tend to be more difficult or complex as the constituent has often already approached a department or member and come to the senator as a last resort. Many senators agreed with this sentiment, and found constituent inquiries to senators more issues-based than electorate-related. There are also partisan differences. For constituents, the choice of twelve senators (in the states) of differing political persuasions compared to only one local member who may or may not be sympathetic to their concerns, may mean that they approach a senator rather than their local member. Many Labor senators claimed that they generally get constituent inquiries from members of the public uncomfortable with dealing with their local Coalition member who may be perceived as unsympathetic, for example, on social security and immigration matters. Green senators also often received these types of inquiries, in addition to environmental and social justice issues. Liberal senators reported receiving inquiries around business and tax issues and Nationals on rural and regional concerns.

One interviewee who switched from the Senate to the House found a different level of constituent issues in the House, despite having operated constituent ‘clinics’ as a senator. This interviewee described a feeling of oppression as a member in the sense of the electorate feeling that they owned you, whereas senators are not treated in the same way. Many senators claimed that backbench members in particular are totally focused on their electorates. Yet a senator who served in a party leadership position found the constituent workload as a member a shock. This interviewee found that as a member you have to constantly communicate with the electorate and the constituent load of 80 000 constituents was much greater than for a senator, even one representing a large state.

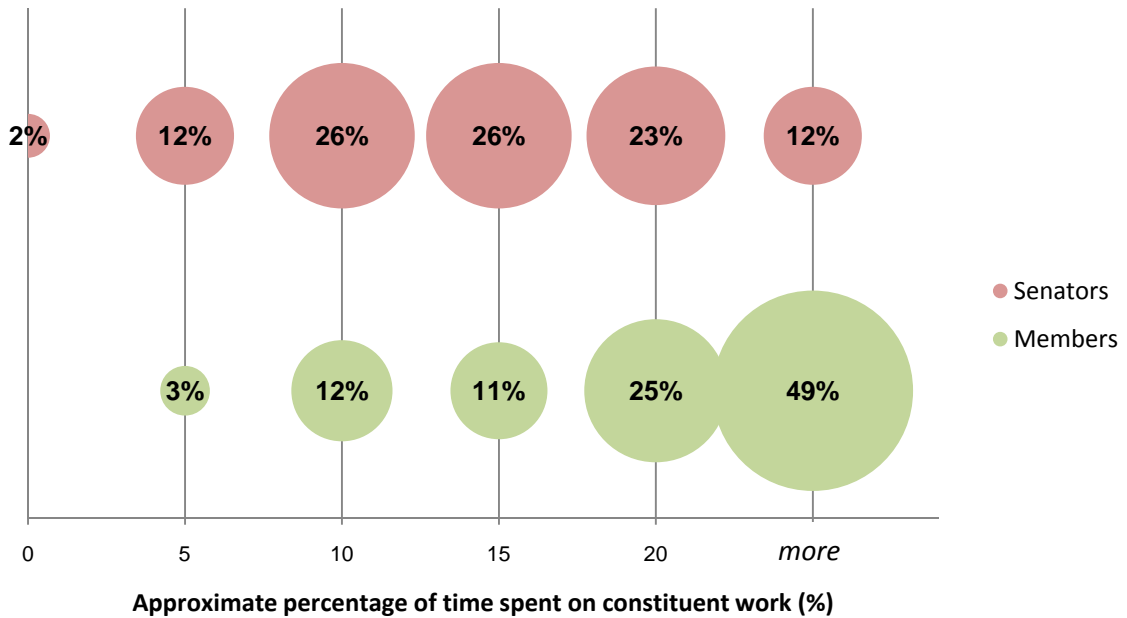
The findings from the survey do reveal a difference, although it not as large as some believe. As can be seen in Figure 16a, close to two-thirds of Senate respondents spend at least 20 per cent of their time on constituent work, compared to just over three-quarters of House respondents. However, the survey was aimed at parliamentarians and what they do with their time rather than their electorate office as a whole, and while senators and members might personally spend the same proportion of their time on constituent work, a member’s electorate office may be more preoccupied with such work than a senator’s office.

Figure 16a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on constituent work



Furthermore, this appears to be a recent development, as there is a much clearer distinction between former senators and members (see Figure 16b). The pattern among the responses of former members is very similar to that of current members, but the responses of former senators are much more evenly spread across the time scale, and just over a third of former senators reported spending at least 20 per cent of their time on constituent work.

Figure 16b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on constituent work



Duty senators

As minor parties have always been more successful in Senate than House elections, senators have long been the public face of parties like the Democratic Labor Party, Australian Democrats and the Greens. For the major parties, the focus has always been on House elections and winning government, but they are also increasingly recognising the value of senators. Van Onselen and Errington observe that major parties use their senators and associated resources in marginal and opposition-held seats, to assist with campaigning and constituency contact.²⁷ They found that both major parties allocate lower house electorates, often known as ‘duty electorates’, to senators (or ‘duty senators’) within their respective States.²⁸ Yet curiously, the precise details of the allocations and functions remain confidential within the parties, with van Onselen and Errington negotiating special access to this information for their research. Duty senators act as ‘quasi-local representatives’, often locating their offices in marginal or opposition-held seats to provide constituents with contact points, in addition to

27. P van Onselen and W Errington, ‘Shock troops: the emerging role of senators in House of Representatives campaigns’, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2005, p. 357.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 362.

campaign support for fellow party candidates for lower house electorates and raising the party's profile in the local media and the community.²⁹ However, one senator explained that while they sited their office in an area where their party did not have members, they are not expected to become the 'shadow member' of the electorate. Another senator explained that in duty electorates and in marginal seats it is about getting the party's message out there rather than developing a personal profile.

Furthermore, it has not been entirely party driven. Many of the interviewees who switched from the Senate to the House began working 'like members' while in the Senate, for example, by moving their electorate offices to areas without party representation and getting involved in the local community like local members and eliciting constituent work. However, one senator who set up their Senate office in a strong area for the opposing party did not find a noticeable increase in the number of constituent inquiries from that area. Another interviewee remarked that it was not easy going into 'hostile' territory.

The 2000 Australian Parliamentary Fellow, Jennifer Curtin, considered rural representation and the Senate, which is particularly pertinent to this study, and noted the dearth of academic analyses on the representative functions of senators. In her monograph, entitled *The Voice and the Vote of the Bush: The Representation of Rural and Regional Australia in the Federal Parliament*, Curtin discusses the 'nexus' provision in the Constitution (ensuring that the size of both Houses of Parliaments can only be increased together and proportionally as the population grows). She argues that an unintentional consequence has been that urbanisation and the resultant loss of rural electorates has not affected the number or geographical distribution of seats in the Senate.³⁰ A logical extension of this line of argument is that political differences between urban areas and rural and regional areas in contemporary politics are arguably greater than the political differences between the states. Both dimensions are geographical yet it is the archaic state-based geographic divisions that are institutionalised in the representative structure of the Senate. Curtin canvasses a possible reform of (informally) dividing each state into smaller electorates so that senators have more contained geographic constituencies and ensuring that rural and regional areas are guaranteed that a senator will be closer to or perhaps even be based in their communities.³¹ One senator in the current study critically observed that most

29. Ibid., pp. 362–3.

30. J Curtin, *op.cit.*, p. 48.

31. Ibid., pp. 50–53.

senators live in the capitals and therefore also proposed dividing the states into regions, which would give more power and status to both the capitals and the regions. For example, the Gold Coast with a population of half a million people does not currently have a resident senator. Yet Curtin acknowledges that dividing the states into regions negates the representational benefits of proportional representation.

As previously mentioned, senators have traditionally received office space in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices, concentrated in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of the state capitals. One senator explained that they actually moved their office to the CBD so that interest and community groups would have better access to the office. Another Senate interviewee observed that while Senate offices are concentrated in the capital cities, senators travel a lot more, which is easier to do from a capital city. The senator argued that large lower house rural electorates with only one member are more underrepresented, than whole states with twelve representatives. However, a senior Senate officer observed that over the last thirty years there has been a shift away from CBDs and into the suburbs and regions.³² The following figures show the approximate locations of senators' offices over the last thirty years. A clear drift away from the central business districts to the suburbs and regions can be observed.

32. Interview with a senior Senate departmental officer.

Figure 17a: Location of senators' offices (January 1979)

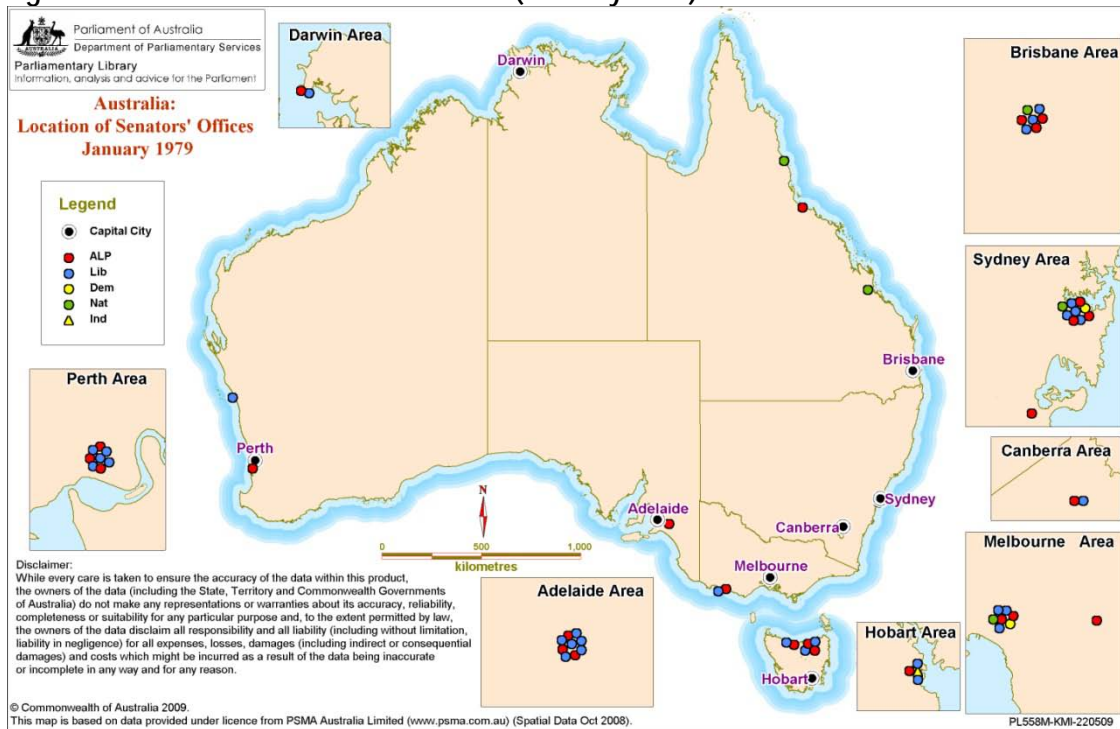


Figure 17b: Location of senators' offices (August 1981)

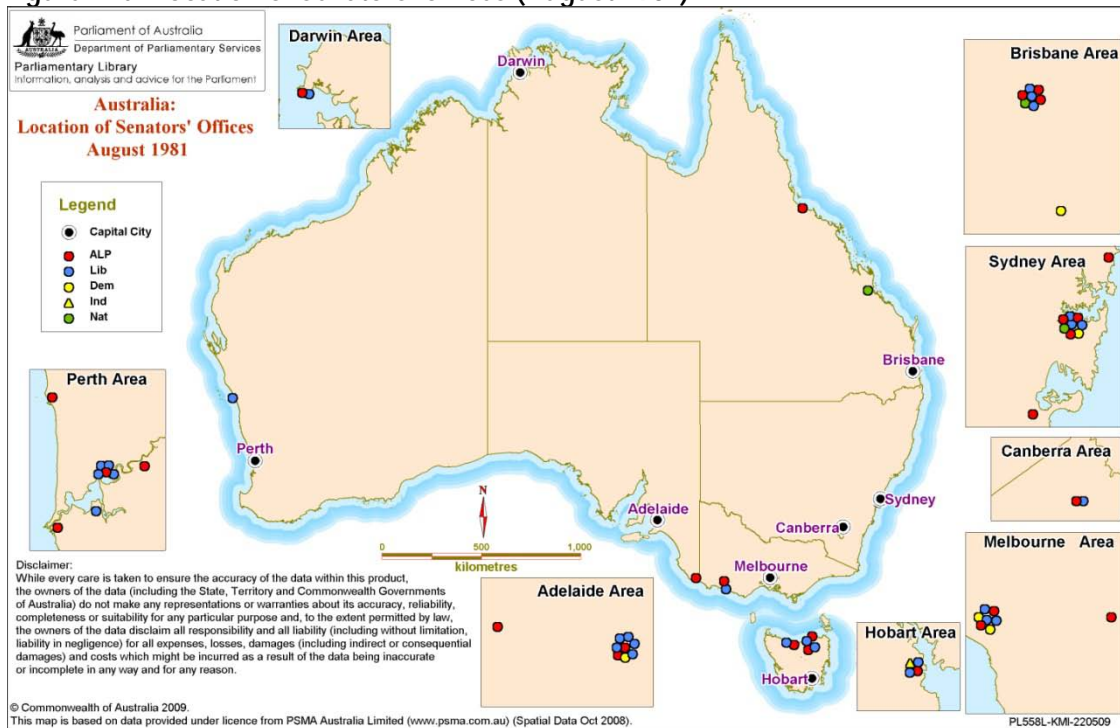


Figure 17c: Location of senators' offices (August 1983)

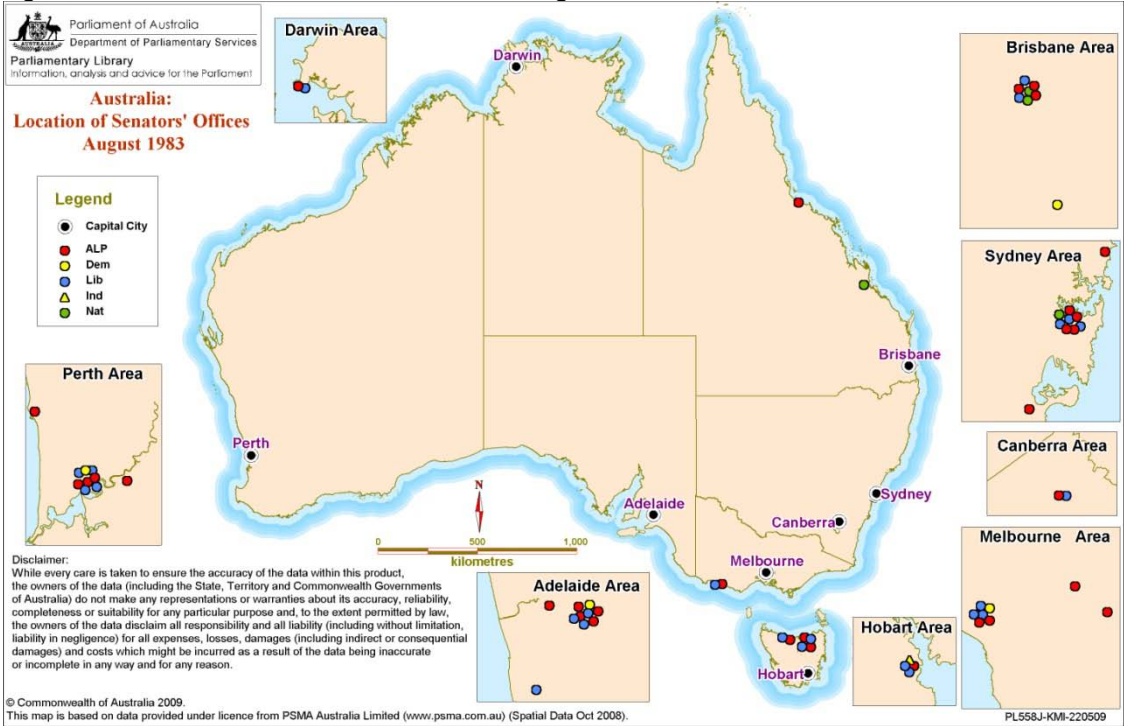


Figure 17d: Location of senators' offices (August 1985)

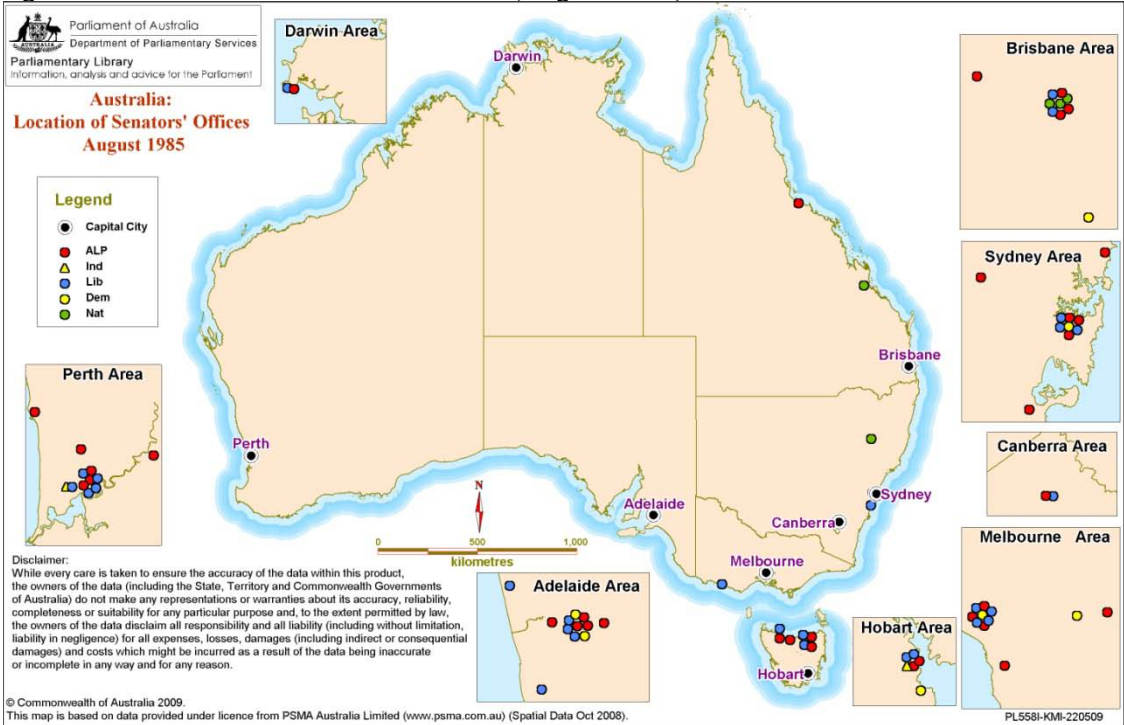


Figure 17e: Location of senators' offices (October 1987)

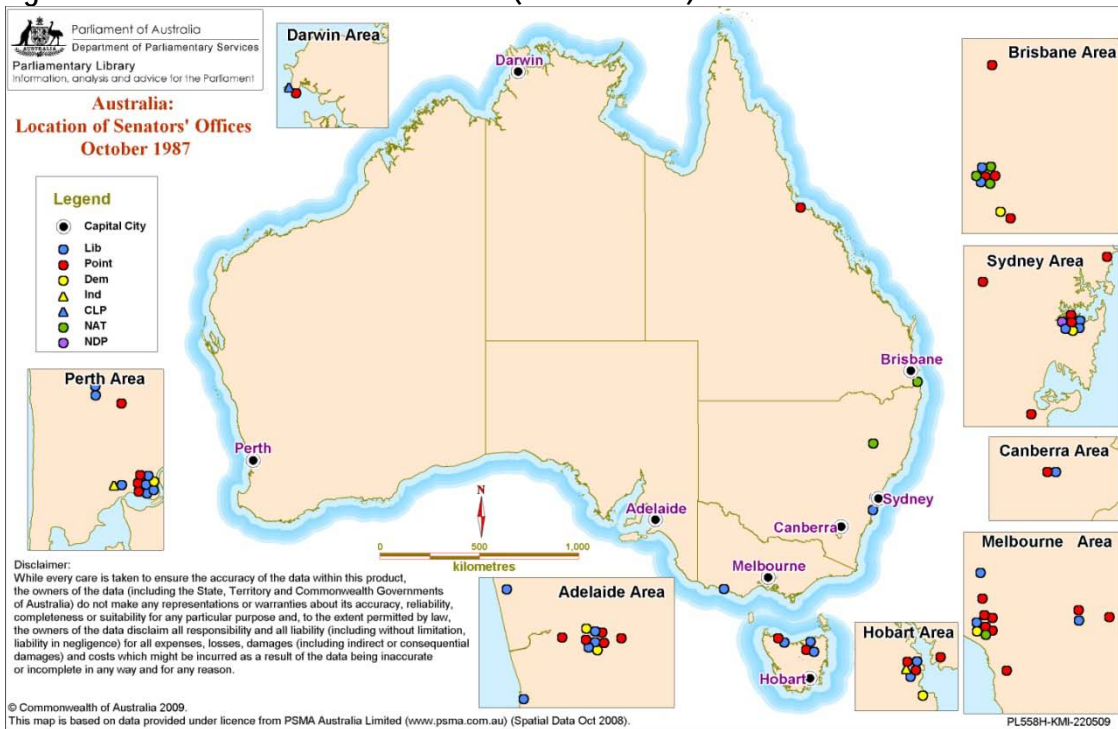


Figure 17f: Location of senators' offices (August 1990)

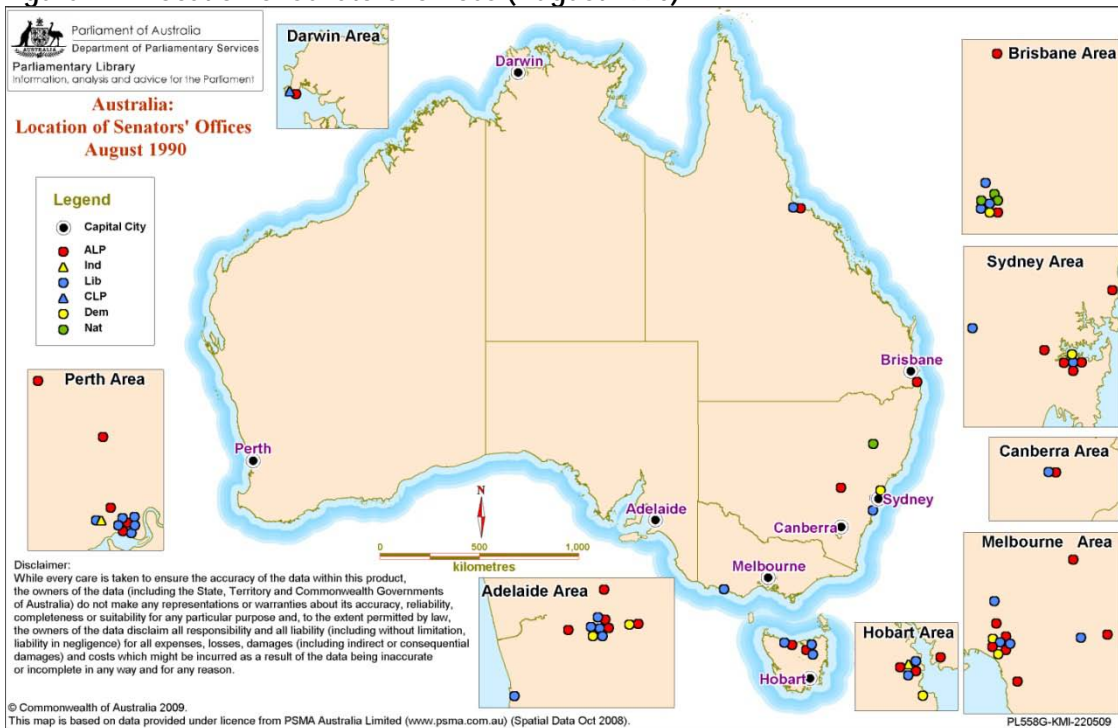


Figure 17g: Location of senators' offices (January 1993)

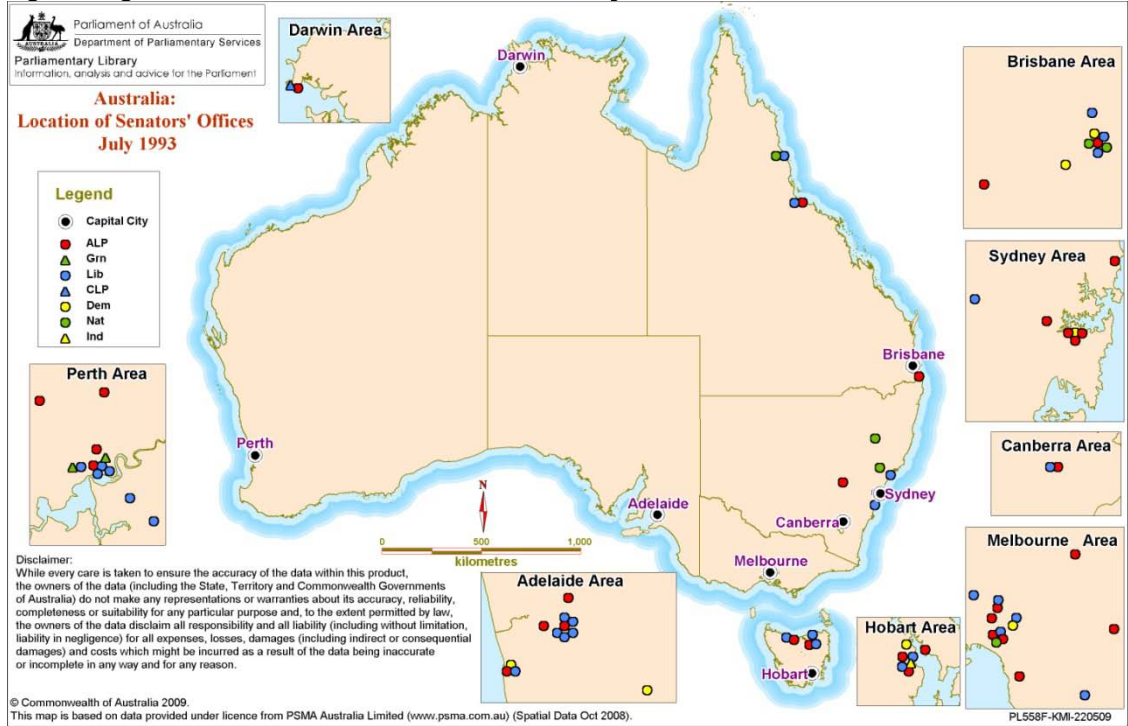


Figure 17h: Location of senators' offices (July 1996)

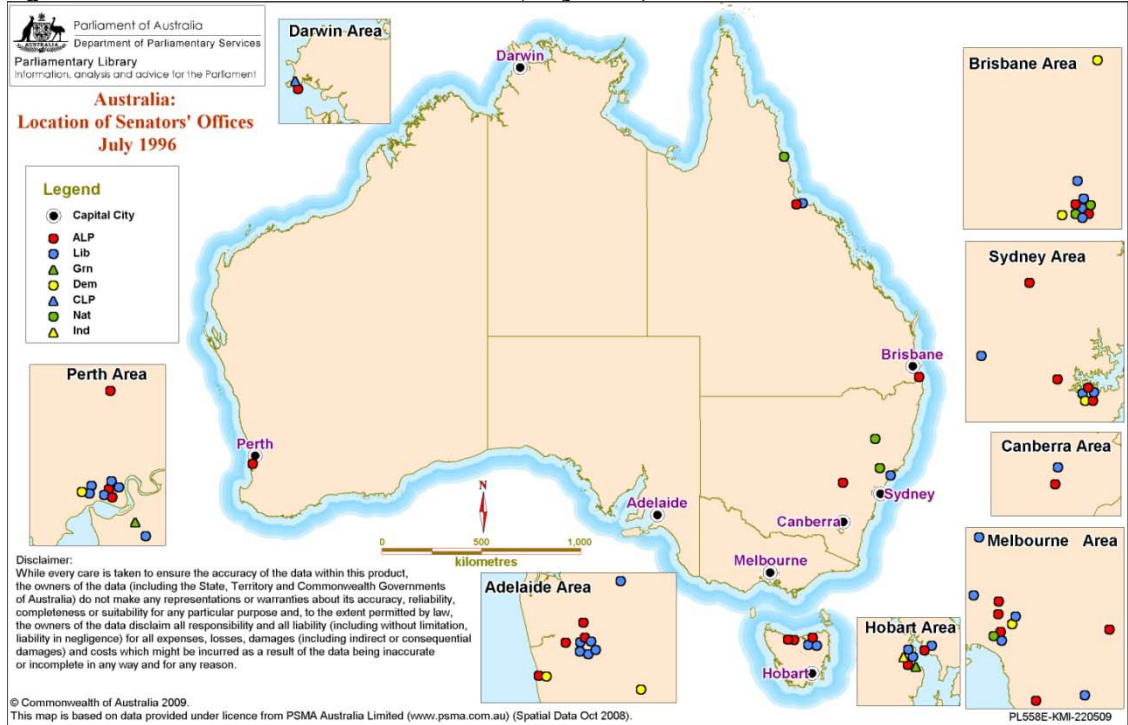


Figure 17i: Location of senators' offices (August 1999)

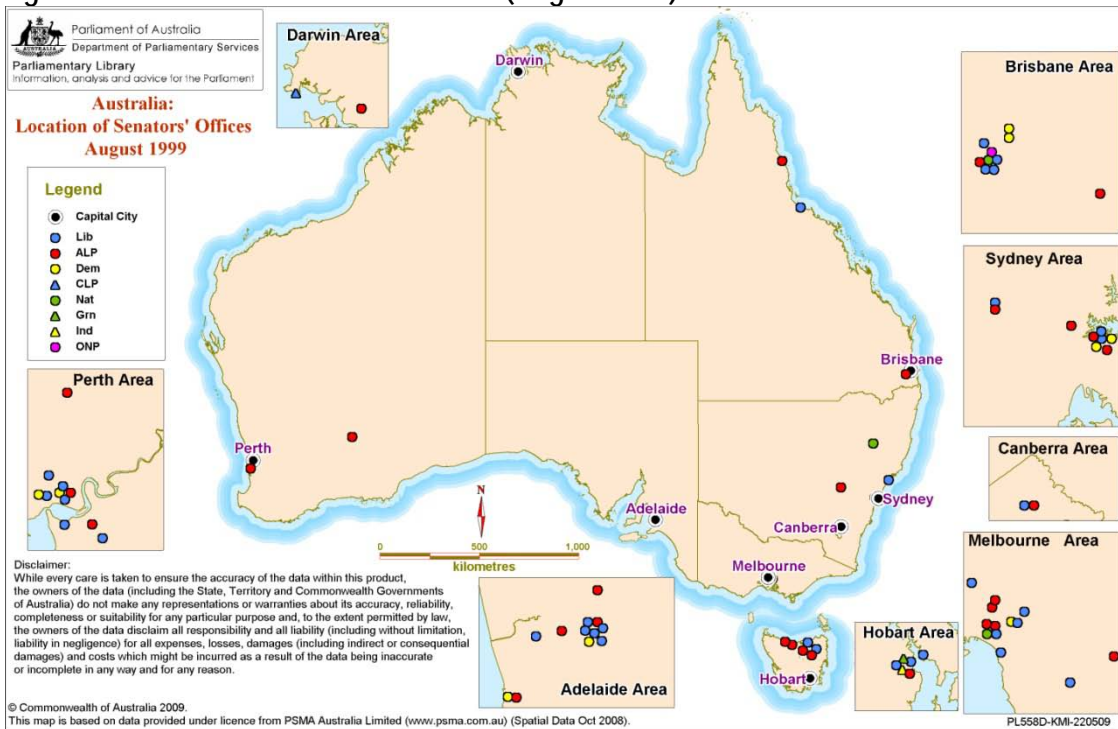


Figure 17j: Location of senators' offices (July 2002)

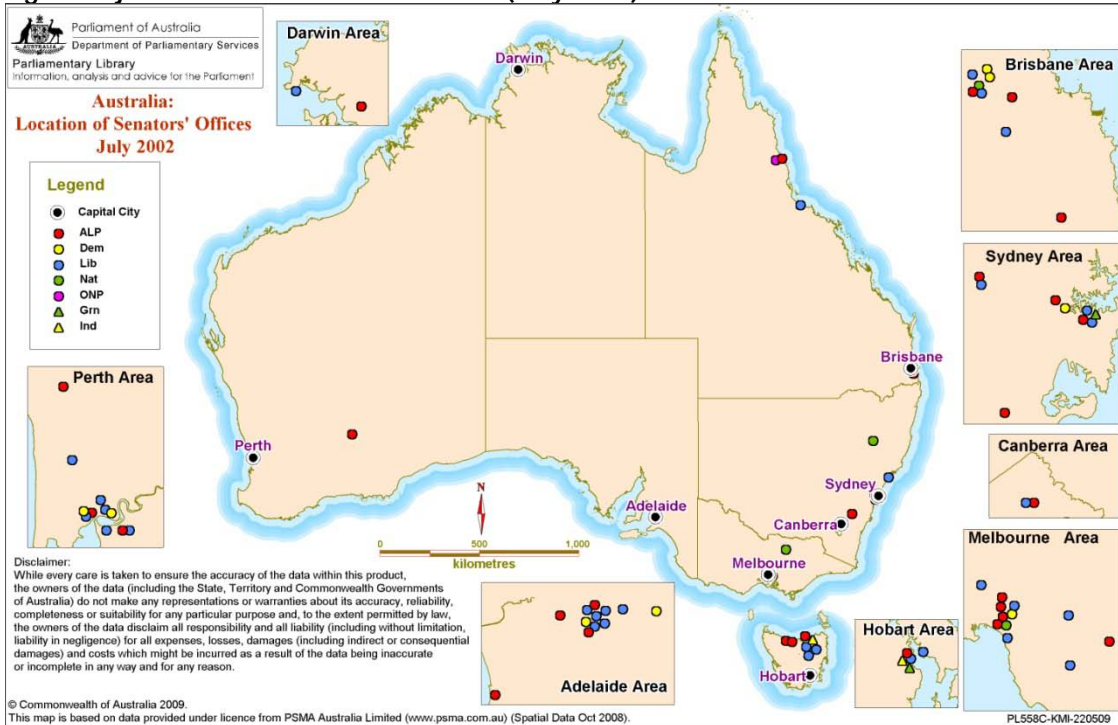


Figure 17k: Location of senators' offices (August 2005)

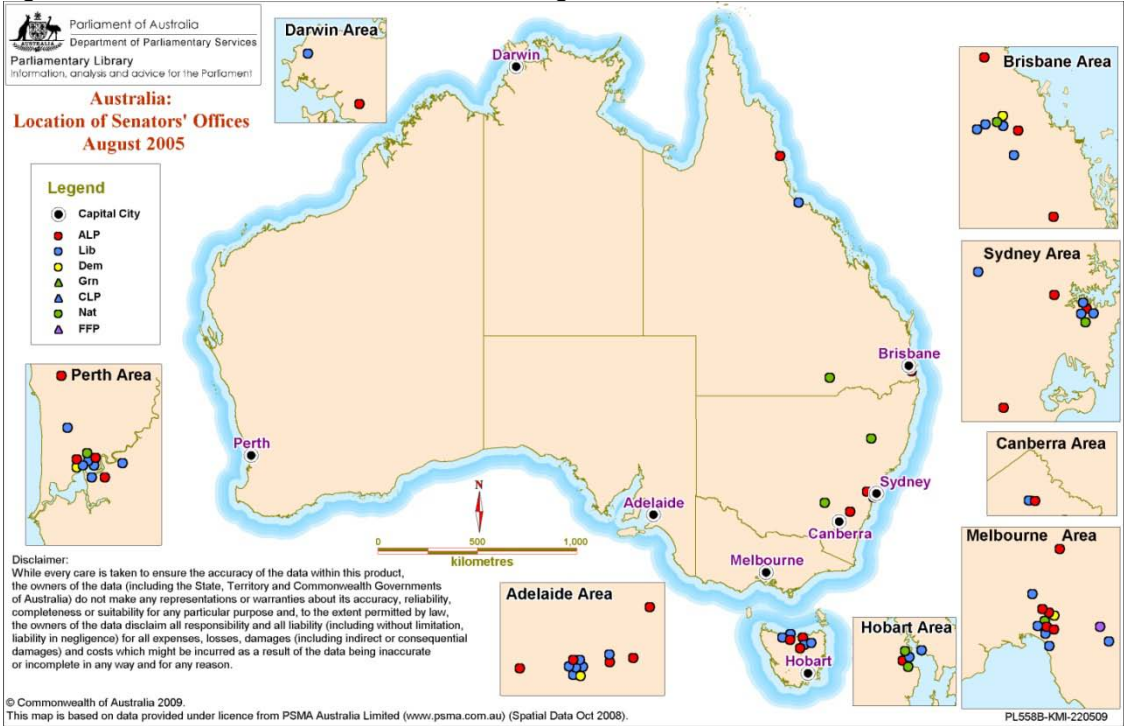
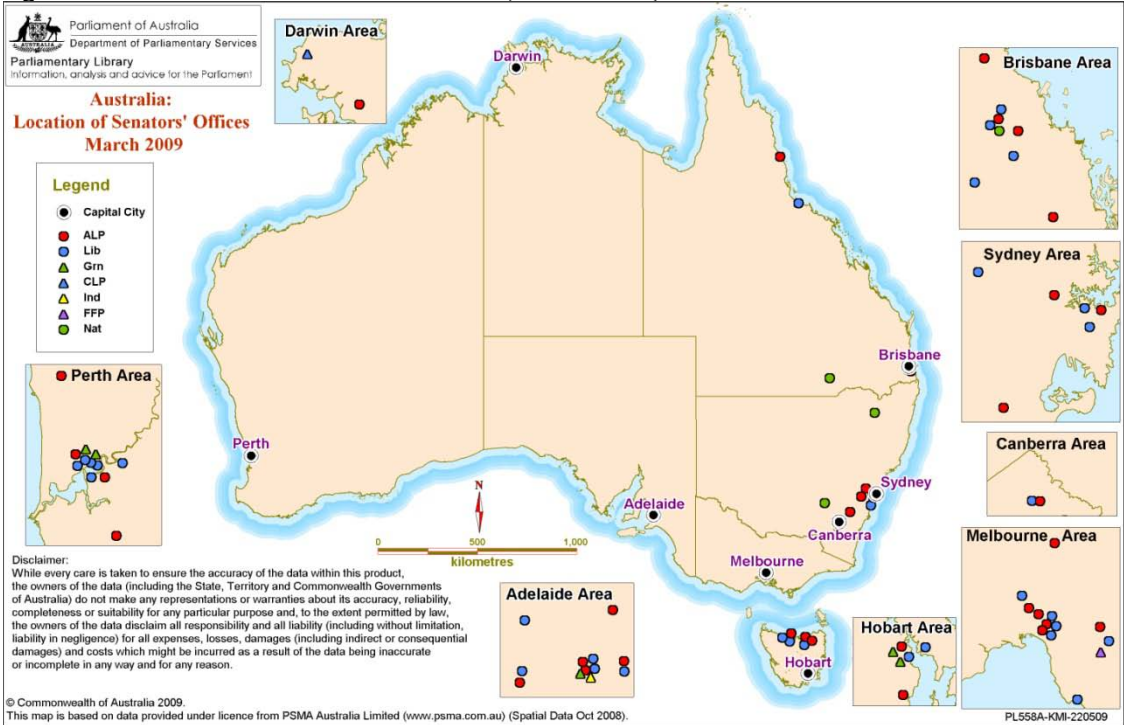


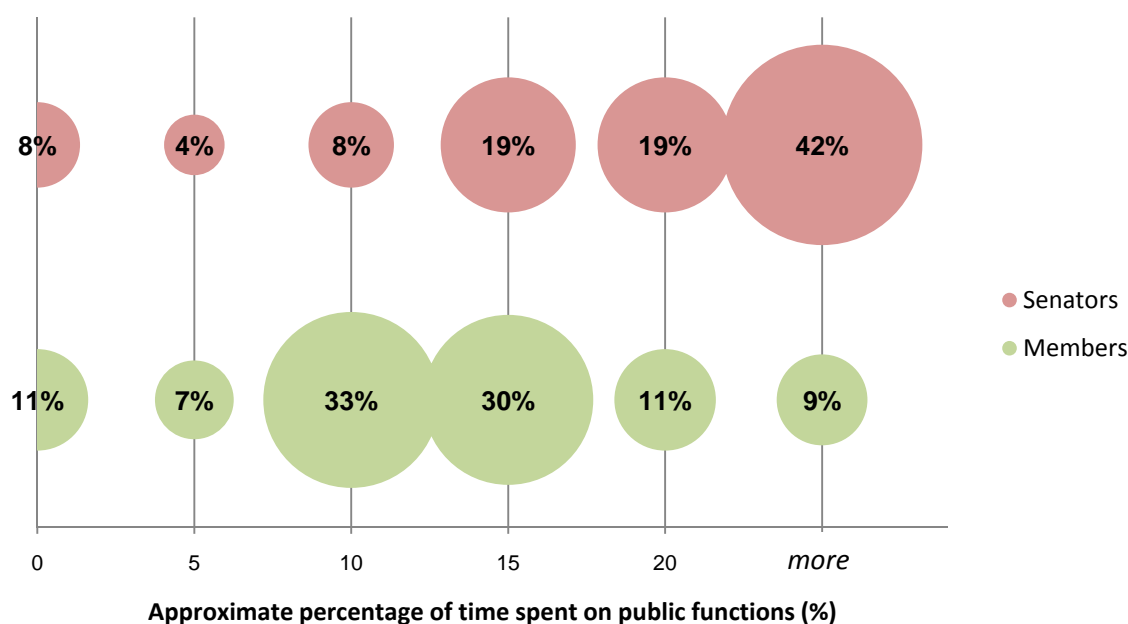
Figure 17l: Location of senators' offices (March 2009)



Community engagement

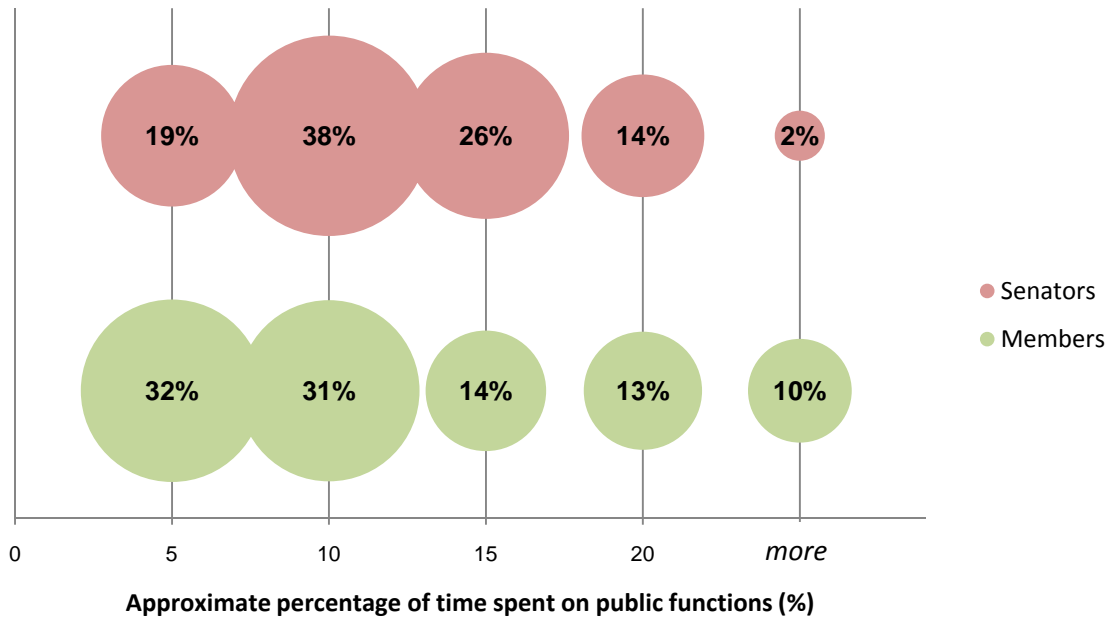
In terms of attendance at events and visibility within the community, the differences between Senate and House respondents are more pronounced than in relation to constituent work (see Figure 18a). Surprisingly, almost two-thirds of Senate respondents spent at least 20 per cent of their time at public meetings and forums, compared with only a fifth of House respondents. About two-thirds of House respondents spent only 10 to 15 per cent of their time on such activities. Perhaps this higher level of community engagement by Senators can be considered further evidence of the effectiveness of the major parties' duty senator strategy, but this pronounced contrast between senators and members is surprising given that local electorate visibility is so important for members. However, the survey item did not distinguish between local electorate functions and public functions across the nation, and instead categorised such events as 'public meetings and functions'.

Figure 18a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on public functions



However there is some evidence that the higher level of community engagement among senators is only a recent trend, with clear majorities of former senators and members reporting spending only five or ten per cent of their time on such activities (see Figure 18b). The different pattern is particularly noticeable when comparing the responses of current senators with those of former senators.

Figure 18b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on public functions



While one interviewee who served in both houses found that they received more invitations and correspondence as a member, they remarked that there was a qualitative difference. As a member often attendance was all that was required whereas as a senator they would be invited to perform a certain role, such as giving a speech. More cynically, some members suggested that senators have more spare time to spend on such activities. However, another interviewee who served in both houses found the demands of being a member more intense, having to attend something in the electorate every night, from school fetes to speech nights to community meetings. Thus once again, there is considerable variation within the groups.

Lobbyists and interest groups

One senator noted that senators are more likely to receive representations from more lobby and interest groups than directly from constituents. As previously discussed, certain interest groups can form a senator’s constituency. The responses from the survey did reveal that generally larger proportions of Senate respondents reported spending more time with lobbyists than House respondents (see Figures 19a and 19b). This perhaps reflects the tightness of numbers in the Senate, and where lobbyists feel they are more effective in influencing important votes. However, despite concerns that lobbyists are becoming more influential, there does not appear to have been a major

change over time, with current and former parliamentarians spending similar amounts of time with these groups.

Figure 19a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent with lobbyists and interest groups

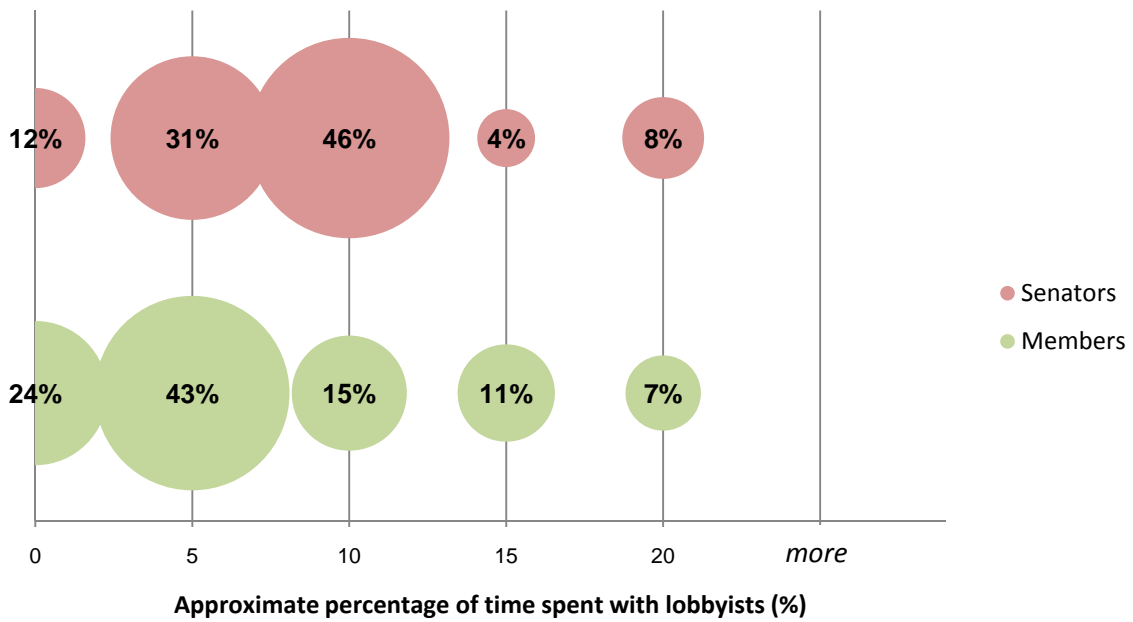
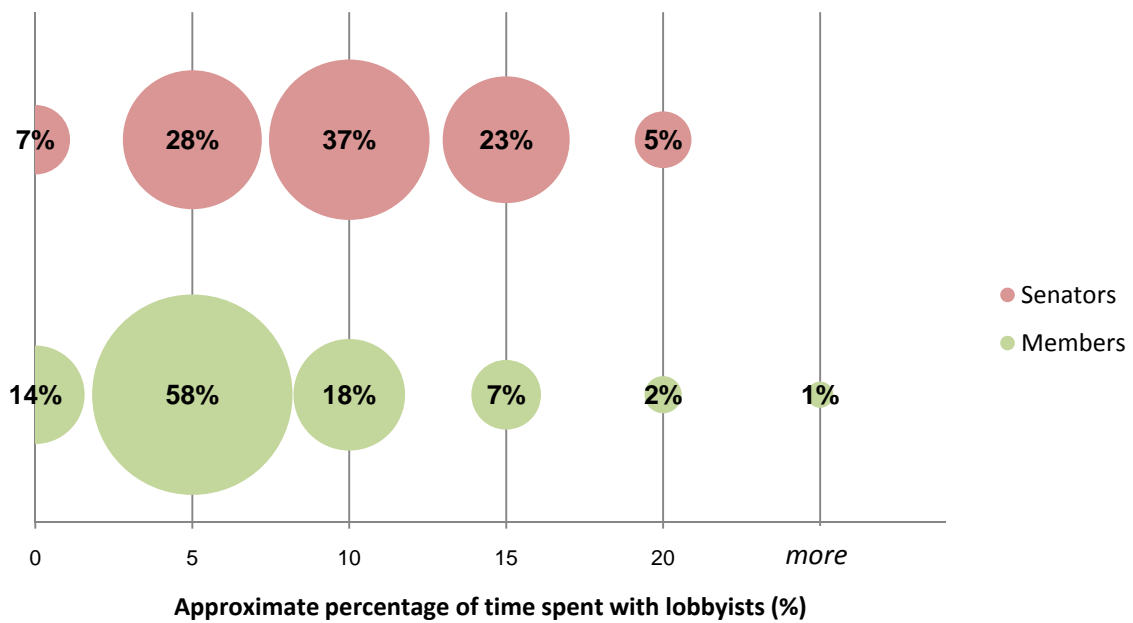


Figure 19b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent with lobbyists and interest groups



Parliamentary work

Senators appear to be much more focused on chamber work, which is not surprising given that currently the government does not have a majority in the Senate and the numbers are tight. This finding also supports the notion of the Senate as a ‘House of Review’, with senators more thoroughly scrutinising legislation, either in the chamber or in committees. One interviewee who served in both houses observed that in terms of the executive, the parliament, and the constituency, that the real difference between members and senators is in terms of the parliament. Finding the right balance between constituency work and parliamentary participation is challenging, as it is constituency work—for members at least—that arguably enhances one’s standing in the community, and therefore prospects for re-election. Yet parliamentary participation arguably enhances one’s standing in the party, and therefore prospects for promotion. Perhaps tilting the balance are the different electoral mandates for members and senators, with members relying more on their local community and senators on their party’s performance for re-election. Albeit, both members and senators must also work to retain their party’s endorsement. One senator cynically viewed parliamentary sittings as a party control mechanism centralising power—or in their words, “corruption with Giorgio Armani suits”.

Parliamentary participation also differs due to the government controlling the numbers in the House but generally not in the Senate. One Senate interviewee contended that senators face more pressure than members during sitting periods, as the numbers are tight and senators cannot miss divisions, while constant negotiation with the crossbench is required. This senator argued that senators work much harder than members when they are in Canberra. Senators are involved in more legislative activity, as can be seen in Figures 20a and 20b. About two-thirds of Senate respondents compared with less than half of House respondents spent at least 20 per cent of their time on chamber work.

Figure 20a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on chamber work

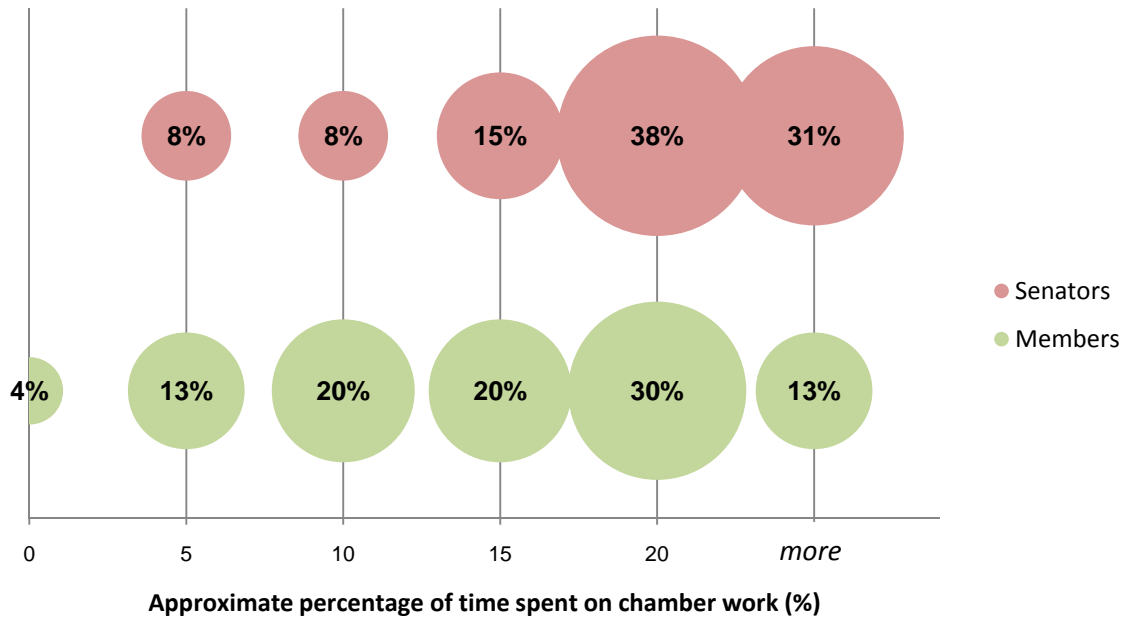
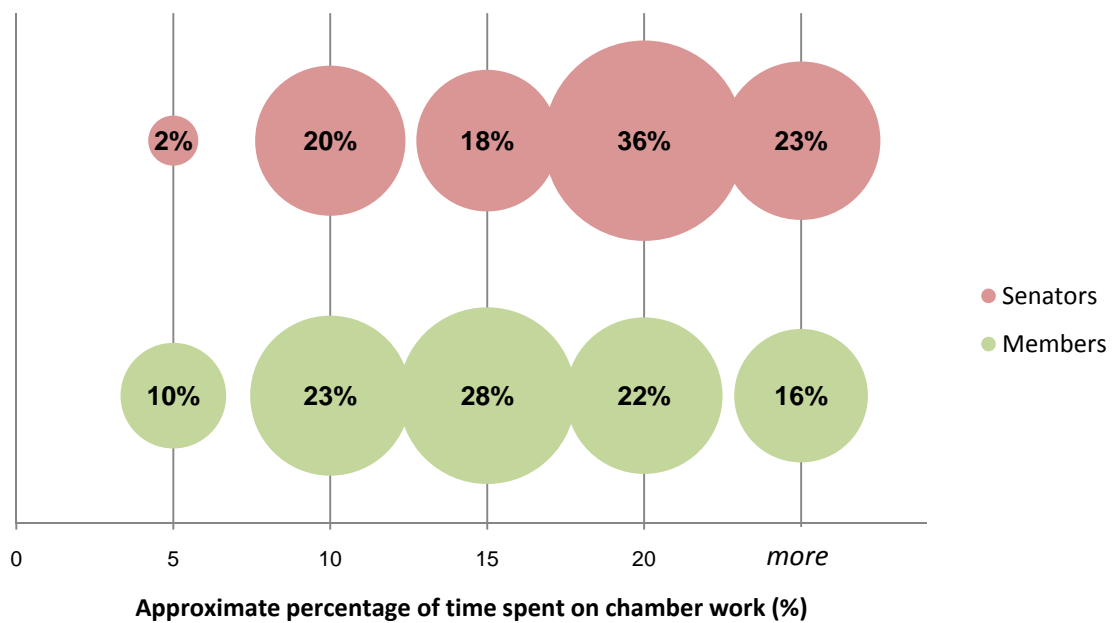


Figure 20b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on chamber work



Cultural differences

One senator who switched to the House found it a culture shock, experiencing a higher level of personal denigration, and feeling that it was complete open slather for the government to attack and be attacked. In many respects their Senate experience did not prepare them for the House. This parliamentarian reflected on their Senate experience as sheltered in comparison, but did find that the quality of debate in the Senate was much better. This observation was supported by other interviewees who served in both houses. One interviewee argued that there was more shouting in the House, a lack of a conversational tone and more artificially inflated debates compared to the more ‘gentlemanly’ debate in the Senate. Another interviewee who served in both houses found the Senate more collaborative and more deliberative, without the same level of partisan conflict as the House and more opportunities to develop good relationships with colleagues in other parties.

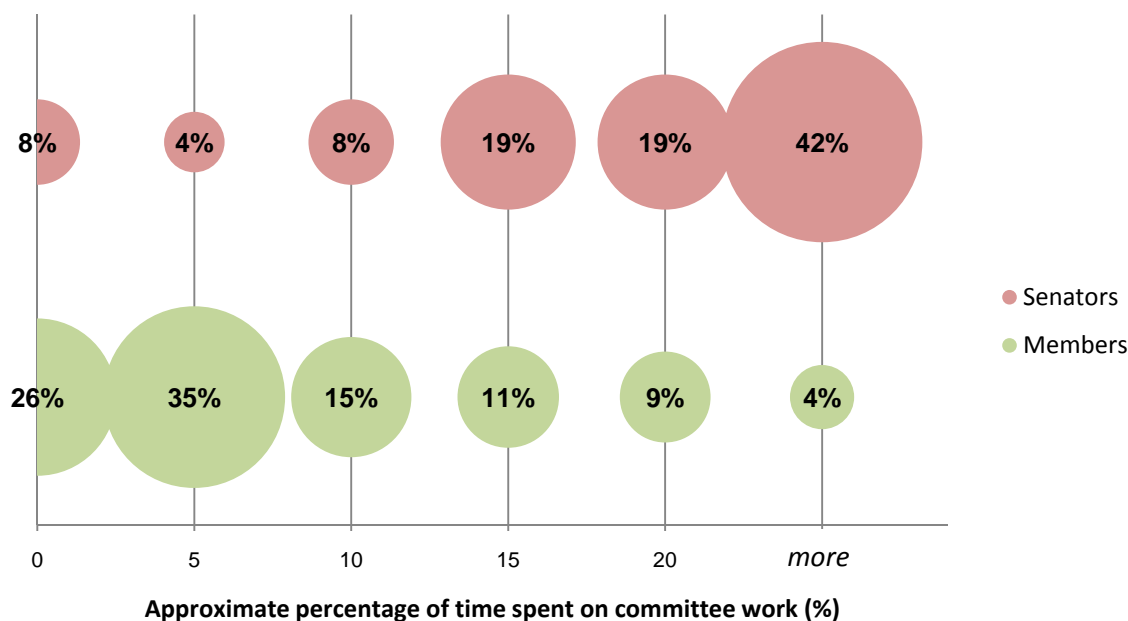
Another parliamentarian with experience in both chambers believed that the sizes of chambers made a difference, as did the slightly different standing orders and modes of operation. Many interviewees who served in both houses noticed procedural and cultural differences between the chambers, and one experienced a steep learning curve in adapting to the different culture, processes and procedures of the other chamber. Yet upper house members often emphasised approaches to legislation as the key difference. One senator who switched to the House was surprised at the level of disinterest in the passage of legislation. Another senator with experience in a lower house concurred, stating that there was not the same level of awareness of legislation as in the upper house, even though most bills originate in the lower house. Once through the House, they simply vanish over to the dark side, while in the Senate (generally-speaking) bills become law. One senator noted that members never watch the Senate, but that senators often watch debates in the House.

Committees

Senators appear to be more active in committees, particularly in the politically important estimates process. While the Fraser government briefly experimented with House estimates committees for a few years, the estimates committees remain under the purview of the Senate. Committee work occupied 20 per cent or more of their time for almost two-thirds of current Senate respondents, compared to only 13 per cent of House respondents (see Figure 21a). Almost two-thirds of House respondents spent 5 per cent

or less of their time on committee work, compared with only 12 per cent of Senate respondents.

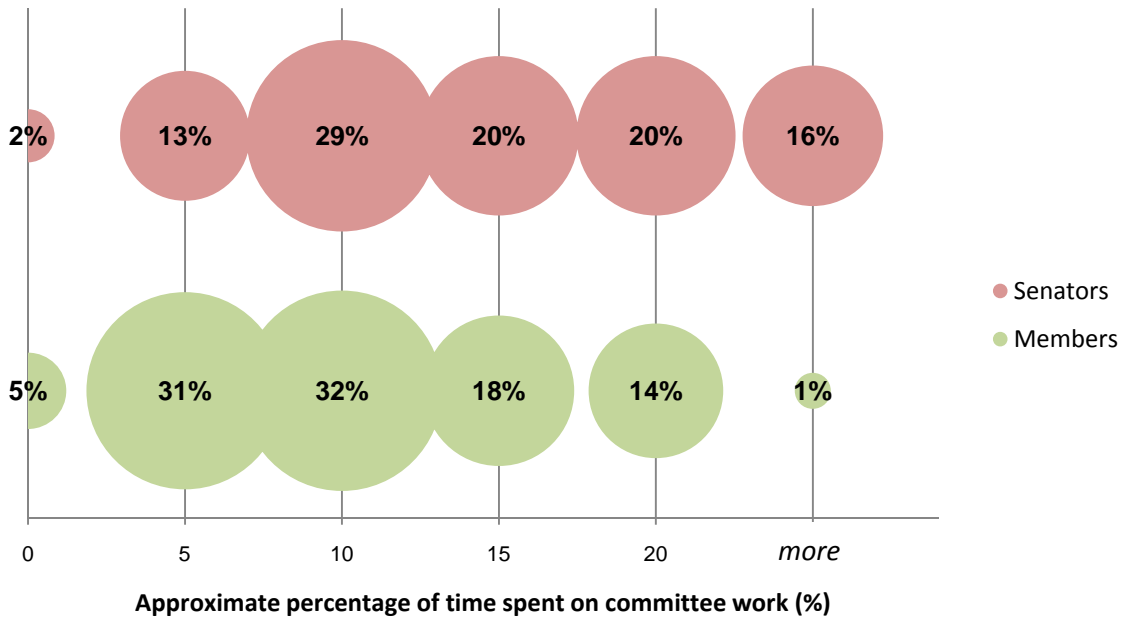
Figure 21a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on committee work



Thus there is some evidence supporting the common perception that one of the major differences between senators and members is that senators not only do more committee work than members, but that such work comprises a significant amount of their time and can be considered a key role and responsibility for senators (at least those not in the Ministry). In general, senators belong to more committees than members.

Yet the Senate's committee system has only achieved a high level of prominence in recent decades. The responses of former senators and members paint a different picture (see Figure 21b). Only a third of former senators spent at least 20 per cent of their time on committee work, while the responses of former members were more similar to current members.

Figure 21b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on committee work



There also appears to be a qualitative difference in how senators and members approach committee work. One interviewee who served in both houses argued that House committees tend to be more practical or technical whereas Senate committees are more broadly-based and investigative. They tend to be longer in terms of content and time, more extensive, and involve substantial review of legislation. Estimates committees in particular, are the epitome of the House of Review. A member argued that in House committees there is often bipartisanship as individual members feel much freer to move outside strict party lines. Members are more efficient with their time and more motivated to achieve realistic bipartisan outcomes. Committees take the House to the people, but the member conceded that it is hard to balance that with electorate duties outside sitting weeks. Conversely, a senator observed that the Senate is much more committee focused and the best work occurs outside the parliament when its activities are taken to the people through committees.

Another senator stated that committees are central to the work of senators with four to five reports released every week, and senators often actively working on two to three committees at a time with constant travelling around the country. In this respect, senators are not held in their own states like members, who feel 'required' to be in their own electorates by their constituents. Another argued that the time spent travelling doing committee work compares with members doing constituent work.

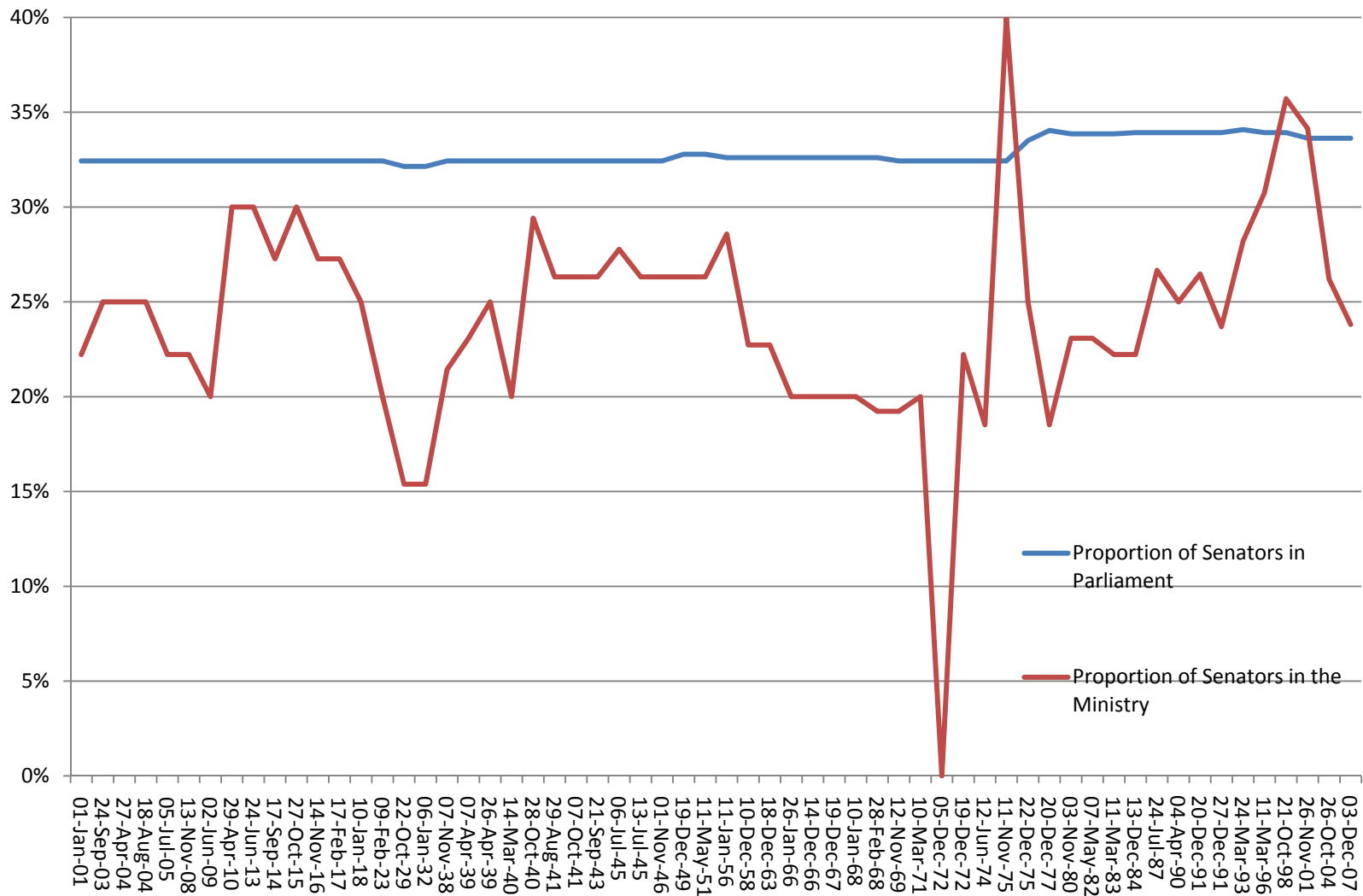
The differing levels of committee work revealed the differences in the skill sets of senators and members and appeared to be a key reason for choosing one chamber over the other (see earlier Figure 6a). One interviewee who served in both houses found the Senate a more suitable vehicle for their skills and really enjoyed the committee work. Another senator, by building a reputation as a good estimates cross-examiner found that people would then come to them with information. A senior Senate officer recalled the bags of mail for this one senator. One interviewee, who switched from the Senate to the House, missed the estimates committees the most. They tried to get estimates into the House, believing it would enhance the effectiveness of the process as members would no longer have to direct their questions through Senate colleagues and ministers would have to listen more intently. While members are busier with constituent work, this parliamentarian believed they would find a way to make estimates committees work in the House.

The Ministry

Many parliamentary participants argue that ministers should not sit in the Senate. A former senior minister suggested that all ministers should be in the lower house—except for two ministers without portfolio in the Senate (who would also be Leader and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate). A current senator agreed that ministers do not belong in the Senate (or even parliament), and refuses to take on a ministerial position. The argument is that if the Senate is to be a genuine House of Review, the executive should be removed. However, it seems that the Senate will continue to seat ministers, if for no other reason than to provide a wider pool of talent in the legislature from which to draw the executive, but also to provide the government with a ministerial presence and to ensure the passage of their legislation. Yet the ministry has traditionally been weighted more towards members than senators.

Figure 22a shows the proportions of senators in ministries since Federation, which is depicted by a red line on this graph, against the blue line, which is the proportion of senators in Parliament. The blue line remains fairly constant at about a 33 per cent, due to the ‘nexus’ provision in the Constitution, which stipulates that the number of members shall be as near as practicable twice the number of senators. However, while senators comprise a third of the number of parliamentarians, they have rarely comprised a third of the ministry since Federation, let alone more than a third.

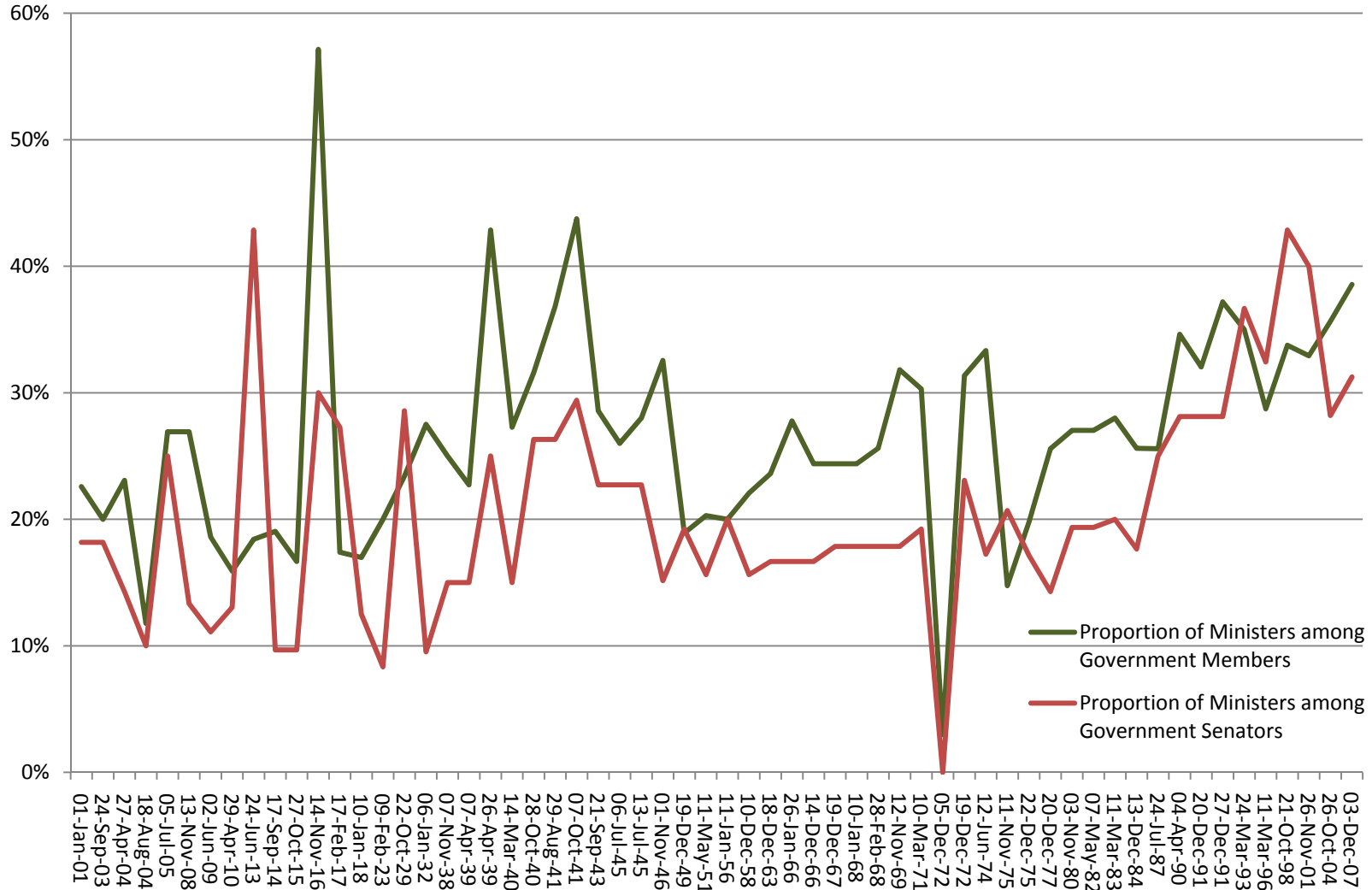
Figure 22a: Proportions of senators in the ministry and the parliament since Federation



This graph is somewhat misleading as it is looking at the whole parliament, and while theoretically the executive is drawn from the legislature, more precisely in practice it is from the governing party or parties in the legislature, and the governing party or parties have generally had healthy majorities in the House but not necessarily the Senate. Therefore, senators often comprise less than a third of the parliamentary membership of the governing party or parties. Figure 22b charts the proportion of ministers among government members since Federation, which is shown by the green line, while the red line depicts the proportion of ministers among government senators. It appears that the probability of becoming a minister as a member is greater than as a senator, although interestingly at the turn of the century the proportion of ministers among government senators was higher than among government members. However, is too early to say whether this is an emerging trend and there has been a swing back in the most recent ministries.

In terms of the workload and pressures of being a minister, many would argue that senators are in a better position to manage their ministerial duties compared to members. Ministers are senior members of a party and therefore are virtually guaranteed a 'safe' top two position on the Senate ticket for a fixed six-year term and not have to worry about an electorate. Being a minister is a full-time job in itself, with significant commitments in Canberra and greater than average and constant national and international travel commitment, yet members still have to be good local representatives as they may be in a marginal seat. A former senior minister discussed having to effectively balance ministerial and local constituent work, but ultimately, in the lower house, a politician has to be seat driven. This minister would often devote Fridays and Saturdays in particular to maintaining a local profile. One interviewee with not only experience serving in both houses but also ministerial experience observed that, at the margin, it is probably easier to be a minister in the Senate. However, many ministers are in reasonably safe seats anyway, or at least benefit electorally from a higher profile, and therefore do not have to be beholden to the local electorate as much as backbenchers. Fundamentally, ministers have to take the national interest into account, regardless of the house in which they serve. However, a former senior minister argued that portfolios such as Defence or Foreign Affairs would be more manageable without the demands of a local electorate.

Figure 22b: Proportions of ministers among government members and senators since Federation



In terms of the raw proportions of time spent on ministerial duties, the differences between senators and members do not appear to be great (see Figures 23a and 23b).

Figure 23a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on ministerial duties

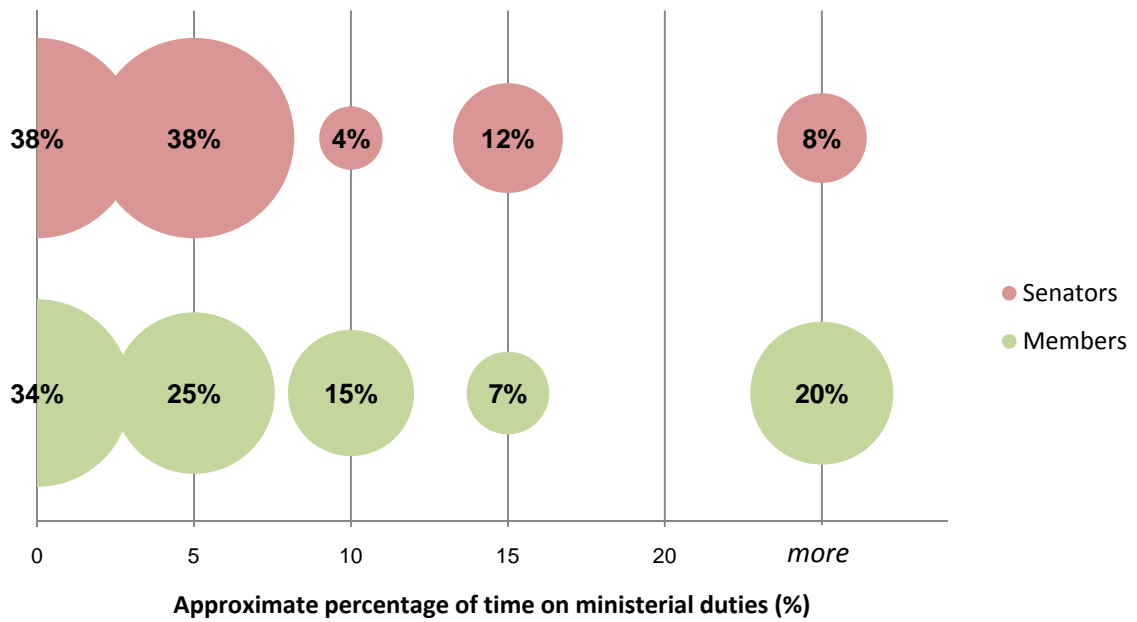
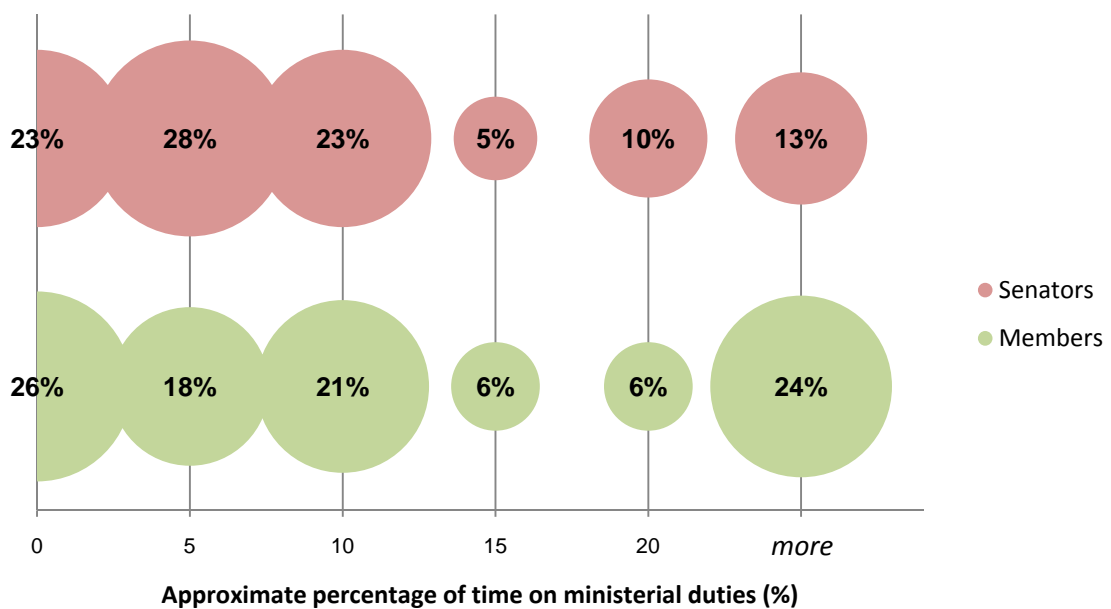


Figure 23b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on ministerial duties



One interviewee with experience in both an upper and lower house claimed that while the demands of the lower house are greater, especially if you are a minister, there are less upper house members so there are more responsibilities. It is often overlooked that all ministers are represented in the other House by a ministerial colleague, and there are less in the Senate which means that they not only have to be across their own portfolios but also many others. One interviewee who served in both houses, found that the challenge of being a minister in the Senate was having to represent three to four other portfolios and be across these areas in significant detail to be able to respond to questions and matters of public importance in debates, which meant additional briefing requirements. Another minister in the Senate agreed.

However a former minister argued that it would have been preferable to be in the House as there are more portfolios there and more media coverage. The minister found it hard to gain traction in the Senate. Another parliamentarian who served in both houses argued that for ministers the day-to-day work is similar in both houses, but that there tends to be more scrutiny of ministers 'downstairs' because of Question Time in the House. While the Senate's Question Time may not have the same prominence as in the House, the Senate is where legislation is often ultimately decided and ministers can expect questions from a much broader political spectrum and the votes of the questioners do actually matter so flippant or theatrical responses will only go so far.

For many interviewees the bigger difference was not between ministers in the Senate and ministers in the House, but between government ministers and their shadows. Shadow ministers are also expected to be across the detail of their portfolio and work on portfolio-related issues, in addition to their electoral commitments, but without the extra staffing, resources, and public service departments that government ministers enjoy. Indeed, some interviewees thought that government ministers have a comparatively easier job.

Crossbench perspectives

Crossbench senators and members were quite critical of ministers, albeit perhaps tinged with envy. One minor party senator argued that while ideally aspiring to hold a ministry that minor party politicians have to be comfortable with just being a senator. Unlike the major parties with a career structure, opportunity for angling and advancement are limited. One crossbench parliamentarian argued that ministers are constrained by solidarity and are often too portfolio-focused. In trying to advance their careers they submit to the authority of the Prime Minister. Senators holding the 'balance of power' referred to a constant and high level of constituent correspondence. Indeed, one

interviewee suggested that ministers have it easier compared to senators holding the balance of power. This interviewee from a minor party described carrying six major portfolios and participating in three major inquiries at any one time with a staff of only four people, again comparing themselves to ministers with only one or two portfolios and considerable departmental and staffing resources. Yet crossbench senators often have to negotiate with key ministers over budgets and important legislation, which can be considered as a form of ‘governing’.

Outside the Ministry: the backbench

A senator suggested lower house backbenchers (particularly in safe seats) have the easiest job, but that it would be boring and frustrating. Another interviewee suggested that lower house backbenchers could choose to become experts in a particular policy area and contribute significant policy expertise. Yet one marginal seat holder described the experience as ‘working like a dog’ and being constantly in campaign and survival mode. Another House interviewee argued that marginal seat members are good at finding out at a local level whether the government ‘is on the nose’. One former parliamentarian was critical of some members in safe seats, stating that they were not worthy of holding such seats and could take it for granted. However, a Labor parliamentarian with a safe seat pointed out that the demographics of such seats typically comprising of lower social-economic groups meant there was often very high level of constituent work involved. Even in some marginal seats, the demographics influenced the workload. For example, the Northern Territory’s high proportion of Indigenous constituents presents different challenges to other electorates.

Representative roles and responsibilities

At first glance political representation in a liberal democracy such as Australia is a straightforward concept: about every three years at a national level there is an election where citizens in defined geographic areas (be it a local electorate or a state/territory) choose from a range of candidates—themselves citizens living in (or near) that same area—and elect a few to sit in the national parliament as *representatives* of the people living in defined geographic areas. Yet both theoretically and in practice it is far more complicated. While representative democracy is often poetically described as government ‘of the people, by the people, for the people’, it is not only ‘the people’ who are represented: political parties, ideologies, states, business, unions, the environmental movement—to name but a few—are also represented. Furthermore, even the very notion of ‘the people’ is amorphous as a representative cannot possibly represent the full diversity of ‘the people’ and all their divergent and conflicting interests.

These complexities actually relate to the actors rather than the institutions. That is, the practice of being a representative and the act of representing is less straightforward than the institutions of political representation, as the institutional norms are clearly defined. In this regard, Blom defines representation ‘as a set of procedures or rules that select people to formulate and legislate the public interest in an accountable way ... representation is the accountable aggregation of interests’.³³ The Constitution and standing orders of the Houses of Parliament circumscribe the functions and powers of the legislature and the actions of those within it, which a learned judiciary adjudicates, guided by widely accepted precedents and conventions. Yet the roles and responsibilities of the legislators outside the institutions are not so clearly defined, as they are contested and ultimately judged by a more unpredictable populace. It is this activity of representing, or the conception of representation as ‘acting for’ others, that this monograph is most interested in, which Pitkin defines in terms of what the representative does and how s/he does it.³⁴

33. HW Blom, ‘Ethos and interests. Arguments for a representational differentiation in a changing society’, in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 149.

34. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967, p. 143.

Delegates with a mandate or trustees with independence?

There is much literature on the idea of representative democracy and how to institutionalise and practise this idea, while the roles of political actors are overlooked or subordinated. Rather it is the roles of citizens and their engagement with representative democracy that excites interest and invites further investigation. Of the comparatively smaller number of scholars who have focused on the role of representatives, eighteenth-century political philosopher Edmund Burke, and more recently, American political theorist Professor Hanna Pitkin, are two of the most cited theorists in this area. In his famous *Speech to the Electors of Bristol at the Conclusion of the Poll* (when he was elected to Parliament as a member for Bristol) Burke expressed his now famous ‘trustee’ view of representation. Burke writes:

Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that of the whole—where not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *Parliament*.³⁵

While this view is still popular and useful for analysing the behaviour of contemporary politicians, his work has been criticised for its inconsistencies. Proceeding cautiously, Pitkin devotes a chapter to Burke in her landmark work *The Concept of Representation* (1967). Representatives have also been variously conceived as agents, trustees, deputies and delegates.³⁶ Reflecting language norms of the time, the quotes in this monograph are reproduced with the author’s gender-bias. Pitkin asks: ‘Should (must) a representative do what his constituents want, and be bound by mandates or instructions from them; or should (must) he be free to act as seems best to him in pursuit of their welfare?’³⁷ Pitkin summarises the mandate-independence debate:

A number of positions have at one time or another been defended, between the two poles of mandate and independence. A highly restrictive mandate theorist might maintain that true representation occurs only when the representative acts on explicit instructions from his constituents, that any exercise of discretion is a deviation from

35. RJS Hoffman and P Levack, (eds), *Burke’s politics: selected writings and speeches of Edmund Burke on reform, revolution and war*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949, p. 116.

36. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., pp. 112–42.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

this ideal. A more moderate position might be that he may exercise some discretion, but must consult his constituents before doing anything new or controversial, and then do as they wish or resign his [post]. A still less extreme position might be that the representative may act as he thinks his constituents would want, unless or until he receives instructions from them, and then he must obey. Very close to the independence position would be the argument that the representative must do as he thinks best, except insofar as he is bound by campaign promises or an election platform. At the other extreme is the idea of complete independence, that constituents have no right even to exact campaign promises; once a man is elected he must be completely free to use his own judgment.³⁸

Further complicating this debate is the issue of the national interest, political parties and the challenges of representing a diverse constituency. Mandate theorists favour local interests on the basis that the representative is elected locally, and argue that the sum of local interests equals the national interest.³⁹ Conversely, independence theorists hold that representatives must pursue the national interest, as the sum of local interest does not necessarily result in the national interest.

Local, national or party interests?

These ideas of national representation and the national interest conflict with Australia's electoral design, whereby citizens vote together as a local community or as a state/territory to elect representatives, rather than as a nation. Representatives are referred to as the 'Member for Griffith' or the 'Senator for Queensland'. Yet the national parliament is preoccupied with national politics; as previously mentioned, parliamentarians divide along national party lines rather than regional or local lines. The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, despite being local members, speak as national representatives on national issues.

The dilemma for political theorists in this context has been that if a person represents a particular local electorate in the parliament, should they pursue that electorate's interests, or the national interest?⁴⁰ Given the choice between electorate and nation interests, most members would probably claim that their local electorate is their prime concern as ultimately their political survival is based on their electorate's opinion. For senators, the situation is more complicated as the party's electoral performance and the senator's position of the party ticket are important factors. Parties are variously

38. Ibid., p. 146.

39. Ibid., p. 147.

40. Ibid., p. 215.

portrayed as links between local and national interests, antithetical to the national interest, or binding the member to a party program, which a constituency endorses.⁴¹ A parliamentarian can also be seen as more representative of a party than a constituency or the national interest. Most parliamentarians have to be very sensitive to party concerns and cultivate relationships with party colleagues, especially party leaders and other powerful figures.⁴² In Australia, party discipline in the major parties is remarkably strong, and in the case of the Australian Labor Party is formalised with a signed pledge binding parliamentarians to vote on party lines. Stilborn argues that: ‘criticisms of the delegate theory on the grounds that the required independence of individual Members of Parliament is incompatible with the demands of responsible government are equally applicable to the “trustee” conception of representation. Trusteeship also requires independence from party discipline’.⁴³

The ‘good’ representative

As Pitkin acknowledges in her summary of the debate, most of the positions are at the extremes and representatives act within ‘an elaborate network of pressures, demands and obligations’, chief among them being re-election.⁴⁴ ‘Good’ representatives have been broadly conceived as either ‘delegates’ reflecting constituent concerns or as paradoxical given the multiple and competing demands.⁴⁵ Fundamentally, democratic representation is characterised by regular free and fair elections, with citizens evaluating ‘good’ (and bad) representation.⁴⁶ Yet doing what a representative thinks is best for his or her constituents does not ensure re-election, while re-election does not mean that representative has been a *good* representative.⁴⁷ There are many examples where defeated parliamentarians have still been regarded as outstanding representatives, and vice versa. Dovi argues that:

A good democratic representative is not likely to be approved by, or even appreciated by, every one of her constituents, let alone by all citizens. Thus my claim is not that a

41. Ibid., pp. 147–8.

42. Ibid., pp. 219–20.

43. J Stilborn, *The roles of the Member of Parliament in Canada: are they changing?*, op. cit., p. 18.

44. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., p. 219.

45. S Dovi, *The good representative*, op. cit., pp. 1–2.

46. Ibid., p. 2.

47. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., pp. 164–5.

good democratic representative will be valued by every citizen (or even a majority of citizens); rather, my claim is that a good democratic representative will be the unbridled advocate of her own constituents.⁴⁸

Yet it is difficult to reconcile this normative value with the electoral reality. Presumably if the majority of citizens do not value good democratic representation, it will result in a negative electoral evaluation. The extent to which a representative is bound by the wishes of their constituency is the subject of a central debate within the literature and there are many compromise positions, with some theorists even maintaining that both extremes are true without offering any practical reconciliation of the inherent tensions.⁴⁹ Some theorists argue a representative can advocate different constituent positions, while ultimately voting according to their own (or their party's) judgement; others argue that constituent desires are generally temporary and representatives must take a longer-term view; some cynically contend that constituents only need to be heard at election time.⁵⁰ In practice, representatives arguably do all of these things; just not necessarily at the same time. Defining a static and universally applicable representative role is problematic. Zappalà through an overview of previous studies of representation exposes (although perhaps unintentionally) the tendency to typologise representative roles, and the simplicity of reducing the demands and pressures of a representative to the 'unholy trinity' of constituents, party and conscience.⁵¹ Only Independents, and to a lesser extent Greens, claimed that they were able to vote on conscience on all issues.

According to Pitkin, Burke regarded political representation as the representation of an abstract interest, which is objective, impersonal and unattached from reality.⁵² Pitkin extends this idea to 'representing people who have interests' in the liberal philosophical tradition, such as property interests, which has (and continues) to form the basis of suffrage qualifications.⁵³ Bicameralism developed to simultaneously accommodate democratic ideals of equal representation (in the lower house) and traditional aristocratic rule (in the upper house). While the founders of Australia's bicameral

48. S Dovi, *The good representative*, op. cit., p. 9.

49. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., p. 148.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

51. G Zappalà, *Four weddings, a funeral and a family reunion: ethnicity and representation in Australian federal politics*, op. cit., p. 18. See also DT Studlar and I McAllister, 'Constituency activity and representational roles among legislators', *Journal of Politics*, vol. 58, no. 1, 1996, pp. 69–90.

52. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit, p. 168.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 190–1.

legislature rejected this classic democracy/aristocracy division between the houses, democratic election of both house alone does not guard against the emergence (or reinforcement) of a political class acting like an aristocracy. Pitkin discusses Burke's idea of virtual representation, or representation beyond strict constituency demarcations, where the virtuous elite govern for the good of the whole nation, or in Pitkin's words, 'Representation has nothing to do with obeying popular wishes, but means the enactment of the national good by a select elite'.⁵⁴ Under this conception, Pitkin reasons that the representative has no special relation to his or her constituency, and elections are merely the mechanism for determining the membership of the natural aristocracy, which consists of national representatives.⁵⁵ Pitkin writes:

Representing as a substantive activity may often have seemed remote from the realities of political life. A political representative—at least the typical member of an elected legislature—has a constituency rather than a single principal; and that raises problems about whether such as unorganized group can even have an interest for him to pursue, let alone a will to which he could be responsive, or an opinion before which he could attempt to justify what he has done. These problems are further heightened when we consider what political science teaches about the members of such a constituency, at least in a modern mass democracy—their apathy, their ignorance, their malleability. Furthermore, the representative who is an elected legislator does not represent his constituents on just any business, and by himself in isolation. He works with other representatives in an institutionalized context at a specific task—the governing of a nation or a state. This reintroduces the familiar problem of local or partial interests versus the national interest, and the question of the political representative's role with respect to them.⁵⁶

Michael Saward explores the relationship between representatives and constituents, arguing that: 'representation in politics is at least a two-way street: the represented play a role in choosing representatives, and representatives "choose" their constituents in the sense of portraying them or framing them in particular, contestable ways'.⁵⁷ Saward conceptualises this relationship in terms of representative claims, with political representatives making claims about themselves (being the best representatives), their constituents, and their relationship with their constituents. Saward argues that: 'The world of political representation is a world of claim-making rather than fact-

54. Ibid., p. 170.

55. Ibid., p. 171.

56. Ibid., p. 215.

57. M Saward, 'The representative claim', *Contemporary Political Theory*, vol. 5, 2006, pp. 301–2.

adducing'.⁵⁸ These representative claims are at the heart of this study: who (or what) do parliamentarians claim to represent? Are members and senators representing the same of different things?

In terms of representation, respondents were presented with a range of options and asked to choose one that best described who or what they primarily represented. The options were: defined geographic area; party; geographic area through a party (or vice versa); particular interest/social groups; parliamentarian-at-large/national representative; and ideology/ philosophy. Respondents were also given the opportunity to record if they felt that they could not choose just one category and were able to add in a different category. The category 'the people' was deliberately not included as it is (perhaps naïvely) a given in a representative democracy. Furthermore, 'the people' are represented through most of the categories and the purpose is to determine *how* the people are represented, although respondents were free to write it in the 'other' category. 'The states' was also not included as a state is covered by the 'defined geographic area' category, which was chosen instead to provide continuity between the surveys for senators elected by the people of a state/territory and members elected by the people of a division/electorate.

The responses are presented in Figures 24a and 24b. The major difference is not a single House respondent chose their party, while about a fifth of Senate respondents did so. This is despite strong party discipline in both houses, and the importance of party identification in determining voting behaviour among the populace. While most senators are elected on a party ticket, party labels are equally as important for lower house candidates, and most also use their party leader and in local campaign material as branding. Thus parties and leaders often become the focus of election campaigns.

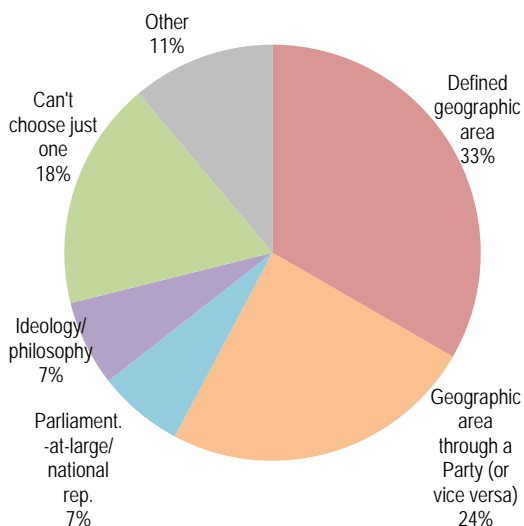
Rather, a third of House respondents chose a defined geographic area, which is more than twice the proportion of Senate respondents. The only other notable difference is that none of the Senate respondents used the 'other' category, while 11 per cent of House respondents wrote in their own categories, which included: regional Australia; the Australian people, as represented by those in my electorate; my beliefs and people; and the interests of the people within the seat boundaries. Yet three of those responses could be categorised as 'defined geographic area'. The other categories elicited similar proportions of respondents from both the Senate and the House. About a quarter choose 'geographic area though a party (or vice versa)'. About a fifth found it too difficult to

58. Ibid., p. 302.

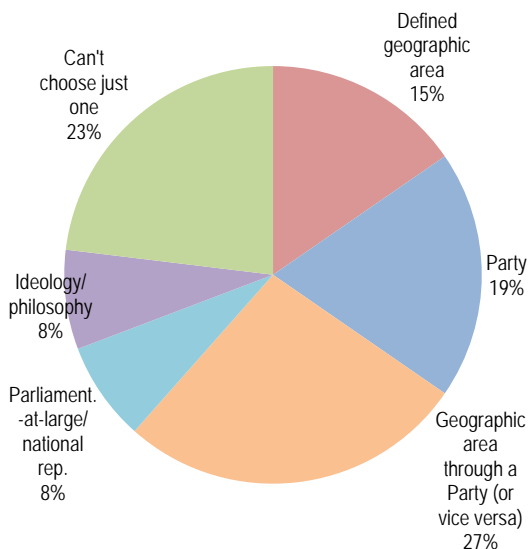
choose just one category, while less the 10 per cent chose each of the remaining categories. None of the respondents claimed to primarily represent particular interest/social groups.

Figure 24a: Who or what current parliamentarians think they primarily represent

Members represent:

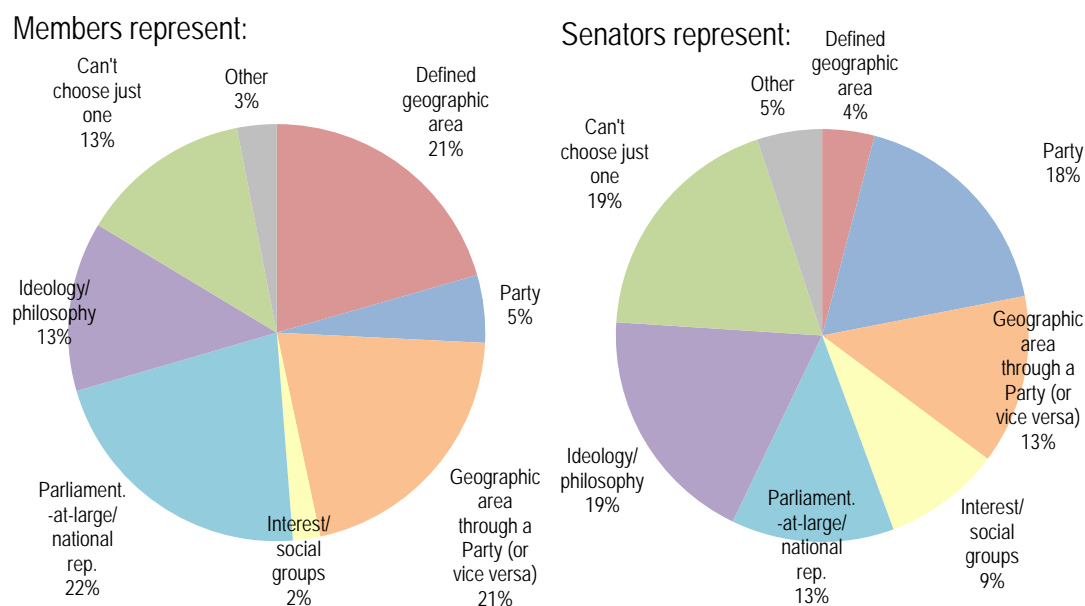


Senators represent:



There was more variation in the responses of former senators and members, with larger proportions of respondents seeing themselves as parliamentarians-at-large and national representatives, and representing an ideology or philosophy. There was also a minority who chose interest/social groups. Yet the difference once again was that more members than senators (five times more) chose ‘defined geographic area’ and more senators than members (three times more) saw themselves primarily as party representatives.

Figure 24b: Who or what former parliamentarians thought they primarily represented



One interviewee saw Senate representation as also representing the government (or opposition) by ensuring that the government gets it right through inquiries and policy and expenditure reviews. A minor party senator, despite only being elected by a small proportion of the state, still saw themselves as representing all of the state through a philosophy. Minor party senators also tended to look at themselves as more national representatives as their party often did not have representatives from all parts of Australia.

One House interviewee argued members have a representational role while senators have a broader look at things and take an ‘academic’ approach in stepping away from things. Another member talked about aspiring to represent the local area, through involvement in party politics only at the local level. One parliamentarian, who switched from the Senate to the House, did so feeling the desire to represent the local area and had a much greater affinity serving the local area.

These findings show how contested the concept of representation is among the political actors themselves, and also the distinct roles that different parliamentarians play despite performing the same job in the same institution. This is not particularly surprising given the array of personalities, backgrounds, aspirations, interests, causes, and expertise that politicians bring to parliament. Furthermore, not all of the categories are discrete or mutually exclusive, and respondents were instructed to choose only the *one* that they *primarily* represented. The most notable difference between Senate and House

respondents was in relation to party representation. As previously mentioned, most parliamentarians in both houses are members of parties and generally 'toe the party line', yet it is often only the Senate that is referred to as a parties' house. Perhaps this is partly because the concept of a 'states' house' is redundant (and senators divide on party rather than state lines), or because more parties are represented in the Senate and legislation usually requires cross-party negotiation to pass. This external institutional identification of the Senate has perhaps led to self-identification among the senators as party representatives. Lower house members emphasised wanting to be local representatives.

The preselection procedures of the parties and the voting system of the Senate also distinguish Senate candidates as more party-oriented than House candidates. In most parties, Senate preselection is conducted at a state-wide level and requires a high-profile within and across the party organisation, whereas preselection for House seats is generally decided by local electorate members. Most voters for the Senate vote for a group rather than individual candidates,⁵⁹ whereas the voting system for the House of Representatives is based on individual candidates contesting a single-member electorate. Furthermore, as previously discussed, senators have also become important campaigning agents for the major parties.

Senators from the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory felt most similar to members of the House of Representatives, in terms of connection to a local electorate and expectations and awareness of their representative role. Indeed, two interviewees from the territories served in both Houses and therefore offered a unique perspective on the similarities, while also stressing that the similarities were due to the nature of the representation of the territories in the national parliament. One interviewee described being a territory representative as more personality based, while all interviewees who represented the territories reported generally higher levels of constituent inquiries than their state counterparts. Currently both territories have two Senate seats and two House seats, and their Senate terms are tied to the House of Representatives rather than fixed at six years as for state senators. The quota for election is closer to a majority at 33.3 per cent as opposed to only 14.3 per cent for state Senators at half-elections, and 7.7 per cent at full-Senate elections.

59. Almost 97% of Australians voted 'above-the-line' for a group at the 2007 election.

The Greens were the only party to refer to being representatives of the whole planet. One Green argued that most politicians want to make Australia a better place, whereas the Greens want to make the planet a better place.

The practice of representation

One independent saw their role as *reflecting* what the electorate thinks, and they often represent views and advocates for constituents that they may not agree with. They argued that major party parliamentarians often try and convince constituents who they do not agree with that they are wrong, as they are as much party representatives within the electorate as representatives of that electorate. However, Pitkin concedes that due to voters' ignorance, apathy and irrationality and the diversity of views and interests of thousands (and in the case of the Senate, millions) of constituents, it is difficult for representatives to accurately gauge the views and interests of the electorate.⁶⁰

Pitkin interrogates the *Federalist's* assumptions about interest and representation, as the interests that representatives are expected to pursue are subjective, shifting, and unstable.⁶¹ Pitkin asks: 'Can a representative really know such interests well enough to pursue them?' and 'are interest and opinion identical? Can a representative know his constituents' interests better than he can know their opinions?'. While representatives will have strong views and opinions on certain issues, interest and pressure groups, party leaders and colleagues, lobbyists, and the media are also influential in opinion formation and change.⁶² They are useful filters of vast amounts of information and views, particularly as the population continues to grow. Furthermore, as Stilborn observes, the opinions and interests of constituencies are often processed through interest groups that have greater influence than individual constituents.⁶³ According to Stilborn, interest groups can provide streamlined representational inputs, greatly assisting parliamentarians in an environment of ever increasing policy and legislative outputs.⁶⁴ Furthermore, a representative faced with many competing demands and pressures cannot possibly devote the time required to communicate with enough constituents to be considered as a reliable method of gauging the views and opinions of

60. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., pp. 219–20.

61. Ibid., p. 197.

62. Ibid., pp. 219–20.

63. J Stilborn, *The roles of the Member of Parliament in Canada: are they changing?*, op. cit., p. 6.

64. Ibid., pp. 5–6.

the entire constituency. Advances in mass and electronic communication and the use of polling also means that traditional face-to-face contact with constituents becomes less necessary. Yet at the same time, if a parliamentarian identifies as a representative of a constituency, they will probably still consider direct communication with constituents as paramount. Survey respondents were asked which method they find most reliable in determining what their constituents think, with the collated responses presented in Figures 25a and 25b.

Figure 25a: The primary method current parliamentarians use to find out what their constituents think

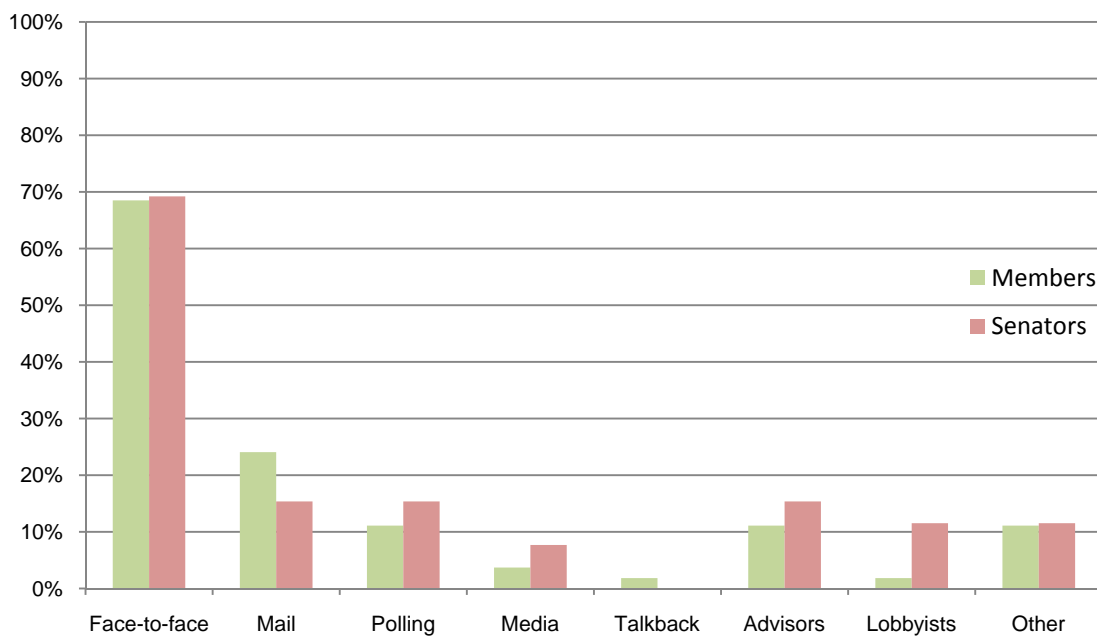
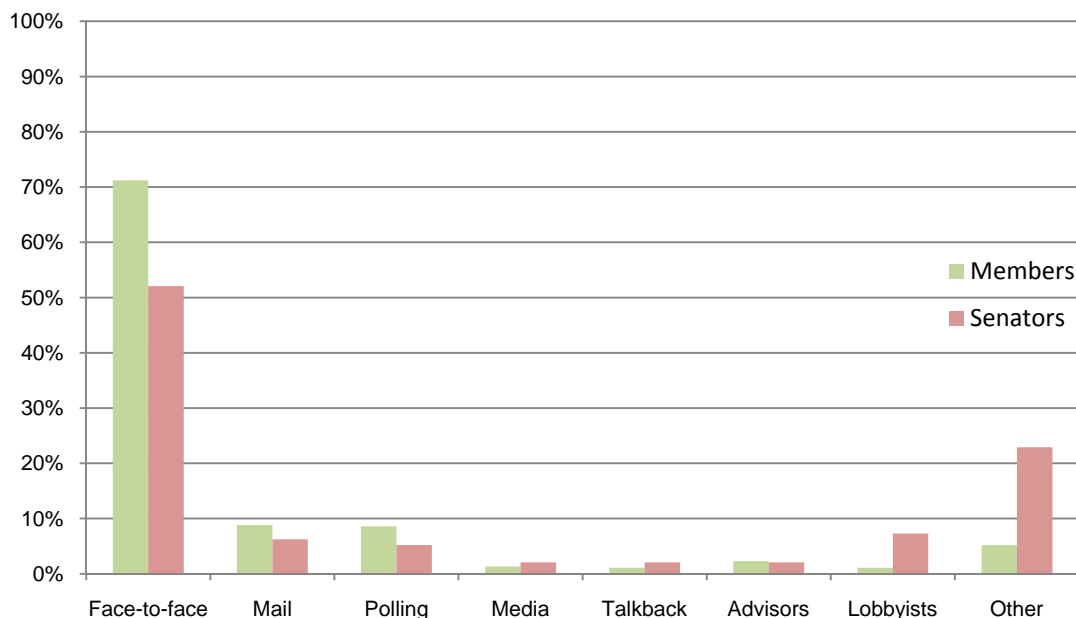


Figure 25b: The primary method former parliamentarians used to find out what their constituents thought



Among the ‘other’ responses included an admission that they ‘did not care’ along with claims of intuition and the statement ‘Regrettably, I don’t think I had any reliable method!’

Party representatives

‘There are only two rooms in Parliament House that are important—the Prime Minister’s office and the Leader of the Opposition’s’ – current senator

‘If the best debate is happening within the party rooms, why not have cameras in there?’ – current senator

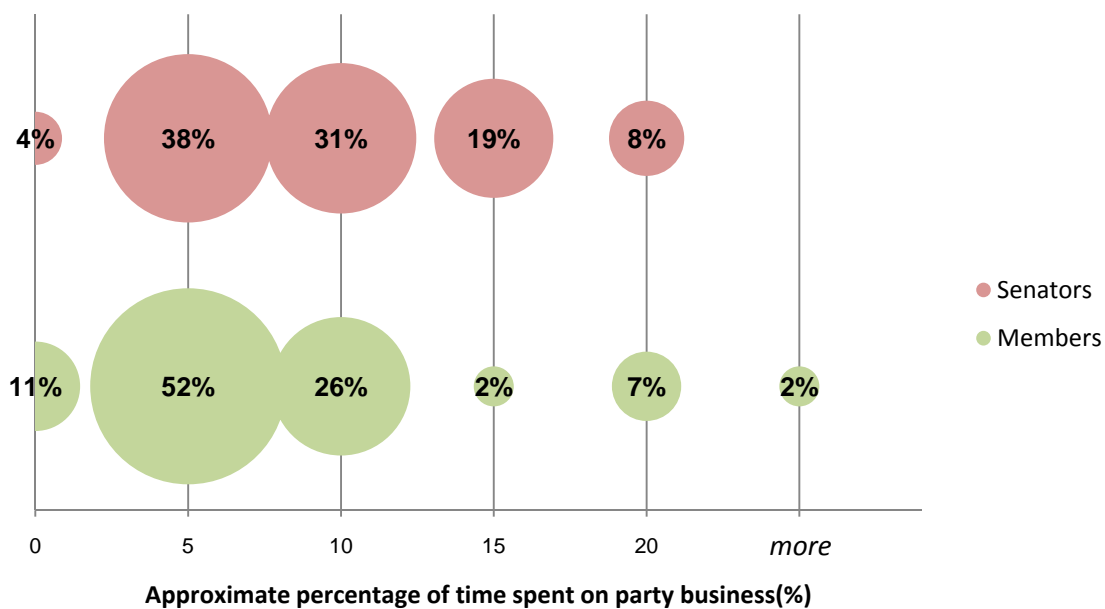
Another interviewee supported this claim, stating that the best speeches are made in the party room rather than in the parliament. However, this parliamentarian maintained that some things need to be said behind the scenes.

Many interviewees and survey respondents, particularly former parliamentarians, were critical of stronger party discipline. A conservative parliamentarian was critical of the centralisation of power in the executive and the threats to the independence of the parliament and the Senate as institutions. Parliamentarians cede power to the party, which cedes power to the leader. They argued that true conservatives should be prepared to cross the floor. They blamed Labor for caucusing and binding members,

which was electorally successful and thus the Liberals imitated. One senator proposed sitting in state groups rather than parties, making ‘divisions’ and ‘crossing the floor’ redundant.

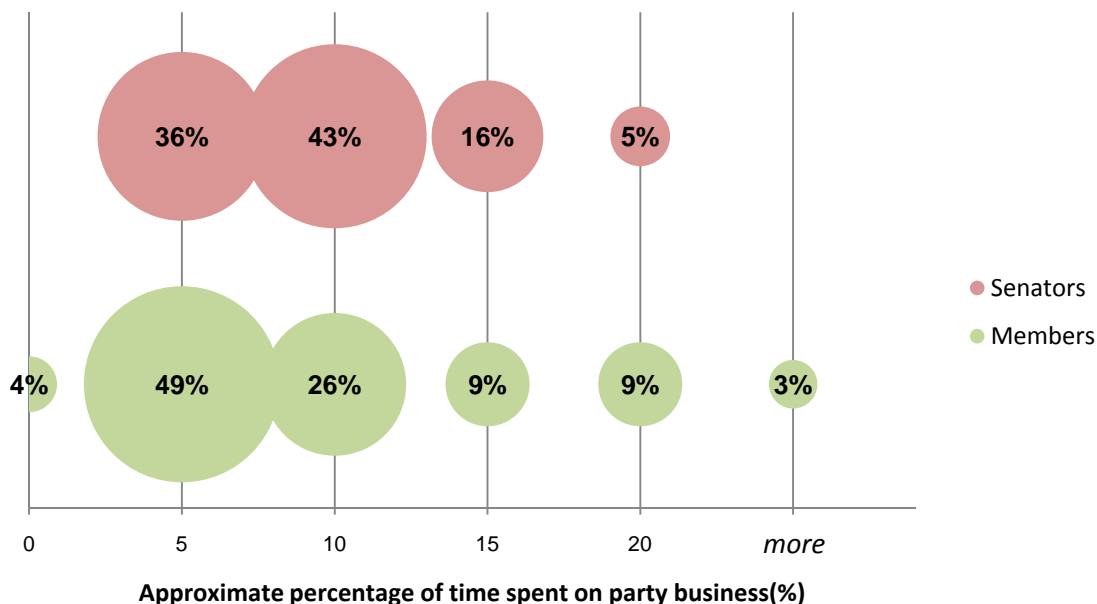
One House interviewee argued that as much as you are representing your electorate's view to the party, you have stood as a party candidate, so voters expect that you will be voting with the party. Despite party discipline, a House interviewee argued that members also bring a view based on their local electorate, which then feeds into the party's policy. One interviewee advised that while being conscious of preselection panels in a survival sense, if you carve a niche you will retain preselection, even if your views are not completely supported by the party.

Figure 26a: Proportions of current parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on party business



Slightly higher proportions of senators spend more time on party business, consistent with the stereotype of party ‘machine men’ in the Senate.

Figure 26b: Proportions of former parliamentarians according to approximate percentage of time spent on party business



For most respondents, party business takes up 10 per cent or less of their time, with only minor differences between the two groups. The only discernible difference is that a higher proportion of Senate respondents spend more than 10 per cent of their time on party business, which is consistent with the earlier finding that some Senate respondents identify as primarily party representatives.

Minor party and independent perspectives

Many minor party interviewees argued that while they held more regular and in-depth party room meetings than the major parties, that they actually spent less time arguing about a common position than in the major parties. As the Greens currently have no lower house representation, they often work on certain issues with the independent crossbench. Independents, without the benefits of party support, rely on staff to get across the detail of legislation and learn ‘to pick your fights’. However, being independent or in a minor party can help to leverage gains from both sides of politics, regardless of which side is in government. A strong belief was expressed by many interviewees that being a crossbench senator meant that you had a ‘real’ voice in parliament.

Bicameral representation

‘If a second chamber dissents from the first, it is mischievous; if it agrees it is superfluous’ – eighteenth-century political philosopher Abbé de Sièyes⁶⁵

In most countries, the upper house is subordinate to the lower house, exemplified by the terms ascribed to the Senate: an ‘upper house’ is symbolically further from the people than the lower house; ‘second chamber’ is secondary; and even ‘house of review’ is reactive to the ‘house of government’.⁶⁶ Even the name House of *Representatives* implies that members are the real representatives, not the senators. *House of Representatives Practice* contends that the Senate ‘is not an equitably representative body in the sense that the House is’.⁶⁷ Uhr notes that the Australian Senate’s powers are remarkable and unlike that of any other upper house in a Westminster-derived parliament.⁶⁸ In Westminster-derived parliamentary systems, Budget bills are generally regarded, at least by the government, as sacrosanct and equivalent to a vote of confidence. Yet as Bach, among others, note, the Senate can compel the government to resign by denying supply, and therefore the executive is not only responsible to the lower house.⁶⁹ In Australia, the Senate can undermine the government’s budgetary authority, and has in 1975 precipitating a Constitutional ‘crisis’, and in 1993 when minor parties in the Senate demanded input into the budget and the budget process.⁷⁰ The dismissal of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1975 after the Senate blocked supply challenged the convention that government can only be brought down in the House of Representatives.

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65. D Shell, ‘The history of bicameralism’, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2001, p. 13.
66. SC Patterson and A Mughan, ‘Senates and the theory of bicameralism’, in SC Patterson and A Mughan (eds), *Senates: bicameralism in the contemporary world*, op. cit., p. 12; J Uhr, ‘Generating divided government: the Australian Senate’, *Ibid.*, p. 102.
67. Quoted in IC Harris (ed.), *House of Representatives Practice (Fifth Edition)*, Department of the House of Representatives, Canberra, 2005, p. 469.
68. J Uhr, ‘Generating divided government: the Australian Senate’, op. cit., p. 94.
69. S Bach, *Platypus and parliament: the Australian Senate in theory and practice*, op. cit., pp. 102–3.
70. L Young, *Minor parties ... major players?: the Senate, the minor parties and the 1993 Budget*, 1996 Parliamentary Fellow monograph, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 1997.

Evolution of the Australian Senate

Australia's system of government is imaginatively described as a 'Washminster' mutation, transplanting the federal system from the United States onto the Westminster system of responsible parliamentary government. The constitutional conventional debates of the 1890s focused on the United States (and even Canada) and adapting their system to the existing British-derived systems of government as existed in the colonies at the time.⁷¹ Yet they did prefer the British cabinet system of ministerial membership of parliament rather than the American presidential system, although America's powerful Senate, or more precisely its federal system and state-based representative chamber, proved an irresistible model. However, the stature of the United States' Senate was not successfully transplanted, with the Australian Senate retaining a sense of illegitimacy like the British House of Lords. Hewitt argues that the Australian Senate has not been able to attain the status and prestige of its American counterpart as it does not exercise the same level of oversight in relation to the administration and foreign affairs.⁷² However, one notable feature of the Senate that Australia did not adapt from the United States, or from the British House of Lords, was the direct election of senators.⁷³ Thus, unlike in many other bicameral systems around the world, Australia has always had two houses of directly-elected representatives. In the Senate, where representatives are elected by the people of a state, are they representatives for the people or for the state?

Electoral legislation was reformed to introduce proportional representation for the Senate in 1948, with Labor Attorney-General H. V. Evatt describing the reform as 'one most likely to enhance the status of the Senate'.⁷⁴ Yet there were no minor parties like the Democratic Labor Party, the Democrats or Greens to worry about at the time of the reforms. *Oggers' Australian Senate Practice* is unsurprisingly complimentary in its description of the reforms:

The 1948 electoral settlement for the Senate mitigated the dysfunctions of the single member electorate basis of the House of Representatives by enabling additional,

71. See EE Hewitt, *Cameral government: unicameral and bicameral legislatures*, Viridia Books, Melbourne, 1992, pp. 129–35.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

73. At the time of Australia's Federation, United States' Senators were chosen by state legislatures.

74. J Uhr, 'Generating divided government: the Australian Senate', in SC Patterson and A Mughan (eds), *Senates: bicameralism in the contemporary world*, op. cit., pp. 107–8.

discernible bodies of electoral opinion to be represented in Parliament. The consequence has been that parliamentary government of the Commonwealth is not simply a question of majority rule but one of representation. The Senate, because of the method of composition, is the institution in the Commonwealth which reconciles majority rule, as imperfectly expressed in the House of Representatives, with adequate representation.⁷⁵

As Bach argues, the 1949 electoral law reforms increased the likelihood of different balances of party power in each house.⁷⁶ Thus the Senate has the capacity to frustrate a government's agenda. In recent decades, the Opposition has not *controlled* the Senate; rather minor parties and independents have held the balance of power between the government and opposition (or the government has controlled both houses). At every Senate election since 1955, candidates from outside the Labor, Liberal and National parties have been elected.⁷⁷ Minor parties and independents have held the balance of power from 1981–2005 and since 2008. While minor parties have been more electorally successful in the Senate, there have been more Independents elected to the House of Representatives than the Senate.⁷⁸

This wider range of parties has given rise to the description of the Senate as the 'Parties' House', even though the strength of party discipline in the major parties is practically the same in both houses. Indeed, Bogdanor argues that there is a fundamental weakness in the representative principle itself, as lower house members do not necessarily represent the popular will of the people, particularly under conditions of strong political party discipline.⁷⁹ However, party voting is more pronounced in the Senate, since the 1984 electoral reforms introduced 'above the line' or 'Group Ticket Voting'. Under this system, voters can simply vote '1' for a party grouping, rather than having to allocate preferences themselves, which can often be a cumbersome process. The parties not only control the order of their own candidates, but also the order of preferences for other candidates. Blom argues that:

75. H Evans (ed.), *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice (Twelfth Edition)*, Department of the Senate, Canberra, 2008, pp. 90–1.

76. S Bach, *Platypus and parliament: the Australian Senate in theory and practice*, op. cit., p. 5.

77. S Bennett, *The Australian Senate*, Research Paper, no. 6, 2003–04, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2004, p. 2.

78. M Rodrigues and S Brenton, *The age of independence? Independents in Australian parliaments*, Forthcoming Research Paper, Parliamentary Library, Canberra.

79. V Bogdanor, 'The problem of the upper house', in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *Bicameralisme: Tweekamerstelsel vroeger en nu*, op. cit., p. 412.

Except for this accountability as an institution, individual senators may experience few pressures to account for their actions, as the elective element is weak or non-existent. At the most they have to respond to an exclusive audience to promote their re-election and even then, their activities as senators might be relatively unimportant. Whatever they do, so it seems, there is almost no survival-pressure to account for it. They might as well snore!⁸⁰

While Blom was referring to upper houses in general, including many non-directly elected upper houses, the nature of the Australia's electoral system and dominance of the major parties means that Senate candidates in the top two positions of the major parties state tickets are virtually guaranteed election.

Among current and former senators there was considerable disagreement about whether state-based representation is relevant. One senator believed that states are on a path to oblivion, but most were more circumspect. Another senator argued there will be always be distinct states, and a former party leader was sceptical about whether Australia could ever move away from state-based representation in the Senate. One long-serving senator argued that the role of the Senate as a 'states' house' has diminished, particularly as free voting is less common and party discipline is much more regimented, as senators are elected by the party so their first allegiance is to the party.

As one senator put it, some issues are just state issues, some are national, and some start as state and become national. One senator stills sees it as a 'states' house', in the sense of looking at state issues through a national framework and placing them in the bigger picture. For example, South Australian senators cited the Murray-Darling basin and the issue of water security as a clearly identifiable state issue. The budget was another area where Senators saw opportunities to ensure that their states received their fair share.

One interviewee observed that most 'states' issues' are actually state government issues. One senator argued that in terms of state representation it is 'horses for courses'—when it suits senators they claim that the Senate is a states' house but it just as much a parties house and 'to deny that is just a folly'. One interviewee explained that while state-based representation has been notional since Federation, equal representation means that the small states get more voice in the party room and that there is substantial debate in the party room. However, the ACT is disadvantaged as it is underrepresented in terms of population, and the ACT's voice can be drowned out in

80. HW Blom, 'Ethos and interests. Arguments for a representational differentiation in a changing society', in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 150.

the party room (there is only one ACT representative in the Liberal Party room compared with five Tasmanians, and three ACT representatives in Labor's party room compared with ten Tasmanians).

Uhr argues that: 'The common rhetoric of the Senate as a (failed) states' house has got it no more than half right, and has done a disservice in suppressing the wider justification of the Senate as a brake on the misuse of majority power'.⁸¹ Bach adds that: 'In any event, whether it is accurate to say that the Senate was intended to be the House of the States, observers of the Parliament in practice are virtually unanimous in stressing that whatever the Senate may be, a House of the States it is not'. He goes onto reject the names House of the States or House of Review, preferring the distinctive names House of Responsibility (lower house) and House of Accountability (upper house).⁸² If senators are not always directly representing their states, then who or what do they represent? Parties? While members of the House of Representatives have identifiable *constituents*, given the strict party discipline that exists in Australian politics and the diversity of large electorates, do they represent a constituency as much as a party? These questions are not new but if senators and members are both representing the same thing and if they sit in houses with almost the same powers, then do they actually differ in terms of their representative roles and responsibilities? Figures 27a and 27b show parliamentarians attitudes towards the institution of parliament in terms of the different functions of both houses.

81. J Uhr, 'Generating divided government: the Australian Senate', op. cit., p. 116.

82. S Bach, *Platypus and parliament: the Australian Senate in theory and practice*, op. cit., p. 351.

Figure 27a: Current parliamentarians' views of the roles of the houses

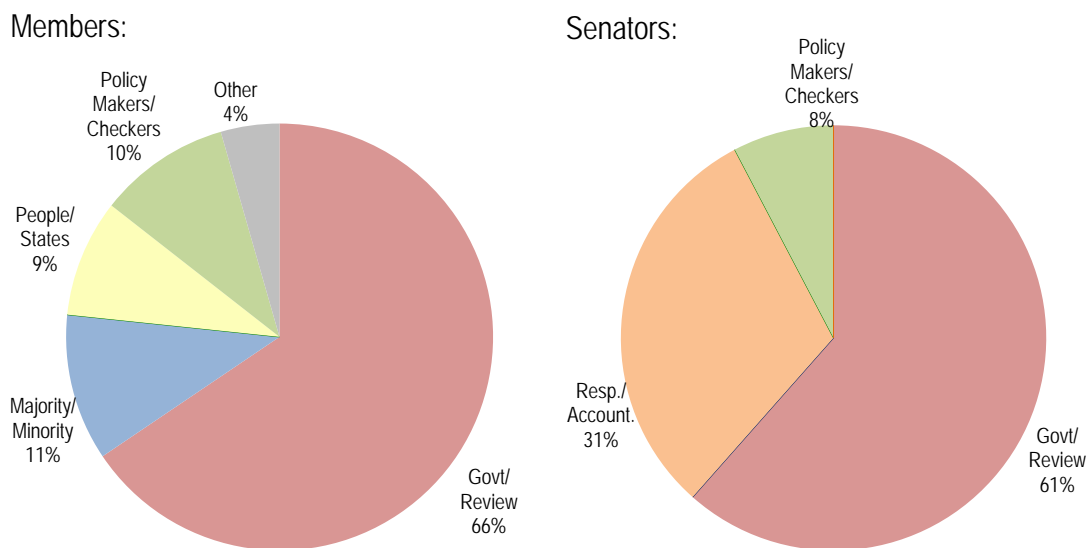
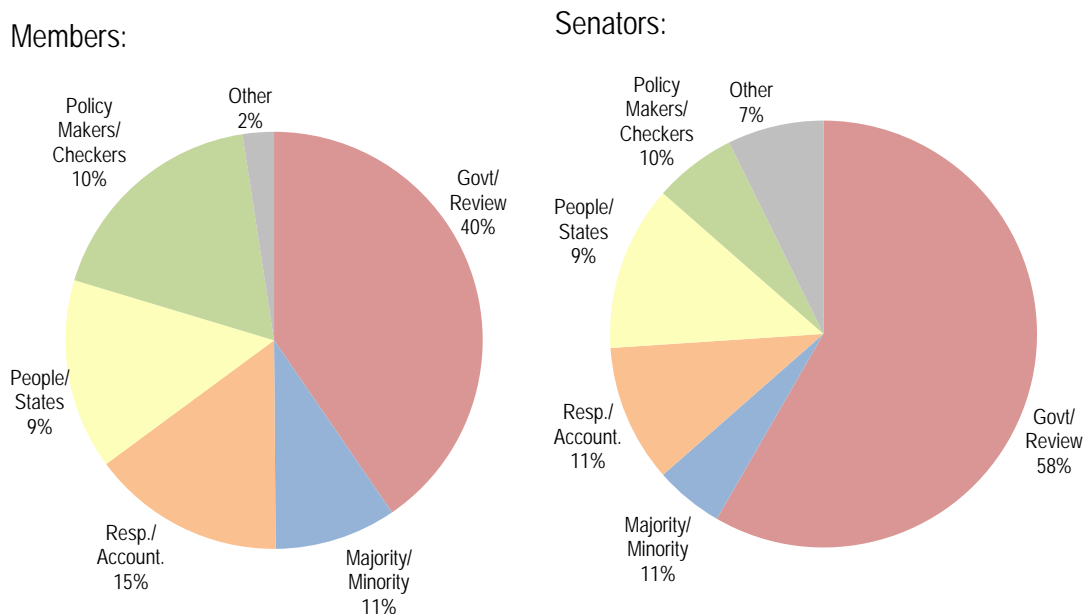


Figure 27b: Former parliamentarians' views of the roles of the houses



Many senators discussed the importance of the review role of the Senate, and strongly identified with that role. Many mentioned holding the government to account and checks and balances. A Senate interviewee was interested in reviewing legislation and holding the executive accountable to the legislature. One interviewee who has served in both houses observed that the Senate’s transformation into a house of accountability is

only relatively recent, and that it was once quite a staid place and that estimates was boring. Indeed a long-serving parliamentarian observed that the relationship between the houses has changed and the status of the Senate has increased as the government has often not controlled the numbers in recent decades. Who holds the balance of power in the Senate appears to be a crucial factor. One senator claimed that when the government had control of the Senate there was not much difference between the houses but when the government does not have control, the workload and presence of senators increases. However, one current parliamentarian observed that during the last term of the Howard government, when the Coalition controlled both houses, that government backbenchers would question the executive more. One former government senator conceded that democracy is enhanced when the government does not have a majority in the Senate.

Yet advocates of the Senate were matched by critics. One former member described the Senate as the 'B team' as the House of Representatives is the House of Government. One senator conceded that the Senate is still seen as a second house and a bit of a sleepy place and it is difficult to get attention, particularly from the Opposition, as the media do not follow the debates closely and are more interested in the Prime Minister and Treasurer, who sit in the lower house. A current senator considered changing to the lower house to become a party leader and believes that one has greater influence in the lower house. However, another senator argued that most members do not understand the Senate or the roles of the senators. Unsurprisingly, minor parties were the biggest advocates of a strong and powerful Senate, but many did recognise the limitations of being able to frame an agenda, particularly in relation to budget bills. However, crossbench senators still actively initiate bills and propose amendments, and occasionally are successful in their endeavours.

The Senate's review role can sometimes overshadow the House. While the government's legislation always passes the House it is reviewed by an unpredictable Senate, which one House interviewee described as an over-simplification that does not acknowledge the contribution of House debate in forming the basis for Senate amendments. Ministers often listen intently and frame amendments themselves to be presented in the Senate. One member argued that accountability, however imperfect in the House, is still there with Questions on Notice and Without Notice, which is a very important part of the process. The House committee system is underrated but significant, as it checks the power of the executive. Flaws are exposed during the course of debates in and the government listens and put amendments in the Senate. This

member claimed that the Australian parliament is one of the few in the world where the Prime Minister and ministers front parliament every day.

Upper House membership

Advocates of bicameralism stress the review role of upper house, variously described as: the *chambre de réflexion*, the ‘embodiment of considered opinion’, that ‘provides for second opinion’ and ‘sober second thought’. In performing the role, the membership often differs from that of the lower house. Shell argues that:

In principle a second chamber ought to provide for the mobilisation into a legislature of people whose experience is different, decidedly different, from that which is normal for the first chamber. The argument here would be that if a second chamber is going to exist at all it ought to be so composed that its membership is dissimilar in important respects from that of the first chamber.⁸³

Couwenberg proposes a division of labour to improve the functioning of bicameralism, based on the Montesquieu model where there is a division of tasks between the chambers and a different composition of the second chamber.⁸⁴ Tsebelis and Money state that:

Montesquieu also noted the distinctive qualities of a senate, whose members shared the characteristics of age, virtue, wisdom, and service to the community. Such a council would reinforce the stability of the polity through its sound advice. In other words, a senate was a wise body that could remind the society of its first principles and ensure that new legislation improved rather than corrupted the old.⁸⁵

Couwenberg argues that there is ‘an undeniable difference in abilities and interests among politicians: some are more interested in legislation and others more in policy making and policy checking’.⁸⁶ Indeed, many senators cited this as the primary reason for contesting the Senate in the first place. John Sturt Mill conceived of one House representing popular feeling and the other personal merit, in the sense that upper House members should have special training or knowledge to comprise a chamber of

83. D Shell, ‘The history of bicameralism’, op. cit., p. 17.

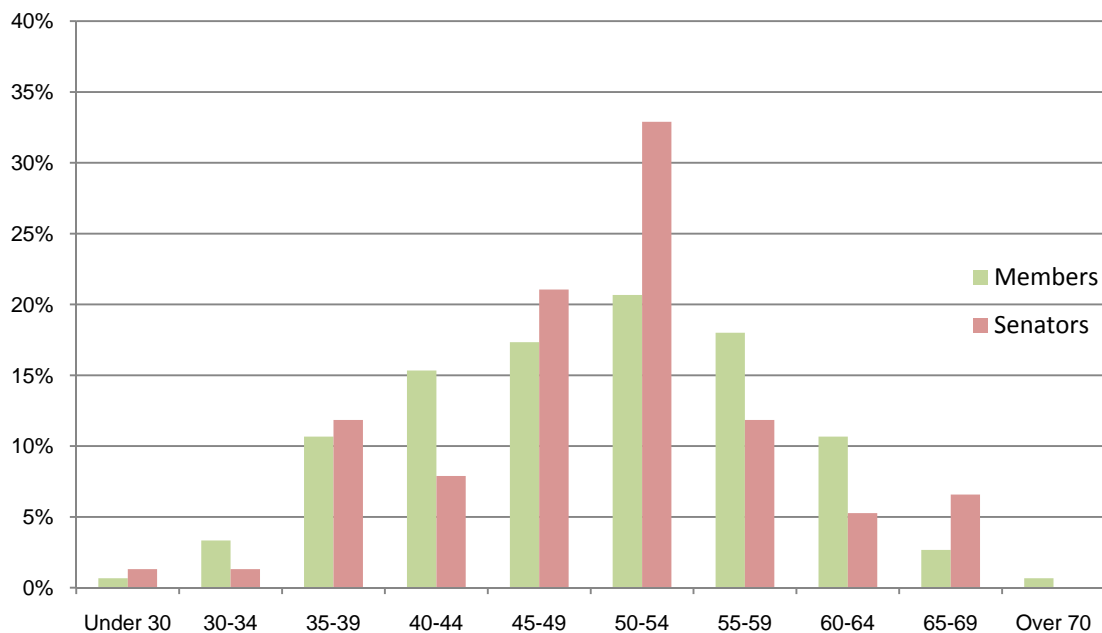
84. SW Couwenberg, ‘Bicameralism, historical background, alternative conceptions and current relevance’, in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *Bicameralisme: Tweekamerstelsel vroeger en nu*, op. cit., p. 141.

85. G Tsebelis and J Money, *Bicameralism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 11–2.

86. SW Couwenberg, ‘Bicameralism, historical background, alternative conceptions and current relevance’, op. cit., p. 141.

'statesmen' counterbalancing the chamber of the people.⁸⁷ Indeed, one interviewee argued that there are different skill sets required for each house. Eligibility for upper house membership can be restricted, including higher minimum age requirements, social and economic restrictions, or the need for professional qualifications.⁸⁸ Yet on the basic measures of age, length of service (even though the Senate has longer terms), qualifications and previous occupations, the distributions of current senators and members are quite similar. This is shown in Figures 28a to 28f.

Figure 28a: Age distribution of current parliamentarians*



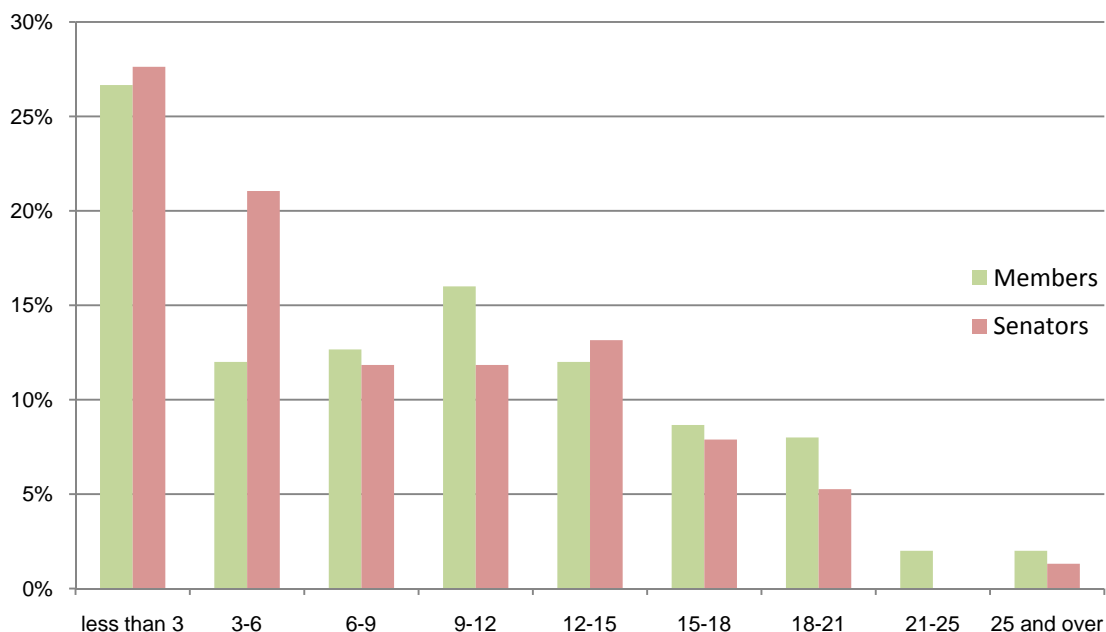
Data Source: Parliamentary Library, *Parliamentary handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, Department of Parliamentary Services, Canberra, 2008, p. 256.

* as at beginning of the 42nd parliament

87. D Shell, 'The history of bicameralism', op. cit., p. 11.

88. HW Blom, 'Bicameralism – history – theory – problems', in HW Blom, WP Blockmans and H de Schepper (eds), *Bicameralisme: Tweekamerstelsel vroeger en nu*, op. cit., p. 22.

Figure 28b: Years served by current parliamentarians*



Data Source: *Parliamentary handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, p. 256. (The graph includes one member who served four years in the Senate; two members who served six and eight years respectively in the Senate, and one senator who served eleven years in the House of Representatives.)

* as at beginning of the 42nd parliament

Figure 28c: Levels of qualifications of current parliamentarians



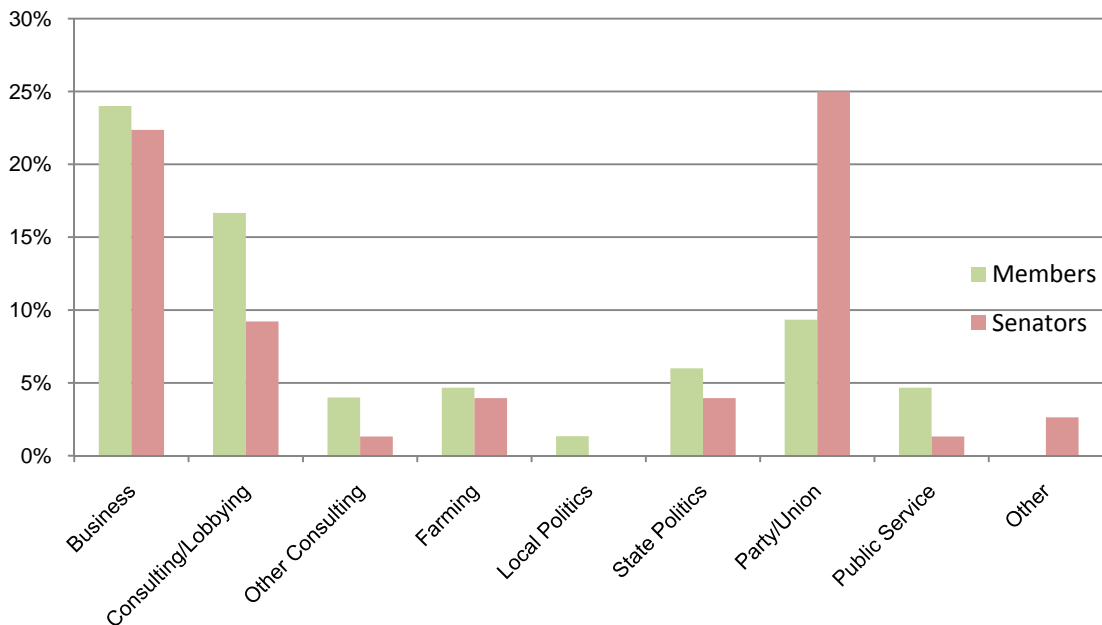
Data Source: *Parliamentary handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, p. 264.

Figure 28d: Proportions of current parliamentarians with prior elected service in local and state government



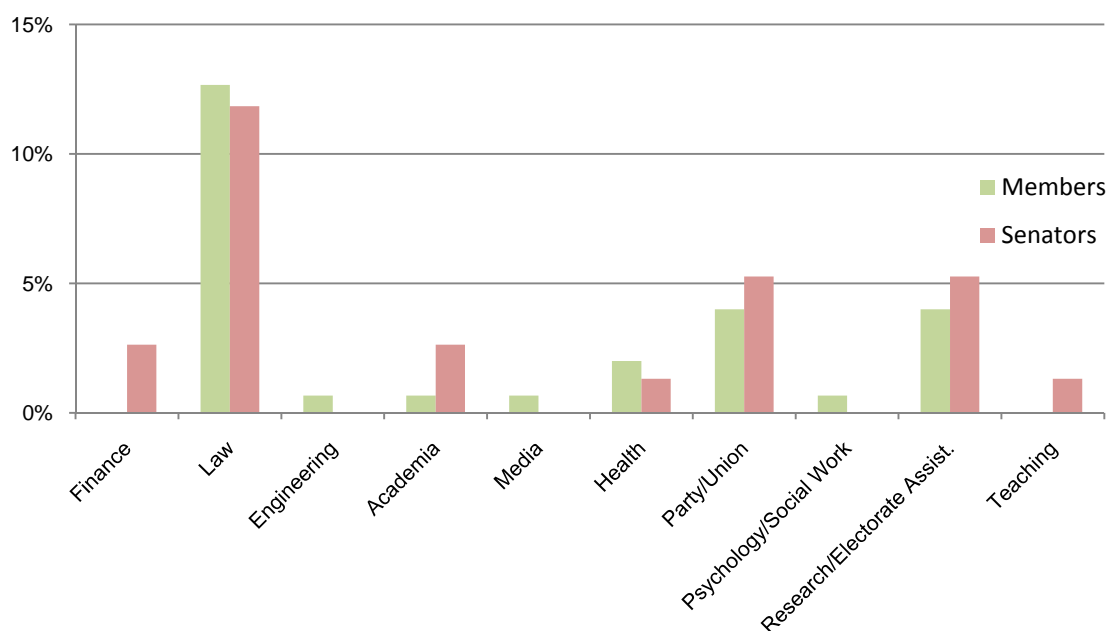
Data Source: *Parliamentary handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, p. 263.

Figure 28e: Previous managerial & administrative occupations of current parliamentarians



Data Source: *Parliamentary handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, p. 263.

Figure 28f: Previous professional occupations of current parliamentarians



Data Source: *Parliamentary Handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, Thirty-first edition 2008*, pp. 268–270.

The most notable differences are that more than twice the proportion of members have previous experience in elected government and more senators have party/union management/administration experience, which is further evidence of Senate preselection process favouring organisational stalwarts. Where there are differences between senators and members is in terms of more personal characteristics.

Mirror representation

The 1996 Australian Parliamentary Fellow, Gianni Zappalà, examined ethnic politics and political representation in his monograph entitled *Four Weddings, a Funeral and a Family Reunion: Ethnicity and Representation in Australian Federal Politics*.⁸⁹ Zappalà discusses both system-wide approaches to representation and normative theories of representation. Of particular relevance to this monograph is Zappalà's critique of mirror representation, that is, the idea that Parliament should proportionally reflect the different demographic groups in Australian society. While such critiques are

89. G Zappalà, *Four weddings, a funeral and a family reunion: ethnicity and representation in Australian federal politics*, op. cit.

beyond the scope of this monograph, of interest in this study is whether one House mirrors Australia's diversity more than the other House. Mirror representation is often practised electorally through proportional representation, which is the method of election for the Australian Senate.

The idea that representatives should share the characteristics of the people they represent dates back to the American Revolution, with John Adams arguing that the legislature 'should be an exact portrait, in miniature, of the people at large, as it should think, feel, reason and act like them'.⁹⁰ He believed the best way of avoiding corruption and tyrannical monarchies, with diversity increasing popular involvement, democratic responsiveness and political accountability.⁹¹ Mirror representation is also commonly known as descriptive representation, or what Pitkin describes as 'standing for'.⁹² 'True' representation is where the composition of the representative body corresponds to, mirrors or reflects the whole nation. Pitkin writes that:

In politics, too, representation as "standing for" by resemblance, as being a copy of an original, is always a question of which characteristics are politically relevant for reproduction ... the history of representative government and the expansion of the suffrage is one long record of changing demands for representation based on changing concepts of what are politically relevant features to be represented. The nation is not like a geographic area to be mapped—solidly there, more or less unchanging, certainly not changed by the map-making process.⁹³

Pitkin notes that this conception of representation is significantly different from the formalistic authorisation and accountability views as it has nothing to do with how the representative acts but depends on the personal characteristics of the representative.⁹⁴

In many respects the Senate is *more* representative of the wider populace than the House of Representatives. Not only are more parties represented but also more minority groups. The only two Indigenous Australian parliamentarians were senators. Women occupy just 27 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives but 36 per cent of the Senate seats (see Figure 29). The youngest women to be elected and sit in parliament were senators. The first Australians of Asian ethnicity to sit in parliament were senators and the only openly gay and lesbian parliamentarians are senators. The

90. Adams cited in S Dovi, *The good representative*, op. cit., p. 29.

91. Ibid., p. 29.

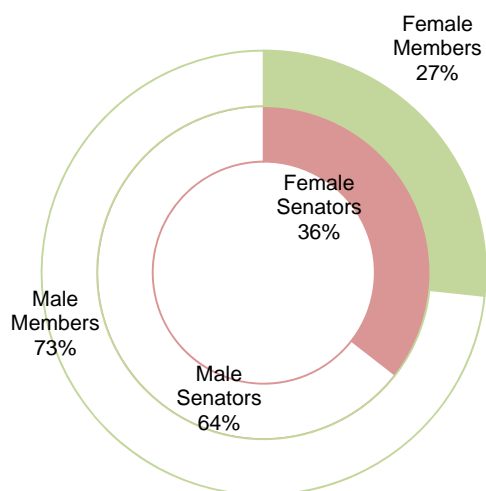
92. HF Pitkin, *The concept of representation*, op. cit., pp. 60–1.

93. Ibid., p. 87.

94. Ibid., p. 61.

list goes on but the theme is the same—that a wider range of groups have been better represented in the Senate, or as some more radical proponents have suggested, the Senate is the *real* house of representatives.

Figure 29: Proportions of current female parliamentarians



Data source: J Wilson and D Black, *Women parliamentarians 1921–2009*, 4 May 2009, viewed at <http://www.apf.gov.au/Library/pubs/BN/2008-09/WomenParliamentarians.pdf>

Women are arguably the most underrepresented group, and differences between houses are replicated at a state level. In the five states with upper houses, four (NSW, Vic., WA and Tas.) currently have higher proportions of female members in the upper house. Only South Australia has a higher proportion of women in the lower house (and Queensland does not have an upper house).

One female parliamentarian claimed that conservative party leaders believed that women are not as exposed to a campaign in the Senate. A long-serving female parliamentarian argued that it would take a long time to achieve equal representation, as sitting members vacate seats and more women contest and win preselection. In this respect, Senate preselections for election ensure a higher turnover and more opportunities for women, due to the multiple positions available. Another major party senator contended that winning a lower house seat and as member of a minority group was more challenging, though not clearly impossible. However, it was not only (male) party powerbrokers who guided women towards the Senate, with some female

politicians also preferring the chamber. One female parliamentarian saw the Senate as more attractive in terms of achieving a better work, life and family balance as electorate demands are less.

Geography provides an easy base upon which to construct representative institutions, but why is geography more important in Australia's electoral design than gender, for example? A certain number of seats are reserved for certain states, sometimes over and above their population, but the notion of reserving half the seats in parliament for women, is contentious. As Dovi acknowledges:

Most theorists do recognise that members of certain groups must be present in democratic institutions in order for good democratic representation to take place. In other words, descriptive representation is considered necessary, albeit not sufficient, for good democratic representation.⁹⁵

Yet it is dependent on the political actors—essentially the political parties—to recognise and act upon this, rather than through institutional changes. Furthermore, while Saward observes that in Australia and the United States some parliamentarians claim they represent constituencies such as women, lesbians and gay men and indigenous people, which transcend geographically defined electorates,⁹⁶ Dovi concedes that not every member of a historically disadvantaged group is committed to advancing the concerns of that group.⁹⁷ They are not necessarily the best representatives of the group and can indeed be hostile to such group identities. Furthermore, it assumes a high degree of homogeneity within the group.

95. S Dovi, *The good representative*, op. cit., p. 23.

96. Sawyer 2001 and Mansbridge 2003 cited in M Saward, 'The subject of representation', *Representation*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2008, p. 94.

97. S. Dovi, op. cit., p. 34.

Conclusion: more similar than different

The sentiments exposed in the Contemporary Bicameralism Conference were confirmed in this study as both senators and members saw their work as unique, which was a perception even more pronounced among current parliamentarians. There were strong senses of pride, even superiority, in identifying as either a senator or member, and confidence that political skills could easily be transferred between the chambers. Yet the experience of parliamentarians who did switch chambers and the opinions of senior chamber officials who witnessed the transfers, suggests that transitions are not quite so easy.

While the focus of this study was comparing senators and members, differences emerged between current and former parliamentarians. There were differences between senators and members in terms of how they saw their representative role, but there was far more variation within the groups and there appears to have been changes over time. Overall the profession has changed for both senators and members, with technological and communication developments, increases in staff and constituents, increased media intrusions, and challenges to balance work and family. This study proceeded on the premise that senators and members are two distinct groups, and it was expected that there would be more differences between them than similarities. While there are some differences between senators and members in terms of their roles and responsibilities, they are not as different as some might think, including the senators and members themselves. Yet often the differences between current and former parliamentarians appeared to be greater than between senators and members. There were also greater differences between the major parties and the minor parties, and between the parties and independents.

While it is theoretically difficult to clearly articulate how all representatives should act in all circumstances, empiricists have been more successful in typologising how different representatives act compared to one another. Donald D. Searing in his study of political roles in the British House of Commons, identified four informal backbench roles—Policy Advocates, Ministerial Aspirants, Constituency Members, and Parliament ‘Men’.⁹⁸ Building on the typologies of Searing in the British context and Wahlke et al. in the American context, Jones identifies five preferential roles based

98. DD Searing, *Westminster's world: understanding political roles*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1994.

parliamentarians, constituency servants, partisans, policy specialists and political theorists.⁹⁹ Jones concluded that the Senate is more concentrated with partisans and less with constituency servants than the House of Representatives, where there is a greater spread of roles. However Jones' categories were based on mutually exclusive assumptions about political behaviours, and most politicians exhibit multiple behaviours. In this study, ideologues, philosophers, interest and social groupies, and parliamentarians-at-large have been replaced by more geographically-identifying representatives (including through a party) in both chambers. While senators generally owe their preselection and election to their parties, so do most members, even if they may not see themselves primarily as party representatives. There is certainly a stronger sense of local attachment among members, but most acknowledge the politics goes far beyond the local. Furthermore, local representation is occurring in the party room rather than the parliament, as representatives advocate for their community in order to influence party policy.

The biggest difference between senators and members is in terms of parliament. Senators are more committee-focused, and chamber-focused while in Canberra, and again this has become more pronounced in recent times. The cultural differences between the chambers are stark, and these institutions have strongly influenced the political actors. The changes for senators over time appear to have been greater than for members, with the role of the Senate changing. Most see the House as the House of Government and the Senate as the House of Review, and this view has become even more entrenched in the current parliament. This policy and legislative focus of the Senate is arguably aided by longer terms, as (state) senators are elected for fixed six-year terms and party ticket voting provides more certainty than for members, who are subjected to individualised electorate contests at least every three years. The focus of members across the different roles and responsibilities is more divided, and is perhaps indicative of the competing demands due to the greater pressures associated with re-election.

The House was once the chamber of choice for parliamentarians wanting to represent a defined electorate, while only a minority of senators were attracted to the idea of state-based representation. Now the difference is less acute, with senators identifying as

99. G Jones, 'The tension between individual role constructions, responsibilities to the institution and their reconciliation on Committees', paper presented to the annual conference of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, Adelaide, 23–25 August 2007; JC Wahlke et.al., *The legislative system: explorations in legislative behaviour*, Wiley, New York, 1962.

strong state-based advocates, for example, Queensland Senator Barnaby Joyce and South Australian Senator Nick Xenophon. Furthermore, the Senate is now perceived by its participants as the more interesting and exciting chamber. While it was expected that the ambitious ministerial aspirants and hardworking constituency servants would reside in the House, and the ‘policy wonks’ and conscientious legislators, or true parliamentarians, would occupy the red-leather Senate benches, there is far more variation. There are many high-profile ministers in the Senate with major portfolios and even more lower-profile backbenchers in the House who will probably never aspire to higher office. Indeed the image of the consummate politician kissing babies in shopping centres is contrasted by some introverted and painfully shy members in reality. Equally there are many extroverted senators with excellent campaigning skills eliciting high levels of constituent interest and support from across the country. However, the ‘House of Review’ is unfortunately also home to many party ‘hacks’, as well as diligent legislators and committee inquisitors.

Despite negative perceptions of the ‘dark’ side, there are many similarities in workloads of senators and members and most types of work, including constituent work, which may surprise many members in particular. Yet the type of constituent work appears to be different, as do the constituencies that senators and members represent. Most members have retained their traditional role as representatives of constituents in their local community, while many senators align themselves with interest and other groups that transcend geographical boundaries. Senators (and their party strategists) have begun to move away from the CBDs of capital cities and are now engaging more with the community and forming regional—if not local—attachments. It appears that senators are shattering (or indeed have shattered) the stereotypes of retirees and ‘unrepresentative swill’ and become ‘pseudo-Members’. Senators are engaging in significant amounts of constituent work and increasingly acting as the public face of the parties at various community and campaigning events.

Australia’s ‘Washminster’ mutation has evolved into a uniquely stable and workable system of government incorporating some of the best aspects of parliamentary and presidential systems. While the executive sits in the parliament there is effectively a presidential-like separation of powers between the executive and the legislature, or more precisely between the executive-controlled lower house and an upper house where the government usually lacks a majority. *Odgers’ Australian Senate Practice* provides the following theoretical justification for Australian bicameralism:

Adequate representation of a modern society, with its geographic, social and economic variety, can be realised only by a variety of modes of election. This is best

Conclusion: more similar than different

achieved by a bicameral parliament in which each house is constituted by distinctive electoral process. A properly structured bicameral parliament ensures that representation goes beyond winning a simple majority of votes in one election, and encompasses the state of electoral opinion in different phases of development.¹⁰⁰

Thus, it is not simply the existence of two houses that has produced this democratic dynamism but the different electoral systems, which has preserved the government's authority in House and not only resulted in a wider range of parties in the Senate but also a broader range of people. Just as the Senate has emerged from the shadow of the House of Representatives and increasingly asserted itself and established a unique role, so too have senators.

100. H Evans (ed.), *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice (Twelfth Edition)*, op. cit., p. 4.

Appendix: list of interview participants

The Hon. Bronwyn BISHOP (Liberal, NSW)

Member for Mackellar (1994–); Senator for New South Wales (1987–94)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Member, Speaker’s Panel from 16.11.04 to 17.10.07.
- Ministerial appointments
 - Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel from 11.3.96 to 21.10.98.
 - Minister for Aged Care from 21.10.98 to 26.11.01.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Regulations and Ordinances from 24.9.87 to 18.8.93.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 11.5.90 to 18.8.93.
 - Senate Select: Functions, Powers and Operation of the Australian Loan Council from 5.11.92 to 24.2.94.
 - Senate Estimates: A from 24.9.87 to 6.5.93; F on 10.9.91; D from 6.5.93 to 24.2.94.
 - House of Representatives Standing: Legal and Constitutional Affairs from 20.3.02 to 31.8.04; Privileges from 20.3.02 to 31.8.04; Procedure from 20.3.02 to 17.10.07; Communications, Information Technology and the Arts from 1.12.04 to 17.10.07; Family and Human Services from 1.12.04 to 17.10.07; Industry and Resources from 1.12.04 to 17.10.07.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 7.10.87 to 24.2.94; Public Accounts and Audit from 16.8.05 to 17.10.07; Corporations and Securities from 27.2.95 to 29.1.96.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Shadow Minister for Public Administration, Federal Affairs and Local Government from 12.5.89 to 11.4.90.
 - Shadow Minister for Urban and Regional Strategy from 17.1.94 to 26.5.94.
 - Shadow Minister for Health from 26.5.94 to 31.1.95.
 - Shadow Minister for Privatisation and Commonwealth/State Relations from 31.1.95 to 11.3.96.
 - Shadow Minister for Veterans’ Affairs from 6.12.07 to 22.9.08.

Senator Robert (Bob) BROWN (Greens, Tas.)

Senator for Tasmania (1996–); Member of the Tasmanian House of Assembly (1983–93)

- Committee service
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts: Legislation Committee from 1.7.05 to 5.10.05.
 - Senate Select: Socio-Economic Consequences of the National Competition Policy from 24.8.99 to 17.2.00.
 - Joint Standing: Electoral Matters from 14.2.08.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - State: Parliamentary Leader of the Greens (Tas.) 1989–93.
 - Federal: Leader of the Australian Greens from 28.11.05.

The Hon. Frederick (Fred) CHANEY (Liberal, WA)

Member for Pearce (1990–93); Senator for Western Australia (197–90)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Minister for Administrative Services from 25.8.78 to 5.12.78.
 - Minister for Aboriginal Affairs from 5.12.78 to 3.11.80.
 - Minister Assisting the Minister for Education from 25.8.78 to 8.12.79.
 - Minister Assisting the Minister for National Development and Energy from 8.12.79 to 3.11.80.
 - Minister for Social Security from 3.11.80 to 11.3.83.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Standing Orders from 4.3.76 to 19.9.80 and from 4.5.83 to 5.6.87; Privileges from 17.8.78 to 19.9.78; Appropriations and Staffing from 11.5.83 to 27.2.90; Procedure from 9.10.87 to 27.2.90.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Constitutional and Legal Affairs from 22.8.74 to 14.9.78; National Development and Ownership and Control of Australian Resources from 13.5.75 to 11.11.75.
 - Senate Select: Foreign Ownership and Control from 1.8.74 to 4.3.75.
 - Joint: Prices from 25.7.74 to 11.11.75.
 - Joint Select: Aboriginal Land Rights in the Northern Territory from 10.12.76 to 28.2.77 and from 10.3.77 to 17.8.77.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Assistant Opposition Whip in the Senate from 20.11.74 to 8.4.75.
 - Opposition Whip in the Senate from 8.4.75 to 11.11.75.
 - Government Whip in the Senate from 22.12.75 to 28.2.78.
 - Leader of the Opposition in the Senate from 21.4.83 to 24.3.90.
 - Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Liberal Party from 9.5.89 to 3.4.90.
 - Deputy Leader of the Opposition from 9.5.89 to 3.4.90.
 - Spokesman on Resources and Energy from 16.3.83 to 14.12.84; on Industry, Technology and Commerce from 14.12.84 to 21.4.87; on Employment and Industrial Relations from 21.4.87 to 14.8.87; on Industrial Relations from 14.8.87 to 16.9.88; on Industry, Technology and Commerce from 16.9.88 to 12.5.89; on Industrial Relations from 12.5.89 to 11.4.90; on the Environment from 11.4.90 to 28.4.92; on Sustainable Development and the Environment from 28.4.92 to 7.8.92.
 - Shadow Minister without Portfolio from 7.8.92 to 7.4.93.

Brian COURTICE (Labor, Qld)

Member for Hinkler (1987–93)

- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Finance and Public Administration from 8.10.87 to 28.11.91; Banking, Finance and Public Administration from 28.11.91 to 8.2.93.

Senator the Hon. Alan FERGUSON (Liberal, SA)

Senator for South Australia (1992–)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Temporary Chair of Committees from 1.5.96 to 14.8.07.
 - President of the Senate from 14.8.07 to 30.6.08.
 - Deputy President of the Senate and Chair of Committees from 26.8.08.
- Committee service

- Senate Standing: Publications from 1.6.92 to 18.8.93; Procedure from 2.5.96 (Chair from 26.8.08); Appropriations and Staffing from 4.8.07 (Chair from 14.8.07) to 30.6.08; House from 14.8.07 (Chair from 14.8.07) to 30.6.08.
- Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Industry, Science and Technology from 1.6.92 to 18.5.93; Industry, Science, Technology, Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 18.5.93 to 10.10.94; Economics:
- References Committee from 10.10.94 to 30.6.99 (Chair from 11.10.94 to 29.4.96) and Legislation Committee from 8.5.96 to 9.9.96 and from 8.10.96 to 30.6.99 (Chair from 9.5.96 to 9.9.96 and from 8.10.96 to 30.6.99); Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade: Legislation Committee from 5.4.00 to 10.11.00 and from 15.12.00 to 11.9.06; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 11.9.06 to 14.8.07 and from 1.7.08.
- Senate Select: Superannuation from 1.7.93 to 9.11.98; Dangers of Radioactive Waste from 23.3.95 to 29.4.96; Uranium Mining and Milling from 8.5.96 to 15.5.97; New Tax System from 26.11.98 to 30.4.99; A Certain Maritime Incident from 14.2.02 to 11.3.02 and from 20.3.02 to 23.10.02; Scrafton Evidence from 30.8.04 to 9.12.04.
- Senate Estimates: E from 6.5.93 to 8.2.94; A from 8.2.94 to 10.10.94.
- Joint Statutory: Public Works from 29.5.96 to 11.8.05; ASIO, ASIS and DSD from 28.8.02 to 2.12.05; Intelligence and Security from 2.12.05 to 14.8.07; Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings from 14.8.07 (Chair from 14.8.07) to 30.6.08.
- Joint Standing: National Capital and External Territories from 23.10.95 to 27.5.97; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 7.5.97 (Chair from 1.7.99) to 14.8.07.

Senator Steve FIELDING (Family First, Vic.)

Senator for Victoria (2005–)

- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Selection of Bills from 9.5.07.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Community Affairs: Legislation Committee from 10.8.05 to 27.2.06.
 - Senate Select: Fuel and Energy from 1.7.08.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Federal Leader, Family First Party from 1.7.05.
 - Family First Party Whip in the Senate from 9.5.07.

The Hon. Timothy (Tim) FISCHER (Nationals, NSW)

Member for Farrer (1984–2001); Member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly (1971–84)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Deputy Prime Minister from 11.3.96 to 20.7.99.
 - Minister for Trade from 11.3.96 to 20.7.99.
- Committee service (Federal)
 - House of Representatives Standing: Transport Safety from 28.2.85 to 18.9.85; Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 8.10.87 to 19.2.90.
 - House of Representatives Select: Aircraft Noise from 28.2.85 to 28.11.85.
 - Joint Standing: New Parliament House from 23.5.89 to 19.2.90.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Leader, Federal Parliamentary National Party of Australia from 10.4.90 to 1.7.99.
 - Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs from 9.9.85 to 28.4.87 and from 14.8.87 to 11.4.90.
 - Shadow Minister for Energy and Resources from 11.4.90 to 7.4.93.

Appendix: list of interview participants

- Shadow Minister for Trade from 7.4.93 to 11.3.96.
- Spokesman for the National Party on Veterans, Immigration and Aborigines from 30.4.87 to 6.8.87.
- Deputy Manager of Opposition Business in the House from 12.5.89 to 11.4.90.

Bruce GOODLUCK (Liberal, Tas.)

Member for Franklin (1975–93)

- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Road Safety from 1.4.76 to 26.10.84; Transport Safety from 28.2.85 to 5.6.87; Publications from 1.3.78 to 19.9.80; Expenditure from 11.5.83 to 26.10.84; House from 8.10.87 to 19.2.90; Community Affairs from 16.5.90 to 8.2.93.
 - House of Representatives Select: Tourism from 14.3.78 to 26.10.78.
 - Joint: Australian Capital Territory from 1.6.89 to 19.2.90.

The Hon. David HAWKER (Liberal, Vic.)

Member for Wannon (1983–)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Member, Speaker's Panel from 23.11.98 to 31.8.04.
 - Speaker of the House of Representatives from 16.11.04 to 17.10.07.
- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Library from 17.5.83 to 26.10.84 and from 1.12.04 (Chair from 1.12.04) to 7.12.05; Road Safety from 18.5.83 to 26.10.84; Expenditure from 28.2.85 to 5.6.87; Industry, Science and Technology from 8.10.87 to 19.2.90; Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 16.5.90 to 8.2.93; Selection from 12.5.93 to 29.1.96; Financial Institutions and Public Administration from 29.5.96 (Chair from 30.5.96) to 31.8.98; Economics, Finance and Public Administration from 8.12.98 (Chair from 9.12.98) to 31.8.04; Primary Industries, Resources and Rural and Regional Affairs from 2.9.97 to 31.8.98; Selection from 18.2.02 to 31.8.04; House from 1.12.04 (Chair from 1.12.04) to 17.10.07; Procedure from 11.3.08.
 - House of Representatives Select: Recent Australian Bushfires from 27.3.03 to 5.11.03.
 - Joint Statutory: Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings from 1.12.04 (Chair from 1.12.04).
 - Joint Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 26.5.93 to 29.1.96, from 8.12.98 to 31.8.04 and from 11.3.08 (Deputy Chair from 11.3.08); Parliamentary Library from 11.3.08.
 - Joint Select: Republic Referendum from 2.6.99 to 9.8.99; Intelligence Services from 28.6.01 to 27.8.01.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Deputy Opposition Whip from 12.5.89 to 11.4.90 and from 26.5.94 to 2.6.94.
 - Opposition Whip from 2.6.94 to 11.3.96.
 - Shadow Minister for Land Transport from 11.4.90 to 7.4.93.

Senator the Hon. John HOGG (Labor, Qld)

Senator for Queensland (1996–)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Temporary Chair of Committees from 29.9.97 to 19.8.02.
 - Deputy President of the Senate and Chair of Committees from 19.8.02 to 26.8.08.

- President of the Senate from 26.8.08.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Regulations and Ordinances from 1.7.96 to 23.9.97; House from 19.8.02 (Chair from 26.8.08); Procedure from 19.8.02 (Chair from 19.8.02 to 26.8.08); Appropriations and Staffing from 26.8.08 (Chair from 26.8.08); Library from 26.8.08 (Chair from 26.8.08).
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade: References Committee from 1.7.96 (Chair from 19.6.97 to 11.2.02) to 11.9.06 and Legislation Committee from 1.7.96 to 10.9.96 and from 29.5.97 to 19.8.02; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 11.9.06 to 30.6.08; Environment, Recreation, Communications and the Arts: References Committee from 4.12.96 to 9.11.98; Economics: References Committee from 5.2.03 to 10.9.03. Senate Select: Superannuation from 27.10.97 to 1.3.98 and from 19.3.02 to 10.12.02; Superannuation and Financial Services from 30.9.99 to 11.2.02.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 12.12.96 to 1.1.98; Public Accounts and Audit from 1.1.98 to 5.2.03 and from 10.9.03 to 26.8.08; Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings from 26.8.08 (Chair from 26.8.08).
 - Joint Standing: National Capital and External Territories from 19.8.02; Electoral Matters from 9.11.05 to 6.12.06.

The Hon. Christopher John (CJ) HURFORD (Labor, SA)

Member for Adelaide (1969–87)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Minister for Housing and Construction from 11.3.83 to 13.12.84.
 - Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs from 13.12.84 to 16.2.87.
 - Minister Assisting the Treasurer from 25.5.83 to 24.7.87.
 - Minister for Community Services from 16.2.87 to 24.7.87.
- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Standing Orders from 8.4.75 to 11.11.75 and again from 26.11.80 to 4.2.83; Expenditure from 5.5.76 to 10.11.77.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 25.11.69 (Chairman from 8.3.73) to 29.8.73.
 - Joint: Prices from 2.5.73 (Chairman from 3.5.73) to 11.11.75.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Spokesman on Treasury matters from 27.1.76 to 29.12.77; on Trade from 2.6.77 to 29.12.77; on Industry and Commerce (including Small Business, IAC, PJT, Trade Practices Commission) and on Productivity from 29.12.77 to 23.11.80; on Consumer Affairs from 29.12.77 to 2.2.78 and on Industry and Commerce (less Tourism, plus IAC, PJT and TPC) from 23.11.80 to 14.1.83; Education from 14.1.83 to 11.3.83.
 - Manager, Opposition Business in the House of Representatives from 11.2.80 to 7.11.80.

Henry (Harry) JENKINS (Labor, Vic.)

Member for Scullin (1986–)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Deputy Chair of Committees from 8.5.90 to 8.2.93.
 - Deputy Speaker from 4.5.93 to 29.1.96.
 - Second Deputy Speaker from 30.4.96 to 17.10.07.
 - Speaker of the House of Representatives from 12.2.08.
- Committee service

- House of Representatives Standing: Publications from 8.10.87 (Chair from 20.10.87) to 19.2.90; Environment, Recreation and the Arts from 8.10.87 to 31.8.98; Environment and Heritage from 8.12.98 to 17.10.07; Finance and Public Administration from 8.10.87 to 19.2.90; Aboriginal Affairs from 26.10.89 to 19.2.90; Community Affairs from 16.5.90 (Chair from 17.5.90) to 8.2.93; Industry, Science and Technology from 16.10.90 to 8.2.93 and from 29.5.96 to 31.8.98; Selection from 12.5.93 (Chair from 12.5.93) to 29.1.96; Members' Interests from 29.5.96 to 17.10.07; Family and Community Affairs from 17.11.97 to 31.8.98; Science and Innovation from 2.12.04 to 17.10.07; House from 12.2.08 (Chair from 12.2.08).
- Joint Statutory: Public Works from 20.3.02 to 17.10.07.
- Joint Standing: National Capital and External Territories from 27.5.93 to 29.1.96.
- Joint Select: Retailing Sector from 9.2.99 to 30.8.99.

Senator Barnaby JOYCE (Nationals, Qld)

Senator for Queensland (2005–)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Temporary Chair of Committees from 26.6.08 to 18.9.08.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Library from 16.8.05 to 7.12.05.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade: Legislation Committee from 16.8.05 to 13.9.05 and References Committee from 6.9.05 to 11.9.06; Legal and Constitutional: References Committee from 16.8.05 to 11.9.06; Economics from 11.9.06.
 - Senate Select: Fuel and Energy from 26.6.08.
 - Joint Standing: National Capital and External Territories from 16.8.05.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Leader of the Nationals in the Senate from 17.9.08.

The Hon. John KERIN (Labor, NSW)

Member for Macarthur (1972–75); Member for Werriwa (1978–93)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Minister for Primary Industry from 11.3.83 to 24.7.87.
 - Minister for Primary Industries and Energy from 24.7.87 to 4.6.91.
 - Treasurer from 4.6.91 to 9.12.91.
 - Minister for Transport and Communications from 9.12.91 to 27.12.91.
 - Minister for Trade and Overseas Development from 27.12.91 to 24.3.93.
- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Environment and Conservation from 31.5.73 to 11.11.75; Banking, Finance and Public Administration from 12.5.93 to 22.12.93; Legal and Constitutional Affairs from 12.5.93 to 22.12.93.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 18.10.78 to 19.9.80.
 - Joint Standing: Foreign Affairs and Defence from 16.5.73 to 11.11.75; Australian Capital Territory from 15.5.73 to 11.11.75; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 26.5.93 to 22.12.93.
 - Member, Mr Speaker's Committee on Parliament House Accommodation.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Member, Opposition Shadow Ministry from 7.11.80 to 11.3.83. Spokesman on Primary Industry from 7.11.80 to 11.3.83.

Cheryl KERNOT (Labor/Democrats, Qld)

Member for Dickson (1998–2001); Senator for Queensland (1990–97)

- Committee service
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Employment, Education and Training from 1.7.90 to 13.11.90; Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 1.7.90 to 10.10.91.
 - Senate Select: Community Standards Relevant to the Supply of Services Utilising Electronic Technologies from 21.6.91 to 23.6.93; Political Broadcasts and Political Disclosures Bill from 16.8.91 to 28.11.91; Superannuation from 17.10.91 to 28.10.93; Sales Tax Legislation from 25.6.92 to 19.8.92; Certain Aspects of Foreign Ownership Decisions in relation to the Print Media from 14.12.93 to 30.3.95; Certain Land Fund Matters from 19.9.95 to 30.11.95.
 - Joint Statutory: Native Title from 25.3.94 to 5.5.94; Native Title and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund from 1.7.96 to 15.10.97.
 - Joint: Electoral Matters from 13.11.90 to 18.5.93.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Parliamentary Leader of the Australian Democrats from 29.4.93 to 15.10.97.
 - Spokesperson for Australian Democrats on Transport and Communications; Aboriginal Affairs; Consumer Affairs; Territories (Northern Australia) from 1.7.90 to 8.10.91; on Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation; Electoral Matters; Territories; Treasury and Finance from 8.10.91 to 30.6.93; on Treasury and Finance; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs; Women; Prime Minister and Cabinet; Small Business from 1.7.93 to 30.6.96; on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Reconciliation; Commonwealth/State Relations; Prime Minister and Cabinet; Treasury and Finance; Women from 1.7.96 to 25.2.97; Treasury and Finance; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs; Employment; Women; Republic; Prime Minister and Cabinet; Commonwealth/State Relations from 25.2.97 to 15.10.97.
 - Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Services from 20.10.98 to 3.10.99.
 - Shadow Minister for Employment and Training from 3.10.99 to 22.11.01.

The Hon. Robert (Bob) McMULLAN (Labor, ACT)

Member for Fraser (1996–); Senator for the Australian Capital Territory (1988–96)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Member, Speaker's Panel from 8.2.05 to 6.2.07.
- Ministerial appointments
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer from 4.4.90 to 24.3.93.
 - Minister for the Arts and Administrative Services from 24.3.93 to 30.1.94.
 - Minister for Administrative Services from 30.1.94 to 25.3.94.
 - Minister for Trade from 30.1.94 to 11.3.96.
 - Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance from 3.12.07.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Regulations and Ordinances from 24.2.88 to 30.5.89; Procedure from 13.8.91 to 18.5.93.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 24.2.88 to 8.5.90; Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 24.2.88 to 8.5.90.

- Senate Select: Administration of Aboriginal Affairs from 2.6.88 (Chair from 3.6.88) to 28.2.89; Health Legislation and Health Insurance from 16.6.89 to 8.5.90.
- Senate Estimates: A from 18.3.88 to 8.5.90.
- House of Representatives Standing: Financial Institutions and Public Administration from 29.5.96 to 17.11.97; Privileges from 2.12.04 to 29.3.07.
- Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 3.5.89 to 19.2.90; Native Title and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Account from 6.2.01 to 11.2.02 and from 11.8.03 to 23.3.06.
- Joint Standing: Australian Capital Territory from 31.5.89 to 19.2.90.
- Joint Select: Corporations Legislation from 20.10.88 to 13.4.89.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Manager of Government Business in the Senate from 4.6.91 to 24.3.93.
 - Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations from 20.3.96 to 22.4.97.
 - Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations and the Arts from 22.4.97 to 7.10.97.
 - Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations, Finance and the Arts from 7.10.97 to 20.10.98.
 - Shadow Minister for Industry and Technology from 20.10.98 to 5.9.00.
 - Shadow Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Shadow Minister for Reconciliation and Shadow Minister for the Arts from 5.9.00 to 25.11.01.
 - Shadow Minister for Treasury, Finance and Small Business from 25.11.01 to 2.7.03; and the Arts from 6.12.02 to 18.2.03.
 - Shadow Treasurer and Shadow Minister for the Arts from 18.2.03 to 2.7.03.
 - Shadow Minister for Finance, Shadow Minister for Cabinet and Shadow Minister for Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs from 2.7.03 to 8.12.03.
 - Shadow Minister for Finance and Small Business from 8.12.03 to 22.10.04.
 - Shadow Minister for Federal/State Relations and Shadow Minister for International Development Assistance from 10.12.06 to 3.12.07.
 - Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition on Public Service Matters from 20.3.96 to 27.3.97.
 - Manager of Opposition Business in the House from 20.10.98 to 25.11.01.
 - Deputy Manager of Opposition Business in the House from 9.3.07 to 3.12.07.

Senator Christine MILNE (Greens, Tas.)

Senator for Tasmania (2005–); Member of the Tasmanian House of Assembly (1989–98)

- Committee service
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport: Legislation Committee from 1.7.05 to 11.9.06 and References Committee from 14.5.09; Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport from 23.8.08 to 14.5.09.
 - Senate Select: Agricultural and Related Industries from 14.2.08 to 26.11.09; Climate Policy from 17.3.09.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - State: Parliamentary Leader of the Greens (Tas.) 1993–98.
 - Federal: Deputy Leader of the Australian Greens from 10.11.08.

Belinda NEAL (Labor, NSW)

Member for Robertson (2007–); Senator for New South Wales (1994–98)

- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Publications from 17.3.94 to 1.7.96 and from 4.9.97 to 3.9.98; Library from 4.9.97 to 3.9.98.

- Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Community Affairs: References Committee from 10.10.94 to 3.9.98 and Legislation Committee from 10.10.94 to 14.5.97; Finance and Public Administration: References and Legislation Committees from 10.10.94 to 29.3.95; Legal and Constitutional: Legislation and References Committees from 29.3.95 to 29.4.96.
- Senate Estimates: D from 17.3.94 to 10.10.94.
- House of Representatives Standing: Communications from 19.2.08; Legal and Constitutional Affairs from 19.2.08.
- Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 17.3.94 to 29.1.96; Corporations and Securities from 17.3.94 to 29.1.96.
- Joint Standing: Treaties from 31.5.96 to 5.3.98 and from 18.2.08.
- Joint Select: Certain Family Law Issues from 17.3.94 to 28.11.95.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs and Assistant to the Shadow Minister for Health from 20.3.96 to 27.3.97.
 - Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs and Local Government from 27.3.97 to 26.8.97.
 - Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs, Local Government, Housing and Childcare from 26.8.97 to 3.9.98.
 - Acting Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader of the Opposition on the Status of Women from 22.4.97 to 26.8.97.
 - Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition on the Status of Women in the Senate from 26.8.97 to 3.9.98.

Janet POWELL (Democrat/Independent, Vic.)

Senator for Victoria (1986–93)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Temporary Chairman of Committees from 15.9.87 to 1.12.88.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Privileges from 24.9.87 to 30.6.90 and from 29.4.92 to 30.6.93; Scrutiny of Bills from 24.9.87 to 30.6.90 and from 10.10.91 to 19.8.92.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Transport, Communications and Infrastructure from 24.9.87 to 30.6.90 and from 10.10.91 to 19.8.92; Legal and Constitutional Affairs from 24.9.87 to 30.6.90.
 - Senate Select: Television Equalisation from 5.12.86 to 23.3.87; Subscription Television Broadcasting Services from 26.6.92 to 19.8.92.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Leader of the Australian Democrats from 1.7.90 to 19.8.91.
 - Spokesperson for Australian Democrats on Social Security; Administrative Services; Consumer Affairs (from AG's); Primary Industry (from Primary Industries and Energy); Communications (from Transport and Communications); Local Government from 6.8.87 to 8.5.90; on Communications; Primary Industry; Social Security; Administrative Services; Local Government; Consumer Affairs from 8.5.90 to 30.6.90; on Prime Minister and Cabinet; Administrative Services; Women from 1.7.90 to 8.10.91; on Consumer Affairs; Employment and Training; Housing; Transport and Telecommunications from 8.10.91 to 31.7.92).

Senator Louise PRATT (Labor, WA)

Senator for Western Australia (2008–); Member of the Western Australian Legislative Council (2001–07)

- Committee service (Federal)
 - Senate Standing: Senators' Interests from 1.7.08.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Economics from 1.7.08; Environment, Communications and the Arts from 1.7.08.
 - Joint Standing: Treaties from 1.7.08.

Nicholas (Bruce) REID (Liberal, Vic.)

Member for Bendigo (1990–98); Member of the Victorian Legislative Council (1976–88)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Deputy Chair of Committees from 4.5.93 to 21.2.94.
 - Member, Speaker's Panel from 21.2.94 to 31.8.98.
- Committee service
 - House of Representatives Standing: Industry, Science and Technology from 16.5.90 (Chair from 30.5.96) to 31.8.98; Selection from 20.6.91 to 8.2.93; Members' Interests from 26.5.93 (Chair from 19.6.96) to 14.10.96 and from 6.2.97 (Chair from 13.2.97) to 31.8.98; Procedure from 29.5.96 to 31.8.98; Selection Committee from 27.8.97 to 31.8.98.

Senator the Hon. Michael RONALDSON (Liberal, Vic.)

Senator for Victoria (2005–); Member for Ballarat (1990–2001)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport and Regional Development from 14.10.96 to 21.10.98.
 - Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Privileges from 1.7.05 to 11.2.08; Regulations and Ordinances from 13.2.08.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts: Legislation and References Committees from 1.7.05 to 11.9.06; Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts from 11.9.06 to 9.5.07; Economics from 8.2.07 (Chair from 8.2.07) to 11.2.08.
 - House of Representatives Standing: Library from 16.5.90 to 29.1.96; Legal and Constitutional Affairs from 7.3.91 to 8.2.93 and from 9.12.98 to 17.2.00; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs from 14.9.92 to 8.2.93; Employment, Education and Training from 29.6.94 to 29.1.96; Primary Industries, Resources and Rural and Regional Affairs from 29.5.96 (Chair from 30.5.96) to 12.12.96; Members' Interests from 29.5.96 to 14.10.96; Selection from 23.11.98 to 8.10.01; Employment, Education and Workplace Relations from 7.2.01 to 29.3.01.
 - Joint Standing: Electoral Matters from 20.3.08.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Shadow Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation from 7.4.93 to 26.5.94.
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition from 26.5.94 to 26.10.94.
 - Shadow Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training from 26.10.94 to 11.3.96.
 - Shadow Special Minister of State from 6.12.07.
 - Shadow Cabinet Secretary from 22.9.08.
 - Chief Government Whip from 18.10.98 to 8.10.01.

The Hon. Susan RYAN, AO (Labor, ACT)

Senator for the Australian Capital Territory (1975–88)

- Ministerial Appointments
 - Minister for Education (formerly Education and Youth Affairs) from 11.3.83 to 24.7.87.
 - Special Minister of State from 24.7.87 to 19.1.88.
 - Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Status of Women from 11.3.83 to 19.1.88.
 - Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Bicentennial from 24.7.87 to 19.1.88.
 - Minister Assisting the Minister for Community Services and Health from 24.7.87 to 19.1.88.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Publications from 4.3.76 to 17.8.78; Regulations and Ordinances from 24.2.76 to 17.8.78.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Education and the Arts from 24.3.76 to 9.9.81; Constitutional and Legal Affairs from 9.9.81 to 4.2.83.
 - Senate Select: Parliament's Appropriations and Staffing from 23.5.80 to 18.8.80.
 - Senate Estimates: F from 29.4.76 to 26.8.76; E from 26.8.76 to 16.3.78; C from 16.3.78 to 20.9.78; F from 20.9.78 to 2.4.81; B from 2.4.81 to 24.3.82.
 - Joint Standing: Australian Capital Territory from 25.3.76 to 19.9.80.
- Parliamentary Party Positions
 - Spokesperson on Communications from 29.12.77 to 19.3.80; on Arts and Letters from 29.12.77 to 11.3.83; on Women's Affairs from 1.2.79 to 11.3.83; on Media from 19.3.80 to 23.11.80; and on Aboriginal Affairs from 23.11.80 to 11.3.83.

Janelle SAFFIN (Labor, NSW)

Members for Page (2007–); Member of the New South Wales Legislative Council (1995–2003)

- Parliamentary positions
 - Member, Speaker's Panel from 18.2.08.
- Committee service (Federal)
 - House of Representatives Standing: House from 19.2.08.
 - Joint Standing: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 18.2.08.

The Hon. James (Jim) SHORT (Liberal, Vic.)

Member for Ballarat (1975–80); Senator for Victoria (1984–97)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Assistant Treasurer from 11.3.96 to 14.10.96.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Regulations and Ordinances from 6.12.96 to 4.2.97.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Finance and Government Operations from 26.2.85 to 5.6.87; Industry and Trade from 26.2.85 to 5.6.87; Participating member, Legal and Constitutional: Legislation Committee from 11.10.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Economics: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96 and References Committee from 8.11.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Finance and Public Administration: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96 and References Committee from 8.11.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Legal and Constitutional: References Committee from 8.11.94 to 29.4.96; Full member, Environment, Recreation, Communications and the Arts: Legislation Committee from 5.12.96 (Chair from 5.12.96) to 4.2.97; Full member, Finance and Public Administration: Legislation Committee from

- 14.12.96 (Chair from 6.2.97) to 12.5.97; Full member, Economics: References Committee from 13.2.97 to 7.5.97.
- Senate Select: Sales Tax Legislation from 25.6.92 to 19.8.92; Functions, Powers and Operation of the Australian Loan Council from 5.11.92 to 14.12.93.
 - Senate Estimates: A from 26.3.85 to 5.6.87, from 9.5.90 to 5.3.92 and from 20.8.92 to 6.5.93; E from 24.9.87 to 8.5.90; F from 6.5.93 to 12.5.94; D from 12.5.94 to 10.10.94.
 - House of Representatives Standing: Road Safety from 1.4.76 to 2.6.77.
 - House of Representatives Select: Tourism from 8.12.76 to 26.10.78.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 3.3.76 to 10.11.77 and from 29.11.96 to 7.5.97.
 - Joint Standing: Foreign Affairs and Defence from 1.4.76 to 19.9.80; Electoral Matters from 21.10.87 to 24.8.90; Migration from 18.5.93 to 29.1.96; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 25.11.96 to 7.5.97.
 - Joint Select: Corporations Legislation from 20.10.88 to 13.4.89.
- Parliamentary party positions
 - Shadow Minister for Finance from 21.4.87 to 14.8.87;
 - Shadow Minister for Home Affairs from 14.8.87 to 16.9.88.
 - Shadow Minister for Finance from 11.4.90 to 7.4.93.
 - Shadow Minister for Assisting the Leader on Commonwealth/State Relations from 11.4.90 to 7.4.93.
 - Shadow Minister for Multicultural Australia, Immigration and Citizenship from 7.4.93 to 26.5.94.
 - Shadow Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs from 26.5.94 to 11.3.96.
 - Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader of the Opposition on Ethnic Affairs from 7.4.93 to 11.3.96.
 - Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate from 5.6.92 to 23.3.93.

Grant TAMBLING (Country Liberal, NT)

Member for the Northern Territory (1980–83); Senator for the Northern Territory 1987–2001; Member of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly (1974–77)

- Ministerial appointments
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport and Regional Development from 11.3.96 to 14.10.96.
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Security from 14.10.96 to 21.10.98.
 - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Aged Care from 21.10.98 to 26.11.01.
- Committee service
 - Senate Standing: Selection of Bills from 18.12.89 to 8.5.90; Senators' Interests on 24.3.94; Library from 2.5.96 to 9.11.01.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Participating member, Community Affairs: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Economics: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96 and References Committee from 19.6.96 to 22.10.97; Participating member, Employment, Education and Training: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Environment, Recreation and the Arts: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Finance and Public Administration: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96 and from 12.9.96 to 22.10.97; Participating member, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96; Participating member, Legal and Constitutional: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 29.4.96 and from

- 7.11.96 to 22.10.97; Participating member, Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport: Legislation Committee from 17.10.94 to 9.11.01 and References Committee from 20.5.96 to 28.8.97.
- Senate Estimates: E from 24.9.87 to 8.5.90; F from 9.5.90 to 24.8.90; C from 6.5.93 to 8.2.94.
 - House of Representatives Standing: Aboriginal Affairs from 4.12.80 to 4.2.83.
 - Joint Statutory: Public Accounts from 26.11.80 to 4.2.83.
 - Joint: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 9.10.87 to 17.5.90.
 - Parliamentary party positions
 - National Party Whip in the Senate from 14.9.87 to 11.4.90.
 - Deputy Leader, National Party of Australia in the Senate from 10.4.90 to 23.3.93 and from 11.5.00 to 9.11.01.
 - Shadow Minister for Regional Development, External Territories and Northern Australia from 11.4.90 to 28.4.92.
 - Shadow Minister for Community Services, External Territories and Northern Australia from 28.4.92 to 7.4.93.
 - Shadow Minister for Housing and Community Services from 7.4.93 to 26.5.94.
 - Shadow Minister for Housing, External Territories and Northern Development from 26.5.94 to 11.3.96.

Josephine (Jo) VALLENTINE (Nuclear Disarmament/Independent/Greens, WA)

Senator for Western Australia (1985–92)

- Committee service
 - Joint: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade from 9.10.87 to 31.1.92.

Antony (Tony) WINDSOR (Independent, NSW)

Member for New England (2001–); Member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly (1991–2001)

- Committee service (Federal)
 - House of Representatives Standing: Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry from 20.3.02 to 17.10.07; Primary Industries and Resources from 11.3.08; Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government from 15.5.08.

Senator Nicholas (Nick) XENOPHON (Independent, SA)

Senator for South Australia (2008–); Member of the South Australian Legislative Council (1997–2007)

- Committee service (Federal)
 - Senate Standing: Appropriations and Staffing from 17.9.09.
 - Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Economics from 16.9.08 to 14.5.09; Economics: Legislation Committee from 14.5.09 and References Committee from 17.6.09.
 - Senate Select: Climate Policy from 18.3.09.