

President's Statement - 17 March 2011

Increased Funding and Organisational Changes Department of the Legislative Council

Members,

All Members will be aware that the Department of the Legislative Council has been seeking additional funding for a number of years, in order to improve service delivery to the House and its Members. Following considerable effort over an extended period, I am delighted to advise Members that supplementary funding for the current financial year and subsequent out-years was approved by the Premier and Treasurer just prior to Christmas. This funding approval will allow the Department to progress a number of initiatives that have been planned for some time.

Foremost amongst these initiatives are changes being made to the organisational structure of the Department. These changes align the structure with the Department's strategic plan, which was developed and tabled in the House in 2008. One position that has changed as a consequence of this process is the role of Usher of the Black Rod. In its amended form, this position will assume more of a management role in relation to the Department's administrative services. The current Usher of the Black Rod, Chris Hunt, has taken up the position of Parliamentary Officer (Procedure) effective from next week. On behalf of all Members, I congratulate and thank Chris for his performance in the Usher's role over the last six years.

I am pleased to announce that the new Usher of the Black Rod will be Dr Julia Lawrinson, a former Sergeant-at-Arms. Julia will commence in this position next Monday, and will be the first female Usher of the Black Rod for the Parliament of Western Australia.

Two further appointments were made to our Chamber personnel recently. A new position of Advisory Officer (Procedure) was created, and Grant Hitchcock was successful in being appointed to that position. A second position of Parliamentary Officer (Procedure) was also created, and Peter Axford, a former Research Officer at the Committee Office, was successful in attaining that role. On behalf of all Members, I congratulate Chris, Julia, Grant and Peter on their appointments, and look forward to working with them in their new roles.

Two additional staff positions have also been created at the Committee Office. Michael Baker has commenced in the position of Advisory Officer, and is already assisting the Public Administration Committee. A further appointment of an Advisory Officer (Legal), under a 12 month contract, will be made in the near future, to support other committee activities including the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review.

For the information of Members, I table a copy of this statement and the new organisational structure of the Department of the Legislative Council. I am confident that these additional staff resources, along with other expansions to Members' support services, will lead to an increased service delivery to all Members during the course of this year, both for the House and its committees.



Department of the Legislative Council

