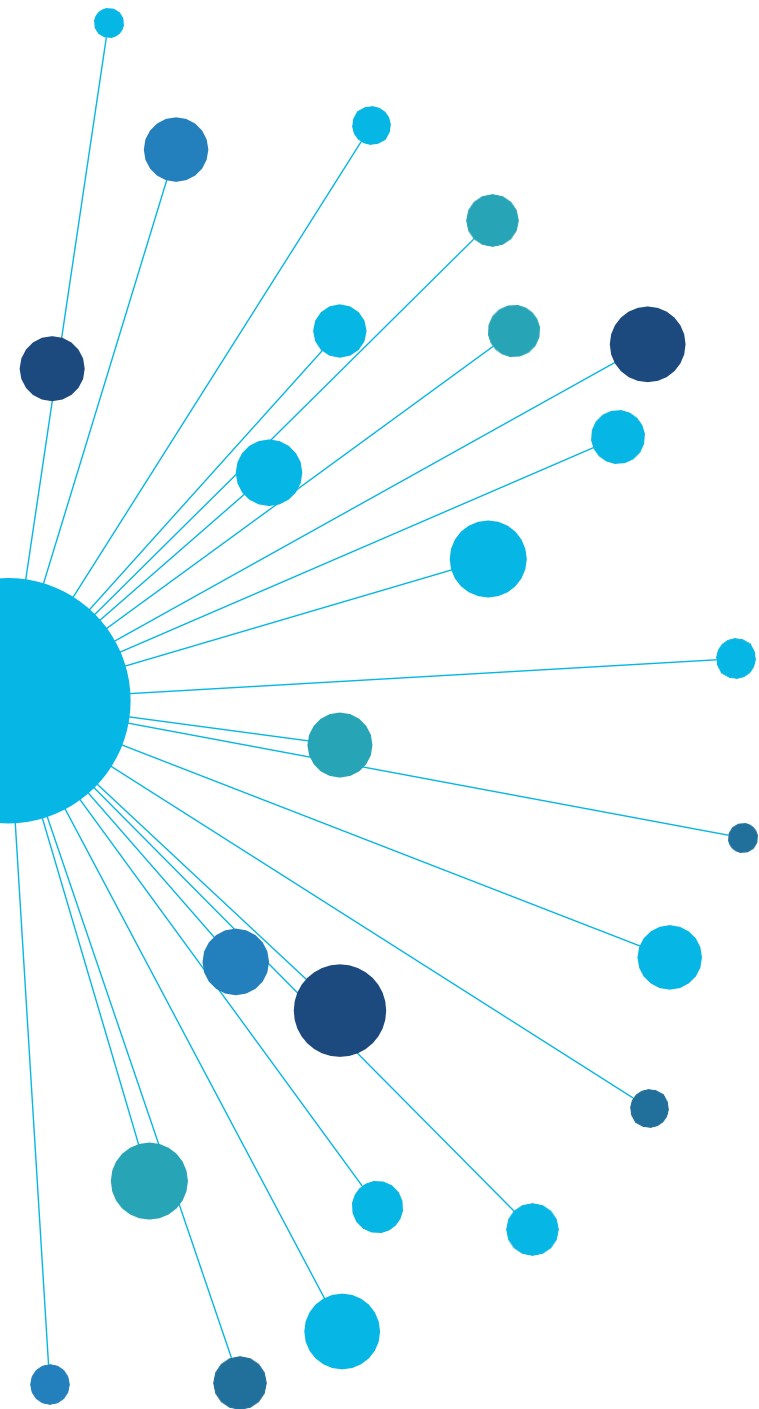


Queensland Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Annual Report 2025–2026



About the Annual Report

The Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal is required under the *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013* (the Act) to prepare and give to the Clerk of the Parliament a written report about the operations of the Tribunal during each financial year.

The Annual Report provides information on the Tribunal, the Tribunal's key achievements during 2025–26, its priorities ahead and a summary of the Tribunal's financial operations.

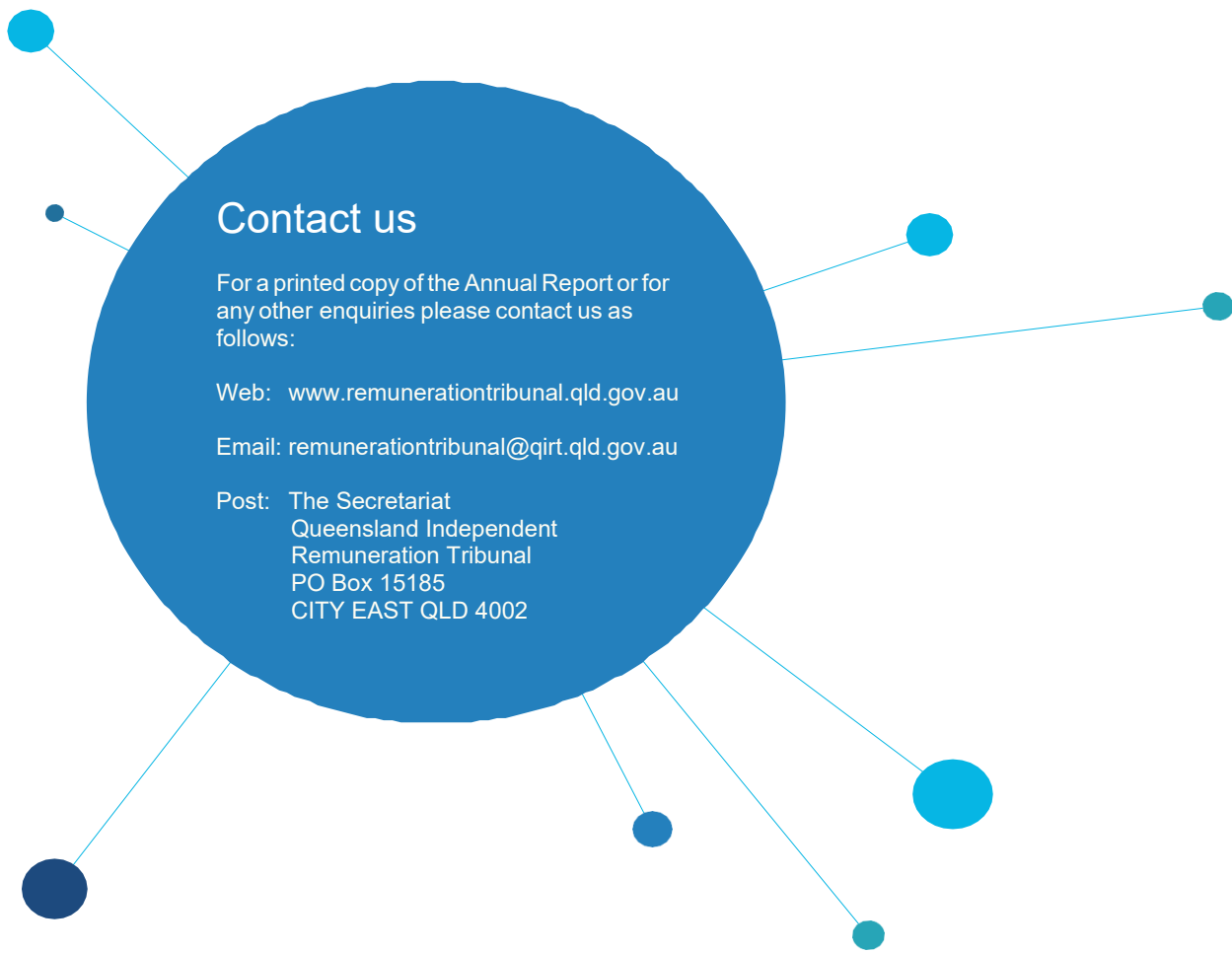
The Annual Report can be accessed online at www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au

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Further information is available at <https://www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au/tools/copyright.aspx>



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Remuneration Tribunal
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Letter of compliance

7 September 2026

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2025-2026 for the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal. This is the thirteenth report issued under section 26 of the *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013* and complies with the provisions of that section.

Yours sincerely

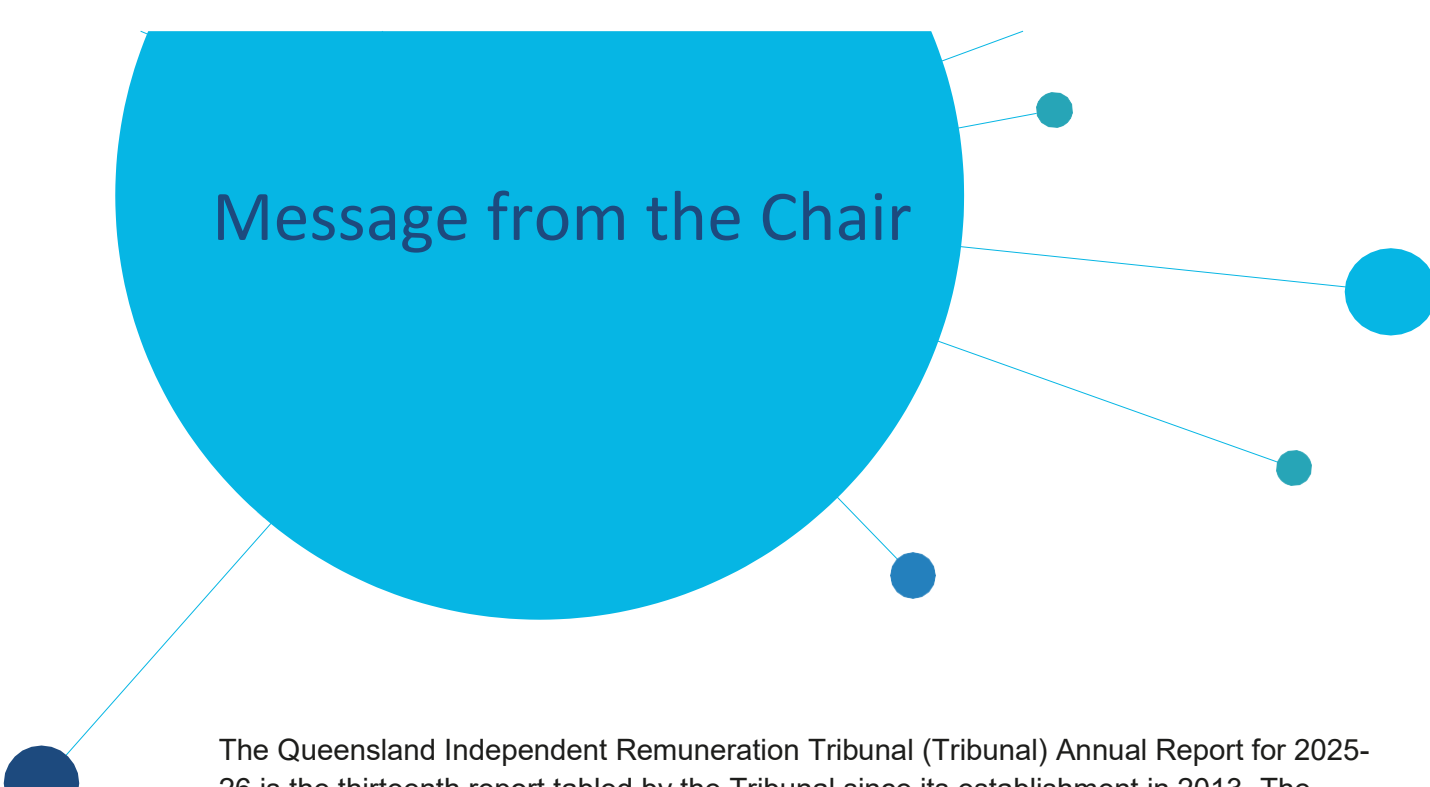


Kirsty Chessher-Brown

Chair

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Message from the Chair

The Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal (Tribunal) Annual Report for 2025-26 is the thirteenth report tabled by the Tribunal since its establishment in 2013. The Report details the Tribunal's operations during the last financial year.

At the end of 2025, Mr Jim Varghese (re-appointment), Mr Michael Hickey and I were appointed as members to the Tribunal for a three year term. Since our appointment we have progressed several pieces of work; reviewing the allowances, entitlements and allocations of members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly (members) and additional staffing levels for cross bench members.

I appreciate the contributions and support of my fellow Tribunal members in undertaking the Tribunal's functions since our appointment.

Thank you to previous Tribunal members Professor Keitha Dunstan (chair) and Emeritus Professor Patrick Weller for their years of service to the Tribunal and their work in the first six months of the 2025-26 financial year.

I also thank the Clerk of the Parliament for his support and advice as we undertook our functions to review and determine remuneration and allowances for members and former members and the entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members.

Looking forward, the Tribunal is committed to considering the issues raised by members regarding the allowances system. The Tribunal is working to future-proof the system of allowances and entitlements, reviewing these in light of the outcomes of the Queensland electoral redistribution and carefully considering the impact this will have on members and electorates in Queensland.

Kirsty Chessher-Brown

Chair

About the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal

1.1 Establishment

On 13 August 2013, the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal (the Tribunal) was established as an independent statutory authority under the *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013* (the Act) to review and decide remuneration in connection with members and former members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

1.2 Members

Under the Act, the Tribunal consists of three persons appointed by the Governor in Council. Ms Kirsty Chessher-Brown (Chair), Mr James (Jim) Varghese and Mr Michael Hickey were appointed as members of the Tribunal for a term of three years commencing on 8 December 2025.

For the period from 1 July 2025 to 7 December 2025 the Tribunal was constituted by Professor Keitha Dunstan (Chair), Mr Varghese and Emeritus Professor Patrick Weller as members.

1.3 Remuneration of Tribunal members

In accordance with the Act, Tribunal members are appointed on a part-time basis and are paid the remuneration and allowances decided by the Governor in Council.

The remuneration of Tribunal members has been assessed in accordance with the *Remuneration Procedures for Part-Time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies* (the Remuneration Procedures) available at: https://www.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0025/39481/remuneration-procedures.pdf and set by the Governor in Council at Adjudication and Determination Level 2 of the Remuneration Procedures, being meeting fees of \$520 for the chair and \$400 for members (meeting of four hours or less).

1.4 Roles and functions of the Tribunal

Under section 7 of the Act, the Tribunal's functions are to:

- review remuneration in connection with members and former members
- review the additional staffing entitlement of cross bench members, and
- make determinations about these matters – known as remuneration determinations and additional staff member determinations.

For the purposes of the Act, 'remuneration' means salary, allowances or entitlements in connection with a member or former member, other than accommodation, services or other entitlements mentioned in section 59D' of the Act.

Salary increases are limited to those received by a public service employee employed in the administrative stream in the department under a public service salary decision (see section 31A of the Act).

In making a determination, the Tribunal:

- may inquire into and inform itself, of anything in the way it considers appropriate;
- may seek and receive written or oral statements from relevant entities;
- must have regard to effective and efficient processes in carrying out its functions; and
- must consult with and consider the view of the Clerk.

In making a **remuneration determination**, the Tribunal must ensure:

- any allowances paid to a member reflect the amount of reasonable expenses incurred by a member in servicing their electorate i.e. expenses to assist constituents;
- the allowances are not a substitute for other remuneration; and
- accommodation, services or other entitlements mentioned in section 59D of the Act are not taken into account.

The Tribunal may consider a range of matters when making a remuneration determination including, but not limited to:

- the value to the community of a member carrying out their role, functions and responsibilities;
- the importance of a member being appropriately remunerated for carrying out their role, functions and responsibilities;
- relevant laws that apply to members; and
- any other matter the Tribunal considers appropriate (for example, the size of a member's electorate).

Section 59D of the Act provides that the Act (and therefore any remuneration determination) does not prevent a person from receiving the following:

- accommodation and services provided by the Parliamentary Service at Parliament House;
- accommodation and services provided in electorate offices, such as offices, staff, IT infrastructure and other major office equipment;
- entitlements a Minister or Assistant Minister receives to perform that role under *The Queensland Ministerial Handbook* available at <https://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/policies-and-codes/handbooks/ministerial-handbook.aspx>;
- entitlements the Leader of the Opposition receives to perform that role under *The Queensland Opposition Handbook* available at <https://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/policies-and-codes/opposition-handbook.aspx>;
- entitlements the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly receives under the *Guidelines for the Financial Management of the Office of the Speaker* available at <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Members/Members-and-Former-Members-Entitlements>; and
- entitlements arising out of a national or international arrangement.

In making an **additional staff member determination**, the Tribunal may have regard to the following:

- parliamentary resources provided to cross bench members and other members of the Legislative Assembly;
- the composition of the Legislative Assembly and how the composition affects cross bench members;
- the workload and duties of cross bench members for whom the Tribunal is considering to make the determination;
- whether the cross bench members are members of political parties;
- relevant laws applying to members; and
- other matters the Tribunal considers appropriate.

In performing its functions, the Tribunal must also act independently, impartially and fairly. The Tribunal is not subject to direction or control by any entity, including any Minister.

To ensure the Tribunal operates in a transparent manner, it must include written reasons for its determinations, provide a copy of determinations and reasons to the Clerk for tabling in Parliament, and make the determination and reasons publicly available. All determinations and reasons are available at <https://www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au/determinations.aspx>.

1.5 Code of Conduct

The Tribunal's *Code of Conduct* (Code) complies with the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Ethics Act) and is consistent with the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service. In accordance with the Ethics Act, the Code has been approved by the Premier as the Minister administering the Act.

The Code is available at:

<https://www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au/resources.aspx>.

1.6 Secretariat support

In accordance with the Act, the Tribunal receives assistance from the Chief Executive of the department that administers the Act (the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC)).

The Secretariat consists of officers from DPC who provide support to the Tribunal on a part-time basis as required. The Secretariat assists the Tribunal in preparing meeting documents, drafting meeting minutes, completing action items, drafting research materials, compiling submissions and drafting determinations and other reports as advised by Tribunal members.

The Secretariat also coordinates support for the Tribunal in relation to website design, communications, printing and other resourcing needs. This support is provided in-kind by relevant areas of DPC.

Key activities 2025–2026

2.1 Tribunal Determinations 2025–2026

During 2025–26, the Tribunal issued three determinations.

All Tribunal determinations including the reasons for the determination are available on the Tribunal's website at:

<https://www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au/determinations.aspx>.

Determination 36/2025

On 9 October 2025 the Tribunal made Determination 36/2025 entitled 'Electorate and Communication Allowance Band Adjustment 2025'. The Tribunal considered the Electorate and Communication Allowance (ECA) bands and quarterly electoral roll data for the preceding 12-month period. The Tribunal re-allocated electorates to bands of the ECA based on changes to the number of registered voters on the electoral roll in electorates.

Determination 37/2026

On 14 January 2026 the Tribunal issued Determination 37/2026 'Review of Additional Staff Members for Cross Bench Members of the 58th Parliament'. The Tribunal considered current staffing arrangements, the composition of the 58th Parliament, the workload and duties of a cross bench member, submissions and staffing arrangements in other jurisdictions.

The Tribunal determined that each member of the Legislative Assembly who was a cross bench member as at 26 November 2024 continued to be entitled to one full time equivalent Parliamentary Policy Officer position. The Tribunal also clarified that the entitlement is limited to those members who were elected as a cross bench member at an election or by-election.

Determination 38/2026

On 22 April 2026 the Tribunal issued Determination 38/2026 entitled '2024-25 Review of Allowances'. The Tribunal considered the current allowances, entitlements and allocations provided to members and the Annual Reports tabled by the Clerk of the Parliament on ECA expenditure, General Travel Allocation (GTA), and Air Warrant and Alternate Travel claims for 2024-25. The Tribunal also took into account a range of economic indices, the Australian Taxation Office Determination 2025/4, previous decisions of the Tribunal on allowances, and decisions regarding allowances in other jurisdictions.

The Tribunal determined that:

- all bands of the ECA and the High Enrolment Supplement (HES) are increased by 5.0% with effect from 1 January 2026;
- Coomera remains eligible for the HES and Logan is eligible for the HES with effect from 1 July 2025; and
- the Motor Vehicle Allowance and GTA are increased by 4.3% with effect from 1 January 2026.

The Tribunal also set the Daily Travel Allowance component of the GTA and Parliamentary Business Overnight Rate with effect from 22 April 2026.

2.2 Tribunal Ruling 2025–26

Under section 36 of the Act, the Clerk of the Parliament wrote to the Tribunal requesting a ruling on the use by members of the GTA to fund staff travel for the purpose of parliamentary business, where the member has not claimed themselves.

On 11 February 2026, the Tribunal ruled that it supported the Clerk of the Parliament to implement appropriate consistent controls and oversight mechanisms to ensure that the cost of staff travel is only met from the GTA where the staff member accompanies the member travelling for the purpose of Parliamentary Business according to categories (f), (g) and (j).

Published rulings are available at

https://www.remunerationtribunal.qld.gov.au/resources.aspx#_rulings

2.3 Tribunal meetings

The Tribunal held meetings on twelve occasions between 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 including one meeting with the Committee of the Legislative Assembly and one with the Clerk of the Parliament.

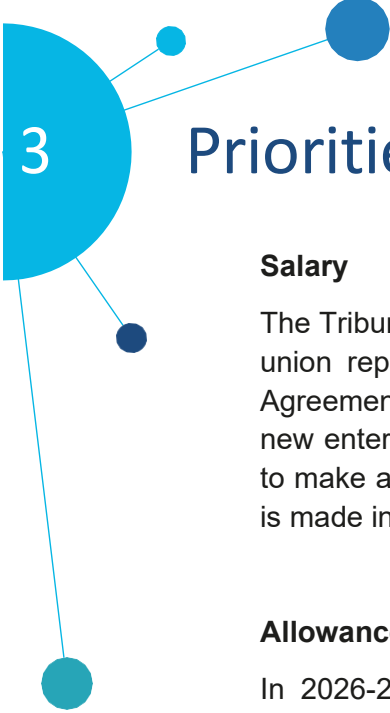
Tribunal meetings were usually held in person at 1 William Street, Brisbane, however, when required, members also attended via video conferencing.

Minutes were produced for each meeting in accordance with the Act.

Tribunal members communicated via telephone and email outside of formal meetings to consider issues, draft and finalise documentation.

2.4 Judicial Remuneration Coordination Group

On 21 May 2026, the Chair of the Tribunal attended the Judicial Remuneration Coordination Group meeting online to discuss remuneration matters for Members of Parliament across Australian jurisdictions.



3 Priorities for 2026–27

Salary

The Tribunal is monitoring negotiations between the Queensland Government and union representatives for the replacement State Government Entities Certified Agreement (Core Agreement) which expired on 30 June 2026. Certification of the new enterprise bargaining agreement will trigger the requirement for the Tribunal to make a members' salary determination within 90 days after the salary decision is made in accordance with section 31A of the Act.

Allowances and entitlements

In 2026-27, the Tribunal will continue to consider issues raised by members regarding the allowances and entitlements system and work to future-proof the system as far as possible to ensure the quantum of the allowances is adequate to continue to enable members to service their electorates and support their constituents.

Queensland Electoral redistribution

The Tribunal notes that the Queensland Redistribution Commission published notice of the final electoral districts in the Queensland Government Gazette on 29 June 2026. The electoral redistribution has moderated enrolment figures in each electorate to within ten per cent of the state average; renamed 17 electorates; created two new electorates; abolished two electorates; and made moderate to significant changes to the boundaries of 50 electorates. These changes may impact on the allowances and entitlements provided to members representing these electorates and will be considered by the Tribunal prior to the redistribution taking effect at the next election.

4

Financial summary

The Financial Statement for the Tribunal has been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the prescribed requirements. DPC provides secretariat support to the Tribunal. The revenues and expenses recognised for the Tribunal do not include allocations for corporate support and executive management services which are provided in-kind by DPC.

Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026¹

	NOTE	2025-26	2024-25
	2		
Revenue from ordinary activities			
Departmental services revenue		28,844	9,251
Total revenue from ordinary activities		28,844	9,251
Tribunal Member Fees and related costs	3	27,955	4,415
Expenses from ordinary activities			
Supplies and services			
Subscriptions		381	348
MV allowance		200	67
Travel costs			376
Legal expenses			3,980
Other consumables		307	65
Total supplies and services		888	4,836
Total expenses from ordinary activities		28,844	9,251
Net Operating Result		-	-

Notes to and forming part of the financial statement:

1. This financial statement for the Tribunal and associated notes has not been audited. Full audited statements are available in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2025-26 Annual Report.
2. Comparative data has been included for the Tribunal for the period ended 30 June 2025. This comparative data was for the Tribunal's twelfth year of operation.
3. The table below provides total remuneration for members of the Tribunal. The table includes actual payments made to members, not accruals or other state obligations as at 30 June 2026. Tribunal member fees and related costs for 2025-26 include fees for meetings attended during the 2024-25 financial year.

2025-2026

Remuneration Table			
Member	Short Term	Post Employment	Total Remuneration
DUNSTAN, Keitha L ¹	\$4,880	\$562	\$5,442
VARGHESE, James C N ²	\$7,600	\$912	\$8,512
WELLER, Patrick M ¹	\$3,600	\$432	\$4,032
CHESSHER-BROWN, Kirsty	\$4,680	\$562	\$5,242
HICKEY, Michael	\$4,400	\$528	\$4,928
	\$25,160	\$2,995	\$28,155

1. Includes fees for six meetings attended during 2024-25 financial year (terms of appointment to the Tribunal ended on 7 December 2025).
2. Includes fees for seven meetings attended during 2024-25 financial year (member re-appointed to the Tribunal on 8 December 2025).