



Oireachtas Library & Research Service 2006 – 2014: achieving and learning against a backdrop of economic boom to bust

IFLA 2014, 14 August 2014

Written by Madelaine Dennison
presented by Maria Fitzsimons Head of Research

Format & content

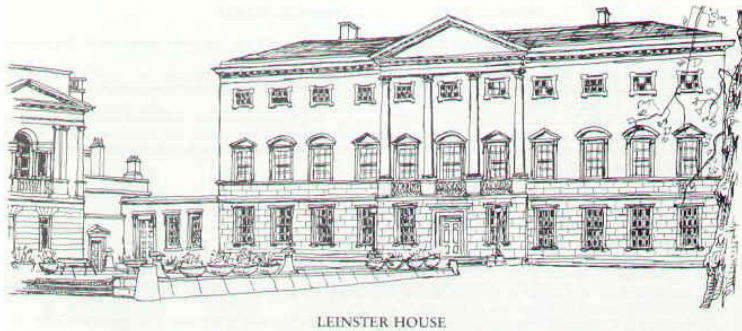


- Who we are & what we do
- L&RS achievements 2006 - 2014
- Surviving the recession
- 9 lessons learned in 9 years
- Conclusion

Who we are



- Bicameral
- 226 members
- 21 committees
- Oireachtas Commission runs the Houses
- 400 civil service staff (Houses of the Oireachtas Service)
- L&RS positioned in the Parliamentary Services Division
- 30 staff (17 researchers, 5 librarians, 5 admin, 3 managers)



What we do - vision



We contribute to a well-informed Parliament by delivering....

- Expert information and research services which are impartial, value-added, responsive and accessible
- Professional information and records management services.

What we do - services



Research/Information

- Legislative analysis
- Proactive publications
- Individual research /reference
- Article/book requests
- Current awareness
- Info skills training
- Press monitoring

Corporate/Statutory

- Records management
- Freedom of information
- Documents laid

Achievements - Verdict on investment.



library/research function has been transformed over last nine years and is on a par with other relevant parliaments in the breadth of services provided to Members...

Value for Money review of L&RS 2013

...verdict on investment



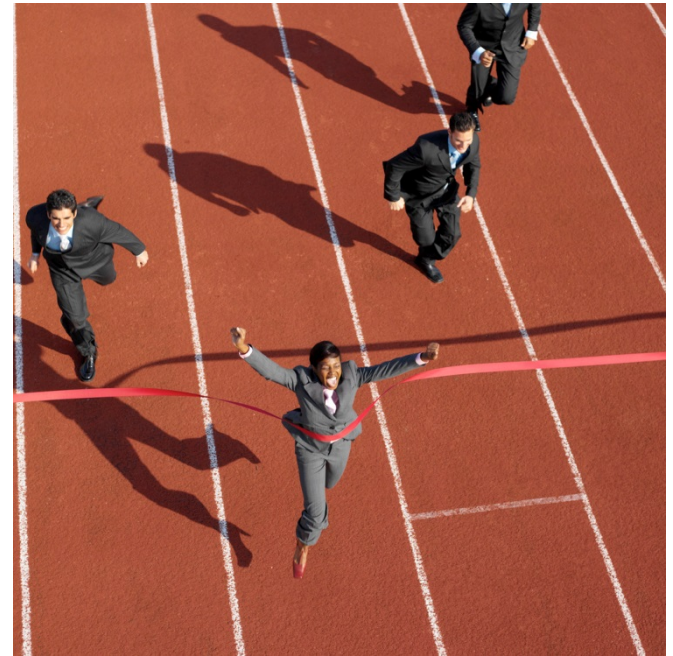
L&RS delivers its services with lower staffing levels and resources than most equivalent parliamentary library and research services.

Value for Money review of L&RS 2013

Achievements 2006 - 2014



1. Integrated L&RS established & VFM
2. Pushed original boundaries - info management role
3. Expanded research/Information portfolio (legislative analysis service)
4. Preferred research provider to Committees
5. Introduced eDocs
6. Online public access to historical collections



The transformation



2013: Historical collections and Docs Laid

Oireachtas Library & Research Service
Seirbhís Leabharlann & Taispeán an Oireachtas
Houses of the Oireachtas
Tíre an Oireachtas

Informing Parliament ~ Informing You

→ Basic search

Oireachtas Library & Research Service

The Oireachtas Library & Research Service is delighted to present its Documents Laid and Historical Collections.

Learn more about these collections below or enter keywords in the searchbox above to find items of interest. An advanced search option is also provided.

Please be advised that because of their size, some of these high quality preservation scans may take a few minutes to download.

See our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or consult our [User Guide](#)

The Documents Laid Collection

The Documents Laid Collection is composed of government reports, annual accounts, and other important documents that are formally presented to the parliament. The collection dates from the 1920s to the present day. Approximately 2000 documents are laid, mainly electronically, each year.



The Historical Collection

Following Irish independence, the newly established Dáil Library sought out materials for purchase, with a view to building up the Library's collections. These materials are now available to view or download, and the Library & Research Service will add other historical materials in the future.



Economic boom to bust



National indicators

- Unemployment up: 4.5% (2007) to 15% (2011)
- Govt spending down by 16% (2008–2012)
- Govt moratorium on civil service recruitment (2009)
- Pay reductions, longer hours for all civil service staff

Oireachtas indicators

- 2009: 438 staff, €26.08m annual budget
- 2013: 389 staff, €23.87m annual budget

Focus on:

- ❖ Reducing expenditure
- ❖ Reducing staff numbers
- ❖ More efficient ways of working



L&RS surviving the recession



Proactive approach

- 'Critical mass' business case
- Reduced no. of admin staff
- Restructured
- Restatement of services
- Reduced non-pay costs

Robust defence

- Know value of services
- Know value of expenditure
- Strong response to all reviews

9 lessons in 9 years



1. Be prepared to 'start again' in an economic crisis

Start again, rethink:

- *Role*
- *Structure*
- *Services*

9 lessons in 9 years



2. Building credibility can help to obtain additional resources

*You can trust us to get
the new project done
(but we need more
resources)!*

L&RS

9 lessons in 9 years



3. Be visible in the parliament's strategic plan
4. Align your services with day-to-day parliamentary business
5. Work out how best to engage with Members...
and keep engaging with them

You can't do without us!

L&RS

9 lessons in 9 years



6. There is no perfect staffing structure
7. Integration of librarians and researchers can work but needs to be nurtured
8. Recruit the best and brightest staff



9 lessons in 9 years



9. Stay connected: learn from other parliamentary libraries... but also from other libraries and research institutions.

*How can we improve
what we do?*

L&RS

Conclusion



- ❖ Recession strategies seem to have worked for us
- ❖ Be proactive - don't wait for others to make cuts to your service
- ❖ Leaner organisations have more chance of surviving & expanding
- ❖ We remain open to change-what we do, how we do it
- ❖ Keep core values; Impartiality, client focus, excellence in service

Thank you for your attention

Interested in hearing more about eDocs?



See our colleague at IFLA

John McDonough, Head of Collections,
L&RS

“A roof over their heads” Government
documents, the parliament...developing
eDocs Laid, 21 August 2014

Session 211