

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 On 20 November 2013, the Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 (Bill) was introduced into the House of Representatives by the Minister for Social Services (Minister), the Hon Kevin Andrews MP.¹ The Bill was passed by the House of Representatives on 4 December 2013.²

1.2 On 5 December 2013, the Bill was introduced into the Senate.³ On the same day, the Senate referred Schedule 2 of the Bill – Continuing income management as part of the Cape York Welfare Reform – to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee (committee) for inquiry and report by 12 December 2013.⁴ In order to assist the parliament's timely consideration of the Bill, the committee decided to present its report on 11 December 2013.

Purpose of Schedule 2 of the Bill

1.3 Schedule 2 of the Bill seeks to amend the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* to extend the operation of income management in Cape York for a further two years until the end of 2015.⁵ Income management is an element of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial.

1.4 The Explanatory Memorandum provides the following reason for the proposed amendment in Schedule 2 of the Bill:

The continuation of income management until the end of 2015 as a key element of the reforms will continue to assist in stabilising people's circumstances and fostering behavioural change, particularly in the areas of school attendance, parental responsibility and increasing individual responsibility.⁶

Conduct of the inquiry

1.5 Details of the inquiry, including links to the Bill and associated documents, were placed on the committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/senate_fpa.

1 *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 6, 20 November 2013, p.106.

2 *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 10, 4 December 2013, p. 164.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 7, 5 December 2013, p. 258.

4 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 7, 5 December 2013, pp 245-246. Note: The provisions of Schedules 6 and 9 were referred to the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee and the remaining provisions were referred to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee.

5 Explanatory Memorandum (EM), p. 1. See Item 1 of Schedule 2 of the Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 (Bill).

6 EM, p. 1.

1.6 The committee also directly contacted a number of relevant organisations and individuals to notify them of the inquiry and invite submissions by 9 December 2013. Submissions received by the committee are listed at Appendix 1.

1.7 The committee decided to prepare its report on the basis of submissions received and available information. The committee thanks those who assisted by providing submissions to the inquiry.