



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

Independent review of the Parliamentary Budget Office

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Public Accounts Committee announces PBO review

The [Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit](#) has today announced an independent review into the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO)—focusing on how the PBO can continue to strengthen its abilities.

The Chair of the Committee, Senator Dean Smith, said that the independent review was an important, constructive step in the maturation of the PBO as an institution.

“The PBO provides the Parliament and the public with independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy and the financial implications of proposals. It is crucial that the PBO maintains its strong performance through constantly looking to improve.”

The Terms of Reference for the independent review state that:

The review will examine, report and make recommendations on the scope for the PBO to build on the foundations it has established and continue to strengthen its ability to achieve its aims of:

- a. providing a more level playing field for all parliamentarians in their access to publicly funded policy costings and budget analyses*
- b. improving the accuracy of costings of election commitments*
- c. enhancing the transparency and public understanding of budget information and fiscal policy settings.*

The review will be completed by mid-2017 and will be conducted by Dr Ian Watt AC, former Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Mr Barry Anderson, former Deputy Director, US Congressional Budget Office. Dr Watt AC will Chair the review.

Under the [Parliamentary Services Act 1999](#), the Committee is responsible for overseeing the operations and resourcing of the PBO. Section 64T of the Act enables the Committee to seek an independent review of the PBO after a general election. The 2016 Federal election was the second election since PBO was established in 2012.

For the full terms of reference or more information about the Committee’s role in overseeing the PBO, please visit the Committee’s [website](#).

Media inquiries:

Chair, Senator Dean Smith, Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, on (08) 9481 0349 (Electorate office) or (02) 6277 3707 (Parliament House)

For background: Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4615 or email jcpaa@aph.gov.au