

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 On 13 February 2014, the Senate referred the following documents to the committee for examination and report in relation to its portfolios:

- Particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2013-2014];
- Particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2013-2014];
- Final budget outcome for 2012-2013; and
- Issues from the advances under the annual Appropriation Acts for 2012-2013.¹

1.2 The committee is responsible for the examination of the following portfolios:

- Health;
- Social Services; and
- Human Services.

1.3 The committee is required to report to the Senate on its consideration of 2013-2014 additional estimates on Tuesday 18 March 2014.²

Details of hearings

1.4 The committee considered the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) 2013-2014 for the Human Services portfolio, the Social Services portfolio, and the Health portfolio, at hearings from 26 February 2014 to 27 February 2014 (inclusive). The hearings were conducted in accordance with the agreed agenda outlined as follows:

- Wednesday 26 February 2014 – Health portfolio; and
- Thursday 27 February 2014 – Social Services portfolio and Human Services portfolio.

1.5 The committee heard evidence from the following Senators:

- Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash, Assistant Minister for Health (representing the Hon. Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Health);
- Senator the Hon. Mitch Fifield, Assistant Minister for Social Services (representing the Hon. Kevin Andrews MP, Minister for Social Services); and

1 Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Journals of the Senate*, No. 14, 13 February 2014, pp 485-486.

2 Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Journals of the Senate*, No. 6, 4 December 2013, p. 224.

- Senator the Hon. Marise Payne, Minister for Human Services.

1.6 Evidence was also provided by the following:

- Professor Jane Halton PSM, Secretary of the Department of Health;
- Mr Finn Pratt PSM, Secretary of the Department of Social Services;
- Ms Kathryn Campbell CSC, Secretary of the Department of Human Services; and
- officers representing the departments and agencies covered by the estimates before the committee.

1.7 The committee thanks the ministers, departmental secretaries and officers for their assistance and cooperation during the hearings.

Questions on Notice

1.8 In accordance with Standing Order 26, the date for submission to the committee of written answers to questions on notice or additional information relating to the expenditure is 24 April 2014.

1.9 Answers to questions taken on notice and tabled documents relating to the committee's hearings will be tabled in the Senate. Answers to questions on notice and additional information may be accessed via the committee's website.

Hansard transcripts

1.10 The committee discussed many of the expenditure proposals and information contained in the PAES. These discussions are detailed in the committee's *Hansard* transcripts of 26 February 2014 to 27 February 2014 (inclusive), copies of which will be tabled in the Senate. *Hansard* transcripts of the estimates proceedings are also accessible on the committee's website at http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca.

1.11 References to the *Hansard* transcript are to the proof *Hansard*; page numbers may vary between the proof and the official *Hansard* transcript.

Changes in the PAES

1.12 The committee notes that the Australian Government Ministry led by Prime Minister the Hon. Tony Abbott MP was sworn in on 18 September 2013 and, in addition to these ministerial changes, there have been significant changes in the portfolios oversighted by the committee.

Health portfolio

1.13 The Health portfolio has been restructured as follows:

- The Department of Health and Ageing has been renamed the Department of Health, with responsibility for aged care transferred to the new Department of Social Services;
- The Department of Health has acquired responsibility for the National Mental Health Commission, as well as sport and recreation policy, including three associated agencies: the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority;

the Australian Sports Commission; and the Australian Sports Foundation Limited; and

- A number of Indigenous health programmes and functions have been transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC).

Social Services portfolio

1.14 The committee further notes that, under the Administrative Arrangements Order of 18 September 2013,³ the Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) portfolio has ceased to exist, with the creation of the new Social Services portfolio. Mr Pratt PSM previously explained the portfolio's restructured responsibilities to the committee:

[I]f I talk about what has left the previous FaHCSIA, it comes down to two main areas. One is Indigenous Affairs in its entirety and the other is the Office for Women. Those have both gone to the Prime Minister's department. In terms of social services, the contributing ex-departments, the FaHCS part of the old FaHCSIA—so, everything else from old FaHCSIA—we [have. From] the former Department of Health and Ageing, the ageing and aged care functions...From the former Department of Immigration and Citizenship we got multicultural affairs and settlement services. From the former DEEWR we picked up responsibilities in two main areas. One was the disability employment services and the other was the income support payments—Newstart allowance, parenting payment, et cetera. From the Department of Industry we picked up Austudy, and from the [DPMC] the responsibilities for not-for-profit volunteering and philanthropy.⁴

1.15 The Social Services portfolio now contains two administrative agencies: the Department of Social Services and the Department of Human Services.

3 Available at: http://www.dPMC.gov.au/parliamentary/docs/aaO_20130918.pdf (accessed 13 March 2014).

4 *Estimates Hansard*, 21 November 2013, pp 9-10.