

Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

The committee met on Tuesday 24 February 2015 from 9 am until 10.07 pm.

The committee called:

- the Department and agencies of the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio, including the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General, and
- the Department and agencies of the Finance portfolio, including ASC Pty Ltd, Comsuper and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, the Future Fund Management Agency (FFMA) and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).

Among other issues, the following matters were discussed:

- the process followed by the Office of the Official Secretary after it was advised of the Prime Minister's intention to appoint Prince Philip a Knight in the Order of Australia,
- the Prime Minister's decision to place the decision-making process for dames and knighthoods with the Council for the Order of Australia, and required amendments to the constitution of the Order,
- the request for tender for new kitchen equipment for Government House,
- the announcement by the Defence Minister on 20 February 2015 on the strategic direction of the future submarine program, and ASC's interaction with the proposed procurement process,
- progress on the merger between Comsuper and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, expected to commence on 1 July 2015, and requirement for legislation, which has not yet been introduced into the Parliament,
- the policy decision to require members of the Public Sector Superannuation Accumulation Plan to pay administration fees, rather than the government,
- the status of legislation and alternative plans for the implementation of the asset recycling scheme through the appropriation bills,
- the smaller government reforms outlined in MYEFO 2014-15,
- the contingency reserve for paid parental leave (PPL) and arrangements for the PPL levy and a company tax rate reduction following an announcement not to proceed with the scheme,
- the implementation of the contestability framework,
- the launch of the cost recovery guidelines,
- new *Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by non-corporate Commonwealth entities* and the advertising campaign for the higher education reforms,
- scoping studies into future ownership options for the Intra Government Communications Network and the Royal Australian Mint,
- an update on the open technology forum and the Open Government Partnership
- feedback on the stationery and office supplier, OfficeMax,
- staffing for the Coalition Advisory Service,

- renewal of the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act Employment Enterprise Agreement,
- an update on the performance of FFMA,
- the comparative size of Australia's sovereign wealth fund internationally, and the global investment environment,
- the conduct of protected action ballots by the AEC and an update on the new electoral integrity unit,
- current executive staffing levels in the AEC,
- divergences between Commonwealth and state electoral rolls, and
- possible multiple voting in the 2013 federal election: referrals to the AFP and the status of prosecutions.