

Chapter 1

Overview

1.1 On 8 May 2018 the Senate referred the following documents to the Education and Employment Legislation Committee (the committee) for examination and report:

- particulars of proposed and certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2019;
- particulars of certain proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2019;
- particulars of proposed expenditure in relation to the parliamentary departments in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2019;
- particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018;
- particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018.¹

Portfolio coverage

1.2 In accordance with a resolution of the Senate on 31 August 2016, as amended on 12 February 2018, the committee is responsible for the examination of the expenditure and outcomes of the following portfolios:

- Education and Training; and
- Jobs and Innovation (Jobs and Small Business).²

1.3 A full list of agencies is available at Appendix 1.

Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19

1.4 The Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) 2018-19 for the Education and Training portfolio and Jobs and Small Business (part of the Jobs and Innovation portfolio) were tabled in the Senate on 8 May 2018.³

Education and Training portfolio

1.5 The 2018-19 PBS for the Education and Training portfolio provides information on the revised estimates for the portfolio and details the Australian Government's education and training priorities including:

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 95, 8 May 2018, pp. 3032–3033.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 2, 31 August 2016, p. 76; and No. 84, 12 February 2018, p. 2668.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 95, 8 May 2018, p. 3033.

- the full implementation of the Child Care Package including the replacement of the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate with the Child Care Subsidy and the Child Care Safety Net;
 - the extension of the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education;
 - ongoing work to implement a national school reform agreement;
 - creation of the High Achieving Teachers Program;
 - extension of the National School Chaplaincy Programme;
 - expansion of the number of available sub-bachelor and enabling places in regional and rural areas;
 - developing Australia's research system through the creation of the Research Infrastructure Investment Plan; and
 - ongoing commitment to the Skilling Australians Fund.⁴
- 1.6 The Department of Education and Training has two outcomes as follows:
- Outcome One: improved early learning, schooling, student educational outcomes and transitions from school through access to quality child care, support, parent engagement, quality teaching and learning environments; and
 - Outcome Two: promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education, and international quality research, skills and training.⁵

Jobs and Small Business

1.7 The 2018-19 PBS for Jobs and Small Business provides information on the revised estimates for the portfolio and details the Australian Government's priorities including:

- delivering efficient and effective employment services and helping job seekers find and keep a job through the continued implementation of jobactive;
- implementing initiatives to support Australians in regional areas or those experiencing challenges due to large-scale industry changes;
- providing mature age Australians with opportunities to contribute to the workforce;
- administering payments and recovery activities under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee which assists workers who have unpaid employment entitlements when they are made redundant by the liquidation or bankruptcy of their employer;

4 *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19: Education and Training Portfolio*, pp. 10–11.

5 *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19: Education and Training Portfolio*, p. 3.

- supporting small and family business and enterprise development, and ensuring that small business interests are considered in national economic reform; and
- contributing to higher productivity through implementation of national approaches to workplace health and safety and workers' compensation laws.⁶

1.8 The department notes that due to the changes to Administrative Arrangements on 20 December 2017, the department has gained small business and regulatory policy functions.⁷

1.9 The Department of Jobs and Small Business currently has the following two outcomes:

- Outcome One: foster a productive and competitive labour market through employment policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, meet employer needs and increase Australia's workforce participation; and
- Outcome Two: facilitate jobs growth through policies that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces, and facilitate the growth of small business.⁸

Hearings

1.10 On 14 November 2017 the Senate resolved that Budget Estimates hearings for the committee would occur between Tuesday, 29 May and Friday, 1 June.⁹

1.11 On 10 May 2018, an amendment to this resolution passed the Senate stating that the committee would meet from 'Tuesday, 29 May to Thursday, 31 May and Tuesday, 5 June and, if required, Friday, 22 June'.¹⁰ The resolution further stated 'that if a committee agrees to sit on 1 June instead of Tuesday, 5 June, then that be allowed if it suits the convenience of the committee'.¹¹

1.12 The committee decided to sit on Tuesday, 5 June. Accordingly particulars of budget expenditure were considered as follows:

- Jobs and Small Business—29 May and 30 May 2018; and
- Education and Training portfolio—31 May and 5 June 2018.

1.13 The committee heard evidence from the following Ministers:

- Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash, Minister for Jobs and Innovation;

6 *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19: Jobs and Small Business (Part of the Jobs and Innovation Portfolio)*, pp. 13–14.

7 *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19: Education and Training Portfolio*, p. 13.

8 *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018-19: Education and Training Portfolio*, p. 13. Note that following the changes to Administrative Arrangement Orders on 20 December 2017, Outcome Two was updated to reflect the department gaining small business policy functions.

9 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 69, 14 November 2017, pp. 2206–2207.

10 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 97, 10 May 2018, p. 3110.

11 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 97, 10 May 2018, p. 3110.

- Senator the Hon. Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Science, Jobs and Innovation; and
- Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training.

1.14 Evidence was also provided by the following departmental secretaries who were accompanied by officers of the portfolio departments and agencies:

- Ms Kerri Hartland, Secretary, Department of Jobs and Small Business; and
- Dr Michele Bruniges, Secretary, Department of Education and Training.

1.15 The committee extends its appreciation to the Ministers and officers of the departments and agencies who assisted the committee in its conduct of the 2018-19 Budget Estimates hearings.

1.16 An index of proceedings is available at Appendix 2.

Questions on notice

1.17 In accordance with Standing Order 26(9)(a), the committee agreed that the date for the return of answers in response to questions placed on notice from the Budget Estimates 2018-19 hearings on from 29 May to 31 May and 5 June would be 13 July 2018.

1.18 Answers to questions on notice are published as they become available on the committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/ee.

Hansard transcripts

1.19 Committee Hansard transcripts are accessible on the committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/ee/2018-2019_Budget_estimates.

1.20 In this report, references to the Committee Hansard are to the proof transcripts. Page numbers may vary between the transcripts of the Proof Hansard and the Official Hansard.