

MEDIA RELEASE

19 Dec 2017

Prime Minister

Government

I have refreshed my Ministry to reflect the priorities and values of my Government.

The Ministry features two new, major portfolios: one focused on job creation, the other on national security. This reflects my Government's determination to provide opportunity and security for every Australian.

We have entrusted those portfolios to two of our most experienced and respected Ministers.

Peter Dutton will become Minister for Home Affairs, for the first time bringing together the nation's security, border and intelligence agencies under one department.

Senator Michaelia Cash will become Minister for Jobs and Innovation, charged with harnessing the policies of the government to create more jobs and job opportunities.

Senator Cash will be a key part of the Government's economic team working to deliver on our commitment of more jobs, more investment, and stronger economic growth.

I'm delighted to welcome Barnaby Joyce back as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport - a vital portfolio as the Government rolls out its record \$75 billion infrastructure program.

Christian Porter will become Attorney General, a role he previously held in the West Australian State Government.

Mathias Cormann will take on the additional role Special Minister of State. Mathias's expanded portfolio is testament to his outstanding performance as a Cabinet Minister.

Kelly O'Dwyer will take on the additional role of Minister for Women, which was previously held by Senator Cash.

I am pleased to welcome five new members of Cabinet.

Deputy Nationals Leader Bridget McKenzie joins Cabinet as Minister for Sport, Rural Health and Regional Communications. Bridget has long campaigned for better services for regional communities.

Michael Keenan will join Cabinet as Minister for Human Services and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Digital Transformation - a central role in ensuring all Australians get the services they expect when dealing with the Government, particularly as more and more services shift online.

Dan Tehan will join Cabinet in the critical role of Minister for Social Services. He will work closely with the newly created role of Assistant Minister for Children and Families, which will be filled by David Gillespie, as well as with Jane Prentice, who has been doing an outstanding job as Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services.

John McVeigh, who previously served as a minister in the Queensland Liberal National Party State Government, will join Cabinet as Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government.

David Littleproud will become Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. He will bring to the role two decades of experience in agribusiness before he joined parliament.

This new Cabinet will not include some familiar faces.

Senator Arthur Sinodinos wrote to me this week to tell me his medical treatment is taking longer than anticipated and he is unlikely to be able to return from leave until the middle of next year.

In those circumstances, he has asked that he not be included in this new ministry.

Senator Sinodinos is one of this generation's most accomplished and experienced public servants and his contributions to the Cabinet have been sorely missed since his illness was first diagnosed.

Naturally, we wish him well in his recovery and I look forward to him regaining full health and returning to a senior Ministerial or other government role in the future.

Senator George Brandis, who after 17 years of distinguished service in the Senate, has signalled his plans to stand down.

Senator Brandis has been a stalwart of this Government in the Senate, particularly in the past couple of years given the difficulties of negotiating with a large and, at times, unpredictable crossbench.

Senator Brandis' legacy as Attorney General will be remembered for two things in particular. First, it was on his watch as Attorney, and in so small measure thanks to his eloquent advocacy over many years, that Australia legislated for marriage equality.

Secondly, as the Minister responsible for domestic national security since 2013, he undertook the most comprehensive reforms of our national security laws to keep Australians safe.

I hope that Senator Brandis' public service to the nation is not over. Early in the new year I intend to recommend to the Governor-General that he be appointed as Australia's new High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. I know he will excel at this role.

Senator Brandis' position as Leader of the Senate will be filled by Senator Cormann, who has been integral in steering the Government's agenda through the Senate. His determination and his counsel are invaluable.

I obviously consult with the Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the Nationals on the makeup of the Ministry.

I take this opportunity to thank Darren Chester for his significant contributions to the Cabinet as the outgoing Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. I know that we will all continue to call on his wisdom and experience.

Changes in the Outer Ministry reflect this Government's focus on business enterprise, national security and families.

Craig Laundry is promoted to the role of Minister for Small & Family Business, Workplaces and Deregulation. Craig spent two decades in private business before joining Parliament so will bring unique insight into the challenges faced by small businesses.