

Preface

On 8 February 2018, the Senate referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee (the committee) for examination the estimates of proposed additional expenditure for the financial year 2017–18.

The committee is responsible for the examination of the Attorney-General's portfolio and the Home Affairs portfolio. The Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements for 2017–18 were tabled on 8 February 2018.¹

Reference of documents

The Senate referred to the committee, for examination and report, the following documents:

- Particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2017–2018];
- Particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2017–2018]; and
- Final Budget Outcome 2016–17.²

The committee was required to report on its consideration of the additional estimates on or before 27 March 2017.

The committee notes the following significant changes and measures in the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) 2017–18:

- the establishment of the Home Affairs portfolio, which integrates a number of agencies and functions from other portfolios;³ and
- under the Attorney-General's portfolio, the establishment of the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry.⁴

Estimates hearings

The committee met in public session on 26 and 27 February 2018. Over the course of the two days of hearings, totalling over 20 hours, the committee took evidence from the following departments and agencies:

- Department of Home Affairs;
- Australian Border Force;
- Australian Federal Police;

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 83, 8 February 2018, p. 2647.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 83, 8 February 2018, p. 2647.

3 *Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2017–18, Home Affairs Portfolio*, p. 6.

4 *Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2017–18, Attorney-General's Portfolio*, p. 3.

- Attorney-General's Department;
- Administrative Appeals Tribunal;
- Australian Human Rights Commission;
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation;
- Family Court of Australia;
- Federal Circuit Court of Australia;
- Federal Court of Australia;
- National Archives of Australia; and
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Copies of the *Hansard* transcripts are available from the committee's webpage at: www.aph.gov.au/senate_legalcon.

An index of the *Hansard* for each portfolio appears at Appendix 2.

Ministers

On 26 February 2018, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, representing the Minister for Home Affairs. The Minister for Home Affairs was represented by Senator the Hon Zed Seselja and Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie on 27 February 2018.

On 27 February 2018, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash and Senator the Hon Zed Seselja, representing the Attorney-General.

Officers from both departments and associated agencies also appeared. The committee thanks the ministers and officers for their assistance.

Questions on notice

The committee resolved that the due date for submitting responses to questions on notice from the additional estimates hearings in February would be 10 April 2018.

Further written explanations, and answers to questions on notice, will be tabled as soon as possible after they are received. That information is also available on the committee's webpage.

Note on references

References to the committee *Hansard* are to the proof *Hansard*. Page numbers may vary between the proof and the official *Hansard* transcript.