

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Establishment, Functions and Staffing Profile of the COVID-19 Taskforce

Senator: Gallagher

Question reference number: 0042

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2pm, Friday 5 June 2020

Number of pages: 2

Question:

With reference to the COVID-19 Taskforce in the department:

- a. On what date was the taskforce established.
- b. Can the functions of the taskforce be outlined.
- c. Can the particular functions of the COVID-19 Data branch be outlined.
- d. Can a current staffing profile be provided.

Answer:

- (a) The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) stood-up the Disaster Preparedness and Response Branch (DPRB) on 3 March 2020 to support PM&C's early COVID-19 policy coordination and response requirements. As these requirements evolved, DPRB expanded to become the COVID-19 Taskforce (the Taskforce).
- (b) The Taskforce does not duplicate the functions of existing PM&C teams, but supplements and supports the responsible PM&C line areas. The Taskforce works closely with Cabinet Division to support the operations of National Cabinet. The Taskforce also prepares data, coordinates and produces responses to COVID-19-relevant correspondence and provides secretariat support for meetings of Senior and Deputy Senior Officials from all jurisdictions.
- (c) The COVID-19 Data Branch is a specialist data analytics team which compiles data provided from Commonwealth, state and territory sources as well as private sector and international sources on COVID-19.

(d) As at 1 June 2020, the Taskforce had 23 full-time equivalent (FTE), as follows:

- 16 PM&C Staff: 1 SESB2, 2 SESB1, 3 EL2, 5 EL1, 4 APS6 and 1 Graduate
- 7 secondees from other departments and agencies: 1 SESB2, 2 EL2, 2 EL1, 1 APS6 and 1 APS2.