



THE SENATE

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the Family Law Courts

(Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Bill 2018, and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2018)

Statement by the Chair, Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald

The Chair of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, Senator Ian Macdonald, has announced that public hearings will be held into the legislation dealing with the Government's proposed consolidation of the Family Court and the Federal Circuit Court.

Senator Macdonald said that the committee had agreed to hold hearings in Sydney, Adelaide and Perth in the week commencing October 28, and in Brisbane and Townsville on November 7 and 8.

Senator Macdonald said that it was clear from representations received by parliamentarians over many years that there are universal concerns at delays and inconsistencies in the current arrangements for dealing with Family Law matters. This is because the two relevant courts – Family Court and the Federal Circuit Court – had different procedures and arrangements, and moving hearings from one court to the other involved unacceptable delay and cost which the Government's legislation is intended to address.

“It is because of this high level of public interest that the committee has set aside at least five days for public hearings”, Senator Macdonald said.

“Submissions have been called from interested parties and the committee urges persons who have had dealings with Family Law courts to make submissions.”

The committee reviews all submissions and some submitters will be requested to give evidence at public hearings.”

Submissions can be made in writing, and further information on the committee's hearings can be found at:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and Constitutional_Affairs.](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and_Constitutional_Affairs)