

Chapter 1

Introduction

Committee's duty to examine reports

1.1 The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (the committee) has a statutory duty to examine each annual report of the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) under the *Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Act 2010* (the Act).

1.2 This is the sixth time that the committee has examined the annual report of the ACC since the widening of the committee's jurisdiction in 2010. Subsection 7(1) of the Act includes the following functions of the committee in relation to the ACC:

...(c) to examine each annual report on the ACC and report to the Parliament on any matter appearing in, or arising out of, any such annual report...¹

1.3 The duty of the committee to examine annual reports of the ACC under the Act stems from an expectation that agencies which have been granted strong coercive powers, like the ACC, should be subject to additional oversight. At the time of the introduction of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Bill 2010, the then Attorney-General noted that the bill would exemplify the 'commitment to improving oversight and accountability in relation to the exercise of the functions of Commonwealth agencies.'²

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

1.4 The *Australian Crime Commission Amendment (National Policing Information) Act 2016* amended the *Australian Crime Commission Act 2002* to incorporate CrimTrac into the ACC. The changes were implemented on 1 July 2016, and the ACC is now known as the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC).³

1.5 The annual report examined in this committee report covers the period before the ACC merged with CrimTrac and became the ACIC. This report will therefore refer to the ACC.

Report under consideration

1.6 The ACC's Annual Report 2015–16 (the annual report) was presented to the Minister for Justice, the Hon Michael Keenan MP, on 10 October 2016. It was

1 *Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Act 2010*, ss. 7(1).

2 *House of Representatives Hansard*, 18 March 2010, p. 2925.

3 Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC), *About us: legislation*, <https://www.acic.gov.au/about-us/legislation> (accessed 12 January 2017).

presented to the House of Representatives on 13 October 2016⁴ and tabled in the Senate on 7 November 2016.⁵

Examination of the annual report

1.7 In examining the ACC annual report, the committee held a public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra on 14 June 2017. The witnesses who appeared before the committee are listed in Appendix 1.

Structure of the committee report

1.8 The committee's report comprises the following chapters:

- chapter 2 examines ACC compliance with annual report requirements and the ACC's financial management;
- chapter 3 considers the ACC's performance against its key performance indicators; and
- chapter 4 details issues raised with the ACC in the hearing, as well as major operational information of interest to the committee over the reporting period.

Acknowledgements

1.9 The committee also acknowledges the cooperation of the ACC officials who assisted the committee in conducting its examination.

Note on references

1.10 References to the committee *Hansard* are to the official *Hansard*.

4 *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 11—13 October 2016, p. 214.

5 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 12—7 November 2016, p. 356.