

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Statement

Monday, 25 May 2015

Appointment of Auditor-General

Dr Andrew Southcott MP, Chair

[Madam] Speaker, I wish to make a statement on the appointment of the Auditor-General of the Australian National Audit Office.

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit has the responsibility under the *Public Accounts and Audit Committee Act 1951* to approve or reject a proposed recommendation for appointment to the office of Auditor-General. The Committee is also required to report its decision to Parliament.

This is a significant statutory duty of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit. As an independent officer of the Parliament, the Auditor-General is responsible for ensuring accountability and transparency in the delivery of government programs and services. It is therefore appropriate that my Committee has the power to scrutinise a nomination to this important position.

Accordingly, I am pleased to take this opportunity to advise the House that on 14 May 2015 the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit unanimously approved the appointment of Mr Grant Hehir as the new Auditor-General. The Auditor-General is appointed by the Governor-

General, under the *Auditor-General Act 1997*, for a term of 10 years, and Mr Hehir is due to commence office on 11 June 2015.

Mr Hehir is currently the New South Wales Auditor-General, and has held a range of positions in state and Commonwealth public sectors. He was the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance for seven years, and held senior positions in the Commonwealth Department of Finance and the Treasury. Mr Hehir is a Fellow of CPA Australia and the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

The Committee also takes this opportunity to acknowledge the significant achievements of Mr Ian McPhee AO PSM, who has served as Auditor-General for the past 10 years. On behalf of the Committee, I thank Mr McPhee for his dedicated commitment to: improving public sector accountability; promoting better practice public administration; and assisting the Parliament in holding executive government to account and informing the wider Australian community of the state of public administration.

The Committee wishes Mr Hehir well in his new role, and looks forward to building on the already strong working relationship between the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit and the Australian National Audit Office, under Mr Hehir's leadership as Australia's new Auditor-General.