

Dissenting Report by Coalition Senators

1.1 Coalition senators oppose the recommendations of this report.

1.2 Coalition senators strongly support and endorse comprehensive settlement and support services for migrants. As the committee's report notes, Australia's delivery of settlement services is internationally acclaimed. The committee's recommendation to create an entirely new bureaucracy to control settlement services is onerous and unnecessary. The current administrative arrangements have proven to be successful and will continue to be.

1.3 The Department of Social Services (DSS) has proven experience in leading the Government's settlement services policy and support and is leading reform of better linkages to other government services.

1.4 Through the new Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) which begins on 30 October 2017, DSS is driving reform to the sector that will see:

- an outcomes-based delivery framework introduced;
- improved case management for humanitarian entrants with individualised, needs-based support;
- clearer linkages to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and the Skills for Education and Employment Program, (administered by the Department of Education and Training) and *jobactive*, (administered by the Department of Employment);
- better English language, education and employment outcomes for humanitarian entrants, including introducing new methods to track outcomes over time;
- expanded orientation and information on life in Australia to provide humanitarian entrants with foundation skills required for their new start;
- innovation and increased efficiency in service delivery amongst providers; and
- a reduction in bureaucratic red tape for service providers.

1.5 The committee's recommendation that a specific migrant-stream employment service be developed by the Department of Employment under the current *jobactive* model is already being addressed through several government departments.

1.6 As the committee was advised during hearings, DSS has been regularly convening an interdepartmental working group to discuss better employment outcomes for humanitarian entrants and improving coordination between agencies with regards to the sharing of information between on-the-ground services. The working group has included the Department of Employment, the Department of

Education and Training, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

1.7 DSS officials acknowledged that an evaluation had found skills recognition reform was needed. It is a high priority of the Turnbull Government that humanitarian entrants' skills and experience is recognised to lead to job opportunities.

1.8 Recommendation 2 also asks for 'stronger coordination' with the AMEP, which, as outlined above, will be achieved under the DSS-led Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP).

1.9 Coalition senators oppose making recommendations to independent private organisations such as the Australian Press Council, particularly those with the role of holding the parliament to account.

1.10 Coalition senators oppose the recommendation that democratically elected Members of Parliament should be bound by codes of ethics developed by previous parliaments.

Senator Jonathon Duniam

Senator James Paterson