

Chapter 1

Overview

1.1 On 13 February 2014¹ the Senate referred the following documents to the committee for examination and report in relation to the Education and Employment portfolio:

- Particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2013–14];
- Particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2014–14];
- Final budget outcome 2012–13 Report by the Treasurer (Mr Hockey) and the Minister for Finance (Senator Cormann), November 2013; and
- Issues from the advances under the annual Appropriation Acts—Report for 2012-13.

1.2 Standing legislation committees are required to report to the Senate on 18 March 2014.

Portfolio coverage

1.3 The committee has responsibility for examining the expenditure and outcomes of the Education and Employment. Appendix 1 lists the department and agencies under this portfolio.

Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) 2013–14

1.4 The Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) and the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) inform senators of the proposed allocation of funding to government outcomes by agencies within the portfolio. However, unlike the PBS, the PAES summarise only the changes in funding by outcome since the Budget. The PAES provides information on new measures and their impact on the financial and/or non-financial planned performance of programs supporting those outcomes.

1.5 The PAES 2013–14 notes that as a result of the September 2013 Administrative Arrangements Order, responsibility for outcomes managed by the former Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has been transferred to the Department of Education, the Department of Employment, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Social Services.²

1 *Journals of the Senate No.14*, 13 February 2014, p. 484.

2 Department of Education, *Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2013–14: Education Portfolio*, p. 3.

1.6 The responsibility for higher education, research and international education has transferred to the Department of Education.³ The responsibility for employment, employment services, workplace relations and work health and safety has transferred to the Department of Employment.⁴

Hearings

1.7 The committee conducted two days of hearings, examining Education outcomes and agencies on 26 February 2014 and Employment outcomes and agencies on 27 February 2014. In total the committee met for 20 hours and 27 minutes, excluding breaks.

1.8 The following outcomes and agencies appeared before the committee for the Education Portfolio:

- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority;
- Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership;
- Australian Research Council;
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency; and
- Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

1.9 The following outcomes and agencies appeared before the committee for the Employment Portfolio:

- Fair Work Commission;
- Fair Work Ombudsman;
- Safe Work Australia;
- Comcare;
- Office of the Fair Work Building Industry Inspectorate;
- Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency;
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency; and
- Outcomes 1 and 2.

Public interest immunity claims

1.10 On 13 May 2009, the Senate passed an order relating to public interest immunity claims.⁵ The order sets out the processes to be followed if a witness

3 Department of Education, *Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2013–14: Education Portfolio*, p. 3.

4 Administrative Arrangements Order, 12 December 2013, p. 14.

5 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 68, 13 May 2009, p. 1941. The order was moved by Senator Cormann.

declines to answer a question. The full text of this order has previously been provided to departments and agencies and was incorporated in the Chair's opening statement on each day of the additional estimates hearing.

Questions on notice

1.11 The committee has drawn the attention of the department and its agencies to the agreed deadline of Thursday 24 April 2014 for the receipt of answers to questions taken on notice from this round, in accordance with Standing Order 26.

1.12 For this round, written questions on notice were received from Senators Cameron, Carr, Lines, Ludwig, Rhiannon, Siewert, Wright and Xenophon.

Note on Hansard page referencing

1.13 Hansard references throughout this report relate to proof Hansard page numbers. Please note page numbering may differ between the proof and final Hansard.

