



**STATEMENT BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
AND AUDIT ON THE 2017-18 DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE AND THE
PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE**

Each year the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit is required by legislation to consider the draft budget estimates of the Parliamentary Budget Office and the Australian National Audit Office and make recommendations to both Houses of Parliament.

I rise today to fulfil this requirement and make a statement on whether the Committee considers that the proposed funding for these offices is sufficient to carry out their respective mandates.

With regard to the Parliamentary Budget Office, the Committee has been informed that the PBO is not seeking supplementation in the 2017-18 Budget.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has advised the Committee that the PBO's estimated expenses for 2017-18 can be met from within the PBO's existing resources.

The Committee endorses the proposed 2017-18 budget for the PBO, and commends the PBO for its high quality work in support of parliamentarians and the public.

With regard to the Australian National Audit Office, the Committee has been informed that the ANAO is not seeking supplementation in the 2017-18 Budget.

The Auditor-General has advised the Committee that the ANAO's resources are adequate for 2017-18, and that he anticipates completing approximately 48 performance audits over the period.

Enhanced performance information is a key focus of the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The ANAO is continuing to develop its audit methodology in this area so as to be in a

position to audit the annual performance statements of all Commonwealth entities.

The Committee endorses the proposed budget for the ANAO in 2017-18, and commends the ANAO for its high quality work and continuing focus on the Commonwealth performance framework.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Committee will continue to closely monitor the work programs and draft budget estimates of the PBO and ANAO. As independent authorities, the PBO and ANAO need to be sufficiently funded to fulfil their legislative requirements and adequately support the Parliament.

The Committee appreciates the efforts of both the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the Auditor-General in maintaining strong working relationships with the Parliament, and particularly with this Committee. They have made themselves available for regular briefings and provided invaluable advice to the Committee on a variety of matters. The Committee looks forward to continuing these productive relationships.

The Committee draws the Parliament's attention to the fact that Mr Phil Bowen has announced his retirement in July. The Committee extends its appreciation for Mr Bowen's proficient and meticulous stewardship of the PBO in its first five years of operation and notes that the independent review of the PBO by Dr Ian Watt stated that in a short period of time, the PBO had developed into a well-regarded, credible, independent, non-partisan source of expertise on the budget cycle, fiscal policy and policy costings.

Senator Dean Smith
Chair
9 May 2017