

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

1.1 On 9 February 2017 the Senate referred the following documents to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee (committee) for examination and report:

- particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2017 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2016-2017];
- particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2017 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2016-2017]; together with the
- Final Budget Outcome 2015–16.<sup>1</sup>

### Portfolio coverage

1.2 In accordance with a resolution of the Senate on 31 August 2016 the committee is responsible for the examination of the expenditure and outcomes of the following portfolios:

- Health; and
- Social Services (including Human Services).<sup>2</sup>

### Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2016–17

1.3 The Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) 2016–17 for the Health Portfolio and the Social Services Portfolio (including Human Services) were tabled in the Senate on 9 February 2017.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Health Portfolio*

1.4 The Health Portfolio's PAES for 2016–17 provides information on the revised estimates for the portfolio and highlights the Australian Government's health reform agenda focusing on: strengthening mental health care; delivering a better health system; fighting cancer; supporting older Australians; supporting communities and improving health and wellbeing of Australians and boosting health and medical research.<sup>4</sup>

1.5 The 2016–17 PAES for the Health Portfolio notes the following changes to Ministerial responsibilities for the portfolio:

On 24 January 2017, the Hon Greg Hunt MP was sworn in as the Minister for Health and Minister for Sport; the Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP as the

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1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 26—9 February 2017, pp. 888–889.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 2—31 August 2016, p. 75.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 26—9 February 2017, p. 889.

4 *Portfolio Additional Budget Statements 2016–17: Health Portfolio*, pp. 8–11.

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Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Indigenous Health; and the Hon Dr David Gillespie MP as Assistant Minister for Health.<sup>5</sup>

1.6 The Health Portfolio's PAES also noted that from 30 June 2016 the National Health Performance Authority was abolished and its functions transferred to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Commission on Safety in Health Care and the Department of Health.<sup>6</sup>

***Social Services Portfolio (including Human Services)***

1.7 The Social Services Portfolio's PAES for 2016–17 notes proposed changes to expenditure since the publication of 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements. The PAES proposes additional appropriations for the portfolio of \$168.470 million and \$79.928 million in Appropriation Bill No. 3 and Appropriation Bill No.4 respectively.

1.8 The Social Services' PAES also noted changes to Ministerial responsibility for the portfolio, with Senator the Hon. Zed Seselja sworn in as Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs on 19 July 2016.

1.9 The Social Services (Department of Human Services) PAES for 2016–17 provides information on proposed additional expenditure of \$155.8 million in Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2016-17 and \$79.1 million in Appropriations Bill (No. 4) 2016-17. In the PAES the Department of Human Services notes the transfer of \$0.7 million of appropriations to the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) under section 75 of the *Public Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, following the transfer of responsibility for the myGov strategy from DHS to DTA on 1 July 2016.<sup>7</sup>

**Estimates hearings**

1.10 On 8 November 2016 the Senate resolved that Additional Estimates hearings for the committee would occur on 1 and 2 March 2017.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly the committee considered particulars of additional expenditure of portfolios as follows:

- Health Portfolio—1 March 2017; and
- Social Services Portfolio (including Human Services)—2 March 2017.

1.11 The committee heard evidence from the following Ministers:

- Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash, Minister for Local Government and Territories, Minister for Regional Communications and Minister for Regional Development (representing the Minister for Health);
- Senator the Hon. Scott Ryan, Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cabinet (representing the Minister for Social Services); and

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5 *Portfolio Additional Budget Statements 2016–17: Health Portfolio*, p. 2.

6 *Portfolio Additional Budget Statements 2016–17: Health Portfolio*, p. 2.

7 *Portfolio Additional Budget Statements 2016–17: Social Services Portfolio (Department of Human Services)*, p. 4.

8 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 13—8 November 2016, pp. 411–412.

- Senator the Hon. Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs.

1.12 Evidence was also provided by the following department secretaries who were accompanied by officers of the portfolio departments and agencies:

- Mr Martin Bowles PSM, Secretary, Department of Health;
- Ms Kathryn Campbell CSC, Secretary, Department of Human Services; and
- Mr Finn Pratt AO PSM, Secretary, Department of Social Services.

1.13 The committee extends its appreciation to the Ministers and officers of the departments and agencies who assisted the committee in its conduct of the 2016–17 Additional Estimates hearings.

### **Questions on notice**

1.14 In accordance with Standing Order 26(9)(a), the committee agreed that the date for the return of answers in response to questions placed on notice from the Additional Estimates 2016–17 hearings would be 21 April 2017.

1.15 Answers to questions on notice are published as they become available on the committee's website: [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate\\_ca](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca).

### **Hansard transcripts**

1.16 Committee Hansard transcripts document the estimates proceedings and are accessible on the committee's website: [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate\\_ca](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca).

1.17 An index of topics raised during the proceedings by Committee Hansard page number is available at Appendix 2.

1.18 In this report references to the Committee Hansard are to the proof transcripts. Page numbers may vary between the transcripts of the Proof Hansard and the Official Hansard.