

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 On 14 May 2013 the Senate referred the following documents to the committee for examination and report in relation to its portfolios:

- Particulars of proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2013-2014].
- Particulars of certain proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2013-2014]; and
- Particulars of proposed expenditure in relation to the parliamentary departments in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014.¹

1.2 The committee is responsible for the examination of the following portfolios:

- Health and Ageing;
- Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and
- Human Services.

1.3 The committee was required to report to the Senate on its consideration of 2013-2014 budget estimates on Tuesday 25 June 2013.²

Details of hearings

1.4 The committee considered the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) 2013-2014 for the Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio, the Human Services portfolio, and the Health and Ageing portfolio, at hearings from 3 June 2013 to 7 June 2013 (inclusive). The hearings were conducted in accordance with the agreed agenda outlined as follows:

- Monday 3 June 2013 – Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio
- Tuesday 4 June – Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio and Human Services portfolio
- Wednesday 5 and Thursday 6 June 2013 – Health and Ageing portfolio
- Friday 7 June 2013 – Cross Portfolio – Indigenous Matters

1.5 The committee heard evidence from the following Senators:

- Senator the Hon Jan McLucas, Minister for Human Services (and representing the Minister for Families, Community Services and

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 144, 14 May 2013, p. 3915.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 121, 1 November 2012, p. 3239.

Indigenous Affairs, the Minister for Housing and Homelessness, the Minister for Health, and the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing).

- Senator the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and for Pacific Island Affairs (representing the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and all relevant Ministers for the Cross Portfolio – Indigenous Matters Hearing).

1.6 Evidence was also provided by the following:

- Mr Finn Pratt, Secretary of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs;
- Ms Kathryn Campbell, Secretary of the Department of Human Services;
- Ms Jane Halton, Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing;
- Ms Jennifer Taylor, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace relations;
- officers representing the departments and agencies covered by the estimates before the committee.

1.7 The committee also considered budget expenditure at a hearing on 7 June 2013 on cross portfolio Indigenous matters pursuant to Resolution of the Senate of 26 August 2008.³ Explanations relating to the estimates were received from Senator the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite. Officers from the following portfolio Departments were in attendance:

- Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs;
- Health and Ageing; and
- Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

1.8 The committee thanks the ministers, departmental secretaries and officers for their assistance and cooperation during the hearings.

Questions on Notice

1.9 In accordance with Standing Order 26, the date for submission to the committee of written answers to questions or additional information relating to the expenditure is 26 July 2013. The committee notes that a forthcoming election, prorogation of parliament, or caretaker conventions have no effect on the requirement that answers to questions on notice be provided.

1.10 Answers to questions taken on notice and tabled documents relating to the committee's hearings will be tabled in the Senate. Answers to questions on notice and additional information may be accessed via the committee's website.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 22, 26 August 2008, p. 683.

Hansard transcripts

1.11 The committee discussed many of the expenditure proposals and information contained in the PBS. These discussions are detailed in the committee's *Hansard* transcripts of 3 June 2013 to 7 June 2013 (inclusive), copies of which will be tabled in the Senate. *Hansard* transcripts of the estimates proceedings are also accessible on the committee's website at http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca.

1.12 References to the Hansard transcript are to the proof Hansard; page numbers may vary between the proof and the official Hansard transcript.

Changes in the PBS

1.13 The committee notes Ministerial changes in the Human Services and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolios since the publication of the 2012-13 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements:

- In the Human Services portfolio, on 25 March 2013 Senator the Hon. Jan McLucas was appointed as the Minister for Human Services;⁴
- In the Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio, on 25 March 2013 the Hon. Amanda Rishworth MP was appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers.⁵

Procedural issues

1.14 No procedural issues were noted during the hearings.

4 Human Services, *Portfolio Budget Statements 2013-14*, p. 4, and The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, Prime Minister of Australia, 'Changes to the Ministry', Media release, 25 March 2013.

5 Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *Portfolio Budget Statements 2013-14*, p. 3, and The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, Prime Minister of Australia, 'Changes to the Ministry', Media release, 25 March 2013.

