

# PREFACE

On 14 May 2015, the Senate referred to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee (the committee) for examination the estimates of proposed expenditure for the financial year 2015–16. The committee is responsible for the examination of the Attorney-General's Portfolio and the Immigration and Border Protection Portfolio. The portfolio budget statements for 2014–15 were tabled on 13 May 2014.<sup>1</sup>

## Reference of documents

The Senate referred to the committee, for examination and report, the following documents:

- Particulars of proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2015 [Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2015–2016];
- Particulars of certain proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2015 [Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2015–2016];
- Particulars of proposed supplementary expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2014–15]; and
- Particulars of certain proposed supplementary expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2014 [Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2014–15].

The committee was required to report on its consideration of the budget estimates on 23 June 2015.

## Estimates hearings

The committee met in public session on 25, 26, 27 and 28 May 2015.

Over the course of the four days of hearings, totalling over 36 hours, the committee took evidence from the following departments and agencies:

### *Immigration and Border Protection Portfolio*

- Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
- Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal

### *Attorney-General's Portfolio*

- Attorney-General's Department
- Australia Council

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1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 27, 13 May 2014, p. 778.

- Australian Crime Commission
- Australian Federal Police
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- Australian Institute of Criminology
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
- CrimTrac
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
- Screen Australia
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
- Family Court of Australia
- Federal Circuit Court of Australia
- Federal Court of Australia
- National Archives of Australia

A full list of departments and agencies for which the committee has oversight is at Appendix 1.

Copies of the transcripts of *Hansard* are available from the committee's internet page at: [www.aph.gov.au/senate\\_legalcon](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_legalcon).

An index of the *Hansard* for each portfolio appears at Appendix 2.

### **Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries**

On 25 and 26 May 2015, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash, the Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, representing the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, and on 26 May 2015 from the Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson, Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC and Special Minister of State, representing the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection.

On 27 and 28 May 2015, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC, the Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts, and on 28 May 2015 from the Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, Assistant Minister for Education and Training, representing the Attorney-General.

Officers from both departments and associated agencies also appeared. The committee thanks the ministers, parliamentary secretaries and officers for their assistance.

## **Answers to questions on notice, tabling date and spill-over hearing**

The committee determined that the due date for submitting responses to questions on notice from the Budget estimates round was 10 July 2015. The tabling date for the committee's Budget estimates 2015–16 report was 23 June 2015.

After the hearings on 25–28 May, the committee received correspondence from three committee members requiring a spill-over hearing pursuant to an Order of the Senate of 25 June 2014. As a result, the tabling date for the committee's report was extended to 12 August 2015. On 6 August 2015, the committee resolved that a spill-over hearing would not be required and that answers to questions on notice from the Attorney-General's Portfolio would be due by 7 August 2015.

Further written explanations, and answers to questions on notice, will be tabled as soon as possible after they are received. That information is also available on the committee's internet page at the above address.

The committee notes that five answers to questions taken on notice by the Attorney-General's portfolio during additional estimates 2014–15 remain outstanding.

