

# **Additional Estimates 2006-07**

## **Introduction**

1.1 On 8 February 2007, the Senate referred to the Committee for examination and report the following documents:

- Particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2007;
- Particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2007;
- Statement of savings expected in annual appropriations made by Act numbers 66 and 67 of 2006;
- Final Budget Outcome 2005-06; and
- Advance to the Finance Minister as a Final Charge for the year ended on 30 June 2006.<sup>1</sup>

1.2 The Senate also referred the following documents to the Committee:

- Mid-year economic and fiscal outlook 2005-06;
- Consolidated financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2005; and
- The 2005 Tax Expenditures Statement.

### **Portfolio coverage**

1.3 The Committee has responsibility for examining the expenditure and outcomes of the following:

- Parliamentary departments;<sup>2</sup>
- Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio;
- Finance and Administration portfolio; and
- Human Services portfolio.

Appendix 1 lists the departments and agencies under the portfolios mentioned above.

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1 *Journal of the Senate*, No. 129, 8 February 2007, p. 3414.

2 As a matter of comity between the Houses, it is traditional that neither House inquires into the operations of the other House. For this reason, neither the annual report of, nor the proposed expenditure for, the Department of the House of Representatives is referred to a Senate committee for review.

## Hearings

1.4 The Committee held public hearings on Monday 12, Tuesday 13 and Friday 16 February 2007. Copies of the Committee's transcript of evidence are tabled in three volumes of *Hansard* for the information of the Senate. Copies of *Hansard* are available on the internet at the following address: <http://aph.gov.au/hansard>.

1.5 Further written explanations furnished by departments and agencies will be tabled, as received, in the Senate. That information is also available on the committee's internet page, found at the following address: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fapa\\_ctte/estimates/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fapa_ctte/estimates/index.htm)

1.6 In accordance with Standing Order 26, the Committee is required to set a date for the lodgement of written answers and additional information. The Committee requested that written answers and additional information should be submitted by Friday 30 March 2007.

1.7 As a matter of Parliamentary Privilege, all information is 'tabled' on receipt.

1.8 Over the course of the three days' hearings—totalling over 27 hours—the committee took evidence from the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Paul Calvert; the Minister for Finance and Administration, Senator the Honourable Nick Minchin, representing the Prime Minister; Parliamentary Secretary, Senator the Honourable Richard Colbeck, representing the Minister for Finance and Administration; and the Minister for Human Services, Senator the Honourable Ian Campbell, together with officers of the departments and agencies concerned.

1.9 The following agencies were released from the hearings without examination: Office of National Assessments; Australian National Audit Office; Australian Public Service Commission; Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman; Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security; Commonwealth Grants Commission; Australian Reward Investment Alliance (ARIA); Australian Hearing; and Health Services Australia.

## General issues

1.10 Water usage was a major theme that ran through the examination of most departments and agencies. In view of the current drought in Australia and mandatory water restrictions in the ACT, the Committee and other senators in attendance took interest in the measures being taken by the various departments and agencies to reduce their water usage.

1.11 The Committee also availed itself of the Friday 'spill over day' to allow time to continue examining the human services portfolio. This enabled senators to concentrate on the proposed access card and gather information to assist the Committee's separate inquiry into the legislation for this measure.

1.12 The sections of the report that follow list the issues considered by the Committee and discuss some of these in detail. The order is not based on hierarchy but rather the order in which those issues arose during the hearings.

