



Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2019-20
Thursday, 4 April 2019
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.01am until 10.44pm.

The committee called:

- Australian Federal Police, Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, and the department from the Home Affairs Portfolio; and
- Department and agencies of the Attorney-General's Portfolio, including Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, Administrative Appeals Tribunal, and National Archives of Australia.

The committee released the following departmental outcomes/groups and bodies from the program:

- Outcome 3 from the Department of Home Affairs;
- Groups 3 and 4 from the Attorney-General's Department;
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; and
- Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

Home Affairs Portfolio

- net migration figures in 2019 compared to 2018 and how they are calculated;
- requirements for TSS visas compared to the previous 457 visa scheme;
- integrity and compliance checks of visa schemes using more sophisticated intelligence systems;
- backlog of family reunion visas and the number of applications on hand;
- additional funding for the AFP to fund a range of activities, including on cybersecurity, a national drug strategy, and combating foreign interference;
- AFP's work on extremism, including on counter-terrorism, and the level of staffing dedicated to the work;
- AFP's work in relation to social media threats to individuals; and
- AFP's involvement in relation to ASIO whistle-blower Richard Boyle and Witness K.

Attorney-General's Portfolio

- CDPP prosecutions of whistle-blowers;
- growth over the last three years in appeals against refusal of protection visa applications;
- growth in appeals against refusal decisions to grant business visas;
- political membership and associations of tribunal members appointed to the AAT;

- access requests to the NAA of ASIO documents;
- staffing levels at the NAA;
- current staffing levels at the Attorney-General's Department and the number of staff transferred to the Department of Home Affairs; and
- funding to federal and family courts.