

Chapter 1

Additional estimates 2017–18

1.1 On 8 February 2018, the Senate referred the particulars of the proposed 2017–18 additional expenditure to legislation committees for inquiry and report in accordance with the allocation of portfolios to committees.¹

1.2 The Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee (committee) held hearings on 28 February 2018 and 1 March 2018 to consider the proposed additional expenditure of the Health Portfolio, Social Services Portfolio and Human Services Portfolio.²

1.3 The Senate resolved that the committee should report with respect to additional estimates 2017–18 on 27 March 2018.³

Portfolio allocation

1.4 The committee is responsible for examining the proposed expenditure of the department and agencies within the Health Portfolio, Social Services Portfolio and Human Services Portfolio.⁴ The Commonwealth departments within those portfolios are the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Human Services (DHS).

1.5 The committee notes that in accordance with amendments made to the Administrative Arrangements Order on 20 December 2018:

- DHS is no longer incorporated into the Social Services Portfolio; and
- matters of multicultural policy have been transferred from DHS to the Department of Home Affairs.⁵

Referral of documents

1.6 The Senate referred the following documents to the committee with respect to additional estimates 2017–18:

- particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect to the year ending on 30 June 2018 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2017-2018];

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 83—8 February 2018, p. 2647.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 70—15 November 2017, pp. 2227–2228.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 70—15 November 2017, pp. 2227–2228.

4 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 2—31 August 2016, p. 75–76; *Journals of the Senate*, No. 84—12 February 2018, p. 2668.

5 Commonwealth of Australia, *Administrative Arrangements Order—Schedule: Amendments to the Administrative Arrangements Order*, pp. 4, 7, <https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/aao-amendment-20-december-2017.pdf>.

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- particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect to the year ending on 30 June 2018 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2017-2018]; and
 - final budget outcome 2016-17—Report by the Treasurer (Mr Morrison) and the Minister for Finance (Senator Cormann), dated September 2017.⁶

1.7 The committee notes that the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) for 2017–18 were tabled in the Senate on 8 February 2018.⁷ The PAES 2017–18 provides information regarding the additional resourcing proposed in Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2017-2018 and Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2017-2018.⁸

Hearings

Health Portfolio—28 February 2018

1.8 On 28 February 2018, the committee examined the outcomes of the Health Portfolio as follows:

- Cross Portfolio Outcomes / Corporate Matters;
- Outcome 3: Sport and Recreation;
- Outcome 4: Individual Health Benefits;
- Outcome 2: Health Access and Support Services;
- Outcome 6: Ageing and Aged Care;
- Outcome 5: Regulation, Safety and Protection; and
- Outcome 1: Health System Policy, Design.

1.9 The committee heard evidence from: the Secretary of DOH Ms Glenys Beauchamp PSM; senior officers of DOH; and Senator the Hon. Bridget McKenzie, Minister for Sport, Minister for Rural Health and Minister Regional Communications (representing the Minister for Health).

1.10 The committee also heard evidence from agencies within the Health Portfolio as listed at Appendix 1.

Social Services Portfolio and Human Services Portfolio—1 March 2018

1.11 On 1 March 2018, the committee examined the outcomes of the Social Services Portfolio and the Human Services Portfolio as follows:

Social Services Portfolio

- Cross Portfolio Outcomes / Corporate Matters;
- Outcome 3: Disability and Carers;
- Outcome 4: Housing;

6 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 83—8 February 2018, p. 2647.

7 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 83—8 February 2018, p. 2647.

8 Note: Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements are available through the Australian Government's Budget 2017–18 website at <http://budget.gov.au/2017-18/content/paes/html/>.

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- Outcome 1: Social Security; and
 - Outcome 2: Families and Communities.

1.12 The committee heard evidence from: the Secretary of DSS Ms Kathryn Campbell CSC; senior officers of DSS; the Chief Executive Officer of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Mr Robert De Luca; senior officers of the NDIA; and Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific (representing the Minister for Social Services).

Human Services Portfolio

- Outcome 1: Support individuals, families and communities to achieve greater self-sufficiency; through the delivery of policy advice and high quality accessible social, health and child support services and other payments; and support providers and business through convenient and efficient service delivery.

1.13 The committee heard evidence from: the Secretary of DHS Ms Renée Leon PSM; senior officers of DHS; and Minister Fierravanti-Wells (representing the Minister for Human Services).

Procedural matters

1.14 During the committee's examination of DHS on 1 March 2018, the Chair sought advice regarding a senator's questions on the involvement of staff in the office of the Hon. Michael Keenan MP, Minister for Human Services, in briefing media prior to an Australian Federal Police raid on the Victorian offices of the Australian Workers' Union on 24 October 2017. Notably, the senator's questions related to periods prior to Minister Keenan's appointment as the Minister for Human Services. Subsequent to receiving advice, the Chair stated that all questions relating to the operation of the Minister's office prior to his appointment as Minister for Human Services were out of order.

1.15 During the hearings, comments were made by some witnesses suggesting they were unable to provide answers to senators' questions as the response would include information that was provided as advice to government. The committee reiterates the following advice provided to witnesses in the Chair's opening statements:

[t]he Senate has resolved that there are no areas in connection with the expenditure of public funds where any person has discretion to withhold details or explanations from the parliament or its committees unless the parliament has expressly provided otherwise.⁹

⁹ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 28 February 2018, p. 3; *Proof Committee Hansard*, 1 March 2018, p. 3.

Questions on notice

1.16 In accordance with Senate Standing Order 26(9)(a), the committee agreed that answers to questions taken on notice during additional estimates 2017–18 should be provided by 20 April 2018.¹⁰

1.17 Answers to questions on notice are published on the committee's estimates webpage following receipt from departments.¹¹

2017–18 supplementary budget estimates

1.18 The committee notes answers to questions on notice from the previous 2017–18 supplementary budget estimates were provided as follows:

- Health Portfolio—of the 435 questions on taken on notice there were no answers returned by the committee's set due date of 6 December 2017;
- Human Services Portfolio—of the 69 questions taken on notice there were 51 answers returned by 6 December 2017. The last of DHS' answers were submitted to the committee several hours prior to DHS' appearance at the additional estimates hearings on 1 March 2018; and
- Social Services Portfolio—answers to all 259 questions taken on notice were provided on 6 December 2017.

Hansard transcripts

1.19 A record of the committee's additional estimates 2017–18 proceedings is produced via the *Committee Hansard*. The *Committee Hansard* is published on the committee's estimates webpage and the Hansard webpage.¹²

1.20 References in this report are to the proof *Committee Hansard*. Page numbers may vary between the proof and the final *Committee Hansard* transcripts.

10 *Proof Committee Hansard*, 28 February 2018, p. 3; *Proof Committee Hansard*, 1 March 2018, p. 3.

11 See: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/ca.

12 See: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/ca/2017-18_Additional_estimates; https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Hansard.