



Budget Estimates

Secretary's Opening Statement

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to make this statement.

To begin, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters, and communities. I pay my respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their continuing education practices and to Elders past, present and emerging.

This is my first appearance before the Committee as the Secretary of the Department of Education, having taken up the role on 4 April this year.

As the Committee did at our last hearing, I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution the former Secretary, Dr Michele Bruniges made to education throughout her substantial and impressive career. I wish Dr Bruniges all the best in the next stage of her life.

For the Committee's benefit, I am a registered primary school teacher, with a specialisation in early childhood education. I have been fortunate to teach in small rural schools, internationally and as a deputy principal of a large primary school. I have worked in senior executive roles across two state education departments, as Director-General of the Queensland Department of Education and as Deputy Secretary at the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. At the Commonwealth level I have worked as Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Associate Secretary, Schools and Youth and Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International.

My department has recently appointed three new Deputy Secretaries – all from outside the department. They join the executive leadership team and Deputy Secretary Corporate and Enabling Services (or Chief Operating Officer), Marcus Markovic, who you will know from previous hearings.

They are:

- **Kylie Crane PSM**, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Youth. Ms Crane has more than 30 years' experience and achievement in service delivery, policy development, program and project management, and implementation. Kylie commenced with us on 6 March.
- **Meg Brighton**, Deputy Secretary, Schools. Ms Brighton has more than 20 years' experience and achievement across economic and social policy portfolios, regulation, corporate services and service delivery in the ACT, NSW, and Canadian public sectors. Relevantly, Ms Brighton served as Deputy Director-General responsible for schools and school facing services in a jurisdiction for several years. Meg commenced with us on 27 March.
- **Ben Rimmer** Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International. Mr Rimmer commenced with the department on 17 April following senior executive roles in the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne. Mr Rimmer has also previously worked in the APS at senior executive levels.

To assist the Committee, I table the Department of Education's Organisational Chart, current as of 1 May 2023.

ENDS

