

OPENING REMARKS – SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 23 OCT 19

Thank you Chair,

Lieutenant-General John Frewen, Acting Director-General of ASD.

I am conscious that you may wish to get straight to questions, and that we only have a short hearing with you today. But I am mindful that we have had some changes in ASD's senior leadership, and I would like to quickly introduce my colleagues and then say a few short remarks.

The Committee would be aware that Mr Mike Burgess left ASD in September 2019 to commence as the Director-General of Security. I will act as the Director-General until a replacement has been identified.

I am joined today by:

- Ms Rachel Noble, Head of the Australian Cyber Security Centre, who joined ASD in July 2019 from the Department of Home Affairs to replace Mr Alastair MacGibbon; and
- Ms Hazel Bennett, Deputy Director-General Corporate and Capability Group.

ASD first appeared before this Committee 12 months ago – and the intervening period has seen ASD deliver some significant work against its functions:

- Our foreign signals intelligence function has continued to deliver intelligence that meets the government's requirements and priorities.
- Our intelligence work has also continued to support a range of activities that protect the lives of Australians – including providing support to the overseas operations of the Australian Defence Force.
- Australia continued to be targeted by a range of actors who conducted persistent cyber operations that posed significant threats to Australia's national security and economic prosperity.
 - During the 2018-19 financial year, the Australian Cyber Security Centre responded to 2,164 cyber security incidents.

- And in the first quarter of the current financial year, we have seen over 13,500 reports of cybercrime made to our new online cybercrime reporting tool, ReportCyber.
 - This is an average of one report every 10 minutes.
- As the Committee may be aware, since being established as a statutory agency on 1 July 2018, ASD has made a concerted effort to be more transparent about our role, and provide a better sense of what we do and why we do it.
 - In August we published our second Corporate Plan; and
 - Last week we tabled our first unclassified Annual Report in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
- While much of what we do needs to remain classified in order to protect our capabilities, we will continue to be as transparent as we can be – and we look forward to assisting you today.