



OFFICIAL

Additional Estimates 2021-22

Opening Statement to Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

Chris Moraitis PSM, Director-General, Office of the Special Investigator

Thank you Chair.

As the Committee may be aware, the Office of the Special Investigator has recently marked its first anniversary.

Having established solid foundations, we start our second year with significant momentum in investigations, intent on delivering on our key functions and on our goal: conducting a fair, thorough and impartial investigation of alleged war crimes within our remit.

Working closely with the Australian Federal Police, we continue to address any complexity that arises with investigating these matters. The guidance and advice of the Special Investigator, the Hon Mark Weinberg AO QC, and the Special Counsel team within the Australian Government Solicitor, is ensuring we carefully manage this novel legal landscape as we advance our investigative work. As always, our primary aim is to protect the integrity of investigations and future prosecutions should any be commenced as a result of our work.

We appreciate the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee's recent acknowledgement of the importance of ongoing support for the OSI's work. War crimes investigations are inherently challenging and confronting, and we're conscious of the import and potential impact of our work on many people.

Our staffing, systems, protocols and governance which underpin our independence are now settled, and relationships with our key government stakeholders are strong. As I've made clear previously, we can't speak about operational detail or advise exactly how long our work will take, but we are committed to conducting these investigations as expeditiously as possible and ensuring our work is carried out with integrity.

Thank you.