



Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee  
Budget Estimates 2024–25  
Tuesday, 4 June 2024  
Daily summary

The committee met from 9.01am until 10.07pm.

The Committee called the following agencies of the Social Services Portfolio:

- Australian Institute of Family Studies; and
- Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission.

Some topics discussed by the committee included:

DSS – Whole of Portfolio/Corporate Matters

- PM&C guidelines on answering Questions on Notice from Senate Estimates;
- Estimates variations over \$20 million; and
- Breakdown of the Department's staffing structure and corporate policies, including Freedom of Information provisions.

DSS – Outcome 1: Social Security

- Breakdown of the various payments and parameters that are indexed on 1 July 2024;
- Income Apportionment and the Robodebt Royal Commission;
- Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme;
- Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee's proposal to raise the rate of various social security payments;
- The adequacy of Commonwealth Rental Assistance, including increases to indexation;
- Paid Parental Leave and Child Support payments, including instances of noncompliance and financial abuse;
- Accessibility of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and the number of recipients receiving the Aged Pension Payment;
- JobSeeker budget papers – single recipients with partial capacity to work on zero to 14 hours;
- Remote Area Allowance; and
- Financial support for carers.

DSS – Outcome 4: Housing

- National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness;
- Predominance of homelessness in Australia, including the level of homelessness experienced by younger demographics;
- The use of the wage cost index across various Commonwealth programs;
- National Rental Affordability Scheme; and
- Australia's current housing crisis as it pertains to women and children escaping family and domestic violence.

## DSS – Outcome 2: Families and Communities

- Provision of 500 additional family, domestic and sexual violence frontline workers;
- Prevention of gender-based violence specifically for older people, including the National Partnership Agreement on addressing the issue of family, domestic and sexual violence;
- The Rapid Review Panel into best-practice prevention approaches, including First Nations and lived experience representation and the scope and outcomes of the panel;
- The Escaping Violence Payment, including associated crisis-related payments;
- Provision of \$4.3 million for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to look at pathways into and out of perpetration of family, domestic and sexual violence;
- Additional indexation funding provided to community sector organisations;
- The Innovative Perpetrator Response Program;
- Men's Behaviour Change Programs;
- Consistency of data monitoring and evaluation frameworks for harnessing statistics on matters relating to domestic, family and sexual violence;
- Circumstances where the risk of violence is heightened due to alcohol and gambling, including the department's work with major sporting codes;
- Number of contacts received to 1800RESPECT;
- Issues related to the Cashless Debit Card, including anti-social and destructive behaviours exhibited following its repeal and the number of individuals voluntarily opting in to the Smart Card; and
- Funding for volunteer resource centres.

## Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

- Measuring the impact of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032;
- 7 May 2024 Crisis Talks into Murdered and Missing Women, hosted by the Commission; and
- Staff resourcing within the Commission amid the existing envelope of funding from the government.

## Australian Institute of Family Studies

- AIFS' research report: 'Summarising the evidence: exploring what we know about drivers of violence against women, family violence and other forms of gendered violence' commissioned by Respect Victoria; and
- AIFS' current state of research.

The committee will next meet at 9.00am on Wednesday, 5 June 2024 in Senate Committee Room 2S1, calling the Health and Aged Care Portfolio.