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**AUSTRALIAN
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Sophie Dunstone
Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
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This submission does not reflect the Australian Strategic Policy Institute perspective. It is the opinion of the author Dr Paul Barnes, Head of the Head of Risk & Resilience Program at ASPI.

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee inquiry into the impact of changes to service delivery models on the administration and running of Government programs

Dear Ms Dunstone,

I submit the following comments to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee on issues that might be considered in relation to changes to service delivery models on the administration and running of Government programs.   My comments relate to item D in the terms of reference: *Outsourcing of security vetting services in the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency*.

- A general issue of importance in both the private and public sectors is that outsourcing arrangements will not normally result in complete 'risk transfer' to third party service providers. Such 'transfers' may also not be fully effective in limiting liability arising from errors in service provision especially if the services in question are linked to future decisions made by a client and/or legislative responsibilities held by a client.

- In considering options for outsourcing security vetting services the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (AGSVA) could consider:

   o A detailed and documented assessment of what services should be retained by the AGSVA and those that can be more efficiently carried out via outsourcing.
   o Completing and implementing a crisis and continuity plan designed to address 'unexpected surprises' that might manifest in relation to any outsourced services.
   o Requiring potential providers of outsourced services to have reliable and tested business continuity & capability recovery plans.
   o Seeking assurance that any outsourced provider has suitable security and document management arrangements in place while in possession (as well as for receiving and returning) digital and hardcopy records being used in vetting processes.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Paul Barnes
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Australian Strategic Policy Institute