



Correspondence ref:

File Ref:

Mr Andrew Hastie MP
Chair, Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: pjcis@aph.gov.au

Dear Chair

Amendments to the Home Affairs and Integrity Agencies Legislation Amendment Bill 2017

Thank you for your letter of 6 March 2018 inviting the Inspector-General to comment on selected proposed Government amendments to the above Bill.

I note that, since receiving your letter, the Committee has published a Government response to the advisory report on the Bill, indicating acceptance of all of the recommendations. The Committee has also published a full set of proposed Government amendments (marked as amendment sheet EK114). It includes amendments to the *Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security Act 1986 (IGIS Act)* to implement recommendations 1 and 2 of the Committee's report (amending items 12-27). It also contains amendments to a more limited power of direction in subsection 65(1A) of the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* concerning the review of certain security assessments (amending items 67-68).

This Office welcomes the Government's response to the Committee's report and has no concerns about the proposed amendments concerning the *IGIS Act* or the functions of the IGIS. We particularly welcome the proposed amendments to section 9 of the *IGIS Act* (amending item 16).

We understand that changes to the *Administrative Arrangements Order* to transfer administrative responsibility for the IGIS from the Prime Minister to the Attorney-General are to commence at the same time as changes to transfer administrative responsibility for ASIO from the Attorney-General to the Minister for Home Affairs. We also understand that these administrative changes would occur on, or shortly after, the commencement of the Bill, if enacted. We support this sequencing, which is material to the substantive and perceived independence of this Office.

Yours sincerely

Jake Blight
Deputy Inspector-General

9 March 2018

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