



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY

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Issue date: 27 March 2019

## Intelligence Committee refers Assistance and Access Act for independent review

[The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security](#) has exercised its powers to refer the [Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment \(Assistance and Access\) Act 2018](#) to the [Independent National Security Legislation Monitor \(INSLM\)](#), Dr James Renwick SC, for review and report.

This is the first referral to the INSLM in the Committee's history.

In referring the review, the Committee has requested that Dr Renwick review whether the Act contains appropriate safeguards for protecting the rights of individuals, remains proportionate to the threat to national security and remains necessary.

[Committee Chair Mr Andrew Hastie MP](#) and [Deputy Chair the Hon Anthony Byrne MP](#) made the following statement:

*The Assistance and Access Act seeks to respond to highly technical challenges encountered by Australian intelligence and law enforcement agencies, and the Act has attracted significant domestic and international attention.*

*In our view, the INSLM provides a valuable, independent perspective on the balance between necessary security measures and the protection of civil liberties. As such, the INSLM is an important and valued component of Australia's national security architecture.*

*As an eminent barrister, Dr Renwick brings a wealth of legal expertise to the role of INSLM and has a strong understanding of national security issues and the operation of relevant security agencies. The Committee looks forward to the outcome and any recommendations made by the INSLM in the review and report.*

The Committee has requested the INSLM to report to the Committee by 1 March 2020.

The Committee will consider any findings or recommendations in its own review of the same Act, due later in 2020.

### **About the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor:**

Established by legislation, the INSLM independently reviews the operation, effectiveness and implications of national security and counter-terrorism laws; and considers whether the laws contain appropriate protections for individual rights, remain proportionate to terrorism or national security threats, and remain necessary. In conducting the review the INSLM has access to all relevant material, regardless of national security classification, can compel answers to questions, and holds public and private hearings.



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**Media enquiries:**

Chair, Mr Andrew Hastie MP on (02) 6277 4223

Deputy Chair, Hon Anthony Byrne MP on (02) 6277 4309

**For background:** Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 2360 or email [pjcis@aph.gov.au](mailto:pjcis@aph.gov.au)