

Inquiry into the Operation of the Administrative Arrangements Order
Public Hearing – Tuesday 14 March 2017
Question Taken on Notice – PM&C

1. HANSARD, Page 2

Ms Lynch: Just to clarify, the 30 September 2015 one also moved aged-care policy and social services to Health and northern Australia policy and coordination was consolidated into the industry, innovation and science portfolio. So it was a combination of some slightly more significant moves and some tidying up.

CHAIR: So aged care went to Health on 30 September.

Mr Rush: That is right.

CHAIR: And—

Mr Rush: Northern Australia policy and coordination was consolidated into the industry portfolio.

CHAIR: Where had it been previously?

Ms Lynch: I think that had not been explicitly stated elsewhere.

Mr Rush: That is right.

Ms Lynch: We can take that on notice and come back to you in writing, but I think northern Australia had not had a separate entry in the AAO above the line before that date. I will come back to you on that. I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

“Northern Australia policy and coordination” was added to the matters dealt with by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science on 30 September 2015.

Northern Australia was not specifically listed in the matters dealt with by any Department in the Administrative Arrangements Order that was in effect immediately prior to 30 September 2015.

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2 HANSARD, pp 4-5

CHAIR: I want to move to something different. In your regular consultations, Ms Lynch and Mr Rush, have any departments or agencies made suggestions to you about changes to the distribution of responsibilities for domestic security? One example is the creation of a consolidated homeland security department.

Mr Rush: We are aware of the commentary that has been going on in the media about an alleged proposal for a department of homeland security, but we have not had any specific input on that from other departments. We are aware also that the government has announced a review of intelligence agencies, which is, amongst other things, looking at the structure of those agencies, but that is ongoing. The short answer is no. We have not got any current or recent specific input work going on in relation to those kinds of proposals.

CHAIR: To be very clear about the answer: do you have inputs from the line agencies that might be interested or affected by such a proposal?

Mr Rush: Not from government division and not the terms of the administrative arrangements order. I am sure that the national security part of the department would be in constant discussion with those agencies in the national security and intelligence area, but nothing has come to the point of needing the technical advice about AAO and machinery change.

CHAIR: I am conscious that that part of the department is not represented here today. Can you take on notice what materials have been prepared in relation to any such consolidation of agencies into a department of this kind and when they were prepared?

Ms Lynch: Yes.

ANSWER

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provides advice to the Prime Minister from time to time about the national security and intelligence community. The Department does not normally comment on the content of its advice.

As the Committee was advised during the hearing, the Department consults across government approximately every 12 to 18 months in preparation for a consolidation of the Administrative Arrangements Order. In the past 12 to 18 months, the Department has not received any requests or proposals from any national security agency or department in relation to a reorganisation of the national security community.

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3 HANSARD, pp 6-7

CHAIR: Okay. This is quite a helpful conversation. Under these new arrangements you then have this consolidated function sitting within DTA. Does the Digital Transformation Committee of cabinet still exist? Is it still a body that you have responsibility for providing assistance to?

Mr Yeaman: Yes.

CHAIR: Very good. And who are the members of that committee?

Ms O'Loughlin: The chair is the Prime Minister. The deputy chair is the Minister for Communications. The other members are the Minister for Innovation, Industry and Science, the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Minister Taylor.

Mr Yeaman: I think that is correct. If there are any changes we will provide it to you, but that is our understanding.

...

Mr Yeaman: I would like to add one point to an earlier question, which is that I do not think we mentioned the Minister for Human Services, Mr Tudge, is also on the DTC.

ANSWER

The members of the Digital Transformation Committee of Cabinet are:

- Prime Minister (Chair)
- Minister for Communications and the Arts (Deputy Chair)
- Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science
- Minister for Finance
- Minister for Immigration and Border Protection
- Minister for Health and Sport
- Minister for Revenue and Financial Services
- Minister for Human Services
- Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation