



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY

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Committee recommends budget relief for Australian intelligence agencies

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security has today fulfilled one of its key statutory oversight responsibilities with the tabling of its review into the administration and expenditure of the Australian intelligence agencies for the 2014–2015 financial year.

The Committee concluded that the six agencies comprising the Australian Intelligence Community are overseeing their administration and expenditure appropriately. Matters addressed by the Committee included agencies' strategic planning, staffing, security, budget and financial performance.

In relation to expenditure, the report recommends that the efficiency dividend be removed from all Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) and Australian Federal Police (AFP) operations.

Committee Chair, Mr Andrew Hastie MP, commented that “while the funding pressures faced by agencies were reduced somewhat during 2014–15 by the additional funding to support counter-terrorism capabilities and other initiatives, ASIO and ASIS continued to face pressure in other areas”.

“Our intelligence and security agencies need sufficient base funding to meet all of their obligations. This means that funding is required to not only to deal with the increased threat to the community from terrorism, but also other significant external threats such as foreign espionage and cyber-attacks.”

“We need to make sure our agencies are resourced adequately as they seek to detect, disrupt and defeat threats to the Australian people.”

During its review, the Committee received comprehensive submissions and conducted private hearings with each intelligence agency and the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security. The Committee's final hearing was conducted on 2 May 2016, shortly before prorogation of the 44th Parliament. The review lapsed on prorogation and was resumed early in the 45th Parliament.

Further information about the inquiry, including the Committee's report, can be accessed via the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/pjcis>.

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