

Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention Bill
2020 and the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide
Prevention (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2020

Attorney-General's Department

Hearing date: 17 November 2020

Question date: 19 November 2020

Question type: **Written**

Senator Lambie asked the following question:

- How much is Dr Bernadette Boss being paid for her role as interim National Commissioner?
- Has any preparatory work been done towards hiring the National Commissioner? If so, what?
- Has a shortlist of candidates for the National Commissioner been produced?
- During the recruitment process for the interim National Commissioner, what steps were taken to ensure Dr Boss is independent from the DVA and Department of Defence?
- Was the interim National Commissioner role publicly advertised prior to the appointment of Dr Boss? Where, and for how long?
- What was the recruitment process for the interim National Commissioner role?
- When was Dr Boss selected for the role as interim National Commissioner?
- Please describe the process for developing the Terms of Reference for the independent review of past defence and veteran suicides.

The response to the Senator's question is as follows:

Dr Boss holds appointment as a Magistrate and Coroner in the ACT Magistrates Court, and is undertaking the role of Interim National Commissioner on a secondment basis based on her pre-existing remuneration, being that applicable under the *ACT Magistrates Court Judicial Positions – Determination 8 of 2020*. The remuneration arrangements for the National Commissioner will be determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.

The selection process for the appointment of an ongoing National Commissioner is a matter for Government.

The interim National Commissioner position was not advertised and the selection process for the interim National Commissioner was a matter for Government.

The appointment of the interim Commissioner was announced by the Attorney-General on 30 September 2020. Prior to her appointment Dr Boss was required to complete and provide a Public Interest Disclosure form.

The department prepared the draft Terms of Reference for the Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides. In developing the Terms of Reference, the department consulted a range of entities, including the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Health, the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.