



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
report:

*Review of Administration and Expenditure: No. 11 and
No. 12—Australian Intelligence Agencies*

November 2015

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

Review of Administration and Expenditure: No. 11 and No. 12—Australian Intelligence Agencies

Government's Response to Committee's Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Consider legislative and other reforms necessary to equip the Australian Intelligence Community (AIC) to meet the challenges posed by current and emerging technologies.

Response to Recommendation 1

Since the 'Review of Administration and Expenditure: No. 11 and No. 12—Australian Intelligence Agencies' was completed by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (the Committee), the Government has successfully introduced the *National Security Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 2014* and the *Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Act 2015*. Further, the Government has committed to introducing a Telecommunications Sector Security Reform scheme prior to the conclusion of the data retention implementation period. These reforms properly equip the Australian Intelligence Community to fulfil their mandate in a contemporary, evolving security environment and ensure the Australian telecommunications sector is properly protected. The Government has committed to write to the Committee by 1 July 2015 setting out its approach to the recommendations in Chapters 2 (Telecommunications Interception) and 3 (Telecommunications Security) of the 2013 *Inquiry into Potential reforms of National Security Legislation*.

I also note that in addition to these specific legislative measures equipping the Australian Intelligence Community to meet the challenges posed by current and emerging technologies, the Government also introduced the *Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Act 2014* and the *Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (No 1) 2014*. These tranches of legislation enable the Australian Intelligence Community and broader national security agencies, in particular the Australian Federal Police, to respond to the threat of foreign fighters and meet operational needs respectively.

Recommendation 2

Review the continued application of the efficiency dividend and other savings measures to AIC agencies

Response to Recommendation 2

In the 2015-16 Budget the Government announced it will provide an additional \$7.6 million over four years from 2015-16 to the Office of National Assessments (ONA) and an additional \$0.7 million over four years to the Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (OIGIS) by exempting the agencies from the Efficiency Dividend. This national security measure underlines the Government's commitment to a safe and secure Australia and its commitment to accountability and oversight of its national security agencies.