

Introduction

- 1.1 Under Section 29 of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* (the Act), the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security has an obligation to review the administration and expenditure of ASIO, ASIS, DSD, DIGO, ONA and DIO, including their annual financial statements.
- 1.2 This is the report of the Committee of the 43rd Parliament's Review of Administration and Expenditure No. 9 – Australian Intelligence Agencies.
- 1.3 Submissions were sought from each of the six intelligence and security agencies, from the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and from the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security (IGIS) (see Appendix A).
- 1.4 The submissions from ANAO and the six intelligence agencies were all classified Confidential, Restricted or Secret and are therefore not available to the public. As has been its practice for previous reviews, ASIO provided the Committee with both a classified and an unclassified submission. The unclassified version is available on the Committee's website.
- 1.5 The Committee also received a submission from the ANAO and from the IGIS. The IGIS' submission was made available on the Committee's website. More comment in relation to the ANAO is contained in Chapter 3 on Expenditure.
- 1.6 Each of the Defence intelligence agencies provided the Committee with a classified submission. The agencies marked each paragraph with its relevant national security classification. This has enabled the Committee for its 2009-10 review to directly refer to unclassified information provided in the Defence agencies submissions.
- 1.7 The Committee also received five submission from members of the public or public organisations which included:

- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project
- R.I.S.E.
- Refugee Council of Australia

1.8 These submissions all dealt with ASIO security assessments of refugees.

1.9 The Committee is grateful to ASIO for providing an unclassified submission and the Defence intelligence agencies for providing unclassified paragraphs within their classified submissions. This has been very helpful in the writing of this report. It means, however, that ASIO and the Defence intelligence agencies are mentioned quite often in the subsequent chapters of this report while the other agencies are generally not referred to by name. This should not be taken to imply that the inquiry focused primarily on ASIO or the Defence intelligence agencies or that they were scrutinised more than other agencies. It merely reflects the amount of unclassified information on which the Committee was able to draw and incorporate directly into its report to support its findings.

1.10 In November 2010, the Committee wrote to the agencies seeking submissions and outlining the issues it would like to see addressed.

1.11 On 25 March 2011 the Committee held a private hearing at which ASIO, ASIS, DSD, DIGO, ONA and DIO appeared before the Committee. The Committee appreciates the commitment of time each agency made to this process (see Appendix B).

1.12 On 16 June 2011 the Committee held a public hearing – its first since July 2006¹ – and heard from representatives of the Refugee Council of Australia, RISE (Refugees, Survivors and Ex-Detainees), the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and ASIO in relation to visa security assessments. The Committee thanks all attendees, particularly those from organisations providing support to refugees, for the time and effort they took to put their views to the Committee.

1 Public hearings were held on 31 July 2006 and 1 August 2006 for the Committee's *Review of Security and Counter Terrorism Legislation*.