

# Chapter 1

## Overview

1.1 On 12 February 2015 the Senate referred the following documents to the committee for examination and report in relation to its portfolios:

- Particulars of proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2015 [Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2014-2015]; and
- Particulars of certain proposed additional expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2015 [Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2014-2015].<sup>1</sup>

1.2 A reporting date of 17 March 2015 was set for additional estimates.<sup>2</sup> This was subsequently amended by resolution of the Senate, in respect of this committee only, to 21 April 2015.<sup>3</sup>

### Portfolio coverage

1.3 The committee has responsibility for examining the expenditure and outcomes of the Education and Training and Employment portfolios.<sup>4</sup> Appendix 1 lists the departments, agencies and other bodies under these portfolios.

1.4 The following outcomes were considered and agencies appeared before the committee for the Education and Training portfolio:

- Cross-portfolio matters and Outcomes 1, 2 and 3;
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority;
- Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership;
- Australian Research Council;
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency; and
- Australian Skills Quality Authority.

The Australian National University and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Studies were not called.

1.5 The following outcomes and agencies appeared before the committee for the Employment portfolio:

- Cross-portfolio matters and Outcomes 1 and 2;
- Fair Work Commission;
- Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman;

---

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 78, 12 February 2015, p. 2178.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 76, 10 February 2015, pp 2116–2117.

3 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 82, 5 March 2015, p. 2259.

4 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 1, 12 November 2013, p. 16.

- Safe Work Australia;
- Comcare (including the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, and the Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority);
- Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency;
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency; and
- Office of the Fair Work Building Industry Inspectorate (Fair Work Building and Construction).

The Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation was not called.

### **Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) 2014–15**

1.6 The Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) and the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) inform senators of the proposed allocation of funding to government outcomes by agencies within the portfolio. However, unlike the PBS, the PAES summarise only the changes in funding by outcome since the Budget. The PAES provides information on new measures and their impact on the financial and/or non-financial planned performance of programs supporting those outcomes.

1.7 Pursuant to the Administrative Arrangements Order of 23 December 2014, responsibility for skills and training, including the Australian Skills Quality Authority, has transferred to the Education and Training portfolio. Responsibility for child care and early childhood development has transferred to the Department of Social Services.<sup>5</sup>

### **Hearings**

1.8 The committee held hearings on 25 and 26 February 2015 to hear from both Departments in relation to all Outcomes and also from relevant portfolio agencies. As a result of the operation of Senate Standing Order 26(4),<sup>6</sup> the committee did not conclude its consideration of expenditure across the two departments on these days.

1.9 With respect to the Department of Education and Training, the committee dealt with cross-portfolio matters, all agencies (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership, Australian Research Council, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Australian Skills Quality Authority) and Outcome 3. The committee did not put questions to the Department about Outcomes 1 and 2 on 25 February 2015 before the hearing concluded.

---

5 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2014–15, *Education and Training portfolio*, p. 3.

6 'If a senator has further explanations to seek, items of expenditure shall not be closed for examination unless the senator has agreed to submit written questions or the committee has agreed to schedule additional hearings for that purpose': The Senate, *Standing Orders and other orders of the Senate*, July 2014, SO 26.

1.10 With respect to the Department of Employment on 26 February, the committee dealt with Cross Portfolio matters and agencies (Fair Work Commission, Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman, Safe Work Australia, Comcare (including the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, and the Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority), Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency, Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Office of the Fair Work Building Industry Inspectorate (Fair Work Building and Construction)), but did not get to Outcomes 1 and 2 before the hearing concluded.

1.11 In line with the Senate Order of continuing effect in relation to additional estimates hearings, three committee members wrote to the chair requesting additional hearings for each portfolio. A hearing was held on 5 March 2015 to hear from the Department of Education and Training in relation to Outcomes 1 and 2, which were not dealt with on 25 February 2015. A hearing was also held on 10 April 2015 to hear from the Department of Employment in relation to Outcomes 1 and 2, which were not dealt with on 26 February 2015.

### **Public interest immunity claims**

1.12 On 13 May 2009, the Senate passed an order relating to public interest immunity claims.<sup>7</sup> The order sets out the processes to be followed if a witness declines to answer a question. The full text of this order has previously been provided to departments and agencies and was incorporated in the Chair's opening statement at the commencement of each hearing.

### **Questions on notice**

1.13 The committee has drawn the attention of the department and its agencies to the agreed deadline of Friday, 29 May 2015 for the receipt of answers to questions taken on notice from this round, in accordance with Standing Order 26.

1.14 Responses to questions on notice and additional information provided to the committee are tabled in the Senate and uploaded to the committee's web page. Links to the *Hansard* transcripts of these public hearings and to answers and additional information will be posted on the committee's website.<sup>8</sup>

### **Note on Hansard page referencing**

1.15 Hansard references throughout this report relate to proof Hansard page numbers. Please note page numbering may differ between the proof and final Hansard.

---

7 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 68, 13 May 2009, p. 1941. The order was moved by Senator Cormann.

8 Information will be published at the following website address:  
[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Senate\\_Estimates/eetctte/estimates/add1415/index](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/eetctte/estimates/add1415/index)

