

Preface

On 9 May 2017 the Senate referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee (the committee) for examination the estimates of proposed and certain expenditure for 2017–18.

The committee is responsible for the examination of the Attorney-General's portfolio and the Immigration and Border Protection portfolio.

Reference of documents

The Senate referred to the committee, for examination and report, the following documents:

- Particulars of proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018;
- Particulars of certain proposed expenditure in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018; and
- Particulars of proposed expenditure in relation to the parliamentary departments in respect of the year ending on 30 June 2018.

The committee is required to report on its consideration of the budget estimates on 20 June 2017.

Estimates hearings

The committee met in public session on 22, 23, 24 and 25 May 2017. Over the course of the four days' hearings, totalling over 45 hours, the committee took evidence from the following departments and agencies:

- Department of Immigration and Border Protection;
- Attorney-General's Department;
- Australian Federal Police;
- Australian Human Rights Commission;
- Administrative Appeals Tribunal; and
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

The following agencies were called by the committee on 25 May 2017 but were dismissed without questions:

- Australian Law Reform Commission;
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions;
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre;
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner;
- Family Court of Australia;
- Federal Circuit Court of Australia;

- Federal Court of Australia
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;
- Australian Institute of Criminology; and
- Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity.

After the hearings on 22–25 May, the committee received correspondence from three committee members requiring a spill-over hearing pursuant to an Order of the Senate of 25 June 2014. At the time of reporting, the committee had not determined a date for this proposed hearing.

Copies of the *Hansard* transcripts are available from the committee's webpage at: www.aph.gov.au/senate_legalcon.

An index of the *Hansard* for each portfolio appears at Appendix 2.

Attendance of Ministers, Assistant Ministers and other witnesses

On 22 and 23 May 2017, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, representing the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. Minister Cash was assisted on 22 and 23 May 2017 by Senator the Hon Zed Seselja, the Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs, and on 22 May 2017 by Senator the Hon James McGrath, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister.

On 24 and 25 March 2017, the committee heard evidence from Senator the Hon George Brandis QC, Attorney-General.

Officers from both departments and associated agencies also appeared. The committee thanks the ministers and officers for their assistance.

Questions on notice

The committee resolved that the due date for answers to questions on notice would be 7 July 2017.

Further written explanations and answers to questions on notice will be tabled as soon as possible after they are received. That information is also available on the committee's webpage.

Structure of this report

This report consists of two chapters:

- Chapter one outlines the issues raised regarding the budget estimates for the Immigration and Border Protection portfolio; and
- Chapter two outlines the issues raised regarding the budget estimates for the Attorney-General's portfolio.

Note on references

References to the committee *Hansard* are to the proof *Hansard*. Page numbers may vary between the proof and the official *Hansard* transcript.