

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 The Superannuation Budget Measures Bill 2004 was introduced into the House of Representatives on 13 May 2004 by the Hon Peter Costello MP, Treasurer. It was passed by the House on 26 May 2004. The Superannuation Laws Amendment (2004 Measures No. 1) Bill 2004 and the Superannuation Laws Amendment (2004 Measures No. 2) Bill 2004 were introduced into the House of Representatives on 27 May 2004 by the Hon Ross Cameron MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, and passed on 2 June 2004. All three bills were introduced into the Senate on 15 June 2004.

Purpose of the bills

1.2 The bills implement measures announced in relation to superannuation in February 2004¹, March 2004,² and in the 2004-2005 Budget. In particular, the bills make changes to the superannuation co-contribution scheme; the superannuation surcharge rate; actuary certificate requirements for prescribed pension providers; work test requirements for under-18s; the superannuation guarantee earnings base arrangements; and the portability time frame applying to retirement savings account providers.

Reference of the bills

1.3 On 16 June 2004, the Senate adopted the Selection of Bills Committee Report No. 8 of 2004 and referred the bills to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee for consideration and report by 21 June 2004.

Submissions

1.4 The Committee advertised its inquiry into the bills on the internet and contacted a number of organisations alerting them to the inquiry and inviting them to make a submission. A list of submissions received appears at **Appendix 1**.

1 Press release, Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia, The Hon Peter Costello MP, *A more flexible and adaptable retirement income system*, 25 February 2004, viewed at: <http://www.treasurer.gov.au/tsr/content/pressreleases/2004/011.asp?pf=1>, on 17 June 2004.

2 Press release, Minister for Revenue and the Assistant, Senator The Hon Helen Coonan, *Matched super extended to one million more Australians*, 14 March 2004, viewed at: <http://assistant.treasurer.gov.au/atr/content/pressreleases/2004/013.asp?pf=1>, on 18 June 2004.

Hearings and evidence

1.5 The Committee held one public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra, on Friday, 18 June 2004.

1.6 Witnesses who appeared before the Committee at that hearing are listed in **Appendix 2**.

1.7 Copies of the Hansard transcript are tabled for the information of the Senate. They are also available through the internet at <http://aph.gov.au/hansard>.

Acknowledgment

1.8 The Committee wishes to thank all those who assisted with its inquiry, especially in the light of the very short time frames involved.