

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The Forestry Marketing and Research and Development Services Bill 2007 and the Forestry Marketing and Research and Development Services (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Bill 2007 (the bills) were introduced into the House of Representatives on 29 March 2007 and were passed on 28 May 2007.

1.2 On 10 May 2007, the Senate Selection of Bills Committee referred the provisions of the bills to the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport (the committee), for inquiry and report by 12 June 2007.¹

1.3 The Selection of Bills Committee gave the following reason for referral:

As this Bill establishes a new entity with new responsibilities it is appropriate that this be reviewed to ensure it is properly established and transition arrangements are appropriate.

A review will include comparing the new entity against the Uhrig template, considering the terms of the statutory funding agreement between the new entity and the Commonwealth and other matters associated with the administration of the new entity.²

Conduct of the inquiry

1.4 The inquiry was advertised in *The Australian* on 16 May 2007, and the committee wrote to a number of relevant organisations and stakeholder groups, seeking their comments on the provisions of the bills. The committee received 12 submissions (see Appendix 1).

1.5 The committee held a public hearing in Canberra on 5 June 2007. A list of witnesses who gave evidence at the hearing is at Appendix 2, and copies of the Hansard transcript and all other evidence presented to the committee is available on the committee's website at http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/rrat_ctte/index.htm

Acknowledgement

1.6 The committee appreciates the time and effort of all of those who provided written and oral submissions to the inquiry. Their work has assisted the committee considerably in its inquiry and the committee thanks them for their contributions.

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 144, 'Selection of Bills--Standing Committee--Report No. 7 of 2007', entry no. 3, 10 May 2007, p. 3795.

2 Selection of Bills Committee, *Report No. 7 of 2007*, 10 May 2007, Appendix 2.

Note on references

1.7 References in this report are to individual submissions as received by the committee, not to a bound volume. References to the committee Hansard are to the proof Hansard: page numbers may vary between the proof and the official Hansard transcript.