

The Senate

---

Select Committee on COVID-19

---

Final report

April 2022

© Commonwealth of Australia 2022

ISBN 978-1-76093-391-3

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International License.



The details of this licence are available on the Creative Commons website:  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

Printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra

# Contents

<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Members</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2 – Failure to plan</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Readiness for a pandemic .....	9
The management of Australia's international border.....	11
National Medical Stockpile and personal protective equipment.....	15
Aged care.....	16
Vaccine supply .....	18
Vaccine rollout.....	23
People with a disability .....	25
Omicron wave: Letting it rip .....	26
Health care system.....	32
<b>Chapter 3 – Failure to take responsibility</b> .....	<b>37</b>
Quarantine .....	37
Overseas Australians.....	41
Booster rollout .....	44
Rapid antigen test supply .....	44
Business assistance left to the states .....	46
Dangerous and divisive messaging.....	47
<b>Chapter 4 – Failure to get it right</b> .....	<b>51</b>
Economic assistance.....	51
Aged care.....	58
People with disability .....	67
Children.....	67
First Nations Australians .....	69
National Cabinet .....	72
Communication failures.....	74
Operation COVID Shield .....	76

No urgency on mRNA vaccine .....	78
COVIDSafe app .....	78
The COVID Commission: an expensive failure.....	81
Foreign students.....	84
Vaccination rates in Pacific countries still shocking .....	84
<b>Chapter 5 – Conduct of the inquiry .....</b>	<b>87</b>
Lacking in transparency.....	89
Obstruction .....	90
Ministerial appearances .....	92
Lessons for the Senate .....	94
<b>Coalition Senators' dissenting report.....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Glossary .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – Timeline of key decisions and milestones.....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Appendix 3 – Public hearings and witnesses .....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Appendix 4 – Submissions and additional information .....</b>	<b>159</b>

# Abbreviations

<b>ABF</b>	Australian Border Force
<b>ACT</b>	Australian Capital Territory
<b>ADF</b>	Australian Defence Force
<b>AHPPC</b>	Australian Health Protection Principal Committee
<b>AMA</b>	Australian Medical Association
<b>ANAO</b>	Australian National Audit Office
<b>ATAGI</b>	Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation
<b>COVID-19 Plan</b>	Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus
<b>CMO</b>	Chief Medical Officer
<b>FDA</b>	Food and Drug Administration
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>mRNA</b>	Messenger RNA
<b>NCC</b>	National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board
<b>NMS</b>	National Medical Stockpile
<b>NSW</b>	New South Wales
<b>PMC</b>	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
<b>PPE</b>	Personal protective equipment
<b>RACF</b>	Residential Aged Care Facilities
<b>RACGP</b>	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
<b>RAT</b>	Rapid antigen test
<b>RT-PCR or PCR</b>	Reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction
<b>TGA</b>	Therapeutic Goods Administration
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation



# Members

## Chair

Senator Katy Gallagher ALP, ACT

## Deputy Chair

Senator James Paterson LP, VIC

## Members

Senator Perin Davey NATS, NSW

Senator Jacqui Lambie JLN, TAS

Senator Tony Sheldon ALP, NSW

Senator Rachel Siewert (*until 26 August 2021*) AG, WA

Senator Jordon Steele-John AG, WA

Senator Murray Watt ALP, QLD

## Substitute Members

Senator Amanda Stoker LNP, QLD

(*for Senator Paterson on 15 and 17 September 2020*)

Senator Slade Brockman LP, WA

(*for Senator Paterson on 22, 24 and 29 September 2020 and 11 March 2021*)

Senator Paul Scarr LP, QLD

(*for Senator Paterson on 30 July and 21 September 2021*)

Senator Andrew Bragg LP, NSW

(*for Senator Paterson on 23 July 2021*)

Senator the Hon Sarah Henderson LP, VIC

(*for Senator Paterson on 2 February 2021*)

## Participating Members

Senator Dorinda Cox AG, WA

Senator Patrick Dodson ALP, WA

Senator Mehreen Faruqi AG, NSW

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young AG, SA

Senator the Hon Kristina Keneally ALP, NSW

Senator Kimberley Kitching ALP, VIC

Senator Malarndirri McCarthy ALP, NT

Senator Nick McKim AG, TAS

Former Senator Richard Di Natale AG, VIC

Senator Rex Patrick IND, SA

Senator Gerard Rennick LNP, QLD

Senator Janet Rice AG, VIC

Senator Malcolm Roberts PHON, QLD

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson AG, TAS

### **Secretariat**

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe, Committee Secretary  
Dr Jane Thomson, Former Committee Secretary  
Dr Ash Clements, Principal Research Officer  
Ms Aysha Osborne, Principal Research Officer  
Ms Natasha Rusjakovski, Principal Research Officer  
Ms Margie Morrison, Principal Research Officer  
Mr Alan Raine, Former Principal Research Officer  
Mr Antony Paul, Former Principal Research Officer  
Ms Pothida Youhorn, Former Principal Research Officer  
Ms Sarah Redden, Former Principal Research Officer  
Mr Michael Finch, Senior Research Officer  
Mr Michael Perks, Senior Research Officer  
Ms Trish Carling, Senior Research Officer  
Ms Samantha Bradley, Former Senior Research Officer  
Ms Lisa Butson, Former Senior Research Officer  
Ms Jade Monaghan, Former Research Officer  
Ms Sophia Moffett, Former Research Officer  
Ms Georgia Bourke, Former Research Officer  
Ms Stephanie Oberman, Research Officer  
Ms Naveena Movva, Research Officer  
Ms Alice Hawkins, Graduate  
Ms Charlotte Lim, Graduate  
Ms Sara Lailey, Graduate  
Ms Sarah Fallows, Administrative Officer  
Mr Jordan Knapp, Former Administrative Officer

PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Committee web page:

E-mail: [covid.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:covid.sen@aph.gov.au)

Ph: 02 6277 3892

Fax: 02 6277 5706

[www.aph.gov.au/select\\_covid-19](http://www.aph.gov.au/select_covid-19)

# Recommendations

## Recommendation 1

**1.30** The committee recommends that the Australian Government establish an Australian Centre for Disease Control to improve Australia's pandemic preparedness, operational response capacity, and communication across all levels of government.

## Recommendation 2

**1.31** The committee recommends that the Australian Government urgently review its pandemic planning to deliver immediate improvements including:

- a pandemic workforce strategy with an immediate focus on support and protection for health, aged care and other essential frontline staff;
- an agreement between the Commonwealth and states and territories on the responsibilities of different levels of government for preparedness and response during a pandemic;
- agreement on national principles for quarantine, including responsibility for provision of suitable facilities and for funding, management and compliance;
- a plan for management of future international border closures;
- a plan for timely repatriation of Australians overseas in the event of border closures or restricted international travel;
- evaluate the effectiveness of plans for working with and responding appropriately to the needs of vulnerable people during a pandemic and implement updated plans accordingly, including for older Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, people living with disability and children; and
- principles for addressing related health impacts, including the social determinants of health, mental health service delivery, and ensuring the health and welfare requirements of people experiencing family, domestic, or sexual violence are met.

## Recommendation 3

**1.32** The committee recommends that the Australian Government report to the Parliament at least once every two years, commencing in 2024, on the state of Australian pandemic preparedness, including all relevant planning, policy, and simulation activities undertaken by government agencies during the reporting period.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**2.10** The committee recommends that the Australian Government commit to resourcing and delivering whole-of-government pandemic preparedness exercises every two years, commencing 2024, on the scale of Exercise Sustain in 2008.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**2.34** The committee recommends that the Australian Government consider appropriate future arrangements to enhance the performance of the National Medical Stockpile, including whether it should be housed and managed by an Australian Centre for Disease Control.

**2.35** The committee recommends that the Australian Government take action to rebuild Australia's diminished sovereign manufacturing capability and develop strategies for emergency redirection of key manufacturing resources to pandemic preparedness and response.

#### **Recommendation 6**

**3.3** The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the states and territories to identify ways to achieve better and more consistent outcomes, including in relation to disaster mitigation and response, through clearer delineation of Commonwealth and state and territory responsibilities, reduction in duplication and better identification of gaps in service delivery.

#### **Recommendation 7**

**3.64** The committee recommends that the Australian Government undertake a review of the powers available under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* to address health misinformation during public health campaigns or emergency responses.

#### **Recommendation 8**

**4.51** The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an expert review of the National COVID-19 Aged Care Plan and the impact of COVID-19 and the pandemic response on residents and staff in residential aged care facilities.

#### **Recommendation 9**

**4.52** The committee recommends that the Australian Government make a submission supporting higher wages for aged care workers in the work value claim currently being heard in the Fair Work Commission.

#### **Recommendation 10**

**4.53** The committee recommends that the Australian Government review and strengthen the Intergovernmental Agreement on data sharing between Commonwealth and state and territory governments to address any gaps in access to timely and relevant data—particularly related to public health and aged care. This agreement should ensure systems and processes are in place to enable data sharing arrangements between jurisdictions in support of a robust national public health intelligence capability.

#### **Recommendation 11**

**4.58** The committee recommends that the Australian Government implement urgently and in full all recommendations contained in Public Hearing Report 5 and Public Hearing Report 12 of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

#### **Recommendation 12**

**4.65** The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an expert review of the impact of COVID-19 and the pandemic response on children including on their education and learning, mental health, and social wellbeing and development.

#### **Recommendation 13**

**4.79** The committee recommends that the Australian Government adequately address the social determinants of health, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic, when delivering responses to COVID-19 with First Nations communities, including food security, fuel security, water security, quarantine facilities, transport, infrastructure, housing.

#### **Recommendation 14**

**4.113** The committee recommends that the Australian Government cease any further expenditure of public funds on the failed COVIDSafe application.

#### **Recommendation 15**

**4.126** The committee recommends that the Australian Government make all reports of the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board public, along with all declarations of actual and perceived conflicts of interest made by commissioners.

#### **Recommendation 16**

**4.137 The committee recommends that the Australian Government increase its contribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Pacific regional countries and increase its provision of technical support related to the promotion and delivery of mass vaccination campaigns.**

#### **Recommendation 17**

**5.1 The committee recommends that a Royal Commission be established to examine Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to inform preparedness for future COVID-19 waves and future pandemics.**

#### **Recommendation 18**

**5.2 The committee recommends that the Australian Government publicly release all previous and future minutes of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee to promote transparency and accountability and provide the public with access to the health advice that informs government decisions around community safety, livelihoods and personal freedom.**

#### **Recommendation 19**

**5.3 The committee recommends that the Senate consider referring to the Senate Standing Committee on Procedure a review of mechanisms to compel compliance with a committee's legitimate entitlement to receive the information it has requested, to ensure that there is greater accountability for unanswered questions on notice and public interest immunity claims that are not accepted by the committee and the Senate.**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 Over the past two years, the COVID-19<sup>1</sup> pandemic has caused unprecedented health, economic, and social challenges across Australia. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Australian Government's (government) response to it has been the defining issue of the 46<sup>th</sup> Parliament.
- 1.2 In March 2020, the country faced a once-in-a-century health and economic crisis resulting in the imposition of unprecedented governmental interventions and restrictions. Enormous sacrifices were made by individuals and businesses to ensure the broader health and safety of the community and to protect the public health system from being completely overwhelmed.
- 1.3 Throughout the 'first wave' of the pandemic Australia fared much better than other countries; but as the pandemic continued that advantage was significantly weakened by the government's complacent approach and inability to lead a truly national response to the crisis.
- 1.4 To date, the Australian Government's response has been characterised by poor preparation, a refusal to take responsibility and provide national leadership— including in areas of clear Commonwealth constitutional responsibility— a failure to learn lessons as the pandemic progressed, and significant failures of implementation with, at times, catastrophic consequences.
- 1.5 As at tabling, Australia has had over 4.6 million COVID-19 cases resulting in 6462 deaths.<sup>2</sup> Approximately 30 per cent of deaths occurred in aged care facilities, residents of which were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic,<sup>3</sup> being just 0.7 per cent of the Australian population.<sup>4</sup> This is a terrible outcome for the community and is particularly tragic as some of these infections and deaths could have been avoided had the government responded more effectively to the pandemic.

---

<sup>1</sup> A glossary of key terms is provided at Appendix 1.

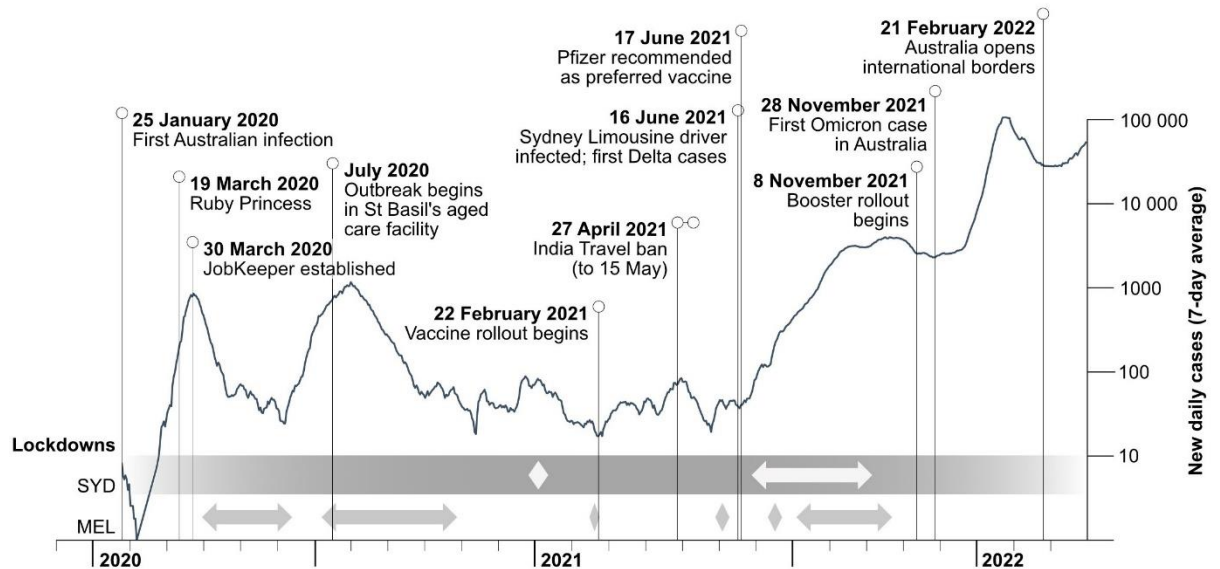
<sup>2</sup> See, Department of Health, *Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance – 6 April 2022*, 7 April 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Note, this information compares the latest available data on COVID-19 deaths in residential aged care, as at 31 March 2022, with population-level COVID-19 data as at 1 April 2022. See, Department of Health, *COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities*, 1 April 2022, p. 2; and Department of Health, *Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance – 1 April 2022*, 4 April 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Note, this information reflects data reported by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare as at 30 June 2021 when there were 183 894 permanent aged care residents from Australia's population of 26 301 264. See, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Aged care data snapshot 2021 – second release*, October 2021, 'Population' tab and 'Residential care' tab (accessed 1 April 2022).

- 1.6 Figure 1.1, below, shows key milestones in Australia's COVID-19 experience and provides the approximate periods during which metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne were in lockdown. These details overlay a graph (using a logarithmic scale, with cases increasing 10-fold between intervals) that shows new daily cases in Australia on a seven-day average.

**Figure 1.1 Timeline of milestones and case numbers**



Source: daily case data from ourworldindata.org

- 1.7 When this committee first reported in December 2020 it made recommendations and findings to inform a better plan for the escalating crisis, to protect lives and livelihoods, and encourage a strong recovery that is fair, inclusive and does not leave people behind. Over one year since that report and after a prolonged pandemic, the government has still not responded to these recommendations.
- 1.8 As the pandemic progressed, major government decisions lacked transparency and were poorly communicated, poorly targeted, and poorly implemented. The government, particularly when under pressure, has at times played the blame game; shirking its often direct constitutional responsibilities as well as a broader leadership role, leaving state and territory governments to fill the leadership void created by the Prime Minister.
- 1.9 The government squandered important opportunities to take responsibility and learn from mistakes as COVID-19 took hold in Australia. The Australian Government's management of COVID-19 quarantine arrangements and its vaccine rollout constitute two of the worst failures of public administration in living memory. The aged care system, for which the Australian Government is responsible, was already in deep crisis prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, as the October 2019 Aged Care Royal Commission Interim report, titled *Neglect*, confirmed. It is clear from the evidence presented to this inquiry that the aged care sector was also completely underprepared for a pandemic event.

Over 1934 vulnerable Australians in residential aged care paid the ultimate price for this catastrophic failure (see Chapter 2).<sup>5</sup>

- 1.10 Throughout the pandemic, the Australian Government side-stepped its responsibility for the quarantine system, which left the country vulnerable to outbreaks, lockdowns, and widespread community transmission. This was evident from the start of the pandemic when 2700 passengers disembarked the *Ruby Princess* cruise ship<sup>6</sup> (see Chapter 2) without quarantining. Further mistakes were made when the Australian Government passed complete responsibility for hotel quarantine to the states and territories, while refusing to plan for any purpose-built quarantine facilities.
- 1.11 This failure to establish stand-alone quarantine facilities resulted in overseas arrival caps being imposed, which severely restricted the number of people able to return to Australia, denying thousands of citizens entry to their own country. Australians who found themselves in this position were left to fend for themselves with few prospects of a timely return home, and often in countries where COVID-19 was running rampant.
- 1.12 The national vaccine rollout was Australia's safe way through the crisis. Unfortunately, the rollout was plagued by the failure to secure enough supply and significant delays which led to every target the government set itself being missed. This left millions of Australians vulnerable to the virus for longer than necessary and the reliance on lockdowns to manage virus spread being extended. There was poor role delineation between federal and state and territory governments in the early stages of the rollout, which should have been addressed prior to the rollout commencing.
- 1.13 The government has also failed to address the serious and dangerous vaccine misinformation promoted within the government's own parliamentary ranks.
- 1.14 The combination of all these vaccine failures left Australians vulnerable to infection, particularly those for whom we bear the greatest responsibility: our elderly, Australians with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and our children.
- 1.15 Failures to prepare, plan, and implement were continuing almost two years into the crisis as Australians were told to learn to live with the virus. Australia opened up with 80 per cent of the population aged over 16 having received two vaccinations and was reassured that appropriate planning had occurred and it was safe to remove restrictions.
- 1.16 Shortly after opening up, the Omicron variant ripped through the community and quickly overwhelmed polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing facilities,

---

<sup>5</sup> See, Department of Health, *COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities*, 1 April 2022, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to Timeline of key decisions and milestones (Appendix 2).

with people forced to wait hours in queues in the middle of the Australian summer. While PCR testing arrangements crashed, there was also a national shortage of rapid antigen tests (RATs), with the Australian Government again denying it had any responsibility to secure their supply, and widespread community transmission took hold. These mistakes were entirely avoidable and tragically cost lives.

- 1.17 The lessons that should have been learned from the mismanagement of the vaccine rollout clearly had not been, as the government failed to secure an adequate supply of RATs for Australians during the opening up stage of the national plan. This was despite warnings by experts that cases would increase during this stage and that testing arrangements would need to be enhanced, including an increased reliance on RATs.
- 1.18 The supply shortage of RATs had devastating health consequences and led to other significant flow-on economic and social impacts. As the virus spread and more workers became unwell with COVID-19, a serious supply chain crisis unfolded. A shortage of workers and the upending of transport distribution channels led to a national shortage of fresh foods and other essential items. This seriously affected the ability of thousands of small businesses to remain open and trading, and forced the community back into lockdown-like conditions.
- 1.19 The National Cabinet, established at the beginning of the pandemic to help guide the national response, has been an ineffective body to deliver the national unity required during a crisis.
- 1.20 At no time during the pandemic has there been the national consistency that was being sought by the Australian people. Public health measures, economic supports and border closures have varied, sometimes significantly across states and territories.
- 1.21 At a time when national unity between leaders was needed, the Prime Minister was unable to deliver. Lack of transparency about advice which underpinned National Cabinet decisions undermined public and state and territory governments' trust in the body. In the absence of national leadership, the Australian experience has been one where state and territory governments have often led the response, leaving the Federal Government ineffectual and irrelevant throughout much of the health response.
- 1.22 This committee was established with bipartisan support in the face of unprecedented constraints on the ability of the Federal Parliament to function. It has not had the cooperation that was promised by the government, which has stood in the way of proper scrutiny of the government's response to COVID-19.
- 1.23 The importance of the committee's work has become even more critical in the face of the Australian Government's repeated failures, its refusal to take responsibility for any shortfalls, and its lack of transparency throughout the COVID-19 response.

- 1.24 The committee is grateful to those witnesses and submitters that assisted the committee to properly inquire into the issues facing Australians throughout the pandemic.<sup>7</sup>
- 1.25 The committee is disappointed that it has been prevented from providing vital oversight of the management of the government's COVID-19 response by spurious claims of public interest immunity by ministers and government officials. Access to information has been restricted and interest in participation in committee hearings by key government officials has diminished over time, which has been frustrating.
- 1.26 The committee has been prevented from building a full picture of what the government knew, when, what advice it received and from whom, what decisions it made and how effective these decisions were in responding to different waves of the outbreak. There is no doubt that future emergency responses will be more effective if they are informed by the current pandemic response—including by learning lessons from the mistakes that have been made. Failure to learn from these mistakes will squander an important opportunity to do better in the future, including to save lives and livelihoods.
- 1.27 The public health emergency is not over. 2022 has seen the emergence of a new, highly contagious coronavirus BA.2 sub-variant. Studies comparing the transmissibility of BA.2 are ongoing, but early data suggests the new sub-variant is 'inherently more transmissible than BA.1' and has become the dominant strain globally.<sup>8</sup> As at tabling, daily case numbers are trending upwards. There is concern from health experts about a dual risk of rising COVID-19 cases and a spike in influenza over winter.
- 1.28 While the government has allocated an extra \$2.1 billion to help address these concerns, it has also asked the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee to provide urgent advice on transitioning away from quarantine requirements for close contacts. The committee hopes that these moves are underpinned by clear health advice and are not decisions that are being made in anticipation of avoiding political problems that may emerge in the coming winter months.
- 1.29 As our public health experts warn of a dangerous winter ahead, it is important that we learn the lessons of the past two years. It is essential that we have in place better readiness for a more effective response that will protect all

---

<sup>7</sup> The committee held 56 public hearings at which 679 witnesses appeared (Appendix 3). The committee published 557 submissions and 2238 answers to questions on notice as well as other evidence detailed in Appendix 4.

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organisation, '[Statement on Omicron sublineage BA.2](#)', *Statement*, 22 February 2022 (accessed 29 March 2022). See also Department of Health, '[ATAGI statement on recommendations on a winter booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine](#)', *News*, 25 March 2022 (accessed 29 March 2022).

Australians, and that we do not see a repeat of the mistakes and failures that riddled the response to the outbreaks to date.

### **Recommendation 1**

**1.30 The committee recommends that the Australian Government establish an Australian Centre for Disease Control to improve Australia's pandemic preparedness, operational response capacity, and communication across all levels of government.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**1.31 The committee recommends that the Australian Government urgently review its pandemic planning to deliver immediate improvements including:**

- **a pandemic workforce strategy with an immediate focus on support and protection for health, aged care and other essential frontline staff;**
- **an agreement between the Commonwealth and states and territories on the responsibilities of different levels of government for preparedness and response during a pandemic;**
- **agreement on national principles for quarantine, including responsibility for provision of suitable facilities and for funding, management and compliance;**
- **a plan for management of future international border closures;**
- **a plan for timely repatriation of Australians overseas in the event of border closures or restricted international travel;**
- **evaluate the effectiveness of plans for working with and responding appropriately to the needs of vulnerable people during a pandemic and implement updated plans accordingly, including for older Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, people living with disability and children; and**
- **principles for addressing related health impacts, including the social determinants of health, mental health service delivery, and ensuring the health and welfare requirements of people experiencing family, domestic, or sexual violence are met.**

### Recommendation 3

**1.32 The committee recommends that the Australian Government report to the Parliament at least once every two years, commencing in 2024, on the state of Australian pandemic preparedness, including all relevant planning, policy, and simulation activities undertaken by government agencies during the reporting period.**

### *Acknowledgments*

- 1.33 The committee acknowledges the tireless efforts of those who have been on the frontlines of Australia's response to COVID-19, including our doctors, nurses, other medical staff, aged care and disability care workers, and those vital workers keeping the country stocked with food and essentials—from food production workers to supermarket staff.
- 1.34 The committee extends its thanks and appreciation to the thousands of public servants who provided critical national support in their work on COVID-19 policy, payments, repatriations, and who often volunteered to be redeployed to areas working on the pandemic response.
- 1.35 This inquiry has taken place during a period of great uncertainty, posing additional challenges for witnesses and parliamentary staff. The committee is grateful for the assistance it has received.
- 1.36 The committee extends its sincere gratitude to the submitters and witnesses that provided evidence throughout this inquiry. The committee notes, in particular, the substantial contribution of departments and departmental officials—many of whom appeared before the committee on multiple occasions whilst also delivering critical pandemic support programs.
- 1.37 The committee also wishes to acknowledge the committee secretariat and other parliamentary staff for their work to support this inquiry.



## Chapter 2

# Failure to plan

2.1 The Australian Government (government) was poorly prepared from the outset of the pandemic and failed to properly plan for the challenges that arose as the pandemic continued. This is evident in the mismanagement of Australia's international borders and quarantine arrangements; the lack of readiness of the National Medical Stockpile to supply the personal protective equipment necessary for infection control; failure to protect already vulnerable Australians, including people in residential aged care, from the worst impacts of the pandemic; a haphazard and sluggish national rollout of COVID-19 vaccines; and failure to plan for the emergence of a new variant as public health restrictions eased in late 2021.

### Readiness for a pandemic

2.2 In its first interim report, the committee noted deficiencies in the Australian Government's pre-pandemic planning.

2.3 The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) found that not only was the government's pre-pandemic planning deficient, but departmental officials were aware of these deficiencies and failed to communicate this to ministers.

2.4 In a damning finding, the ANAO noted that the results of a pandemic 'stress test' conducted in 2018 by the newly established Department of Home Affairs had not been provided to the Minister for Home Affairs until a month into the COVID-19 pandemic. The stress test apparently highlighted '**significant concerns not being, or not able to be, addressed**'. Further, on 1 February 2020 the Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs wrote to the Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs to advise that Australia's whole-of-government civil contingency planning was 'outdated and not fit for purpose.'<sup>1</sup>

2.5 Yet, on 5 May 2020, the Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs described the extensive 'hazard-agnostic planning' and civil contingency planning the department had undertaken since its establishment and claimed this planning had enabled the department to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.<sup>2</sup>

2.6 The ANAO revealed that the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Health began planning for 'an extreme national catastrophic pandemic

---

<sup>1</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, 8 December 2021, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Michael Pezzullo AO, Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, *Opening Statement* (tabled 5 May 2020).

- disaster' on 2 February 2020, the day *after* the Australian Government introduced its first travel restrictions.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.7 The Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (or COVID-19 Plan) was released in February 2020.<sup>4</sup> It was less comprehensive than the 2019 Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza from which it was adapted and, among other omissions, failed to take account of the different constitutional responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the states.<sup>5</sup> The pandemic influenza plan also made no provision for mass quarantine and had identified difficulties associated with the voluntary isolation of ill travellers not requiring hospitalisation, noting, 'isolation of cases with mild symptoms may be difficult to enforce. No quarantine premises are available, and use of hotels is problematic.'<sup>6</sup>
- 2.8 Similarly, the COVID-19 Plan made only limited reference to quarantining of repatriated nationals and approved foreign nationals. Consequently, the plan did not outline which level of government would be responsible for this.<sup>7</sup> It appears that the authors had concluded international travel restrictions and mass quarantine would not be effective in responding to a pandemic.<sup>8</sup> This was a critical downfall in planning for the pandemic response.
- 2.9 While the COVID-19 Plan was characterised by the Department of Health as a 'living document',<sup>9</sup> it was not. The plan was not updated throughout the first 18 months of the pandemic, meaning information on governance and coordination set out in the plan was quickly outdated. The consequences of this were revealed in the results of a 'lessons learnt' exercise undertaken by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in mid-2020, which acknowledged breakdowns in

---

<sup>3</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, 8 December 2021, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Health, *Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, 18 February 2020, (accessed 31 March 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Grattan Institute, *Submission 230*, p. 72. For more on pandemic planning and preparedness, see Department of Health, answer to question on notice, document no. 87, 6 May 2020 (received 4 June 2020), pp. [4-6]; and Department of Health, answer to question on notice, document no. 564, 7 August 2020 (received 4 February 2021), p. [5].

<sup>6</sup> Department of Health, *Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza*, August 2019, p. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, 8 December 2021, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, 8 December 2021, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Department of Health, *Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, 18 February 2020, p. 2.

coordination, information dissemination, and data sharing.<sup>10</sup> It is inexcusable that those responsible for advising on and leading the government's response failed in this way.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**2.10 The committee recommends that the Australian Government commit to resourcing and delivering whole-of-government pandemic preparedness exercises every two years, commencing 2024, on the scale of Exercise Sustain in 2008.**

#### **The management of Australia's international border**

2.11 The committee has previously highlighted that the COVID-19 Plan did not contemplate the closure of international borders and the flow-on consequences of this.

2.12 It is clear that the key to containing the spread of COVID-19 in Australia during the early stages of the pandemic was management of the international border and quarantining of arrivals. However, the Australian Government was poorly prepared to manage the closure of its international border, and had made no plans for managing international arrivals.

2.13 When the government began introducing travel restrictions and mandatory self-isolation requirements from 1 February 2020 there was no blueprint for implementation of the restrictions, and it was unclear which level of government was responsible for monitoring compliance. There was a similar lack of clarity regarding the lines of operational responsibility for quarantine arrangements.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Quarantine*

2.14 The Australian Government has a clear constitutional responsibility for incoming arrivals and quarantine.<sup>12</sup> Quarantine proved to be a weak link in Australia's defences against COVID-19, and seeded major clusters of infections instead of protecting against them. Responsibility for this failure to plan for pandemic quarantine arrangements sits squarely with the Australian Government.

---

<sup>10</sup> Department of Health, *Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, 18 February 2020, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 9–11 and 14–17.

<sup>12</sup> The Australian Border Force is responsible for incoming arrivals. In relation to quarantine, section 51(ix) of the *Australian Constitution* lists quarantine as a Commonwealth head of power.

- 2.15 The Australian Government was caught flat-footed when it finally announced mandatory quarantine requirements for incoming travellers from 28 March 2020—ten days *after* the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)<sup>13</sup> recommended universal quarantine.<sup>14</sup>
- 2.16 The whole-of-government submission to the committee suggested a seamless introduction of mandatory quarantine arrangements by state and territory governments, supported by the Commonwealth:
- From 28 March 2020, further restrictions were imposed on the movement of incoming travellers. State and territory governments, supported by Commonwealth law enforcement agencies and the Australian Defence Force, implemented mandatory 14-day quarantine arrangements at designated facilities, including hotels for all international arrivals. This is enforceable under state and territory law.<sup>15</sup>
- 2.17 What the submission did not describe is the surprise of state and territory leaders when they found the Australian Government had no plan to act on its constitutional responsibilities for quarantine. It did not acknowledge that there was a clear intention from the outset to rely on hotels for the mass quarantine of international arrivals and that arrangements to support this would need to be hastily cobbled together over a single weekend.<sup>16</sup>
- 2.18 Travel restrictions imposed by the Australian Government during the initial phase of the response were delayed and inconsistent, with no clear lines of responsibility for quarantine arrangements.<sup>17</sup>
- 2.19 The decision to rely on hotel quarantine and push responsibility for its implementation to the states and territories was a matter of political expediency rather than a considered policy response. In the absence of dedicated quarantine facilities, the potential to use hotels as quarantine facilities offered a quick, but ultimately flawed, solution.

---

<sup>13</sup> See glossary in Appendix 1.

<sup>14</sup> Department of Health, '[Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\) coronavirus \(COVID-19\) statement regarding travel restrictions on 18 March 2020](#)', *Statement*, 19 March 2020 (accessed 10 March 2022).

<sup>15</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Whole-of-Government Submission, *Submission 3*, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Bongiorno, 'PM shirks duty in gold-standard quarantine blame game', *The New Daily*, 22 December 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, interim finding 2.4 and pp. 14–17.

- 2.20 The ANAO's summary of the steps that led to the use of hotels for quarantine confirms this:

On 26 March 2020 the CMO [Chief Medical Officer] emailed the Secretary of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force (ABF) Commissioner noting a concern that the 'great majority of our new COVID-19 cases are still returned travellers' and stating he was 'seriously considering whether we should be formally quarantining ALL returned travellers'. The CMO also noted that: 'There must be a lot of empty airport hotels and we could take everyone straight to a designated hotel and keep them there for 2 weeks. States and Territories would have to provide the Health services to them'.<sup>18</sup>

- 2.21 The ANAO reported that the CMO emailed the proposal to the AHPPC on 26 March 2020. The AHPPC met the same day and agreed to the proposal to quarantine returning travellers where they land. The next day, National Cabinet agreed to 14 days mandatory self-isolation for international arrivals at 'designated facilities (for example, a hotel)' from 11.59 pm on 28 March 2020.<sup>19</sup>

- 2.22 Following the National Cabinet decision on 27 March 2020, states and territories were required to establish hotel quarantine arrangements at short notice.<sup>20</sup> As Victoria's COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Inquiry noted, this was a 'most unsatisfactory situation from which to develop such a complex and high-risk program':

The lack of a plan for mandatory mass quarantine meant that Victoria's Quarantine Program was conceived and implemented 'from scratch', to be operational within 36 hours, from concept to operation.<sup>21</sup>

- 2.23 The report of the Western Australian Review of Hotel Quarantine Arrangements captures the complexity of the programs that states and territories were required to establish in such a short timeframe:

Quarantine remains a complex public health function, with strong program elements of logistics, security, compliance and risk management. It requires the highest levels of corporate and clinical governance, and continuous attention to fundamental IPC [infection, prevention and control] principles throughout the end-to-end process. It is government's responsibility, but requires private sector partnerships.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, Performance audit, 8 December 2021, pp. 37–38.

<sup>19</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Update on Coronavirus Measures', *Media Release*, 27 March 2020; and Australian National Audit Office, *Management of International Travel Restrictions during COVID-19*, Audit Report No. 12, 2021–22, 8 December 2021, pp. 37–38.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Health, *National Review of Hotel Quarantine*, October 2020, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Victorian Government, *COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Inquiry Final Report*, December 2020, p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> Tarun Weeramanthri, *Review of Western Australia's Hotel Quarantine Arrangements, Final Advice*, 12 March 2021, p. 16.

2.24 The Victorian inquiry noted that the ad hoc manner in which facilities were stood up could have been avoided had there been a set of nationally consistent principles to form the basis for jurisdictions to develop operating guidelines, plans for accommodating potentially infected people and better systems to support people in quarantine.<sup>23</sup>

### *Cruise ships*

2.25 In May 2019, less than a year before the pandemic, the Australian Government participated in another pandemic planning exercise specifically for disease containment on a cruise ship arriving in Sydney.<sup>24</sup> Despite this exercise, and the known risks of infection containment on cruise ships, the AHPPC was still reviewing protocols for cruise ship arrivals in late February 2020.<sup>25</sup> As a result, the Australian Government was woefully underprepared to manage the entry of cruise ships to Australia.

2.26 On 15 March 2020, the government banned all cruise ships entering Australia and made 'bespoke arrangements' to manage ships entering port that had departed before a certain date.<sup>26</sup> However, the government's mismanagement of its direct responsibility for enforcement of those arrangements allowed for passengers to disembark from the *Ruby Princess* in Sydney on 19 March 2020, with disastrous consequences for the nation.<sup>27</sup> Over 120 passengers and crew (17.5 per cent of those onboard) were later found to have contracted COVID-19,<sup>28</sup> leading to 28 deaths and what was at the time Australia's worst COVID-19 cluster.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Victorian Government, *COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Inquiry Final Report and Recommendations*, Volume 1, December 2020, p. 16. The 2009 Review of Australia's Health Sector Response to Pandemic (H1N1) had recommended this but the work had not been undertaken.

<sup>24</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 23 April 2020, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Department of Health, Australian Health Protection Principal Committee meeting documents dated between 26 February 2020 to 31 March 2020, as provided to Senator Gallagher in response to a request made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, additional information received 17 February 2022.

<sup>26</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference', *Transcript*, 15 March 2020; The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Coronavirus measures endorsed by National Cabinet', Media Release, 16 March 2020; and *Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) (Emergency Requirements) Determination 2020* (Cth), 18 March 2020.

<sup>27</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 23–29.

<sup>28</sup> Government of New South Wales, *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Ruby Princess*, 14 August 2020, p. 265.

<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Huir, 'Ruby Princess coronavirus inquiry slams "inexcusable" mistakes made by NSW Health', *ABC News*, 14 August 2020.

2.27 As detailed previously by this committee, the Australian Government has not provided a satisfactory explanation for the breakdowns that led to the *Ruby Princess* debacle. The Australian Border Force, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, and the CMO all had responsibilities for managing cruise ship arrivals in Australia at the time.<sup>30</sup> What is clear, however, is that critical steps required of federal agencies to plan for and manage cruise ship arrivals were ignored by officials. As concluded previously by this committee:

The revelations of the government's *laissez faire* approach to its own policy leaves open the possibility of fundamental flaws in the application of biosecurity procedures at every port in Australia.<sup>31</sup>

### **National Medical Stockpile and personal protective equipment**

2.28 The National Medical Stockpile (NMS) is a strategic reserve of medical supplies and equipment for use during a national response to a public health emergency. However, the NMS was critically under-resourced for the COVID-19 response. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the government ignored warnings of the need to build reserves of personal protective equipment (PPE).<sup>32</sup>

2.29 In December 2020, the committee concluded:

The government should have acted on warnings received prior to the pandemic about the inadequacy of strategic stores in the NMS. Instead, crisis purchasing and large outlays of public funds were spent trying to locate and secure adequate supplies for the stockpile.<sup>33</sup>

2.30 In May 2021, the ANAO found that there had been an 'absence of risk-based planning and systems that sufficiently considered the likely ways in which the NMS would be needed in a pandemic' at the NMS. Further, the ANAO found that 'risks to effective deployment in a pandemic of any magnitude were not sufficiently considered in the years preceding the COVID-19 response'.<sup>34</sup>

2.31 In May 2020 the NMS did not have a current strategic plan, and while its previous strategic plan (2015–2019) had identified development of a deployment plan as a priority before 2020, one had not been finalised.

2.32 Fewer than half the requests (46 per cent) for PPE from the National Medical Stockpile by the aged care sector were approved from the onset of the

---

<sup>30</sup> Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *Committee Hansard*, 5 May 2020, pp. 1 and 6; and Mr Michael Outram APM, Commissioner, Australia Border Force, *Committee Hansard*, 5 May 2020, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 27.

<sup>32</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 12–14.

<sup>33</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> Auditor-General, Report No. 39 2020-2021, *COVID-19 Procurements and Deployments of the National Medical Stockpile*, 27 May 2021, pp. 8 and 44.

COVID-19 pandemic until mid-August 2020.<sup>35</sup> The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners reported that general practitioners (GPs) had resorted to unsafely reusing PPE or purchasing equipment on the open market at inflated rates.<sup>36</sup>

- 2.33 To the detriment of Australia's health system, the government has continued to underperform in its administration of the NMS at key stages of the pandemic. While the government has published advice on the critical importance of healthcare workers using PPE to manage COVID-19 infection,<sup>37</sup> the reality is the government did not always ensure workers in high-risk environments had adequate access to PPE. The shortages which were evident across critical health care facilities were also present for the wider community, leading to fear and uncertainty, with hoarding and price gouging further distorting availability of PPE when supplies were low.

### **Recommendation 5**

- 2.34 **The committee recommends that the Australian Government consider appropriate future arrangements to enhance the performance of the National Medical Stockpile, including whether it should be housed and managed by an Australian Centre for Disease Control.**
- 2.35 **The committee recommends that the Australian Government take action to rebuild Australia's diminished sovereign manufacturing capability and develop strategies for emergency redirection of key manufacturing resources to pandemic preparedness and response.**

### **Aged care**

- 2.36 The Australian Government has funding and regulatory responsibility for the aged care sector. It also has clear evidence of the crisis in the sector, and recommendations on how to fix it, including from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (Royal Commission). However, the Australian Government has ignored warnings about neglect in the system. It should have anticipated the risk and impact of COVID-19 in residential care facilities, and it should have had a plan to protect residents and the staff that care for them.

---

<sup>35</sup> Department of Health, answer to question on notice, document no. 530, 28 August 2020 (received 21 October 2020), pp. 1–2.

<sup>36</sup> Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, *Submission 434*, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Australian Government, *Guidance on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers in the context of COVID-19*, June 2021, p. 1.

- 2.37 In September 2020 the Royal Commission delivered a special report on aged care and COVID-19. The commissioners reported that never before had the aged care sector faced a challenge like COVID-19. A disproportionate number of deaths from COVID-19 had occurred in residential aged care facilities, and the already under resourced and overworked aged care workforce was now traumatised.<sup>38</sup>
- 2.38 Among the recommendations made for immediate action was the publication of a national aged care plan for COVID-19, informed by the establishment of a national aged care advisory body.<sup>39</sup> It took until December 2021 for the government to convene a meeting of an advisory body, by which time the virus had had a devastating impact on aged care residents and their families and staff. A COVID-19 Aged Care plan '7th edition' was published by the government on 30 November 2021.<sup>40</sup> Under Freedom of Information disclosures it is clear that the government engaged in a revision of history by claiming the plan as a 7th edition when no previous editions of the plan existed.<sup>41</sup>
- 2.39 The Royal Commission also recommended that an aged care plan should establish protocols between the Australian Government and states and territories.<sup>42</sup> It observed that lack of clarity of roles added to complexity and cited the 'dilemma' faced by senior facility managers when a dispute developed between Australian Government officials and state government officials about the transfer to hospital of residents with COVID-19. The incident is described as an impasse that led to a high degree of frustration.<sup>43</sup>
- 2.40 In this case—and in many other instances—the relationship between the Australian Government and the states and territories has been unclear, mismanaged, or absent. This has hindered effective planning and responsiveness and led to poorer outcomes for the community.
- 2.41 In its first interim report, the committee found that the Australian Government had failed to take responsibility for the crisis in the aged care sector. By 9 October 2020, 683 Australians had died from COVID-19 in aged care facilities, accounting for 3 out of every 4 pandemic-related deaths in Australia

---

<sup>38</sup> Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Aged Care and COVID-19: a special report*, 1 October 2020, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> See Recommendation 4, Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Aged Care and COVID-19: a special report*, 1 October 2020, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Department of Health, *National COVID-19 Aged Care Plan – 7th Edition*, 30 November 2020.

<sup>41</sup> Christopher Knaus, 'National Covid aged care plan did not exist before Coalition published "7th edition" in late 2020', *The Guardian*, 18 June 2021.

<sup>42</sup> Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Aged Care and COVID-19: a special report*, 1 October 2020, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Aged Care and COVID-19: a special report*, 1 October 2020, p. 13.

at the time.<sup>44</sup> Yet the government failed to learn lessons from early outcomes, and Australia has continued to experience extremely poor outcomes in residential aged care during the pandemic. The government's failure to take responsibility and deliver better outcomes is examined in Chapter 3.

## Vaccine supply

2.42 Securing vaccines for Australia is solely a Commonwealth Government responsibility.<sup>45</sup> It is the foundation of a successful rollout; without enough vaccines, even the most sophisticated rollout strategy will fail.

2.43 Government announcements showed promise in the second quarter of 2020, when Australia was among the first to order supplies of AstraZeneca and the government trumpeted local manufacturing capacity of both AstraZeneca and the University of Queensland vaccine that was in local development.<sup>46</sup> These early announcements appear to have been made for political expediency and did not translate into adequate supply in early 2021.

2.44 By December 2020, this committee had already expressed concern at the lack of urgency by the government to secure vaccine deals and its seeming lack of transparency:

The Australian Government has lagged in securing vaccine deals and needs to do more to catch up. It also overstated its progress towards securing access to a vaccine in August when it prematurely announced a deal with the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca.<sup>47</sup>

2.45 The committee also called on the government to secure as many deals as possible to ensure a timely and sufficiently large supply of vaccines.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. xii.

<sup>45</sup> Australian Government, *Australian COVID-19 vaccination policy*, November 2020, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, the Hon Karen Andrews MP, Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, 'Australia secures onshore manufacturing agreements for two COVID-19 vaccines', *Media release*, 7 September 2020; Adam Harvey, Sashka Koloff, and Nick Wiggins, 'How Australia's COVID vaccine rollout has fallen short and left us "in a precarious position"', *ABC News*, 24 May 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 44.

<sup>48</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 46.

- 2.46 However, within months of initial announcements, the government's rollout was already in trouble. Trials of the University of Queensland vaccine had to be scrapped and reports emerged that AstraZeneca had reported results which combined data from separate trials, casting doubt on the results.<sup>49</sup>
- 2.47 Despite issues arising during trials that were beyond the government's control, it was the government's responsibility to plan for the possibility of any of the vaccine candidates encountering unforeseen obstacles. The government should have, and was advised to, diversify its supply orders to include a wider range of vaccines.
- 2.48 Australia was still experiencing vaccine shortages more than half a year later, in the third quarter of 2021, during a large outbreak of the Delta variant.<sup>50</sup>
- 2.49 The government did not heed warnings against a concentrated risk strategy, instead opting to rely heavily on only one vaccine, AstraZeneca. The weakness of this supply strategy was laid bare when a rare blood-clotting complication from the AstraZeneca vaccine was identified once the rollout was underway, causing hesitancy and a population-wide preference for the Pfizer vaccine, ordering of which had been bungled by the government.

### *Bungled Pfizer deal*

- 2.50 A surge in demand for Pfizer vaccines could not be met. The situation was not helped by a pervasive lack of transparency from the government on the actual number of Pfizer doses available. By September 2021, media outlets were reporting reductions in state and territory vaccine allocations. These reports appeared to come from National Cabinet leaks, but the situation was never clarified for the Australian public.<sup>51</sup>
- 2.51 Documents released under freedom of information legislation show that discussions between Pfizer and the Australian Government began on 26 June 2020. This was followed by an approach from Pfizer to the Minister for Health on 30 June 2020, in which the pharmaceutical company wanted to

---

<sup>49</sup> Adam Harvey, Sashka Koloff, and Nick Wiggins, '[How Australia's COVID vaccine rollout has fallen short and left us "in a precarious position"](#)', *ABC News*, 24 May 2021, (accessed 24 February 2022).

<sup>50</sup> See glossary in Appendix 1.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Karp, 'Leaked figures confirm fears of a drop in Australia's supply of Pfizer vaccine', *The Guardian*, 24 September 2021.

discuss a deal for vaccines.<sup>52</sup> Case numbers were doubling in Victoria at the time, however, the contract was not signed for another four months.<sup>53</sup>

- 2.52 The government has consistently said that decisions about how many vaccine agreements to pursue, and with which vaccine developers, were based on expert medical advice.
- 2.53 Yet, members of the government's own vaccine advisory group, the Science and Industry Technical Advisory Group, state that their advice was based on ensuring adequate quantities of all vaccines available:

We were presented with options and we gave our views on them. We did not say to them prospectively, we think this is what you need to do... Across all of the vaccines, we said get as much as you can.<sup>54</sup>

### *All our eggs in one basket*

- 2.54 Supply agreements with vaccine manufacturers were by necessity secured before post-market safety or efficacy analysis could be performed, in mid-2020. The government could not have foreseen a rare but serious issue arising with the AstraZeneca vaccine. But the Australian Government should have had enough foresight to put a Plan B in place.
- 2.55 Instead, the lack of vaccine diversity in the early stage of the rollout, when the complication associated with AstraZeneca influenced public perceptions of safety, threw the program into disarray.<sup>55</sup>
- 2.56 This contributed to relatively low vaccine uptake three months into the rollout,<sup>56</sup> leaving NSW, Victoria and the ACT underprepared for outbreaks in mid-2021.
- 2.57 Lack of supply of Pfizer vaccines led to states and territories competing for stock. Nothing which transpired with the rollout in 2021 could be described as an equitable, methodical distribution by a responsible government. While NSW

---

<sup>52</sup> Sarah Martin, 'Scott Morrison insists "every effort" was made to get vaccines, despite Greg Hunt missing Pfizer meeting', *The Guardian*, 9 September 2021. See also Ms Lisa Schofield, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 21 June 2021, p. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Tory Shepherd, 'In hindsight there was no foresight: how Australia bungled its Pfizer Covid deal', *The Guardian*, 12 September 2021. See also Ms Lisa Schofield, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 21 June 2021, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup> Sarah Martin and Katherine Murphy, 'Vaccine advisory group urged Australian health department in 2020 "to get as much as you can"', *The Guardian*, 28 July 2021.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Karp, 'Australian Covid vaccine rollout in disarray as AstraZeneca doses given blood clot warning for under-50s', *The Guardian*, 8 April 2021.

<sup>56</sup> Frances Mao, 'Covid vaccine: Why are Australians cancelling AstraZeneca jabs?', *BBC News*, 22 June 2021.

- had extra doses prioritised for its outbreak, other states were left insufficient supplies to contend with.<sup>57</sup>
- 2.58 The need for the government to scramble to reach agreements with Poland and the United Kingdom for access to their surplus Pfizer stock was created by its earlier failures.<sup>58</sup>
- 2.59 This was not a situation a developed country should have found itself in, with vaccine contracts within ready reach.
- 2.60 The vaccine supply bungles were compounded by the Morrison Government's decision that Moderna vaccines weren't needed because Pfizer could provide all the mRNA doses we needed.
- 2.61 According to evidence to this committee, as late as 20 April 2021 the Morrison Government hadn't even asked Moderna if it could supply doses.<sup>59</sup>
- 2.62 On 12 May 2021, when Moderna announced its first supply agreement with Australia, the company already had supply agreements with the United States, Israel, the Philippines, Japan, the European Union, Canada, Qatar, Taiwan, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Korea.<sup>60</sup>
- 2.63 Late in 2021, when Australia's vaccine supply woes finally began to ease and the national vaccination rate climbed, it became apparent that booster doses would be needed due to the waning protection offered by primary doses of Pfizer, AstraZeneca, and Moderna.<sup>61</sup>
- 2.64 The interval for booster doses changed considerably as advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)<sup>62</sup> evolved. Initially, booster doses were recommended six months after the primary vaccine

---

<sup>57</sup> SBS News, "'Egg and spoon' race: Daniel Andrews slams "totally unfair" NSW vaccine allocations', 7 September 2021 (accessed 11 January 2022).

<sup>58</sup> Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Women, and Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'One million doses of Pfizer vaccine from Europe boosting Australian supplies', *Media Release*, 15 August 2021 (accessed 28 February 2022).

<sup>59</sup> *Committee Hansard*, 20 April 2021, pp. 7–8.

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Jason Murdock, 'Which Countries have already secured COVID Vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna?', *Newsweek*, 18 November 2020.

<sup>61</sup> See for example, Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, p. 32.

<sup>62</sup> See glossary in Appendix 1.

course; this changed to five months in early December 2021,<sup>63</sup> four months from 4 January 2022;<sup>64</sup> and three months from 31 January 2022.<sup>65</sup>

- 2.65 While the shift in ATAGI's advice reflected evolving medical understanding, the advice was also informed, in part, by vaccine stock availability,<sup>66</sup> and was therefore constrained by the government's failure to take responsibility for ensuring an adequate and early supply of vaccines. This leaves open the possibility that the initial eligibility interval of six months, which left older Australians vulnerable, was only reduced once sufficient stock could be guaranteed.

---

<sup>63</sup> James Massola, Aisha Dow, and Tom Cowie, 'COVID boosters fast-tracked to five-month gap, making millions more eligible for third shot', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 2021.

<sup>64</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Interval between primary course of COVID-19 vaccination and booster dose further reduced', *Media Release*, 24 December 2021 (accessed 1 March 2022).

<sup>65</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Interval between primary course of COVID-19 vaccination and booster dose further reduced', *Media Release*, 24 December 2021 (accessed 1 March 2022).

<sup>66</sup> Department of Health, 'ATAGI statement on revised recommendations on the use of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, 17 June 2021', 17 June 2021, *Media Release* (accessed 1 March 2022).

## Vaccine rollout

2.66 In January 2021, the Australian Government released a five-step national vaccine rollout strategy. The rollout strategy was launched on 21 February 2021 and established priority vaccine recipient groups for each phase, as detailed below. It did not set time-bound targets:

- **Phase 1a:** quarantine and border workers; frontline health care worker sub-groups for prioritisation; aged care and disability care staff; aged care and disability care residents;
- **Phase 1b:** elderly adults aged 80 years and over; elderly adults aged 70–79 years; other health care workers; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 55 years; younger adults with an underlying medical condition, including those with a disability; critical and high-risk workers, including defence, police, fire, emergency services, and meat processing;
- **Phase 2a:** adults aged 50–69 years; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 18–54; other critical and high risk workers;
- **Phase 2b:** general unvaccinated population; catch up from previous categories; and
- **Phase 3:** general population under 18 years, subject to health advice.<sup>67</sup>

2.67 The rollout strategy was accompanied by a series of rapid-fire announcements, setting self-imposed government targets for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations across the country. These targets were repeatedly revised before being missed altogether.

### *'Four million by April'*

2.68 In January 2021, the Prime Minister announced four million Australians would be vaccinated by the end of March.<sup>68</sup> Mr Morrison subsequently stepped back from this target, claiming it had been 'subject to the progress of the rollout and the events that we encounter along the way'.<sup>69</sup> Separately, he attributed the missed target to overseas supply issues.<sup>70</sup>

2.69 By the end of March 2021, fewer than 600 000 doses of a vaccine had been administered—a shortfall of over 3.4 million.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Australian Government, *Australia's COVID-19 vaccine national roll-out strategy*, January 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

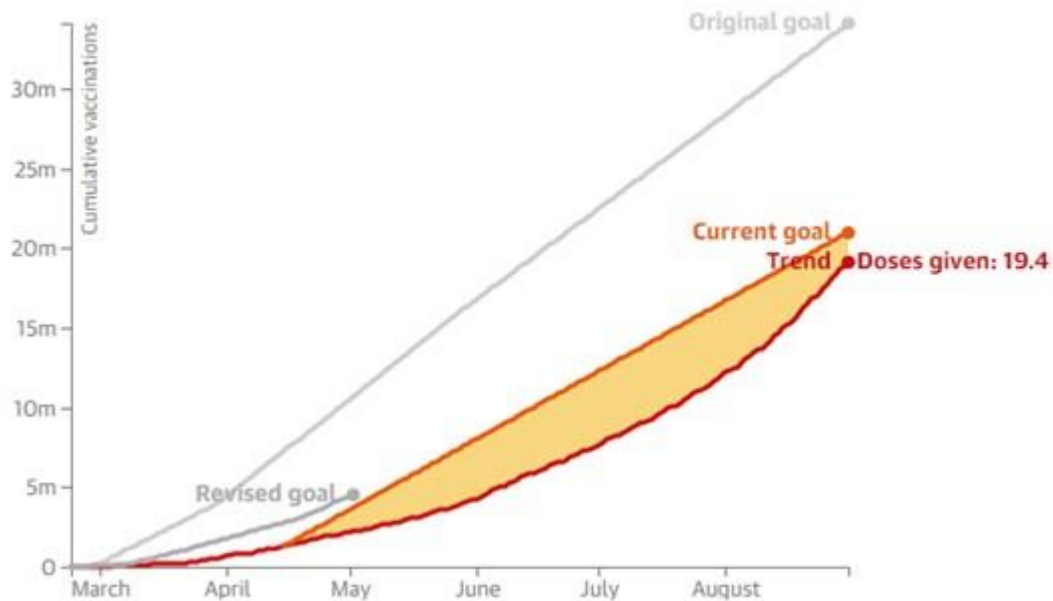
<sup>68</sup> Paul Karp, 'Scott Morrison spun a Covid vaccine story the public believed—and then it fell apart', *The Guardian*, 10 April 2021.

<sup>69</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP and Professor Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health, 'Doorstop, Symonston, ACT', *Media Release*, 10 March 2021 (accessed 22 February 2021).

<sup>70</sup> ABC News, 'Australia's COVID vaccine rollout started off slow: but will it affect when you get it?', 31 March 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

<sup>71</sup> Naaman Zhou, 'Missed it by that much: Australia falls 3.4m doses short of 4m vaccination target by end of March', *The Guardian*, 31 March 2021.

**Figure 2.1 Vaccine rollout in Australia against government target to 31 August 2021**



Doses administered against original and revised federal government targets. Current goal is calculated as a first dose for every Australian by the end of 2021. Calculation starts as of the Prime Minister's press conference on 15 April 2021. Target includes a second dose for those who receive their first shot before 1 October 2021.

Source: Elias Visontay, 'End of December more realistic target for all Australians to get Covid vaccine, AMA says', *The Guardian*, 11 March 2021. Last updated 31 August 2021.

### 'Fully vaccinated' by October 2021

- 2.70 On 28 December 2020, Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, announced all Australians would be 'fully vaccinated' by October 2021.<sup>72</sup>
- 2.71 On 1 February 2021, the Prime Minister qualified the target set by Mr Hunt: 'our aim is to offer all Australians the opportunity to be vaccinated by October'.<sup>73</sup> A month later, he announced Australia was on track for full vaccination by October 2021.<sup>74</sup>
- 2.72 The Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Phil Gaetjens, told the committee on 9 March 2021 he understood 'fully vaccinated' in the context of the government target consisted of two doses of a vaccine.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Melissa Davey, 'Australians will be "fully vaccinated" against Covid by October, Greg Hunt says', *The Guardian*, 28 December 2020.

<sup>73</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Address: National Press Club Barton ACT', *Media Release*, 1 February 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022), emphasis added.

<sup>74</sup> Tom McIlroy, 'Australia on track for full vaccination by October: Morrison', *Australian Financial Review*, 9 March 2021.

<sup>75</sup> Mr Phil Gaetjens, Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 9 March 2021, p. 2.

- 2.73 On 11 March 2021, the Secretary of the Department of Health, Dr Brendan Murphy, walked back the government's firm October deadline of full vaccination, telling the committee the aim was now to 'offer everyone a vaccine by the end of October'.<sup>76</sup> Dr Murphy conceded some Australians would only have access to a first dose by this deadline, but argued the shift from the original target of full coverage was only a 'semantic difference'.<sup>77</sup>
- 2.74 On 29 March 2021, Mr Hunt casually revised his October deadline, stating, 'we remain on track for all the first doses before the end of October'.<sup>78</sup>
- 2.75 On 2 November 2021, 89 per cent of Australians over 16 years had received a first dose, with 78 per cent having received both doses of a vaccine. This reached 80 per cent four days later.<sup>79</sup>
- 2.76 On 6 November 2021, the Prime Minister publicly claimed success, despite the missed targets.<sup>80</sup>

### **People with a disability**

- 2.77 In March 2020, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability issued a *Statement of Concern*, calling on Australian governments to ensure future emergency planning and responses include a specific strategy to provide appropriate guidance, support, and funding to meet the particular needs and requirements of people with disability.<sup>81</sup>
- 2.78 Many countries vaccinated people with a disability first. This was not the case in Australia where the government failed to implement strategies which would protect this vulnerable group as soon as vaccines became available.
- 2.79 This failure to protect extended to the most vulnerable people with a disability, those in care facilities. Despite being prioritised in phase 1a of the national vaccine rollout strategy, many disability care residents were left unvaccinated and had to make their own arrangements to go to a GP for the vaccine.

---

<sup>76</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 11 March 2021, pp. 5 and 29–31.

<sup>77</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 11 March 2021, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup> Rachel Clun and Liam Mannix, 'No excuse for slow vaccine rollout to healthcare workers: experts', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 March 2021.

<sup>79</sup> ABC News, 'Video: Tracking Australia's COVID-19 vaccine rollout: November 2', 2 November 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

<sup>80</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, [@ScottMorrisonMP]. 'Great news Australia! We did it! 80% of all Australians aged 16+ are now fully vaccinated. But let's keep going', *Twitter*, 6 November 2021.

<sup>81</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, *Statement of concern*, 26 March 2020, p. 2.

By June 2021 (more than three months after the rollout began), only 355 people living in disability residential facilities across Australia had been vaccinated.<sup>82</sup>

- 2.80 In February 2022, the Royal Commission issued a *Statement of Ongoing Concern* that people with disability are still not being appropriately prioritised during this phase of the pandemic in relation to health care, disability support, and the vaccine and booster rollout.<sup>83</sup>
- 2.81 It is unacceptable that emergency planning for, and government responses to, the needs of people with a disability were initially so poor, and failed to improve over the course of the pandemic.

### **Omicron wave: Letting it rip**

- 2.82 In December 2021, the government pushed forward with plans to ease public health restrictions as the Prime Minister urged state and territory governments to 'step back', and 'put Australians back in charge of their own lives'.<sup>84</sup> He even urged Australians to take 'personal responsibility' for their health.<sup>85</sup> But the government failed to adequately plan or prepare for what this would entail.
- 2.83 Almost two years into the pandemic, the government was wholly unprepared for the widespread transmission of the highly infectious Omicron variant, leaving Australians further exposed to the social, health, and economic impacts of the virus.
- 2.84 When Omicron was first detected in Australia on 28 November 2021 there were over 14 000 active COVID-19 cases, over 500 people in hospital with COVID-19, over 200 000 total cases, and nearly 2000 deaths.<sup>86</sup>
- 2.85 On 21 December 2021, the Prime Minister downplayed modelling from the Doherty Institute which anticipated a significant increase in daily COVID-19 infections over the following months.<sup>87</sup> Within three weeks, Australia had over 600 000 active COVID-19 cases and on 10 January 2022 it recorded over

---

<sup>82</sup> Ms Lisa Schofield, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce Division, Department of Health, *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Hansard*, 1 June 2021, p. 65.

<sup>83</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, *Statement of ongoing concern: The impact of and responses to the Omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability*, 17 February 2022.

<sup>84</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Remarks: Sydney Institute dinner', *Speech*, 13 December 2021.

<sup>85</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference – Bribie Island, Qld', *Transcript*, 21 December 2021.

<sup>86</sup> NSW Government, 'Omicron variant in confirmed NSW cases', *Media Release*, 28 November 2021; Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 28 November 2021', 30 November 2021.

<sup>87</sup> See for example, Tom McIlroy, 'Mask up to save Christmas as 200,000 cases a day feared', *Australian Financial Review*, 21 December 2021.

90 000 new cases in a single day. The Australian Government denied it had 'let Omicron rip'.<sup>88</sup>

- 2.86 The situation continued to deteriorate through January 2022 as active cases reached over 765 000 and daily cases peaked at over 155 000.<sup>89</sup> In the first two months of 2022, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Australia had increased seven-fold to over 2.8 million. Deaths more-than doubled to 5171.<sup>90</sup> Regrettably, health experts maintained that these figures could have been reduced through a more effective response.<sup>91</sup>

### *Rapid testing: A failure to plan*

- 2.87 Until early 2022, the national response to COVID-19 relied on a testing regime built exclusively on the so-called 'gold standard' quantitative reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR or PCR).<sup>92</sup> However the testing regime collapsed<sup>93</sup> in response to the easing of public health restrictions, widespread transmission of the Omicron variant, and pre-travel testing requirements in some states—which accounted for up to 20–25 per cent of peak demand in some jurisdictions over the Christmas 2021 period.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> See, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference – Canberra, ACT', *Transcript*, 10 January 2022; and Department of Health, Coronavirus (COVID-19 case numbers and statistics, updated 8 March 2022.

<sup>89</sup> Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) case numbers and statistics', accessed 25 February 2022; Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 25 January 2022', 27 January 2022; and Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 28 January 2022', 31 January 2022.

<sup>90</sup> Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 28 February 2022', 1 March 2022.

<sup>91</sup> See for example, Timna Jacks, 'Many Omicron deaths could have been prevented, experts say', *The Age*, 23 February 2022.

<sup>92</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, 'Press Conference, Kirribilli, NSW', *Media Statement*, 29 December 2021; and Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, p. 23. For more on PCR, see glossary in Appendix 1.

<sup>93</sup> See, for example, Rachel Eddie and Cassandra Morgan, 'Weimar calls for 'sensible' travel rules as testing sites turn people away', *The Age*, 22 December 2021; Rachel Clun and Mary Ward, 'COVID-19 testing sites shut down as PM rules out universal free rapid kits', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 January 2022; and "'It felt like a disaster movie": Guardian Australia readers share their stories of Covid testing mayhem', *The Guardian*, 8 January 2022. Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, disputed that the testing system had 'collapsed', but conceded 'in certain jurisdictions for a particular period of time the system was not delivering results in a way that was supporting an adequate COVID response'. See *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 4.

<sup>94</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, pp. 3, 6, and 12.

- 2.88 Australians were forced to queue for hours to be tested for COVID-19, with many waiting days to find out if they were infected.<sup>95</sup> These delays kept families apart over the holidays, forced individuals into needless isolation, and compounded critical workforce shortages that added to the pressures faced by businesses.
- 2.89 Australia had two years to prepare the testing system for high-level community transmission, through, for example, ensuring rapid COVID-19 tests were approved, stockpiled, and integrated into the national testing regime. But this was not done in time.
- 2.90 Indeed, evidence to the committee suggests the government undertook limited scenario planning to prepare the system to respond to a variant of higher transmissibility or widespread infections following an easing of public health restrictions. For example, Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary at the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, acknowledged to the committee that the Government was aware that rapid antigen tests (RATs)<sup>96</sup> would play 'an increasing role' in the pandemic response, but conceded there had been few preparations for their rollout and little planning in the event of a collapse of the PCR testing system.<sup>97</sup>
- 2.91 Tragically, these pressures had been foreseen. For example, Professor Deborah Williamson, deputy director of the Microbiological Diagnostic Unit at the Doherty Institute, warned as far back as August 2021:
- As we transition through the pandemic and we start to think about opening up, there are very real questions of whether that PCR capacity will still meet demand for testing, it seems unlikely it will.<sup>98</sup>
- 2.92 Indeed, experts had long been calling for RATs to be integrated into the national testing regime to mitigate the impact of widespread transmission on the PCR-based system.<sup>99</sup> For example, Dr Ian Norton, a former head of the World Health

---

<sup>95</sup> See for example, BBC News, 'Covid: Australians desperate for tests amid Omicron surge', 4 January 2022.

<sup>96</sup> See glossary in Appendix 1.

<sup>97</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> Sherryn Groch, 'What's rapid antigen testing and is it about to become part of daily life?', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 August 2021.

<sup>99</sup> See for example, Jennifer Hewett, 'Time to test for the virus, over and over', *Australian Financial Review*, 21 October 2020; Mary Louise McLaws, Ian Norton, T.G. Henning Liljeqvist, Bill Anseline and Dean Whiting: 'Opinion: Time to plug the gaps in our COVID-19 testing', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 December 2020; George Roberts, 'Experts call for TGA-approved rapid COVID-19 tests to be used in Australia', *ABC News*, 19 March 2021; Wayne Flower, 'Experts call for TGA-approved rapid COVID-19 tests to be used in Australia', *Daily Mail Australia*, 7 June 2021; Clay Lucas and Simone Fox Koob, "'Absolutely disgusting": Rapid test crisis pushes people to the brink', *The Age*, 4 January 2022; Stephen Rice, 'Coronavirus: Losing RAT race was totally avoidable,

Organisation's emergency medical team, advocated in late 2020 that RATs be introduced in Australia as an added layer of testing.<sup>100</sup> In September 2021, Professor Mary-Louise McLaws, an infectious diseases expert, also discussed RATs with the committee, highlighting their importance for when Australians would be 'living with' COVID-19.<sup>101</sup>

2.93 Separately, Dr Norton claimed he had called on political leaders and health officials to secure large supplies of RATs.<sup>102</sup> He stated:

We were watching other countries stocking up on RAT tests and wondering why on earth we were not getting ready in case that happens here.<sup>103</sup>

2.94 Mr Dean Whiting, Chief Executive of Pathology Technology Australia (the peak body representing manufacturers and importers of rapid antigen tests) claimed to have regularly met 'many politicians' since October 2020 to press for the widespread adoption of RATs in Australia, with little progress.<sup>104</sup> Manufacturers of RATs also publicly expressed frustration at what they perceived to be 'resistance' to the use of rapid testing in Australia.<sup>105</sup> Even former Liberal Treasurer the Hon Joe Hockey weighed in, claiming it was 'like moving mountains' to get rapid tests accepted by the government.<sup>106</sup> Separately, Mr Hockey described delayed RAT approvals in Australia as 'absurd'.<sup>107</sup>

2.95 The government's own medical advisors also highlighted the advantages of RATs to the committee. In September 2021 Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical

---

physician Ian Norton says', *The Australian*, 12 January 2022; and Caitlin Fitzsimmons, 'While we wait for a COVID-19 vaccine, rapid tests could help keep life near to normal', opinion, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 February 2021.

<sup>100</sup> Jennifer Hewett, 'Time to test for the virus, over and over', *Australian Financial Review*, 21 October 2020. See also Lucy Carroll and Mary Ward, 'Health experts urging the use of rapid antigen COVID-19 testing for frontline workers', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 June 2021; and Sherryn Groch, 'What's rapid antigen testing and is it about to become part of daily life?', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 August 2021.

<sup>101</sup> Professor Mary-Louise McLaws, private capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 21 September 2021, p. 14.

<sup>102</sup> Dr Ian Norton in Stephen Rice, 'Coronavirus: Losing RAT race was totally avoidable, physician Ian Norton says', *The Australian*, 12 January 2022.

<sup>103</sup> Dr Ian Norton in Stephen Rice, 'Coronavirus: Losing RAT race was totally avoidable, physician Ian Norton says', *The Australian*, 12 January 2022.

<sup>104</sup> Clay Lucas and Simone Fox Koob, "'Absolutely disgusting": Rapid test crisis pushes people to the brink', *The Age*, 4 January 2022.

<sup>105</sup> Michael McGowan, "'A Scramble": how Australian governments flipped from resisting to embracing Covid rapid antigen tests', *The Guardian*, 31 December 2021. See also Nicholas Jensen, 'Medical experts 'to blame for shortage' of rapid antigen tests', *The Australian*, 4 January 2022.

<sup>106</sup> Kylar Loussikian, 'Business was assured enough rapid tests likely for demand', *The Australian*, 4 January 2021.

<sup>107</sup> Courtney Gould, 'Ex-Treasurer slams "absurd" decision to shun Aussie made rapid antigen test', *The Australian*, 21 January 2022.

Officer at the Department of Health, claimed PCR tests were more appropriate when seeking to eradicate the disease, but acknowledged rapid tests were useful 'as we move into a time of living with COVID'.<sup>108</sup>

2.96 Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary at the Department of Health, also told the committee:

Now that we have community transmission and we're starting to transition to living with COVID [rapid antigen tests] are applicable, and we are pulling out all stops to get the regulatory approval done as quickly as possible. Then, national cabinet will consider their role in the reopening plan.<sup>109</sup>

2.97 Despite rapid testing having been rolled out widely across other jurisdictions like the United States and the United Kingdom from late 2020,<sup>110</sup> the Australian Government was slow to pave the way—or plan—for the broad introduction of RATs in Australia.

2.98 There was acknowledgement by the Communicable Diseases Network Australia of the potential role that RATs would play in certain high-risk settings as early as February 2021.<sup>111</sup> In August 2021, the government began a trial deployment of RATs in Commonwealth-funded residential aged-care facilities in high-risk areas of New South Wales.<sup>112</sup> As part of that trial, both Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, and the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, were briefed

---

<sup>108</sup> Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, p. 21.

<sup>109</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, p. 23.

<sup>110</sup> See for example, Jennifer Hewett, 'Time to test for the virus, over and over', *Australian Financial Review*, 21 October 2020; Food and Drug Administration, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Authorizes Antigen Test as First Over-the-Counter Fully At-Home Diagnostic Test for COVID-19', *Media Release*, 15 December 2020; Reuters, 'Britain extends approval for rapid COVID test after US rebuke', 17 January 2021; William Wan, 'A fast, at-home coronavirus test will be available to Americans this year', *The Washington Post*, 1 February 2021; and BBC News, 'Covid-19: Free rapid testing for pupils' families in England', 28 February 2021. See also Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing, Department of Health, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 42. This advice was updated on 23 August 2021 to identify a potential use for RATs at the point-of-care and with a rapid turn-around. See Department of Health, answer to question on notice, 6 August 2021, (received 1 December 2021), document no. 715, pp. [2–3].

<sup>112</sup> Australian Government, Rapid antigen testing for aged care, Department of Health (accessed 18 February 2022); and Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 42. See also the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Elderly Australians and Aged Care Services, *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Hansard*, 16 February 2022, pp. 7–9.

on the role of RATs for screening purposes.<sup>113</sup> But little appears to have been done to pave the way for a broader rollout of rapid tests.

- 2.99 In September 2021, Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and head of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), informed the committee that legislative changes were underway that would allow RATs to be made available for home use from 1 November 2021.<sup>114</sup> But until early 2022, legislation in some states still prohibited unsupervised at-home rapid COVID-19 testing.<sup>115</sup>
- 2.100 When the PCR-based testing regime was overwhelmed in late 2021, the government began to turn to RATs to supplement the failing system.<sup>116</sup> According to evidence provided to the committee, the government failed to place any orders for rapid testing kits until around 20 December 2021.<sup>117</sup> The delay in securing supply contributed to nation-wide shortages of rapid testing kits throughout the holiday period that crippled businesses and disrupted critical supply chains, leaving supermarket shelves bare.<sup>118</sup> This led to a food security crisis at a national level that highlighted vulnerabilities in our supply chains which could have been avoided.
- 2.101 Some retailers reportedly doubled their prices of rapid testing kits amid the surge in demand and supply shortages, prompting accusations of price-gouging.<sup>119</sup> By January 2022, consumers were paying between \$20 to \$30 per test, as compared with wholesale prices of between \$3.82 and \$11.42 per test.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup> Mr Paul McBride, Acting Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Evidence and Research Group, Department of Health, and Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 43.

<sup>114</sup> Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, pp. 19–20.

<sup>115</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 10; and Courtney Gould, 'TGA admits delay in at-home testing until vax rates higher was deliberate', *NCA NewsWire*, 27 September 2021.

<sup>116</sup> Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, 'AHPPC statement on rapid antigen testing for current high community prevalence environment', *Media release*, 20 January 2022.

<sup>117</sup> Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing, Department of Health, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 44.

<sup>118</sup> Andrew Tillett and John Kehoe, 'Rapid test shortage cripples small business', *Australian Financial Review*, 11 January 2022.

<sup>119</sup> Luke Henriques-Gomes and Ben Butler, 'Rapid antigen tests double in price in Australia amid concerns of price-gouging', *The Guardian*, 30 December 2021.

<sup>120</sup> Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, 'Update on action on rapid antigen test pricing', *Media release*, 1 February 2022.

2.102 Moreover, systems had not been put in place at the federal, state, or territory levels to ensure the results from rapid antigen tests were recorded and referred to relevant health authorities.<sup>121</sup>

2.103 On 24 January 2022, in a hurried response to escalating national outrage over the lack of access and affordability of RATs, the government introduced a concessional access programme to enable eligible concession card holders to collect up to 10 free RATs over a three-month period from participating pharmacies.<sup>122</sup> But Pharmacy Guild of Australia president Trent Twomey warned the scheme would be significantly impacted by supply shortages and many pharmacists complained that they were having to carry costs associated with the scheme.<sup>123</sup>

### Health care system

2.104 As Omicron cases peaked in January 2022, Australia's health system was placed under severe pressure. Patient demand spiked and system capacity was constrained as health workers became sick or were required to isolate. Hospital staff ratios were stretched; non-urgent elective surgeries were postponed; GPs became overwhelmed; and ambulance services experienced significantly delayed response times.<sup>124</sup> The pressure of the Omicron outbreak on the health system compounded existing pressures and risked the system's patient care capabilities.<sup>125</sup>

2.105 Despite the Australian Government's assurances about the health system's preparedness and capability to meet demand during the pandemic, the experience during the Omicron outbreak showed that there was a real risk of the system failing under pandemic pressures.

---

<sup>121</sup> Stephen Rice, 'Coronavirus: Losing RAT race was totally avoidable, physician Ian Norton says', *The Australian*, 12 January 2022.

<sup>122</sup> Those eligible included Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, Veteran Gold, White or Orange Card, Health Care Card, and Low Income Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card holders. See Australian Government, 'Get free rapid antigen tests (RATs) if you hold a concession card', Services Australia, 24 January 2022 (accessed 16 February 2022).

<sup>123</sup> SBS News, 'Here's how concession card holders can now access free rapid antigen tests', 24 January 2022.

<sup>124</sup> See for example, Rayane Tamer, "'The system is absolutely not coping": Hospital staff struggle as COVID-19 admissions rise', *SBS News*, 4 January 2022; Anastasia Tsirtsakis, "'Clearly not practical": Practices overwhelmed following PM's direction to call GPs', *NewsGP*, 6 January 2022; and Elias Visontay, 'Ambulance Victoria issues code red alert and NSW under "unprecedented" pressure from Omicron wave', *The Guardian*, 11 January 2022.

<sup>125</sup> See, The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference: Canberra, ACT', *Transcript*, 30 July 2021; The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference Canberra, ACT', *Transcript*, 23 August 2021; The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Time to shift focus from case numbers to hospitalisations', *Opinion*, 22 August 2021.

- 2.106 The January 2022 increase in Omicron cases resulted in a ten-fold increase in the number of patients admitted to hospital with COVID-19.<sup>126</sup> The Australian College for Emergency Medicine said that many COVID-19 positive people presenting to emergency departments were 'requiring admission to hospital, many also—although requiring clinical assessment—are well enough to be discharged.' However, many people presenting to emergency departments were not aware of how to respond to a positive COVID-19 test, resulting in calls for a public information campaign.<sup>127</sup>
- 2.107 Hospitals in urban and regional areas experienced significant staff shortages to deal with the increased patient demand. In some cases, staff to patient ratios fell below mandated levels and staff reported having to make significant compromises in patient care;<sup>128</sup> nursing shifts went unfilled, even as staff were recalled from their holiday leave; and some lower-risk patients were moved to hotels or private hospitals for treatment.<sup>129</sup>
- 2.108 In order to preserve hospital resources, several jurisdictions postponed non-urgent elective surgeries. This prompted concerns from surgeons about the health impacts on affected patients, particularly as elective surgery wait times had already increased during earlier phases of the pandemic in 2020–21.<sup>130</sup> The government has no apparent plan to manage the backlog of elective surgeries, which will be a burden on individuals and the health system for some time.
- 2.109 Hospital staff shortages were so acute that some hospitals were forced to plead with staff to take any extra shifts that they could, and even sought to employ staff from overseas.<sup>131</sup> To address the 'enormous burden' on healthcare staff, the government has relied on unique workforce arrangements, including the redeployment of staff from the private hospitals and establishing a surge

---

<sup>126</sup> See, Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 28 November 2021', published 30 November 2021; Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance: 19 January 2022', published 20 January 2022.

<sup>127</sup> Australian College for Emergency Medicine, 'Statement on emergency department pressures', *Media Release*, 3 January 2022.

<sup>128</sup> See for example, Rayane Tamer, "'The system is absolutely not coping": Hospital staff struggle as COVID-19 admissions rise', *SBS News*, 4 January 2022.

<sup>129</sup> See for example, Natasha May and Ben Doherty, "'Our health services were already compromised": Australia's regions struggle under Omicron's weight', *The Guardian*, 11 January 2022; and Nadia Daly and Laura Kewley, 'COVID-19 and staff shortages overwhelming regional health system, staff say', *ABC News*, 24 January 2022.

<sup>130</sup> See for example, NSW Government, 'Support measures for hospitals, community', *Media Release*, 7 January 2022; and Neela Janakiraman, 'We urgently need a plan to allow elective surgery', *The Age*, 26 January 2022.

<sup>131</sup> See for example, Elias Visontay, 'NSW hospitals resort to flying nurses in from overseas as staff are begged to take extra shifts amid Covid crisis', *The Guardian*, 1 January 2022.

workforce of retired, part-time, and under-employed healthcare staff to backfill services.<sup>132</sup>

2.110 When the capacity in the system fell short, the Australian Government framed the shortcomings as due to Omicron being 'like dealing with a completely different virus' and that the variant had 'changed all the rules'.<sup>133</sup> This was inconsistent with the government's lines-of-the-day and messaging to downplay within the community the impact of Omicron. At various times, the government stated it was 'not spooked' by Omicron, that states should not 'overreact' in their responses, and that Omicron was just a 'gear change and we have to push through'.<sup>134</sup>

2.111 In December 2021, health experts encouraged 'proportionate and measured application of public health levers' and 'tightening public health restrictions' to help control the community transmission of Omicron.<sup>135</sup> However, the Prime Minister was reluctant to lead on these health measures and focused on the 'personal responsibility' of Australians during the outbreak:

If you feel uncomfortable about going out in other public spaces, well, you can choose to stay home, you can choose to wear a mask, you can choose many things to protect your own health, but they're your choices, and we have to be careful about imposing our choices on others.<sup>136</sup>

2.112 Evidence provided to the committee suggests that the Australian Government planned 'for a worst-case eventuality in the health system' but did not anticipate the 'extent of the transmissibility' of the Omicron variant.<sup>137</sup> However this

---

<sup>132</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, 'Canberra Press Conference, 18 January 2022, on Private Hospitals Agreement, National Medical Stockpile, provision of PPE, Omicron variant and vaccination rates', *Transcript*, 18 January 2022; and Department of Health, 'COVID-19 surge health workforce package', 23 February 2022 (accessed 7 March 2022).

<sup>133</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Address by Scott Morrison', National Press Club of Australia, *Transcript*, 1 February 2022.

<sup>134</sup> Press Conference with Prime Minister the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Doherty Institute, Melbourne Victoria, 14 December 2021; the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, cited in Phillip Coorey, 'Morrison stares down omicron: "It's manageable"', *Australian Financial Review*, 13 December 2021; and the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference: Canberra, ACT', *Transcript*, 10 January 2022.

<sup>135</sup> See, AHPPC, 'AHPPC statement on the Omicron public health implications and response options', Statement, 22 December 2021; Australian Medical Association, 'A national plan is needed now to tackle Omicron', *Media Release*, 21 December 2021.

<sup>136</sup> See, The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference – Bribie Island, Qld', *Transcript*, 21 December 2021; The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference Terrigal, NSW', *Transcript*, 16 December 2021.

<sup>137</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 11.

position is contrary to the views of some health experts, including University of New South Wales Sydney, epidemiologist Professor Raina MacIntyre, who said:

There was no planning. We knew there'd be a surge when restrictions were relaxed... To anyone who understands epidemic spread, it was 100% predictable there'd be this surge in cases.<sup>138</sup>

- 2.113 By not preparing the health system or taking early and proportionate action in responding to the highly infectious Omicron variant, Australia's plan for living with COVID-19 rested on the government's hope for a positive outcome rather than proper planning for a worst-case scenario. In the committee's view, this is a dire policy failure that left Australians unnecessarily exposed to the Omicron variant.
- 2.114 COVID-19 continues to be a significant public health challenge. SARS-CoV-2 can evolve rapidly,<sup>139</sup> and there is an ongoing risk of recurrent COVID-19 waves.<sup>140</sup> Living with COVID-19 effectively in 2022 means it must be a national priority for the Australian Government to ensure Australia's health system is prepared for those demands.

---

<sup>138</sup> Professor Raina MacIntyre cited in Tory Shepard, "'Entirely predictable': experts accuse Dominic Perrottet over Omicron surge as NSW premier backflips on restricts', *The Guardian*, 7 January 2022.

<sup>139</sup> Doherty Institute, 'Rapid emergence of new SARS-CoV-2 variants due to virus' ability to momentarily accelerate its evolutionary pace', 25 February 2022.

<sup>140</sup> See for example, Raina MacIntyre, 'From COVID control to chaos: what now for Australia? Two pathways lie before us', *The Conversation*, 5 January 2022.



# Chapter 3

## Failure to take responsibility

- 3.1 The rapidly developing challenges of COVID-19 required swift and well-informed decision making by a government prepared to lead and take all necessary action to protect Australians. The Prime Minister told Australians that he would do all he could to get us through the pandemic, but he did not. A lack of adequate planning and readiness was apparent early in pandemic and continued throughout.
- 3.2 This chapter details six examples of the Australian Government's (government) failure to take responsibility: in managing quarantine; assisting Australians overseas; ensuring availability and accessibility of rapid antigen tests (RATs); delivering nationally-consistent support to businesses; and managing members of the government who promoted misinformation which undermined the key measures intended to keep Australians safe.

### Recommendation 6

- 3.3 The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the states and territories to identify ways to achieve better and more consistent outcomes, including in relation to disaster mitigation and response, through clearer delineation of Commonwealth and state and territory responsibilities, reduction in duplication and better identification of gaps in service delivery.**

### Quarantine

- 3.4 International arrivals and the provision of quarantine are the responsibility of the Australian Government. A report of the first meeting of the National Cabinet detailed how the Prime Minister shocked state and territory leaders by arriving at the meeting without a quarantine plan.<sup>1</sup> As detailed in Chapter 2, the states and territories were subsequently required to set up and pay for hotel quarantine on short notice and without adequate preparation.
- 3.5 The Australian Government has persisted in its claim that hotel quarantine has been 99.9 per cent successful and used this as a defence against its failure to deliver purpose-built quarantine facilities at the outset of the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> This claim fails to recognise the impact on communities of breaches of hotel

---

<sup>1</sup> Paul Bongiorno, 'PM shirks duty in gold-standard quarantine blame game', *The New Daily*, 22 December 2020.

<sup>2</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, quoted in 'Scott Morrison says hotel quarantine has been 99.9 per cent successful. Is that correct?', *RMIT ABC Fact Check*, 15 July 2021.

quarantine that led to significant outbreaks, clusters of infections and months-long state lockdowns.<sup>3</sup>

- 3.6 In April 2021, then-President of the Australian Medical Association (Western Australia), Dr Andrew Miller, noted that of those international travellers who tested positive on arrival, about 1 in every 200 would result in a leak to the community.<sup>4</sup> Data provided by the Department of Health indicated that of 21 instances of COVID-19 transmission in hotel quarantine to June 2021, 11 instances resulted in transmission to other travellers in quarantine and seven resulted in transmission to quarantine workers. Six instances resulted in community transmission, each triggered by only a small number of source cases.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.7 While the number of breaches of hotel quarantine may appear small, the consequences were not. A single case of COVID-19 in the Stamford Hotel in Victoria sparked more than 19 000 cases and 112 days of lockdown. A case of transmission between rooms in the Playford 'Medi-Hotel' in South Australia, resulted in 63 cases and 14 days of lockdown.<sup>6</sup> On 15 June 2021, a driver transporting international flight crews from the airport to hotel quarantine in Sydney tested positive for the Delta variant of COVID-19. Before showing symptoms and being diagnosed, the driver had already spread the virus, and within days the city was forced into a lockdown that would last 15 weeks.<sup>7</sup>
- 3.8 Breaches of hotel quarantine have occurred in every Australian state, resulting in costly lockdowns and devastating health, social, and economic consequences.<sup>8</sup> Lockdowns in Melbourne and Sydney are estimated to have cost between \$100 million and \$140 million a day in lost economic activity.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, 'Scott Morrison says hotel quarantine has been 99.9 per cent successful. Is that correct?', *RMIT ABC Fact Check*, 15 July 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Miller, 'We need to face the hard truths of hotel quarantine', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 April 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, 'Folder of hotel quarantine transmission event documents', *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, 2021–2022 Budget estimates*, Document tabled 2 June 2021.

<sup>6</sup> David Crowe, 'We're stuck with quarantine hotels. But can we fix the breaches?', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 June 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Levi Parsons, 'From flight FX77 to 64,500 cases, 454 deaths and 15 weeks of lockdown: Timeline of terror shows exactly how Delta snuck into Australia — and health chiefs saw it coming', *Daily Mail Australia*, 15 October 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Doug Hendrie, 'Latest hotel quarantine leak proves "we're not learning"', *RACGP, news GP*, 1 February 2021; and Lucy Macdonald, 'Tim Gunn sentenced over Hobart COVID quarantine breach which triggered 72-hour lock down', *ABC News*, 21 December 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Joel Carrett, 'Yes, lockdowns are costly. But the alternatives are worse', *The Conversation*, 1 July 2021 (accessed 28 February 2022).

- 3.9 As one epidemiologist observed: 'It was a good quick and dirty solution in April 2020, but since then we have seen and suffered from the limitations of such a system.'<sup>10</sup>
- 3.10 Dr Miller described hotel quarantine as 'this thrown-together amateur system', stating:
- During Western Australia's February [2021] lockdown, I implored the community to demand what it is entitled to: a professional, high-standard quarantine system, run by quarantine professionals in a much safer manner than it is now.<sup>11</sup>
- 3.11 The report of the National Review of Hotel Quarantine in October 2020 recommended that options for new models of quarantine should be developed and that the Australian Government consider the establishment of a national facility for quarantine, to be used for emergency situations, emergency evacuations, or urgent scalability.<sup>12</sup> The review noted:
- The Australian Government has the capability to declare a human health response zone, as seen with evacuations of early quarantine cohorts to national facilities or State/Territory facilities gazetted for this purpose, including the Learmonth RAAF [Royal Australian Air Force] base or immigration detention facilities, and the Northern Territory's Howard Springs facility.<sup>13</sup>
- 3.12 The Australian Government resisted calls to establish more appropriate quarantine facilities and the Prime Minister appeared to dismiss the review's recommendation regarding the need to expand Australia's national quarantine capability, stating that the Howard Springs facility was already in place to provide emergency-surge capacity.<sup>14</sup>
- 3.13 However, despite the facility being used sporadically in the early stages of the pandemic, it was not until 16 October 2020 that an agreement was reached with the Northern Territory Government to use the facility as a designated quarantine site.<sup>15</sup> It took until 5 March 2021 for the Australian Government to

---

<sup>10</sup> Dr Driss Ait Ouakrim, quoted in Josh Nicolas, "'Inadequate': Covid breaches on the rise in Australia's hotel quarantine', *The Guardian*, 12 July 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Miller, 'We need to face the hard truths of hotel quarantine', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 April 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Department of Health, *National Review of Hotel Quarantine*, October 2020, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Health, *National Review of Hotel Quarantine*, October 2020, p. 31.

<sup>14</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National Cabinet', *Media Statement*, 23 October 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Note, Howard Springs was used as a quarantine site for Australians evacuated from Wuhan, China and from the Diamond Princess cruise ship in February 2020. See, *ABC News*, 'Coronavirus evacuees head home after two weeks quarantined in Darwin's Howard Springs camp', 23 February 2020 (accessed 8 June 2021); *ABC News*, 'Coronavirus evacuees from Diamond Princess cruise ship arrive in Darwin for quarantine', 20 February 2020 (accessed 8 June 2021);

announce that the capacity of Howard Springs would be increased from approximately 850 people per fortnight to 2000. This work was not completed until late May 2021.<sup>16</sup>

- 3.14 The states responded constructively to the review's recommendations and submitted proposals for alternate quarantine facilities for the Australian Government's consideration. The Australian Government was characteristically slow in its response.
- 3.15 In January 2021, the Queensland Government provided the Commonwealth with two proposals for dedicated quarantine facilities at Gladstone and Toowoomba. The Australian Government rejected both proposals and it was not until 16 August 2021 that it signed a memorandum of understanding with the Queensland Government for the establishment of a Centre for National Resilience to be built at Pinkenba.<sup>17</sup>
- 3.16 The Victorian Government submitted proposals to the Australian Government for two potential quarantine sites at Avalon and Mickleham in April 2021.<sup>18</sup> While the Australian Government progressed discussions with the Victorian Government on the Mickleham facility, it was not until 4 June 2021 that it formally accepted the proposal.<sup>19</sup>
- 3.17 Of the three agreed facilities, only Mickleham is complete and operational at the time of tabling this report. Hotel quarantine remained the mainstay of Australia's quarantine program for international arrivals during 2020 and 2021.
- 3.18 The Government's Bullsbrook hotel quarantine facility in Western Australia is not expected to be completed until June 2022, long after domestic and international borders have reopened.

---

and The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference: Sydney, NSW', *Transcript*, 16 October 2020.

<sup>16</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National Cabinet', *Media Statement*, 23 October 2020; The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National Cabinet', *Media Statement*, 5 March 2021; Ms Lynette Wood, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, Budget Estimates 2021-2022, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 3 June 2021, p. 51; and Ms Caroline Edwards, Associate Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 7 May 2021, p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Queensland Government, 'MOU signed on proposed quarantine facility in Brisbane', *Media Statement*, 16 August 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Victoria State Government, *Alternative Quarantine Accommodation Hub Project Summary*, April 2021.

<sup>19</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National Cabinet Statement', *Media Statement*, 4 June 2021.

## Overseas Australians

- 3.19 While the closure of Australia's international border bought precious time in which to vaccinate the Australian population, tens of thousands of Australian citizens and permanent residents stranded overseas were effectively abandoned by the government.
- 3.20 From the date that international borders closed, the Australian Government argued that the primary responsibility for citizens trying to return lay with the individuals themselves. This ambivalence to their plight is summed up in the Prime Minister's statement that 'there's been many opportunities for people to return. If they're choosing to do so now, they have obviously delayed that decision for a period.'<sup>20</sup>
- 3.21 Committee members were dismayed to find officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) continuing this line some 12 months later:
- People are registered because they wish to return at some point. So, to say how long they've been on there—they could have been on there for a long time and its not that they haven't had the opportunity to take a flight but that they haven't chosen to take a flight that's been offered to them.<sup>21</sup>
- 3.22 The Australian Government attempted to shift blame to the states and territories, stating that while it was committed to returning more Australians home, it was constrained by the incoming traveller caps determined by states and territories, without acknowledging that incoming traveller caps were directly limited by the hotel quarantine system.

## *Home by Christmas*

- 3.23 Australians overseas faced a wide range of challenges during the pandemic: separated from their loved ones, missing personal and family milestones and events; experiencing financial hardship and contracting COVID in countries where health care had collapsed, among other challenges. Their situation was not assisted by promises made by the government that it was simply unable to keep. For example, in September 2020, in a media conference to report on National Cabinet outcomes, the Prime Minister said:

I would hope that those who are looking to come home, that we'd be able to do that within months and I would hope that we can get as many people home, if not all of them by Christmas [2020].<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press Conference: Australian Parliament House', *Transcript*, 8 July 2020.

<sup>21</sup> Ms Lynette Wood, First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, 2021–2022 Budget Estimates, *Committee Hansard*, 3 June 2021 p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press Conference: Sydney, NSW', *Transcript*, 18 September 2020.

3.24 By the end of 2020, nearly 37 000 Australians were still stranded without a way to get home.<sup>23</sup>

### *Australians stranded in India*

3.25 A low point in the Australian Government's response to the plight of Australians stranded overseas was its response to travellers returning from India during a severe second wave of COVID-19.

3.26 On 27 April 2021, in response to the high proportion of Australians returning from India who tested positive for COVID-19, the Australian Government implemented a two-week 'temporary pause' on direct flights between Australia and India, and on 30 April 2021 announced a ban on Australian citizens and permanent residents who had been in India from returning to Australia.<sup>24</sup>

3.27 The Australian Government also highlighted the criminal penalties (fines of up to \$60 000 or five years imprisonment, or both) that would be imposed should a person be found in breach of its determination.<sup>25</sup>

3.28 The Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) advice on the implementation of the travel restrictions stated that potential consequences for Australians stranded in India included a risk of serious illness without access to health care, and in the worst-case scenario, death.<sup>26</sup>

3.29 Despite having done nothing wrong, these Australians were left unprotected by a government that failed to uphold its responsibility to its own citizens.

3.30 The fundamental right of citizens to return freely to their country has deep historical roots under common law and is also an important principle of international law. Legalities aside, that the government reached a point where it refused citizens entry to Australia is an extraordinary breach of its responsibility and deeply inconsistent with community expectations.

3.31 The government's explanation for its actions stated that the high positivity rate of returning travellers from India posed too great a risk to quarantine and health

---

<sup>23</sup> Mr Tony Sheehan, Deputy Secretary, International Security, Humanitarian and Consular Group, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Committee Hansard*, 26 November 2020, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister and Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Women, *Press Conference*, 27 April 2021; the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Travel arrangements to be strengthened for people who have been in India', *Media Release*, 30 April 2021; and *Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) (Emergency Requirements—High Risk Country Travel Pause) Determination 2021 [F2021L00533]*, 30 April 2021.

<sup>25</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Travel arrangements to be strengthened for people who have been in India', *Media Release*, 30 April 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, Letter from the Chief Medical Officer to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, 30 April 2021, *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee* (tabled 3 May 2021).

- systems and that the restrictions were necessary to 'recover capacity' in the quarantine system.
- 3.32 The CMO elaborated on this point, describing it as an 'off-the-chart situation' and noting that the high positivity rate could lead to a 'failure of our quarantine system'.<sup>27</sup> Inexplicably, it appears that the quarantine strategy in place was only designed to cope with healthy, uninfected arrivals.
- 3.33 As a result, 10 998 Australians were stranded in India—facing dire circumstances—1024 of whom were classified as vulnerable, including 209 children without their parents.<sup>28</sup>
- 3.34 Witnesses described a of lack information from the Australian Government and a lack of responsiveness on the part of government departments. People were turning to Facebook for information because 'there isn't enough information out there, and no-one is answering the phone'.<sup>29</sup> Dilin, whose child was stranded in India, spoke of never receiving more than an automated reply to emails.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Meg, who received a cancer diagnosis while in India, described how when she attempted to contact the Australian High Commission the 'phone would just ring out'.<sup>31</sup>
- 3.35 When the Prime Minister announced on 7 May 2021 that facilitated commercial flights from India to Australia would resume with approximately 1000 Australians able to return by the end of June 2021,<sup>32</sup> this represented only 10 per cent of stranded Australians in India and it was unclear how long it would take to return the remaining 90 per cent.
- 3.36 On 28 May 2021, the DFAT consular team advised some travellers that 'all flights from India are currently fully booked' and that there were no scheduled facilitated flights from India after 3 June 2021 at that stage.<sup>33</sup>
- 3.37 The plight of Australians stranded overseas for long periods of time—including vulnerable citizens and children stranded in India—highlights, once again, the

---

<sup>27</sup> Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 7 May 2021, pp. 35–36.

<sup>28</sup> Ms Lynette Wood, First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, 2021–2022 Budget Estimates, *Committee Hansard*, 3 June 2021, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Ms Deborah Tellis, private capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 7 May 2021, p. 13.

<sup>30</sup> Dilin, private capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 7 May 2021, pp. 10–11.

<sup>31</sup> Meg, private capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 7 May 2021, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National Cabinet Statement', *Media Statement*, 7 May 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Committee Hansard*, 3 June 2021, p. 16.

government's failure to take responsibility for critical areas of the pandemic response.

- 3.38 The government's pandemic plan should have provided a workable means of repatriating citizens early in the pandemic. Instead, when Australia's international border closed, Australian citizens stranded overseas were effectively abandoned and the government largely washed its hands of any responsibility for them until it became a political problem.

### **Booster rollout**

- 3.39 On 2 February 2022, the Department of Health informed the committee that the booster program was performing strongly, with over 50 per cent of the population eligible at that time having already received the booster dose.<sup>34</sup>
- 3.40 A month later, however, that percentage had not climbed significantly, sitting at just 57 per cent.<sup>35</sup>
- 3.41 With supply constraints largely addressed in early 2022, poor messaging from the government inhibited the uptake of booster doses. The government's messaging focussed on 'learning to live with COVID-19' and the reduced risk of serious illness associated with the Omicron variant. The government failed to properly account for the Omicron variant's turbocharged transmissibility which more than offset any drop in virulence when compared to Delta.
- 3.42 The relatively low uptake of booster vaccines is concerning and once again leaves vulnerable groups—older Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people living with disability—at considerable risk.
- 3.43 The Australian Government must do more to prepare Australia for a resurgence of the virus in the coming months. There was no excuse for being unprepared for the last wave of infections, yet the government appears at risk of a repeat of its mistakes.

### **Rapid antigen test supply**

- 3.44 The Australian Government failed in its responsibility to make RATs available to augment the PCR-based (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) testing regime: it did not strike deals with manufacturers or ensure the necessary approvals and systems were in place to supply RATs. The Prime Minister has refused to accept any responsibility for this failure. He maintained throughout the Omicron wave from late 2021 that his health

---

<sup>34</sup> Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator-General, Operation COVID Shield, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022. p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> Josh Nicholas and Nick Evershed, 'Covid-19 vaccine Australia rollout tracker: percentage of population vaccinated and vaccination rate by state', *The Guardian*, 21 February 2022.

advisors never suggested RATs would be needed. For example, at an address in February 2022, Mr Morrison said:

Medical advice was that the right testing process was PCR tests, not rapid antigen tests. No medical body, no state government, no one anywhere came forward and said these tests should now be used for this purpose, who were responsible [sic] providing that advice to government. Okay?<sup>36</sup>

- 3.45 Yet, the government had long faced calls for RATs to be integrated into the national testing regime, as detailed in Chapter 2. Moreover, evidence to the Senate contends that the Prime Minister received multiple briefings throughout 2020 and 2021 on COVID-19 testing, including advice on legislative frameworks related to RATs and their use overseas.<sup>37</sup>
- 3.46 The Prime Minister also justified the government's inaction on the basis that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) had not approved self-administered rapid tests until 1 November 2021, leaving little time for planning and stockpiling in the leadup to Christmas. 'Prior to that', Mr Morrison claimed, 'in many states, [RATs] were actually outlawed'.<sup>38</sup>
- 3.47 However, TGA head, Dr Skerritt, pointed to government policy for Australia's belated approvals: 'we can't formally make an approval decision until we get a signal from the government... It's a decision for the government'.<sup>39</sup>
- 3.48 In a meeting with senior officials from the Department of Health in September 2021, the Australian Medical Association reportedly warned that the government would need to develop a national strategy to address the supply of RATs. The Association's vice-president, Dr Chris Moy, claimed he was told

---

<sup>36</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, 'Transcript: National Press Club address: Scott Morrison', *National Press Club of Australia*, 1 February 2022, p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC), answers to questions on notice, 284 and 287, Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee, Supplementary Budget Estimates 2021-22, 12 November 2021 (received 12 February 2022). PMC declined to answer questions relating to who first raised the use of RATs at National Cabinet or whether the TGA had briefed the Prime Minister in relation to rapid testing, erroneously claiming cabinet confidentiality over the deliberations of the National Cabinet. See PMC, answers to questions on notice, 286 and 332, Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee, Supplementary Budget Estimates 2021-22, 12 November 2021 (received 12 February 2022); and Katherine Murphy, 'Rex Patrick wins FoI case to release national cabinet records', *The Guardian*, 5 August 2021.

<sup>38</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, 'Transcript: National Press Club address: Scott Morrison', *National Press Club of Australia*, 1 February 2022, p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> Courtney Gould, 'TGA admits delay in at-home testing until vax rates higher was deliberate', *NCA NewsWire*, 27 September 2021. Dr John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary at the Department of Health, explained to the committee that his statement related to 'a combination of many factors, some of which are internal to [the Department]'. See, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2021, p. 22.

during this meeting that the government would not build a national stockpile of rapid tests as it 'did not want to intervene in the private market'.<sup>40</sup>

- 3.49 RATs could have played a role in reducing infections and subsequent deaths in the Omicron wave but were either not available, or where they were available were not accessible for many people because of cost. Among other measures, the government should have made RATs available under Medicare to ensure accessibility.

### **Business assistance left to the states**

- 3.50 The absence of federal government support for businesses and workers set the Omicron wave apart from the earlier economic impacts of the pandemic. As the Australian Government moved to ease the public health measures that paved the way for the spread of Omicron, it rolled back key economic support measures.
- 3.51 On 28 March 2021, the Australia Government ended Australia's largest fiscal support measure, JobKeeper (a wage subsidy program designed to help keep Australians employed).<sup>41</sup> On 29 September 2021, the government announced that once 70 per cent of a state's population over 16 years were fully vaccinated, the COVID-19 Disaster Payment (a lump sum payment designed to help workers who had lost work or income as a result of a COVID-19 lockdown) would end.<sup>42</sup> On 10 January 2022, the government reduced the rate of the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, workers and businesses were left particularly vulnerable to the financial impact of the Omicron wave when it hit.
- 3.52 State and territory governments once again stepped up, accusing the federal government of 'stepping aside'. For example, New South Wales announced in January 2022 a \$1 billion support package for businesses impacted by the Omicron wave. New South Wales treasurer, the Hon Matthew Kean MP, stated:

I was hoping to make this announcement standing beside the Prime Minister today and the Treasurer Frydenberg, but they're not to be found...  
These are not just New South Wales businesses, they're Australian

---

<sup>40</sup> Sarah Martin and Michael McGowan, 'Morrison government warned about lack of rapid antigen tests in September, AMA claims', *The Guardian*, 4 January 2022.

<sup>41</sup> Australian Taxation Office, 'JobKeeper key dates', accessed 28 February 2022. See also Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, Chapter 5.

<sup>42</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, 'COVID-19 Disaster Payment', *Media Release*, 29 September 2021; and Michael Klapdor and Anthony Lotric, *Australian Government COVID-19 disaster payments: A quick guide*, Department of Parliamentary Services, Parliamentary Library, research paper series 2021–22, 21 January 2022. For more on pandemic economic support, see Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, Chapter 5.

<sup>43</sup> Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, 'Changes to the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment', *Media Release*, 8 January 2022.

businesses, Australians that pay their taxes to the Commonwealth government.<sup>44</sup>

- 3.53 Victoria also announced in February 2022 a \$200 million business stimulus package to support businesses to recover from Omicron, targeting hospitality and tourism.<sup>45</sup>
- 3.54 The combined effect of workforce shortages, reduced consumer spending, and the removal of economic support measures proved to be a perfect storm for some Australian businesses that were forced to permanently close. Many businesses that have survived have exhausted financial reserves and will be poorly placed to weather another COVID-19 wave.
- 3.55 The government's reluctance to introduce a wage subsidy and other support measures at the beginning of the pandemic hit businesses hard.<sup>46</sup> By prematurely removing economic support programmes, the government has pulled the rug out from under many vulnerable businesses and workers.

### **Dangerous and divisive messaging**

- 3.56 In the government's own ranks are vocal critics of the government's policy of vaccinating children against COVID-19—despite the enormous weight of medical evidence that clearly supports the vaccination of children five years and above.
- 3.57 The Prime Minister should have done more to reject this misinformation and he has been unwilling or unable to bring these members of his government into line.
- 3.58 A member of the government used a public hearing of this committee to allege that providing COVID-19 vaccines to children was tantamount to 'treating children as an experiment'.<sup>47</sup> During the same hearing, they dismissed the use of the word 'pandemic' in relation to COVID-19 as 'alarmist' due to the allegedly low number of deaths and low hospitalisation rates among children.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Mollie Gorman, 'NSW unveils \$1bn support package for Omicron-hit businesses as Treasurer takes swipe at Commonwealth', *ABC News*, 30 January 2022.

<sup>45</sup> The Hon Daniel Andrews, '\$200 Million Package To Support Jobs, Economy, Business', *Media Release*, 21 February 2022.

<sup>46</sup> See for example, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, Chapter 5.

<sup>47</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 7 December 2021, p. 20.

<sup>48</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 7 December 2021, p. 20.

- 3.59 Whilst the Prime Minister labelled this messaging 'completely irresponsible',<sup>49</sup> the claims spurred wider alarmist messaging about the safety of vaccinating children.
- 3.60 In other instances, members of the government have expressed support for the 2022 anti-government protests against mandatory vaccinations.<sup>50</sup> Another appeared on the infamous United States-based conspiracy theory talk show *Infowars* to criticise Australia's public health restrictions and appeared to voice support for anti-vaccination protests.<sup>51</sup>
- 3.61 The Prime Minister has dismissed these claims as 'unwise' and 'dangerous', but has taken no tangible steps to sanction the members or limit the spread of the misinformation. At the time at which this report was being prepared, several government senators were understood to be refusing to support government bills before the Parliament until legislation is passed to override state government vaccine mandates.<sup>52</sup>
- 3.62 The committee understands vaccination misinformation is not considered a contravention of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.<sup>53</sup> Rather, responsibility for countering public health and vaccine misinformation is understood to rest with the Department of Health, which has at its disposal only limited tools like blocking commentators from departmental communication channels and reporting accounts to social media platforms.<sup>54</sup>
- 3.63 The committee believes that the Prime Minister should play a stronger role reining in misinformation from members of his own government, and that this is vital to ensuring support for effective public health measures and vaccine uptake.

---

<sup>49</sup> Paul Karp, 'Scott Morrison moves to rein in Gerard Rennick after senator says Pfizer for children is "completely irresponsible"', *The Guardian*, 8 December 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Sarah Basford Canales, 'Morrison govt MP, senators back Parliament House anti-vax protests', *Canberra Times*, 1 February 2022.

<sup>51</sup> Nick Bonyhady, 'George Christensen uses US conspiracy show appearance to call for Australian embassy protests', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 December 2021.

<sup>52</sup> See for example, Paul Carp, 'Liberal MP to vote against religious discrimination bill that fails to protect transgender students', *The Guardian*, 8 February 2022.

<sup>53</sup> See, Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, pp. 37–38.

<sup>54</sup> Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People, Communication and Parliamentary Division, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 38.

**Recommendation 7**

**3.64** The committee recommends that the Australian Government undertake a review of the powers available under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* to address health misinformation during public health campaigns or emergency responses.



# Chapter 4

## Failure to get it right

4.1 Throughout the pandemic the Australian Government (government) has failed to take advice, repeatedly sought to shift blame, publicly attempted to minimise its responsibilities and frequently doubled down on its failures. This failure of leadership has meant COVID-19 measures were often too little, too late, or were marred by design and implementation shortcomings.

### **Economic assistance**

4.2 While the government's economic support measures offered much-needed assistance to the businesses and workers hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government's support was repeatedly too late, too limited, and ended too soon.

### *JobKeeper*

4.3 The JobKeeper wage subsidy was the Australian Government's largest COVID-19 economic support measure<sup>1</sup> and the 'largest single fiscal measure in Australia's history'.<sup>2</sup> The Secretary of the Department of the Treasury, Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, described the importance of the support:

[T]he JobKeeper program in conjunction with the JobSeeker enhancements, appear to have been especially successful in preserving employment while supporting incomes and encouraging rapid recovery.<sup>3</sup>

4.4 The government announced \$130 billion for the JobKeeper subsidy in March 2020 to 'help keep Australians in jobs' and to 'tackle the significant economic impact from the coronavirus'.<sup>4</sup> Just two months later, in May 2020, the government announced that it had revised down the estimated cost for the JobKeeper program to \$70 billion due to a data administration error.<sup>5</sup> In its year of operation, JobKeeper provided critical financial support to approximately

---

<sup>1</sup> Reserve Bank of Australia, *Research Discussion Paper: How many jobs did JobKeeper Keep?*, November 2020, p. [1].

<sup>2</sup> Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary, Department of the Treasury, *Opening Statement*, Senate Economics Legislation Committee, 2020–2021 Additional estimates, 24 March 2021, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary, Department of the Treasury, *Opening Statement*, Senate Economics Legislation Committee, 2021–2022 Additional estimates, 16 February 2022, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, '\$130 billion JobKeeper payment to keep Australians in a job', *Media Release*, 30 March 2020.

<sup>5</sup> See, Department of the Treasury and the Australian Taxation Office, 'JobKeeper update', *Media Release*, 22 May 2020; and Senate Select Committee on Covid-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 79–81.

one million businesses and around 3.8 million workers,<sup>6</sup> and cost the Australian Government \$88 billion<sup>7</sup>—some \$42 billion less than initially projected.

### Limited eligibility

- 4.5 As discussed in the committee's first interim report, from the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a clear need for a national wage subsidy to support businesses and workers to manage the severe economic disruption. Despite this, the Australian Government ignored calls from the opposition to provide a wage subsidy.<sup>8</sup> When the government did implement JobKeeper, the program's eligibility criteria excluded many workers, including: casual employees, temporary visa holders, local government employees, employees of foreign owned companies, including airport catering services firm Dnata, and university employees.<sup>9</sup>
- 4.6 Notwithstanding the government's JobKeeper costing error, the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, maintained that the subsidy's eligibility criteria should not be expanded to groups excluded in the initial announcement as the program was funded with 'borrowed money'.<sup>10</sup>
- 4.7 In August 2020, the government announced JobKeeper would be extended for a further six months, from its scheduled end date of September 2020, and would be paid at a reduced rate.<sup>11</sup>

### Ending JobKeeper too soon

- 4.8 The Australian Government announced JobKeeper would end on 28 March 2021, a little over a year into the pandemic, and claimed the program had 'achieved its objectives of supporting businesses and saving jobs, preserving employment'.<sup>12</sup> Treasury officials anticipated that the end of JobKeeper would 'lead to some businesses closing and jobs being lost', predicting 100 000 to 150 000 people could lose employment as a result, but noted there was a 'wide band of uncertainty' around the estimate and that not all jobs lost would result in unemployment.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, 'JobKeeper', *Media Release*, 28 March 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Ms Philippa Brown, First Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Policy Division, Department of the Treasury, *Senate Economics Legislation Committee Hansard*, 27 October 2021, p. 42.

<sup>8</sup> See, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 75–80.

<sup>9</sup> See, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 75–80.

<sup>10</sup> See, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, 'Interview with Patricia Karvelas, ABC TV', *Transcript*, 22 May 2022.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Taxation Office, *JobKeeper extension*, updated April 2021.

<sup>12</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, 'JobKeeper', *Media Release*, 28 March 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary, Department of the Treasury, *Senate Economics Legislation Committee Hansard*, 24 March 2021, p. 12.

4.9 At the time that JobKeeper ended, Australia's international borders remained shut and active COVID-19 cases were low (155).<sup>14</sup> However, many businesses and 1.5 million workers, including 40 000 travel agents, were still reliant on the program.<sup>15</sup> By July 2021, the COVID-19 Delta variant had slipped through Australia's border management system, resulting in lockdowns that affected half of Australia's population.<sup>16</sup> Treasury officials estimated the cost of the lockdowns to the national economy was in the order of \$20 billion in the September 2021 quarter.<sup>17</sup> Despite the severe impacts, the Prime Minister insisted JobKeeper would not be reintroduced:

When you go through a pandemic or in any sort of policy challenge, you don't address last year's challenges. You address today's challenges. And, today's challenge with these lockdowns is very different to what the Treasurer and I and the Government were confronted with last March and April when we put JobKeeper in place. That was a national scheme that went across all businesses in Australia and it was designed with the prospect of having Australia in that situation for at least six months, which indeed it was in.<sup>18</sup>

4.10 In December 2021 and January 2022, the Omicron variant caused an exponential spike in COVID-19 cases and extremely challenging conditions for business, including lockdown-like impacts<sup>19</sup> and a 'triple blow' from staff shortages, supply chain disruptions and reduced consumer activity.<sup>20</sup> Despite many businesses calling for increased support, the Australian Government left businesses and workers without a comprehensive economic safety net.

4.11 While the JobKeeper program provided essential support to millions of Australians, the program has been widely criticised as poorly designed and administered. In some instances, businesses appeared to have curtailed their

---

<sup>14</sup> See, Department of Health, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance – 28 March 2021', published 29 March 2021.

<sup>15</sup> General business notice of motion 1007 agreed to on 18 February 2021, *Senate Journals*, No. 88, 18 February 2021, pp. 3100–3101.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Matthew Burgess and Georgina McKay, 'Half of Australia Back in Lockdown as Delta Tests Covid-Zero', *Bloomberg*, 21 July 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Mr Trevor Power, Acting Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group, Department of the Treasury, *Senate Economics Legislation Committee Hansard*, 27 October 2021, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference', *Transcript*, 21 July 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Jo Masters, then-Chief Economist, EY, cited in Hannah Wootton and David Marin-Guzman, 'It's "like a lockdown": Omicron chaos crippling businesses', *Australian Financial Review*, 6 January 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew McKellar, CEO, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, cited in Peter Hannam, '"Extreme stress": Australian businesses risk going under due to impact of Omicron', *The Guardian*, 18 January 2022.

operations to maintain their eligibility for the JobKeeper program.<sup>21</sup> In other cases, JobKeeper was paid to companies that were not eligible under the program's rules.<sup>22</sup>

- 4.12 Reporting of analysis by the Parliamentary Budget Office revealed that up to \$38 billion of JobKeeper payments were made to ineligible companies, including \$1.3 billion paid to companies whose turnover had tripled.<sup>23</sup> In the July–September 2020 quarter alone, over \$18 billion was paid to ineligible companies—approximately 58 per cent of the JobKeeper payments in that period.<sup>24</sup>
- 4.13 While the government was warned about JobKeeper overpayments, it did not make changes to the scheme until September 2020. By failing to ensure the JobKeeper program's eligibility criteria were appropriately administered, the Australian Government wasted billions of dollars of public money in making payments to companies that were ineligible for program, including some companies that were highly profitable throughout the pandemic.

#### *Early access to superannuation*

- 4.14 The Australian Government provided individuals experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 early access to their superannuation in two tranches of up to \$10 000 each, between 19 April 2020 and 31 December 2020.<sup>25</sup> While financial support was much needed by those who made withdrawals, the government's scheme was poorly designed, poorly administered and compounded the adverse financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for many Australians. As the committee found in December 2020, in the early months of the pandemic the government's scheme led to the Australian economy being supported by 'the private savings of people who were hardest hit by COVID-19 restrictions'.<sup>26</sup>
- 4.15 Approximately 4.8 million early super withdrawals were made under the scheme, at a combined value of \$36.4 billion dollars.<sup>27</sup> The average amount

<sup>21</sup> See, Department of the Treasury, *Insights from the first six months of JobKeeper*, October 2021, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> David Crowe, 'ATO review finds thousands of JobKeeper businesses weren't eligible', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 October 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Dan Conifer, 'At least \$38b in JobKeeper went to companies where turnover did not fall below thresholds, data finds', *ABC News*, 2 November 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Dan Conifer, 'At least \$38b in JobKeeper went to companies where turnover did not fall below thresholds, data finds', *ABC News*, 2 November 2021.

<sup>25</sup> See, Australian Taxation Office, *Early access to your super*, updated 9 September 2021; and Commonwealth of Australia, *Economic and Fiscal Update*, July 2020, pp. 9 and 76–77.

<sup>26</sup> See, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 89.

<sup>27</sup> Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, *COVID-19 Early Release Scheme: Issue 36*, 8 February 2021.

withdrawn was \$7638, and for people who made two withdrawals the average withdrawal increased to \$8268.<sup>28</sup> Australian Taxation Office data shows withdrawals were often made by people who had their working hours reduced (44 per cent), or people who were unemployed (19 per cent), and were overwhelmingly made by people paid low-to-middle incomes.<sup>29</sup> Most people who made withdrawals used the money to pay their mortgage or rent (29 per cent), or to pay household bills (27 per cent).<sup>30</sup> However, in some instances, the government's design of the scheme allowed for people who did not see a decline in their income to make a withdrawal.<sup>31</sup>

4.16 By shifting the burden of economic support to individuals, the government has increased the risk of Australians experiencing long-term adverse financial impacts. The scheme encouraged people to make withdrawals as financial markets bottomed, which served to lock in super balance losses.<sup>32</sup> Super industry data from less than three months into the scheme, and prior to the scheme's second withdrawal tranche, shows approximately 480 000 Australians had 'wiped out' their super account balances through the withdrawals.<sup>33</sup> Recent research by the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia suggests the early access to super scheme has:

...lead to around one million accounts being left with less than \$1,000 with around 160,000 accounts being entirely cleaned out and closed. There is no evidence of any significant catchup contributions being made to such accounts in the period up to February 2022.<sup>34</sup>

4.17 Younger people who made the maximum withdrawal amount could be up to \$95 000 worse off in retirement.<sup>35</sup> For women whose super balance is, on

---

<sup>28</sup> Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, *COVID-19 Early Release Scheme: Issue 36*, 8 February 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Australian Taxation Office, *COVID-19 Early release of super report (20 April – 31 December 2020)*, 5 April 2021.

<sup>30</sup> See, Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Household financial resources: September 2021*, 21 April 2021.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 89; and Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group, Australian Taxation Office, *Committee Hansard*, 30 July 2020, p. 37.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, The McKell Institute, 'COVID-19: 9 reasons why accessing super early is a risky idea', March 2020; Michael Read, 'Early access to super cost Australians thousands', *Australian Financial Review*, 30 June 2021.

<sup>33</sup> See, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 90.

<sup>34</sup> Ross Clare, *Developments in account balances Superannuation account balances for various demographic groups*, Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia, March 2022, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Australian Council of Trade Unions, *Submission 122*, p. 13.

average, significantly lower than their male counterparts,<sup>36</sup> the early access to super scheme has further eroded their retirement savings.<sup>37</sup>

- 4.18 Analysis by the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees of more than 750 000 withdrawals in the scheme's first tranche has confirmed the disproportionate impact of the scheme on Australian women. Analysis from the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees found that female applicants aged 25–34 had on average a starting balance before COVID-19 of \$19 906, which was 21 per cent less than the average male balance of \$25 200 across this age cohort. After accessing their super through the scheme, this gap widened to 46 per cent.<sup>38</sup>
- 4.19 Despite the serious impacts of the scheme on Australians' retirement savings, the government has done little to remedy the situation. In March 2022, the government announced people who had made withdrawals under the scheme could 'rebuild' their super by making personal super contributions.<sup>39</sup>

### *Other payments*

- 4.20 Under pressure to be seen to do more to support Australians impacted by lockdowns,<sup>40</sup> the government introduced two income support payments for individuals affected by state and territory decisions relating to COVID-19 public health measures.
- 4.21 On 3 August 2020, the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment was announced, consisting of a lump-sum payment of around \$750 for each week during which an individual lost income as a result of government directions to self-isolate or quarantine, or to care for someone subject to such government directions.<sup>41</sup> The disaster payments largely replaced support already on offer from the

---

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Australian Super, '[The gender super gap: How gender inequality affects superannuation](#)', February 2020, (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>37</sup> See, Martin Fahy, Chief Executive Officer, ASFA, cited in John Collet, 'Gender 'blind spot' on parental leave needs to end', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 March 2022.

<sup>38</sup> Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees, '[Gender super gap set to widen for women who applied for COVID early release](#)', 2020 (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>39</sup> See, Australian Taxation Office, '[Re-contribution of COVID-19 early release superannuation amounts](#)', updated 25 March 2022 (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Nino Bucci and Katharine Murphy, 'Victoria takes aim at "disgraceful" lack of federal financial support during lockdown', *The Guardian*, 30 May 2021; Anthony Albanese MP, 'Doorstop interview, Sydney', *Transcript*, 29 May 2021; and Australian Council of Social Service, 'ACOSS calls on Federal Government to deliver on pandemic disaster recovery payments as part of a plan to protect incomes in lockdowns', *Media Release*, 2 June 2021.

<sup>41</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press Conference, Australian Parliament House, ACT', *Transcript*, 3 August 2020.

Victorian Government.<sup>42</sup> On 18 January 2022, the scheme was scaled back and a financial hardship test applied.<sup>43</sup> All payments under the scheme are due to end on 30 June 2022.<sup>44</sup>

- 4.22 On 3 June 2021, the COVID-19 Disaster Payment was announced as a temporary measure of between \$200 and \$750 per week for those who had lost income as a result of state and territory public health restrictions.<sup>45</sup> Once 70 per cent of a state's population over 16 years were fully vaccinated, the disaster payments would not be renewed, and the payments would end completely at the 80 per cent threshold. The committee understands that all payments under the COVID-19 Disaster Payment scheme have now ceased.<sup>46</sup>
- 4.23 The criteria for eligibility for these payments were widely criticised as being overly restrictive, which at times excluded those with access to more than \$10 000 in savings, those receiving welfare payments, or people still working but with significantly reduced hours, among other restrictions. Critics pointed out that such limitations had not been applied to payments rolled out during previous disasters.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, COVID-19 Disaster Payments were not equally distributed between states and territories. While NSW residents received \$7.4 billion, a little over half that amount (\$3.8 billion) was allocated to Victorians, despite Melbourne experiencing one of the world's longest lockdowns.<sup>48</sup>
- 4.24 The COVID-19 disaster and leave payments were supplemented by business support payments. This was also inequitably distributed between states and territories. For example, the government provided joint economic support with the NSW Government to support that state's economy during the Delta

---

<sup>42</sup> Government of Victoria, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) Worker Support Payment Guidelines', July 2020, (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>43</sup> Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience and Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education, 'Changes to the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment', *Media Release*, 8 January 2022.

<sup>44</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, and Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience and Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education, 'COVID-19 Disaster Payment', *Media Release*, 29 September 2021.

<sup>45</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press Conference, Australian Parliament House, ACT', *Transcript*, 3 June 2021.

<sup>46</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, 'COVID-19 Disaster Payment', *Media Release*, 29 September 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Luke Henriques-Gomes, 'Coalition urged to expand Covid disaster payments after workers barred from the program', *The Guardian*, 9 June 2021.

<sup>48</sup> Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group, Department of the Treasury, *Senate Economics Legislation Committee Hansard*, 27 October 2021, p. 30.

lockdown, while the Victorian Government claimed equitable support was not being provided in that state by the Australian Government.<sup>49</sup>

- 4.25 As the Australian Government moved to ease public health measures, paving the way for the spread of Omicron, it rolled back key economic support measures. Workers and businesses were therefore left particularly vulnerable.

### Aged care

- 4.26 In December 2020, the committee raised serious concerns about the government's aged care response, particularly that COVID-19 deaths of residents were disproportionately high and, at that time, accounted for over 74 per cent of Australia's total COVID-19 deaths.<sup>50</sup> This made Australia's COVID-19 death rate in residential aged care facilities (RACFs) among the worst in the world.<sup>51</sup>
- 4.27 Australia's aged care system was already in crisis in the lead up to the pandemic. In October 2019, the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (the Royal Commission) reported on systemic underfunding and the need for urgent reform of aged care in Australia.<sup>52</sup> Despite the Australian Government's acknowledgement of the pressure on the aged care system,<sup>53</sup> and the early evidence of the risk of COVID-19 to residents, almost two years into the pandemic the government did not ensure that RACFs were properly prepared for the Omicron variant in the wake of the relaxation of public health measures in the broader community.<sup>54</sup>
- 4.28 Aged Care and Community Services Australia said that the 'cracks' in the aged care system were turned into 'chasms' by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing a crisis in the sector that has had a 'tragic human cost'.<sup>55</sup> Residents' care was

---

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Sarah Martin, "'Beg for every scrap": Victoria fumes after Morrison and NSW unveil \$500m a week Covid lockdown package', *The Guardian*, 13 July 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 53.

<sup>51</sup> See, for example, Caroline Egan, 'Australia has one of the world's highest rates of COVID death in nursing homes, royal commission hears', *HelloCare*, 10 August 2020.

<sup>52</sup> Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Final report – executive summary*, March 2021, pp. 74 and 88.

<sup>53</sup> See, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, 'Press conference – Kirribilli, NSW', *Transcript*, 1 March 2021.

<sup>54</sup> See, for example, 'Aged care workers fear facilities unprepared for Omicron and "let it rip" approach', *SBS News*, 11 January 2022.

<sup>55</sup> Aged Care and Community Services Australia, 'Open letter to the Prime Minister from aged care providers and unions', 10 February 2022.

compromised; family visits have been limited; and staff and providers have been forced to provide care with inadequate resources.<sup>56</sup>

- 4.29 Despite this, the Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck has, at various times, claimed the aged care system is performing 'incredibly well', 'exceptionally well', and has sought to minimise the government's responsibilities for the continually poor outcomes in the aged care sector.<sup>57</sup>

### *Vulnerability of aged care residents*

- 4.30 In late November 2021, prior to the Omicron outbreak, Australia had 259 active cases of COVID-19 across 29 RACFs (188 resident cases and 71 staff cases).<sup>58</sup> Just two months later, in late January 2022, infections had rapidly escalated to 23 900 active cases (9643 resident cases and 14 257 staff cases) across 1261 facilities.<sup>59</sup>
- 4.31 Tragically, infections too often translated into COVID-19 deaths. In the first two months of 2022, Australia's rate of COVID-19 related deaths in RACFs nearly doubled with a further 877 deaths, three times higher than the 282 deaths recorded in 2021 and surpassing the 685 deaths recorded in 2020 (see Figure 4.1).<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, Aged Care and Community Services Australia, 'Open letter to the Prime Minister from aged care providers and unions', 10 February 2022.

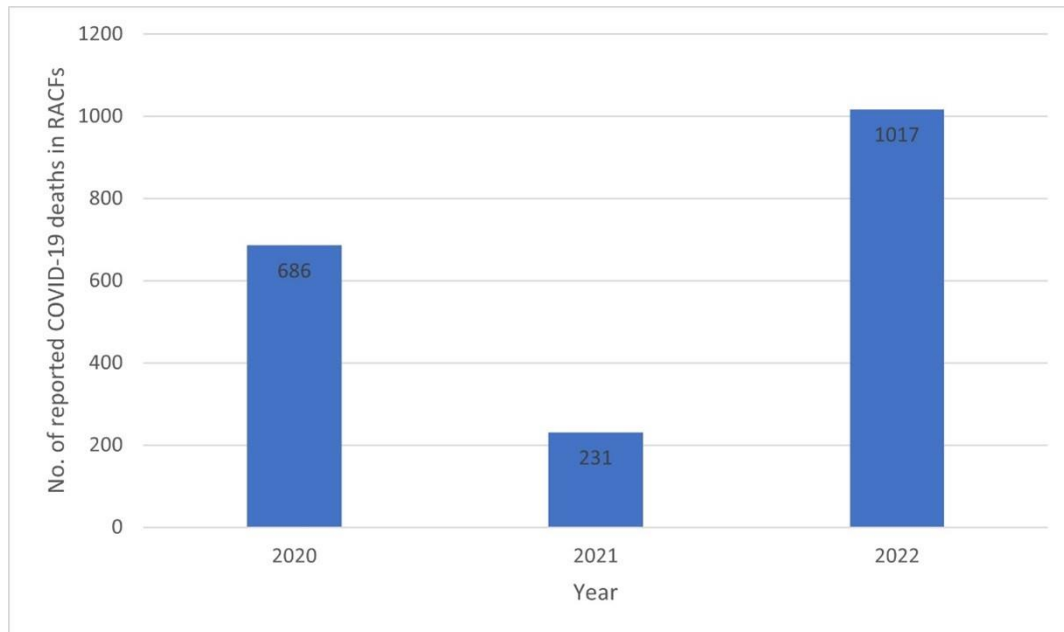
<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 18; and Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, 2021–2022 Additional estimates, *Proof Hansard*, 16 February 2022, pp. 48–50.

<sup>58</sup> Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities, 26 November 2022, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities, 28 January 2022, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities, 15 March 2022, p. 2.

**Figure 4.1 Reported COVID-19 deaths in RACFs by year — at 31 March 2022**



Data sourced from the Department of Health.<sup>61</sup>

- 4.32 The committee remains deeply concerned about the death rate in RACFs and that more could be done by the Australian Government to mitigate COVID-19 related deaths. Approximately 30 per cent of Australia's total COVID-19 related deaths (6384 people as of 1 April 2022) were among aged care residents,<sup>62</sup> despite less than 0.7 per cent of Australians living in RACFs.<sup>63</sup>
- 4.33 The Australian Government has sought to downplay the high rate of RACF COVID-19 related deaths in 2022 as being of older Australians in palliative care.<sup>64</sup> At the same time as COVID-19-related deaths in RACFs were peaking, the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, claimed:

<sup>61</sup> See, Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities, 1 April 2022, p. 2

<sup>62</sup> Note, this information compares the latest available data on COVID-19 deaths in residential aged care, as at 31 March 2022, with population-level COVID-19 data as at 1 April 2022. See, Department of Health, *COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities*, 1 April 2022, p. 2; and *Department of Health, Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a glance – 1 April 2022*, 4 April 2022.

<sup>63</sup> Note, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that, as at 30 June 2021, there were 183 894 permanent aged care residents from Australia's total population of 26 301 264. See, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [Aged care data snapshot 2021—second release](#), October 2021, 'Population' tab and 'Residential care' tab (accessed 1 April 2022).

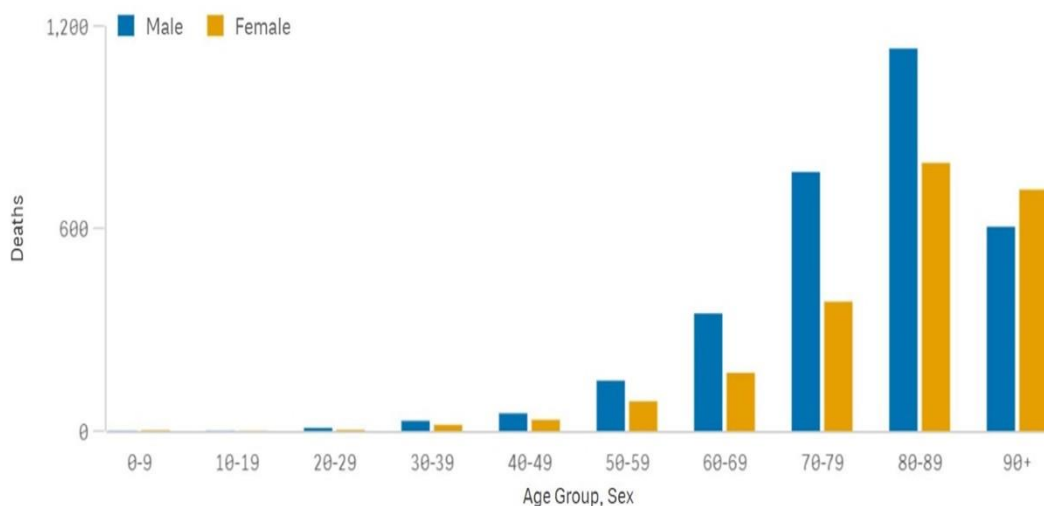
<sup>64</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Canberra Press Conference, 31 January 2022, on Australia COVID update, vaccine booster program and Omicron BA.2 sub variant', *Transcript*, 31 January 2022.

And I think an important piece of information as well, the latest advice that I have is that approximately 60 per cent of those that have agonisingly passed have been in palliative care.

...but the notion of those that were in the absolute latest days of their lives, who may have contracted COVID, the definition is that they have passed with COVID, and they are absolutely rightly counted as a national loss.<sup>65</sup>

- 4.34 The committee rejects Minister Hunt's comments. Health practitioners have observed that while many aged care residents who die with COVID-19 have underlying conditions, being infected with COVID-19 demonstrably reduces their quality of life, can hasten their death, and limited families' ability to visit their loved ones.<sup>66</sup>

**Figure 4.2 COVID-19 deaths by age and sex, as at 15 March 2022**

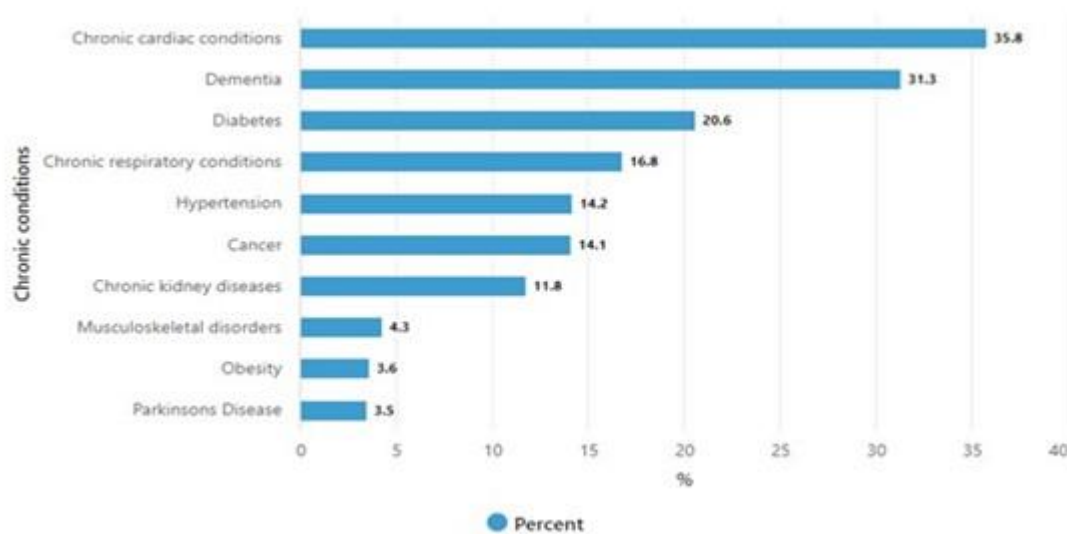


Source: Department of Health

<sup>65</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Canberra Press Conference, 31 January 2022, on Australia COVID update, vaccine booster program and Omicron BA.2 sub variant', *Transcript*, 31 January 2022.

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, Melissa Davey, 'Greg Hunt accused of being disrespectful and playing down Covid deaths in aged care', *The Guardian*, 1 February 2022.

**Figure 4.3 Percentage of COVID-19 deaths with commonly certified comorbidities, as of 31 January 2022**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

- 4.35 Preventing death is one of the government's key public health aims in the pandemic response.<sup>67</sup> The fact that aged care deaths were at record highs two years into the pandemic shows that the government has failed to protect older Australians in RACFs from the worst impacts of COVID-19. It also reveals that the government's claims that it had learnt from its experiences in managing COVID-19 in RACFs were critically misjudged and misleading.
- 4.36 The Australian Government mishandled the vaccine rollout to older Australians, leaving them 'sitting ducks'.<sup>68</sup> While older Australians were among those prioritised in phase 1a of the rollout, as detailed in Chapter 2, the government missed its original target by over 3.4 million.
- 4.37 Several factors compounded the slow rollout in RACFs. The lack of advance notice of availability of vaccine supplies in early 2021 made it hard to obtain timely informed consent from residents in aged care facilities, exacerbating delays in the rollout. Further, from early January 2022, providers reported shortages of essential supplies. Personal protective equipment and rapid antigen tests were particularly scarce,<sup>69</sup> despite assurances from the government

<sup>67</sup> Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, 'AHPPC statement on the Omicron public health implications and response options', *Statement*, 22 December 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Dr Chris Moy, Vice-president of the Australian Medical Association, in Jade Macmillan, 'Doctors call for better COVID-19 vaccination promotion, warning Australians are 'sitting ducks' until they're vaccinated', *ABC News*, updated 21 May 2021.

<sup>69</sup> Anne Connolly, 'As Omicron moves in, Australia is facing a predictable tragedy in aged care', *ABC News*, 7 January 2022; *SBS News*, 'Aged care workers fear facilities unprepared for Omicron and 'let it rip' approach', 11 January 2022; Savannah Meacham, 'Aged care homes face staff shortages and lockdowns as COVID-19 surges', *9News*, 15 January 2022; and Christopher Knaus, "'Pushed to

in August 2021 that they would be made available to residential aged care facilities for regular screening of staff and visitors.<sup>70</sup> One study found more than half of staff surveyed in mid-January had not been supplied with rapid tests.<sup>71</sup>

### *Aged care workforce*

- 4.38 Aged care staff have worked throughout the pandemic in extremely difficult conditions. By mid-January 2022, the sector was warning it had reached 'breaking point'.<sup>72</sup> Large numbers of aged care staff tested positive to COVID-19 or were deemed to be close contacts and furloughed for up to two weeks. This led to massive staffing shortfalls and a decline in the quality of care.
- 4.39 While aged care staff frequently went above and beyond in their commitment to caring for residents,<sup>73</sup> in some instances, aged-care residents faced deplorable conditions, with some left without food, water, or help showering and toileting.<sup>74</sup> It also left residents with increased exposure to the risks of COVID-19 and other serious health complications.
- 4.40 The government provided surge workforce funding to the highest risk residential aged care facilities facing COVID-19 outbreaks through a \$47 million support package.<sup>75</sup> The Department of Health reported that 260 facilities had been supported through the surge workforce from December 2021 to February 2022—representing under 10 per cent of Commonwealth-supported facilities.<sup>76</sup> Providers reportedly waited as long as 10

---

the edge": Australian aged care providers facing dire staff shortages, unions say', *The Guardian*, 28 January 2022.

<sup>70</sup> Sarah Russell, 'The Coalition's "hands-off" approach to aged care Covid outbreaks is having heartbreaking consequences', *The Guardian*, 10 January 2022.

<sup>71</sup> Change Aged Care and United Workers Union, *Aged Care Omicron survey*, 14-21 January 2021, p. 4.

<sup>72</sup> Tom Stayner, 'Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) CEO Paul Sadler', *SBS News*, 18 January 2022.

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Rachel Dexter, 'They become your family': the aged care workers living on the job', *The Age*, 19 January 2022.

<sup>74</sup> John Butler, '"Bullying tactics": Richard Colbeck denies he should resign over aged care deaths', *The Guardian*, 16 February 2022.

<sup>75</sup> Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care Group, Department of Health, Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, *Proof Hansard*, 16 February 2022, p. 28.

<sup>76</sup> Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care Group, Department of Health, Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, *Proof Hansard*, 16 February 2022, p. 13.

days for support, labelling the scheme 'sluggish',<sup>77</sup> and 'inadequate', and claiming it covered only a fraction of the staffing shortfall.<sup>78</sup>

- 4.41 The Australian Aged Care Collaboration (a group representing around 70 per cent of the aged-care sector) estimated that around a quarter of all shifts in residential aged care facilities were going unfilled each week, despite the surge workforce.<sup>79</sup> The Department of Health estimated in mid-February 2022 that on average, some 4000 staff were on furlough and nearly 5 per cent of facilities were still facing staffing shortages. However, the department of Health was unable to provide data on the number of shifts going unfilled, again highlighting the lack of timely data provided throughout the response.<sup>80</sup>
- 4.42 From mid-January 2022, there were calls for the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to be deployed to aged care facilities.<sup>81</sup> The Prime Minister initially rejected the proposal, claiming 'defence forces are not a shadow workforce for the aged care sector'.<sup>82</sup>
- 4.43 But on 4 February 2022, the ADF began preparing to deploy to priority aged care facilities, with the first health augmentation teams arriving on-site the following day.<sup>83</sup> On 7 February 2022, the Prime Minister announced the deployment of up to 1700 ADF members to support the troubled aged care sector. Providers broadly welcomed the deployment but expressed concern that it had taken the government weeks to get underway.<sup>84</sup>
- 4.44 Only a fraction of the promised surge workforce was delivered. Most of the ADF personnel made available to support the sector were general duties staff, whereas facilities overwhelmingly needed clinical staff. As of 17 February 2022,

---

<sup>77</sup> Ellen Coulter and Laura Kewley, 'Aged care workers are facing a "crisis level of exhaustion" as the COVID-19 pandemic continues', *ABC News*, 3 February 2022.

<sup>78</sup> Rachel Clun, '"Inadequate" support for aged care as COVID crisis continues', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 2022.

<sup>79</sup> Rachel Clun, '"Inadequate" support for aged care as COVID crisis continues', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 2022.

<sup>80</sup> Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care Group, Department of Health, *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Hansard*, 16 February 2022, p. 26.

<sup>81</sup> See for example, Savannah Meacham, 'Aged care homes face staff shortages and lockdowns as COVID-19 surges', *9News*, 15 January 2022.

<sup>82</sup> John Butler and Paul Karp, 'PM shuts down Peter Dutton after defence minister flags sending troops into nursing homes', *The Guardian*, 4 February 2022.

<sup>83</sup> Rear Admiral Robert Plath AM, Royal Australian Navy, Commander Defence COVID-19 Taskforce, *Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee*, 17 February 2022, p. 55.

<sup>84</sup> Tom McIlroy, 'Defence teams to boost struggling aged care sector', *Australian Financial Review*, 7 February 2022.

- only 152 ADF staff had actively supported the sector in 29 of the highest priority facilities (around 1 per cent of Commonwealth-funded facilities).<sup>85</sup>
- 4.45 On 21 February 2022, the government announced its plan to bolster the aged care sector with volunteers to address the ongoing workforce crisis. The Health Services Union NSW called the plan a 'cop-out', describing it as a move from relying on an 'underpaid' to an 'unpaid' workforce.<sup>86</sup>
- 4.46 This crisis in aged care was entirely predictable and—to a large extent—avoidable. Just 10 months before Omicron ripped through aged care facilities, the Royal Commission identified a range of workforce measures which would address staff shortages over time and improve the capacity of staff to offer quality care. Among its recommendations to build the workforce was for aged care workers to be paid a proper wage.<sup>87</sup> Three years prior, the government had been warned by the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce that the value and contribution of aged care staff was not properly reflected in their low pay.<sup>88</sup>
- 4.47 Despite calls from providers and unions for a 25 per cent pay rise for aged care staff, on 31 January 2022, the Prime Minister announced that eligible aged care staff would receive two pre-election 'bonus' payments of up to \$400 to 'support the aged care workforce to continue to care for older Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic'.<sup>89</sup>
- 4.48 The Minister for Health and Aged Care said the payments 'acknowledged the response of the aged care workforce to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic'.<sup>90</sup>
- 4.49 Providers and unions largely dismissed the payments as failing to address the structural issues faced by the sector. The Health Services Union described the payments as 'a disgrace' and 'too little, too late'. Chief Executive Officer of National Disability Services, Ms Laurie Leigh, stated the payments 'did not

---

<sup>85</sup> Rear Admiral Robert Plath AM, Royal Australian navy, Commander Defence COVID-19 Taskforce, *Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee*, 17 February 2022, p. 56.

<sup>86</sup> Dana Daniel, 'Morrison seeks volunteer army to fill aged care staffing gaps', *The Age*, 21 February 2022.

<sup>87</sup> Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *A Summary of the Final Report*, 1 March 2021, pp. 128–129.

<sup>88</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, *A Matter of Care: Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy: Report of the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce*, June 2018, pp. 88–95.

<sup>89</sup> Paul Karp, 'Industry stakeholders strike deal that could lead to pay rise for Australian aged care workers', *The Guardian*, 29 January 2022.

<sup>90</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, '\$800 bonus to support Australia's Aged Care workforce', *Media Release*, 1 February 2022.

scratch the surface' of what was needed in the sector.<sup>91</sup> These additional payments to aged care workers are also at risk of being offset by persistent low wage growth and rising cost of living.<sup>92</sup>

4.50 Applications for the bonuses opened on 1 March 2022, but as at 25 March it is reported that as many as 97 per cent of workers had not yet received their bonus, and that well over half of the 1600 providers expected to apply for payments on behalf of their staff had not yet done so. Despite this, it is reported that a spokesperson for the Aged Care Services Minister has insisted that the rollout 'was on track'.<sup>93</sup>

### **Recommendation 8**

**4.51 The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an expert review of the National COVID-19 Aged Care Plan and the impact of COVID-19 and the pandemic response on residents and staff in residential aged care facilities.**

### **Recommendation 9**

**4.52 The committee recommends that the Australian Government make a submission supporting higher wages for aged care workers in the work value claim currently being heard in the Fair Work Commission.**

### **Recommendation 10**

**4.53 The committee recommends that the Australian Government review and strengthen the Intergovernmental Agreement on data sharing between Commonwealth and state and territory governments to address any gaps in access to timely and relevant data—particularly related to public health and aged care. This agreement should ensure systems and processes are in place to enable data sharing arrangements between jurisdictions in support of a robust national public health intelligence capability.**

---

<sup>91</sup> Sarah Martin, 'Industry stakeholders strike deal that could lead to pay rise for Australian aged care workers', *The Guardian*, 31 January 2022.

<sup>92</sup> Sarah Martin, 'Industry stakeholders strike deal that could lead to pay rise for Australian aged care workers', *The Guardian*, 31 January 2022. The Australian Council of Trade Unions has recently stated that in 2021 '...an Australian worker earning the average annual income of \$68 000 has had their wages go backwards by \$832 in real terms... full time health and social assistance workers experienced an effective wage cut of \$967. See, Australian Council of Trade Unions, 'Morrison Government have severely mismanaged Australia's economic recovery', *Media Release*, 15 March 2022.

<sup>93</sup> Stephanie Borys, 'Thousands of aged care workers have not got their promised bonus, union says', *ABC News*, 25 March 2022; and Christopher Knaus, 'Survey finds 97% of Australia's aged care workers have not received \$800 bonus', *The Guardian*, 25 March 2022.

## People with disability

4.54 In evidence to the committee, the Department of Health conceded that the vaccine rollout to people with disability was suboptimal, and the committee found the justification for delay was alarming: authorities had 'pivoted' from people with disability to aged-care residents. As put to the committee:

[T]he initial slow start in aged-care residents required us to pivot to make sure we focused on them, on the basis that they have been, both in practice and on our advice, the most vulnerable group. So we are now returning our attention to the disability piece.<sup>94</sup>

4.55 While expediting vaccination in aged care was critically important, it is beyond comprehension that the government would not have adequate resources in place (almost 18 months into the pandemic at that stage) to enable both aged care and disability care residents to be vaccinated as a matter of priority.

4.56 By June 2021, the rollout to this cohort was even more woeful. Disability care residents were understandably frustrated at the lack of consultation and communication from the government.<sup>95</sup>

4.57 Sadly, the sluggish start was a sign of things to come. More than a year later, in February 2022, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability raised concern that the Australian Government was still not prioritising people with disability in its vaccine rollout. The Royal Commission expressed particular concern with what it described as an 'overall de-prioritisation of people with disability and a lack of regard for their health and wellbeing'. It also described issues with a lack of access to vaccinations for people with disability and disability support workers, as well as 'insufficient levels of immunisation when restrictions were eased' in late 2021.<sup>96</sup>

## Recommendation 11

**4.58 The committee recommends that the Australian Government implement urgently and in full all recommendations contained in Public Hearing Report 5 and Public Hearing Report 12 of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.**

---

<sup>94</sup> Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 20 April 2021, p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Jewel Topsfield and Rachel Clun, "'Don't forget us': Fewer than 2 per cent of people living in disability homes fully vaccinated', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 June 2021.

<sup>96</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, 'Statement of ongoing concern: The impact of and responses to the Omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability', 17 February 2022.

## Children

- 4.59 In September 2021, the committee noted that Australia was months behind countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Israel, Singapore, France, and the Netherlands with its rollout to the 12–15 year old cohort.<sup>97</sup>
- 4.60 Children aged five to 11 years were approved to receive a vaccine from 10 January 2022. However, many parents were initially unable to book their child's appointment through the Australian Government's error-laden online booking system. The government also did not provide timely information to GPs on the arrival of orders for children's doses of the vaccine, undermining the ability of doctors to plan and take advanced bookings.<sup>98</sup>
- 4.61 Supply and delivery issues also stalled vaccinations for children, prompting the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) to call on the government to 'urgently repair' the rollout for children.<sup>99</sup> Concerns were raised that children with disabilities were not prioritised in the rollout.<sup>100</sup>
- 4.62 Misinformation and complacency also hampered the vaccine rollout to children—some spread from within the Morrison Government's own ranks, as discussed in Chapter 3.<sup>101</sup> In February 2022, the RACGP raised concerns that parents and expectant parents had encountered vaccine misinformation discouraging them from having their children vaccinated against COVID-19 or being vaccinated themselves.<sup>102</sup> Experts warned that the pace of vaccinations among primary school-aged children had 'slowed dramatically' by mid-February, with more than half of that age group completely unvaccinated.<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> See discussion, *Committee Hansard*, 21 September 2021, p. 13.

<sup>98</sup> Melissa Davey, 'Covid vaccine bookings for children in Australia scarce as parents told to "check again in next few weeks"', *The Guardian*, 22 December 2022.

<sup>99</sup> Christopher Knaus, 'Supply and delivery issues stalling Covid vaccine rollout for children 5-11, Australian GPs say', *The Guardian*, 11 January 2022.

<sup>100</sup> Christopher Knaus, 'Supply and delivery issues stalling Covid vaccine rollout for children 5-11, Australian GPs say', *The Guardian*, 11 January 2022.

<sup>101</sup> Sarah Martin, 'Scott Morrison rebukes George Christensen for "dangerous messages" on vaccinating children', *The Guardian*, 18 January 2022. For a discussion of what federal, state, and territory governments have done in relation to misinformation, see Department of Health, answer to question on notice, 'The NCHRAC report on Risks of resurgence of COVID-19 in Australia', Senator Kristina Keneally, 27 July 2020 (received 17 November 2020), document no. 550, p. 7.

<sup>102</sup> Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, 'RACGP urges action to tackle vaccine misinformation targeting parents', *Media Release*, 21 February 2022, (accessed 23 February 2022).

<sup>103</sup> Lucy Carroll, Rachel Clun, and Nigel Gladstone, 'Child vaccine rate plummets with parents uncertain about the jab', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 February 2022.

- 4.63 One of the most significant and harmful effects of this slow rollout to children is the risk it will prolong remote learning for some children. With children largely unprotected throughout most of 2021, the burden imposed on Australian children by school closures and lockdowns has had an immeasurable effect on their social development and mental health. These effects have been disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable, exposing pre-existing societal inequality and exacerbating emotional and financial stress for families.<sup>104</sup>
- 4.64 Whilst lockdowns and school closures were epidemiologically justified and necessary in order to curb the spread of the virus and save lives while vaccinations were underway, their duration and resulting impact on children could have been improved had the government ensured a more efficient vaccine rollout.

### Recommendation 12

- 4.65 The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an expert review of the impact of COVID-19 and the pandemic response on children including on their education and learning, mental health, and social wellbeing and development.**

### First Nations Australians

- 4.66 The Australian Government was advised early in the pandemic that COVID-19 posed a significant and heightened risk to the health and wellbeing of First Nations Australians, resulting from pre-existing inequities in health and socio-economic outcomes when compared to the general population.<sup>105</sup>
- 4.67 The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, explicitly acknowledged that First Nations Australians were intended to be a priority for vaccination, stating in September 2021 that: 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been a priority for vaccination since the beginning stages of the national vaccination program.'<sup>106</sup>
- 4.68 Despite clear advice to government of the risks posed to First Nations Australians by COVID-19, particularly those in remote and regional communities where health disparities are pronounced,<sup>107</sup> in October 2021 the committee heard evidence from organisations delivering vaccines and other

---

<sup>104</sup> Discussion with Murdoch Children's Research Institute, *Committee Hansard*, 21 September 2021, pp. 26–27.

<sup>105</sup> See, Department of Health, 'Management Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Populations', July 2020.

<sup>106</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Boosting COVID-19 Vaccination Support for Indigenous Australians', *Media Release*, 14 September 2021 (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>107</sup> See, Department of Health, 'Management Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Populations', July 2020.

primary health services across Australia that the government did not adequately consult, or subsequently revise its vaccination strategies effectively, when its rollout encountered difficulties.<sup>108</sup>

4.69 It took a serious outbreak of Covid-19 in Western NSW in August 2021 for the Australian Government to put in place additional strategies to boost vaccination rates in 30 priority areas.<sup>109</sup> It is not clear how these priority areas were identified by the Commonwealth or whether any evaluations were put in place to monitor the effectiveness of these approaches.

4.70 This evidence was exemplified by witnesses for the Rural and Remote Medical Services who told the committee that with respect to the vaccine rollout for First Nations communities:

There was poor or no communication about who was doing what or about what was happening, and almost no coordination around program delivery on the ground, resulting in duplication and waste.<sup>110</sup>

4.71 Early into the pandemic, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and public health experts identified the need for tailored messaging for First Nations' communities.

4.72 ACCHOs struggled to coordinate a vaccine rollout while competing with mixed messaging from the Commonwealth and state governments. In evidence to the committee, the South West Aboriginal Medical Service noted:

We have seen very mixed messages here coming from both the Commonwealth and the state government with regard to how culturally safe and appropriate those messages are. How we're getting down into distributing that understanding amongst our local communities is a significant challenge.<sup>111</sup>

4.73 ACCHOs were not given adequate resources to handle multiple challenges throughout the pandemic, including countering misinformation and hesitancy. The Commonwealth's heavy reliance on only one vaccine—AstraZeneca—had a profound impact on the vaccine rollout in First Nations' communities. In evidence to the committee, the Department of Health admitted 'there was no option to pivot really quickly to change to ACCHOs delivering Pfizer'.<sup>112</sup> First Nations people were directly impacted by the Government's failure to secure a diverse supply of vaccines.

---

<sup>108</sup> Rural and Remote Medical Services Ltd, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, pp. 22–25.

<sup>109</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, pp. 2–3.

<sup>110</sup> Rural and Remote Medical Services Ltd, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 23.

<sup>111</sup> Ms Lesley Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, South West Aboriginal Medical Service, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 25.

<sup>112</sup> Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Program Implementation and Primary Care Response, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 3.

- 4.74 In its evidence to the committee, the Department of Health conceded that it was aware as early as 'mid to late April' of 2021 that First Nations vaccination rates had begun to lag the general population,<sup>113</sup> following the program's commencement in February 2021.
- 4.75 Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator-General, Operation COVID Shield, acknowledged in October 2021 that a 'wide gap' persisted between the vaccination rates of the First Nations Australians and the general population, more than 6 months after the gap was first identified.<sup>114</sup>
- 4.76 Lieutenant General Frewen conceded in evidence to a public hearing that the first dose vaccination rate for First Nations Australians was just 57.5 per cent, while rates of two vaccinations was 42.3 per cent. When compared to the broader population, this represented a 26.1 per cent gap for first doses and a 23.1 per cent gap in rates of full vaccination.<sup>115</sup>
- 4.77 It is unacceptable that the government failed its responsibility to ensure First Nations Australians were adequately protected through vaccination from COVID-19 prior to the widespread easing of public health restrictions in late 2021.
- 4.78 It is the committee's view that the Australian Government must act urgently to address the persistent gap in rates of full vaccination between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It is clear from the serious failures in the vaccine rollout that First Nations must be able to self-determine solutions for managing all aspects of COVID-19 in their communities.

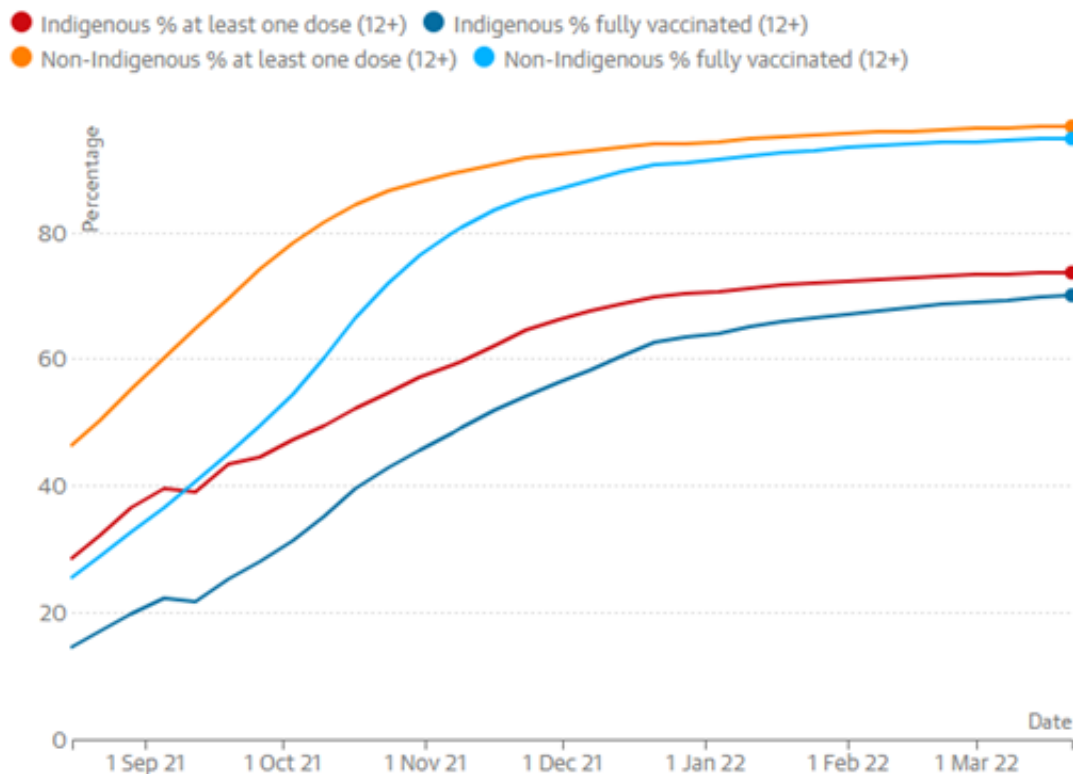
---

<sup>113</sup> Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 3.

<sup>114</sup> Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator-General, Operation COVID Shield, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup> Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator-General, Operation COVID Shield, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 14 October 2021, p. 3.

**Figure 4.4 Indigenous vaccination rates vs. non-Indigenous rates over time**



Source: *The Guardian*, 21 February 2022.<sup>116</sup>

### Recommendation 13

**4.79 The committee recommends that the Australian Government adequately address the social determinants of health, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic, when delivering responses to COVID-19 with First Nations communities, including food security, fuel security, water security, quarantine facilities, transport, infrastructure, housing.**

### National Cabinet

4.80 On 13 March 2020, the National Cabinet was established to oversee the health and economic response to COVID-19.<sup>117</sup> Meeting at least monthly and chaired by the Prime Minister, it included state premiers and territory chief ministers.<sup>118</sup> Implementation of decisions taken at the National Cabinet remained the responsibility of the Commonwealth, state, and territory governments.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> See, Josh Nicholas and Nick Evershed, 'Covid-19 vaccine Australia rollout tracker: percentage of population vaccinated and vaccination rate by state', *The Guardian*, 21 February 2022.

<sup>117</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference with premiers and chief ministers – Parramatta, NSW', *Transcript*, 13 March 2022.

<sup>118</sup> Federation.gov.au, '[National Cabinet](#)', (accessed 24 February 2022).

<sup>119</sup> Whole-of-Government submission, *Submission 3*, pp. 8 and 16; and Mr Phillip Gaetjens, Secretary, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 11.

- 4.81 The National Cabinet should have been the operational arm of the pandemic response. It could have served as an effective vehicle for securing agreement and consensus and managing the interface between the Commonwealth and states and territories. And it should have facilitated information sharing between jurisdictions to inform and shape the response.
- 4.82 It did none of these things effectively.
- 4.83 An effective response to COVID-19 required a seamless and consistent approach across the Federation. The National Cabinet was intended to provide just this. The Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Phillip Gaetjens, described the body as the 'central governance mechanism through which Commonwealth, state and territory leaders together could make quick decisions'.<sup>120</sup> Yet, from the outset, the Australian Government was unable or unwilling to lead and foster consensus through the National Cabinet. States and territories were left to implement highly-localised and often highly-differentiated responses.
- 4.84 The Australian Government's failure to lead through the National Cabinet meant local responses were often inconsistent and failed to complement one another. The Institute of Public Affairs described the result as 'a confusing patchwork of arrangements which varied widely state-by-state'.<sup>121</sup>
- 4.85 State and territory leaders increasingly found themselves at odds with other leaders. For example, in mid-2021 a prolonged public spat between Victoria and New South Wales over vaccine supplies and public health restrictions shook public confidence in the national response.<sup>122</sup>
- 4.86 Throughout the pandemic, the Australian Government not only failed to unite the country but at times even fostered divisions, apparently for political gain. For example, in October 2020 the Prime Minister praised the NSW response as the 'gold standard' even whilst undermining Victoria's response and labelling Melbourne's COVID-19 outbreak the 'Victorian wave'.<sup>123</sup>
- 4.87 The Hon Peter Dutton MP, then-Minister for Home Affairs, added to national divisions in August 2020 by condemning Queensland's premier for being 'a panicker' and describing the state's temporary border closure as

---

<sup>120</sup> Mr Phillip Gaetjens, Secretary, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 1.

<sup>121</sup> The Institute of Public Affairs, *Submission 246*, p. [2].

<sup>122</sup> Calla Wahlquist, 'State v state: war of words heats up over Sydney and Melbourne lockdowns', *The Guardian*, 31 July 2021.

<sup>123</sup> David Speers, 'Gladys Berejiklian and Daniel Andrews are in crisis, but their paths out are very different', *ABC News*, 15 October 2020 (accessed 24 February 2022); Prime Minister, Treasurer, and Minister for Health, 'Victorian restrictions', *Media Statement*, 25 October 2020 (accessed 24 February 2022).

'devastating'.<sup>124</sup> Days later, the Treasurer, labelled Victoria's response, 'the biggest public policy failure by a state government in living memory'.<sup>125</sup>

4.88 States have also seen very different economic support measures made available by the Australian Government—with assistance seemingly handed out along party lines. In July 2021, for example, the Victorian Government accused the Prime Minister of a 'double standard' when the Australian Government provided a multibillion-dollar support package to NSW during its lockdown, in contrast to Victoria having to 'beg for every scrap of support', according to the spokesperson.<sup>126</sup>

4.89 The Grattan Institute summarised this role played by the National Cabinet:

The National Cabinet dealt the Prime Minister into discussion of state decisions, and gave the states political cover for difficult choices. Because it was set up in haste, there were no real rules for its operation. It has no decision-making power—that still rests with each of the participants—and there is no collective accountability to the public through any of the parliaments. Often the outcome of a National Cabinet meeting was a 'decision' in name only. Often, behind the fig-leaf of unity, each state and territory went its own way.<sup>127</sup>

### Communication failures

4.90 The Australian Government repeatedly put out mixed signals that fostered complacency and undermined public health messaging. As vaccination targets slipped and pressure mounted from early 2021, a coordinated government campaign insisted the vaccine rollout was 'not a race'. Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health, appears to have coined the infamous phrase on 10 March 2021, at which time he stated:

**This is not a race.** We have no burning platform in Australia.<sup>128</sup>

4.91 The following day, the Prime Minister adopted the slogan in a series of public appearances, repeatedly insisting the rollout was 'not a race'.<sup>129</sup> The message

<sup>124</sup> The Hon Peter Dutton MP, 'Interview with Peter Stefanovic, Sky News', *Transcript*, 28 August 2020 (accessed 24 February 2022).

<sup>125</sup> Australian Associated Press, 'Treasurer lashes Victorian government for "biggest public policy failure in living memory"', *SBS News*, 31 August 2020 (accessed 24 February 2022).

<sup>126</sup> Sarah Martin, "'Beg for every scrap": Victoria fumes after Morrison and NSW unveil \$500m a week Covid lockdown package', *The Guardian*, 13 July 2021.

<sup>127</sup> Grattan Institute, *Submission 230*, pp. 22–23.

<sup>128</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, and Professor Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, 'Doorstop, Symonston, ACT', *Media Release*, 10 March 2021 (accessed February 2021), emphasis added.

<sup>129</sup> Josh Taylor, 'From "it's not a race" to "go for gold": how Scott Morrison pivoted on Australia's Covid vaccine rollout', *The Guardian*, 29 July 2021.

continued to be used by Prim Minister Morrison and other senior government officials throughout the first half of the year.<sup>130</sup>

- 4.92 Messages like this fed complacency and a lack of urgency in the face of the pandemic. A survey conducted in May 2021 found almost a third of Australians were unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Some were hesitant over potential side effects, but many saw little reason to get vaccinated while international borders were closed and infection rates remained low.<sup>131</sup> But as the vaccine rollout fell even further behind schedule, the Prime Minister in July 2021 expressed regret for using the phrase and acknowledged the need to 'make up that ground'.<sup>132</sup>
- 4.93 Statements by the Prime Minister may also have fuelled anti-vaccination sentiment and undermined the authority of states to impose public health measures. For example, following violent protests over public health restrictions in Victoria in November 2021, the Prime Minister condemned the violence but expressed sympathy with Australians 'who have had a gutful of governments telling them what to do'.<sup>133</sup>
- 4.94 The Prime Minister again muddied the waters in February 2022 when protesters objecting to vaccine mandates marched on Parliament House. Mr Morrison said, 'I understand their concerns', and blamed state governments for imposing the mandates.<sup>134</sup>
- 4.95 Messages like these from our most senior government representatives undermine community acceptance of public health and infection control measures and contribute to delays in vaccine uptake, jeopardising the safety and wellbeing of us all.

---

<sup>130</sup> See for example, Mr Michael McCormack, Deputy Prime Minister in David Crowe, "'Not a race": Deputy PM defends vaccine rollout after missed targets', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 May 2021; and Professor Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health in 9 News Staff, ["This is not a race": Government defends pace of vaccination rollout after passing milestone mark](#), *9News*, 10 March 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

<sup>131</sup> David Crowe, 'Almost one-third of adult Australians say they're unlikely to get COVID vaccination: survey', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 May 2021.

<sup>132</sup> David Crowe, 'Morrison regrets "not a race" remark, promises to make up lost ground', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 July 2021.

<sup>133</sup> Courtney Gould, 'Scott Morrison condemns anti vax protests but has "sympathy" with cause', *NCA NewsWire*, 19 November 2021.

<sup>134</sup> Australian Associated Press, 'Scott Morrison says he "understands" Canberra antivax protesters amid skirmishes with police', *The Guardian*, 12 February 2022.

## Operation COVID Shield

- 4.96 The government's self-imposed vaccine targets have repeatedly been walked back and missed, as detailed in Chapter 2. Throughout the first six months of the rollout, the government managed to oversell and overpromise. Early failures of the rollout led to the word 'strollout' entering our vernacular, and it was named 2021 word of the year by the Australian National Dictionary Centre.<sup>135</sup>
- 4.97 On 8 June 2021, after the rollout had already fallen months behind schedule, the Prime Minister appointed Lieutenant General John Frewen to lead the National COVID Vaccine Taskforce within the Department of Health, known as Operation COVID Shield.<sup>136</sup> Lt General Frewen was tasked with getting the vaccine rollout back on track and bolstering public confidence in the response.<sup>137</sup> Whilst vaccine coverage improved markedly under Operation COVID Shield, the Prime Minister later acknowledged, 'if I had my time over, I would have put [the vaccination programme] under a military operation from the outset... I wish we'd done that earlier'.<sup>138</sup>
- 4.98 The early failings in the vaccine rollout had profound implications for Australians across the country—and overseas. Had the original targets been reached, public health experts argue Australia would have been in a significantly stronger position to contain the spread of the virus.<sup>139</sup> While the rollout eventually picked up pace towards the end of 2021, and now compares favourably with other jurisdictions, the considerable delays in launching the rollout strategy put Australia months behind much of the rest of the world (see Figure 4.6, below). Australians faced longer lockdowns, extended infection prevention measures, prolonged economic pressures, and many remained stranded overseas, battling to return home.

---

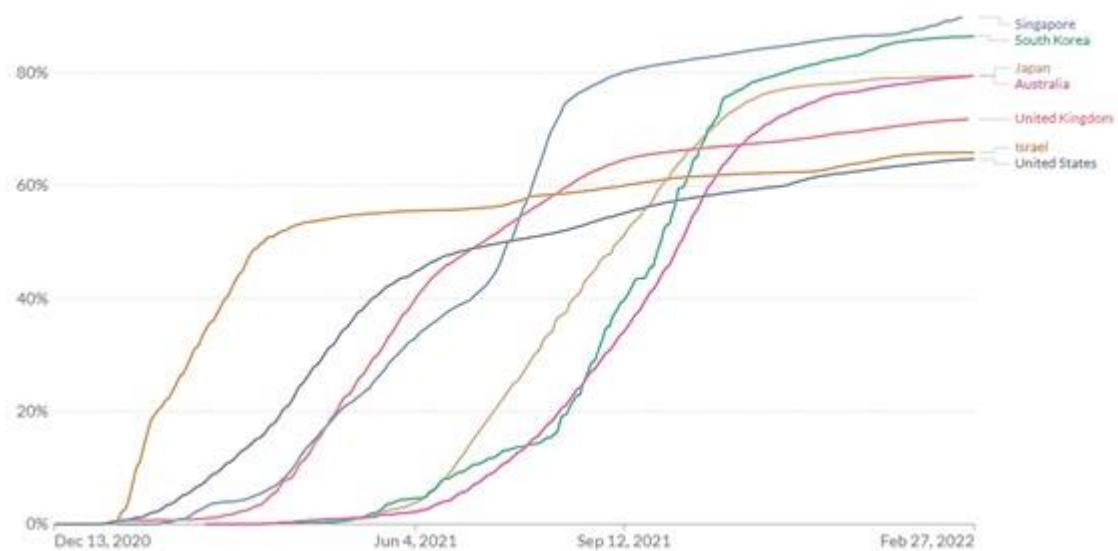
<sup>135</sup> Niki Burnside, 'In choosing "strollout" as its Word of the Year, the National Dictionary Centre alludes to a uniquely Australian problem', *ABC News*, 17 November 2021.

<sup>136</sup> Department of Defence, Answer to written question on notice, 6 August 2021 (received 27 August 2021), Document no. 661.

<sup>137</sup> Department of Health, 'About Operation COVID Shield', 29 June 2021.

<sup>138</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison, Prime Minister, 'Questions and Answers, National Press Club Canberra, ACT', *Transcript*, 1 February 2022.

<sup>139</sup> RMIT ABC Fact Check, 'Reality Check: Would the government's original vaccine timetable have put Australia in a different position?', *ABC News*, 3 August 2021.

**Figure 4.5 Percentage of population fully vaccinated**

Total number of people in comparable jurisdictions who have received all doses (as prescribed by the vaccination protocol in each jurisdiction), divided by the total population of the country.

Source: [Our World in Data](#) (accessed 1 April 2022).

- 4.99 The rollout strategy was hastily prepared and was not backed by sound delivery mechanisms, leading to a slow launch that took six-months to gain traction.
- 4.100 The government initially relied on a GP-led rollout to reach priority groups, instead of the mass vaccination clinics used in many other countries. But early vaccine shortages and uncertainty over the allocations to each state delayed the scheduling of appointments and resulted in frustration and lost months.<sup>140</sup>
- 4.101 The logistical challenge of getting each dose into the hands of a GP also proved highly complex, contributing to the delayed rollout and leaving high-risk cohorts particularly vulnerable for longer.<sup>141</sup> Many GPs invested heavily in the capacity to store and administer large numbers of doses. But when clinics received only a fraction of the anticipated number of doses, countless patients were turned away.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Rachel Clun, 'Why Australia opted for a GP-led vaccination program', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March 2021; *BBC News*, '[What's gone wrong with Australia's vaccine rollout?](#)', 17 June 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022); and Liam Mannix, 'What went wrong with Australia's vaccine rollout?', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 March 2021.

<sup>141</sup> Rachel Clun, 'Why Australia opted for a GP-led vaccination program', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March 2021.

<sup>142</sup> Christopher Knaus, 'Australia's Covid vaccine rollout and why it has GPs beating their heads "against a wall"', *The Guardian*, 27 March 2021. See also Associate Professor Charlotte Hespe, Chair, NSW & ACT Faculty, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, *Committee Hansard*, 27 April 2021, pp. 1 and 3; and Dr Omar Khorshid, Federal President, Australian Medical Association, *Committee Hansard*, 27 April 2021, p. 2.

- 4.102 On 5 March 2021, the Minister for Health and Aged Care insisted Australia had 'more than enough' vaccine doses and expressed confidence in his government's ability to maintain sufficient volumes to keep the rollout on schedule.<sup>143</sup> Days later, the Prime Minister also defended the pace of the rollout: 'It's steady. It's safe. It's well-planned'.<sup>144</sup>
- 4.103 But as targets were repeatedly missed, the Australian Government erroneously pointed the finger at states, accusing them of stockpiling vaccines, 'sitting on their hands', and failing to administer the supplies they had been given.<sup>145</sup> States responded that they had been given little notice of delivery schedules or the number of doses they were to receive from the Australian Government, undermining their ability to administer the vaccines.<sup>146</sup>

### **No urgency on mRNA vaccine**

- 4.104 As discussed in Chapter 2, the lack of vaccine diversity meant supply shortages plagued Australia's vaccine rollout from the start. It became apparent from more efficient vaccine rollouts in other countries that mRNA vaccines were proving to be the most effective at combatting COVID-19, as well as being more easily adapted to new variants. The Australian Government should have done more to secure local manufacturing capability for these vaccines as soon as their significance became clear.
- 4.105 However, there was no sense of urgency from the Australian Government. The Prime Minister did not announce plans for developing local manufacturing capability for mRNA vaccines until December 2021, a full year after these vaccines began to be rolled out overseas. Although this was a welcome announcement, the committee notes that production is unlikely to begin before 2024.

---

<sup>143</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, 'Doorstop interview about the Astra-Zeneca vaccine rollout: 5 March 2021', Department of Health, *Media Transcript*, 9 March 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

<sup>144</sup> *9 News*, '"This is not a race": Government defends pace of vaccination rollout after passing milestone mark', 10 March 2021 (accessed 22 February 2022).

<sup>145</sup> Melissa Davey, 'NSW and Queensland premiers hit back after Morrison government blames states for slow Covid vaccine rollout', *The Guardian*, 31 March 2021.

<sup>146</sup> Kate Aubusson, Tom Rabe, and Rachel Clun, 'Vaccine feud erupts between NSW and federal government', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 March 2021; and Melissa Davey, 'NSW and Queensland premiers hit back after Morrison government blames states for slow Covid vaccine rollout', *The Guardian*, 31 March 2021.

## COVIDSafe app

- 4.106 The Australian Government launched the COVIDSafe app in April 2020 as a critical COVID-19 contact tracing tool.<sup>147</sup> In its first interim report, the committee noted the Prime Minister's claims that the app was the 'ticket to ensuring we can ease restrictions' and likened Australians' use of the app to the application of sunscreen.<sup>148</sup> However the COVIDSafe app has been roundly criticised for its high cost and significant limitations as a practical measure for contact tracing.<sup>149</sup>
- 4.107 As of 4 October 2021, the COVIDSafe app had cost Australian taxpayers \$9.19 million, including GST, of which \$2.77 million were costs associated with hosting the app using Amazon Web Services.<sup>150</sup> The government has estimated the monthly maintenance costs of the COVIDSafe app to be between \$75 000 and \$60 000.<sup>151</sup>
- 4.108 Concerns have been raised about the COVIDSafe app's reliance on Bluetooth technology as an ineffective proxy for close contacts;<sup>152</sup> parameters that fail to account for COVID-19 variants of increased infectiousness;<sup>153</sup> and the app not meeting citizens' privacy expectations.<sup>154</sup> In February 2022, a study of the app's use in NSW between May and November 2020 found that from approximately 25 300 close contacts, the app detected just 17 additional close contacts which were not identified through conventional contact tracing methods (under 0.1 per cent of all cases).<sup>155</sup>

---

<sup>147</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 43–45.

<sup>148</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference – Australian Parliament House, ACT', *Transcript*, 29 April 2020.

<sup>149</sup> See, for example, Dan Conifer, 'The COVIDSafe app has cost \$9m to date, but it hasn't uncovered any close contacts during the current outbreaks', *ABC News*, 30 September 2021.

<sup>150</sup> Mr Jonathon Thorpe, General Manager, Whole of Government Governance and Sourcing, Digital Transformation Agency, Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 25 October 2021, p. 135.

<sup>151</sup> See, for example, Florian Vogt, Bridget Haire, John Kaldor, and Linda Selvey, 'The COVIDSafe app was designed to help contact tracers. We crunched the numbers to see what really happened', *The Conversation*, 5 February 2022 (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>152</sup> See, for example, Dave Colls, 'Why the COVIDSafe app failed', *The Australian*, 5 April 2021.

<sup>153</sup> See, for example, James Purtill, '"Very useless": COVIDSafe has not been updated for the more infectious Delta variant', *ABC News*, 1 July 2021.

<sup>154</sup> Jiesen Lin, Lemuria Carter, and Dapeng Liu, 'Privacy concerns and digital government: exploring citizen willingness to adopt the COVIDSafe app', *European Journal of Information Systems*, vol. 30, no. 4, 5 May 2021, pp. 389–402.

<sup>155</sup> Florian Vogt, Bridget Haire, Linda Selvey, Anthea L Katelaris, and John Kaldor, 'Effectiveness evaluation of digital contact tracing for COVID-19 in New South Wales, Australia', *The Lancet* vol. 7, no. 3, 4 February 2022, pp. 250–258.

4.109 An evaluation of the COVIDSafe app, commissioned by the government and released in response to a freedom of information request in August 2021, also noted the app's low rate of novel COVID-19 detection and warned of the serious efficiency challenges this created for contact tracers:

...while all app potential contacts need to be validated by contact tracers, a significant number of those individuals are either 'false close contacts' or individuals already identified by standard contact tracing. This is compounded by existing processes to access datastore information.<sup>156</sup>

4.110 When the government was asked to provide an update on how many additional contacts the COVIDSafe app had identified, it failed to do so, and claimed the states and territories were responsible for reporting the number of cases identified.<sup>157</sup>

4.111 The future use of the COVIDSafe app appears uncertain, in no small part due to states having reportedly given up on using the app.<sup>158</sup> In September 2021, officials told the committee that the app would not be used to support a national app for unified access to digital vaccine certificates due to concerns about the interoperability of the COVIDSafe app with check-in apps used by the states and territories.<sup>159</sup> In October 2021, government officials suggested there was no intention to update the COVIDSafe app.<sup>160</sup>

4.112 The Minister for Health has sought to defend the value of the app, telling Parliament that 'any single case can lead to many others. So it's played an important role.'<sup>161</sup> By not recognising the app's faults, or seeking to fix the app, the government has continued to oversee an application which is not fit for its intended purpose, has cost millions of dollars, and offered limited public value.

## Recommendation 14

**4.113 The committee recommends that the Australian Government cease any further expenditure of public funds on the failed COVIDSafe application.**

---

<sup>156</sup> See, document published at Department of Health, [FOI request 2326: Abt and bdna, Bold delivers: Final report – Evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of COVIDSafe and the National COVIDSafe datastore](#), March 2021, p. 2 (accessed 28 March 2022).

<sup>157</sup> Digital Transformation Agency, Answer to question on notice 69, 2021–22 Supplementary Budget Estimates, *Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee*, p. [2].

<sup>158</sup> See, for example, Josh Taylor, 'A lemon': Coalition fights to keep Covidsafe app data under wraps', *The Guardian*, 2 December 2021.

<sup>159</sup> *Committee Hansard*, 30 September 2021, pp. 7–8.

<sup>160</sup> Mr Jonathon Thorpe, General Manager, Whole of Government Governance and Sourcing, Digital Transformation Agency, *Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, Proof Committee Hansard*, 25 October 2021, p. 136.

<sup>161</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt, Minister for Health, *House of Representatives Hansard*, 26 August 2021, p. 8750.

## The COVID Commission: an expensive failure

- 4.114 On 25 March 2020, the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission was formed to advise the government on mitigating the economic and social impacts of the pandemic.<sup>162</sup> On 27 July 2020, it was renamed the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board (NCC).<sup>163</sup> Terms of reference for the group were published online a month after it was formed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, but this page has since been removed.<sup>164</sup> Members of the commission were hand-picked by the Prime Minister, with no transparency or accountability around the process.<sup>165</sup>
- 4.115 The NCC was chaired by Mr Neville Power, the former CEO of Fortescue Metals and board member of Australian Securities Exchange-listed gas company Strike Energy. Mr Power received \$267 345 plus GST for six months in the role.<sup>166</sup> Other commissioners were engaged on a part-time basis at a daily rate of up to \$2000.<sup>167</sup> The NCC also commissioned hundreds of thousands of dollars of work from external consulting firms.<sup>168</sup>
- 4.116 All in, the NCC had cost taxpayers \$6.5 million by the end of 2021. Yet there is no public record of its work.<sup>169</sup>
- 4.117 Also advising the commission and leading its manufacturing taskforce was Mr Andrew Liveris, a director of Saudi Aramco (the world's biggest oil producer), a former CEO of Dow Chemical, and adviser to former United States President Donald Trump on domestic manufacturing and deregulation.<sup>170</sup> The government appears to have embraced the recommendations of the taskforce:

---

<sup>162</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'National COVID-19 Coordination Commission', *Media Release*, 25 March 2020.

<sup>163</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'New mode' Commission to concentrate efforts on recovery,' *Media Release*, 27 July 2020, (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>164</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, <https://www.pmc.gov.au/nccc/terms-reference> (accessed 15 March 2020). See also Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 118.

<sup>165</sup> Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Associate Secretary, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 29.

<sup>166</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, question on notice, 15 May 2020 (received 15 August 2020), document no. 298. Mr Power subsequently elected not to take a salary and receive an allowance for costs incurred in performance of the role. See Mr Neville Power, Chairman, National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board, *Committee Hansard*, 11 August 2020, p. 26.

<sup>167</sup> Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Associate Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 32.

<sup>168</sup> Mr Malcom Thompson, Head of Taskforce, National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 11 August 2020, pp. 15–17.

<sup>169</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, pp. 117–119.

<sup>170</sup> Jacob Greber, 'Liveris calls the start of the on-shoring era', *Australian Financial Review*, 9 April 2020.

- on 20 April 2020, Minister for Industry, Energy and Emissions Reduction, the Hon Angus Taylor MP, promoted the idea of a 'gas-fired recovery' from the pandemic;<sup>171</sup> and
  - on 21 May 2020, a leaked report from the NCC detailed plans for taxpayers to underwrite a massive expansion of the domestic gas industry.<sup>172</sup>
- 4.118 The expertise and backgrounds of commissioners raised significant concerns around actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest, as detailed in this committee's first interim report.<sup>173</sup>
- 4.119 Darebin Climate Action Now submitted that the strong mining and resources background of commission members was concerning, given several 'own shares in petrochemical companies, and/or work for or sit on the boards of companies that stand to gain from a gas expansion'.<sup>174</sup> The submission also expressed concern that 'little information is publicly available about the way in which the commission operates or the advice it provides to the Government'.<sup>175</sup> Dr Geraldine McCarron submitted that the appointment of the NCC lacked transparency and parliamentary oversight.<sup>176</sup>
- 4.120 Another submitter described the Prime Minister's choice of commissioners as 'farcical', expressing concern the NCC would 'facilitate the taxpayer-funded bailout of the industries they represent, and [would] broker the transfer of vast swathes of public money to private coffers'.<sup>177</sup> A further submission pointed to what they saw as the 'vested interests' of NCC members who may gain financially if government were to implement its advice, as well as the NCC's 'lack of transparency around interests and decision-making'.<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>171</sup> Mike Foley, 'Gas to fire economic recovery and capitalise on cheap oil prices', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 April 2020.

<sup>172</sup> Environmental Investigations, 'Leaked Covid-19 commission report calls for Australian taxpayers to underwrite gas industry expansion', *The Guardian*, 21 May 2021.

<sup>173</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *First interim report*, December 2020, p. 118. See also Human Rights Law Centre, *Submission 31.1*, p. 7; Transparency International Australia, *Submission 124*, pp. 4–5; Australian Council of Social Services, *Submission 130*, p. 2; Australian Marine Conservation Society, *Submission 154*, p. 2; and Farmers for Climate Action, *Submission 157*, p. 5.

<sup>174</sup> Darebin Climate Action Now, *Submission 305*, p. [4].

<sup>175</sup> Darebin Climate Action Now, *Submission 305*, p. [5]. See also, Australian Parents for Climate Action, *Submission 309*, p. [5].

<sup>176</sup> Dr Geraldine McCarron, *Submission 513*, p. 1.

<sup>177</sup> Ms Melissa Harrison, *Submission 521*, p. 2.

<sup>178</sup> People for the Plains Inc, *Submission 293*, p. 1.

- 4.121 Mr Peter Harris, CEO of the NCC, conceded to the committee, 'the process is opaque for where [the work of the NCC] goes once it's completed.'<sup>179</sup>
- 4.122 Mr Harris also detailed for the committee how commissioners were required to complete a conflict-of-interest declaration. They were also asked to declare any conflicts of interest at the outset of each meeting, following which the respective commissioner may elect to step aside for the specific discussion.<sup>180</sup> Officials refused to disclose the conflict-of-interest declarations of NCC members to the committee.<sup>181</sup>
- 4.123 Officials and departments also declined to answer the committee's questions relating to advice provided by the NCC, claiming it was subject to cabinet confidentiality.<sup>182</sup> Officials also failed to respond to requests from the committee for a list of the NCC's reports to government.<sup>183</sup>
- 4.124 The NCC was beset by allegations of infighting and power struggles between Ministers and Departments.<sup>184</sup> On 3 May 2021, the Prime Minister announced the NCC had 'concluded' its work and would be immediately disbanded.<sup>185</sup> The NCC's website was promptly deleted the following month.<sup>186</sup>
- 4.125 Ultimately, Australians were left to foot the bill of at least \$6.5 million for a body that lacked transparency, seemingly operated with only the oversight of the

---

<sup>179</sup> Mr Peter Harris, Chief Executive Officer, National COVID-19 Coordination Commission, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 34.

<sup>180</sup> Mr Peter Harris, Chief Executive Officer, National COVID-19 Coordination Commission, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, pp. 21–22 and 30.

<sup>181</sup> See for example, Mr Peter Harris, Chief Executive Officer, National COVID-19 Coordination Commission, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 13 May 2020, p. 35; QoN 327; and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Conclusion of Ms Catherine Tanna's role with the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board', document no. 405, 17 August 2020 (received 23 September 2020).

<sup>182</sup> See for example, Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary, Economy, Industry and G20 Sherpa, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 11 August 2020, p. 18; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Progress of the Narrabri Gas Project', document no. 405, 17 August 2020 (received 23 September 2020); and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Leaking of the Manufacturing Taskforce Report', document no. 414, 28 August 2020 (received 24 September 2020).

<sup>183</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, answers to questions on notice, 13 May 2020 (received 11 August 2020), document no. 241, p. 1.

<sup>184</sup> Michael Roddan, 'The untold story of the COVID-19 commission', *Australian Financial Review*, 31 January 2022.

<sup>185</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'The National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board', *Media Statement*, 3 May 2021.

<sup>186</sup> Michael Roddan, 'The untold story of the COVID-19 commission', *Australian Financial Review*, 31 January 2022.

Prime Minister, released no work publicly, and failed to demonstrate how its commissioners' conflicts of interest were managed.

### **Recommendation 15**

**4.126 The committee recommends that the Australian Government make all reports of the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board public, along with all declarations of actual and perceived conflicts of interest made by commissioners.**

### **Foreign students**

4.127 When the borders closed, many international students were cut off from their homes and families, and lost casual jobs in services, retail and hospitality.

4.128 Education services are an important export market for Australia, with over 750 000 international student enrolments in Australian education institutions in 2019.

4.129 Despite the significant contribution made by international students to Australia's economy and society, they were not eligible for government financial assistance. Many subsequently returned to their home countries.

4.130 The committee was told of how the loss of foreign students had placed the tertiary education sector under 'severe stress'.<sup>187</sup> A witness from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment cautioned that the university sector would have to adjust significantly to reduced numbers of international students.<sup>188</sup>

4.131 In October 2020, the government allocated \$1 billion to university research in an attempt to offset the impact of decreased foreign student numbers on the higher education sector.<sup>189</sup> Lost revenue from international students in 2021 was expected to be twice that.<sup>190</sup>

---

<sup>187</sup> Mr Stephen Koukoulas, Managing Director, Market Economics, *Committee Hansard*, 2 July 2020, p. 10.

<sup>188</sup> Mr Rob Heferen, Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International, Department of Education, Skills and Employment, *Committee Hansard*, 19 May 2020, p. 10.

<sup>189</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, *Budget Measures: Budget Paper No. 1 2020–21*, p. 26.

<sup>190</sup> Senator the Hon Kim Carr, *Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee Hansard*, 28 October 2020, p. 83.

## Vaccination rates in Pacific countries still shocking

- 4.132 The committee received submissions calling for increasing Australian assistance to the Pacific region and strengthening initiatives to support broader coverage of COVID-19 vaccination programmes and future outbreaks.<sup>191</sup>
- 4.133 Australia has a particular responsibility to our Pacific neighbours. Our help in supporting the region to stave off the worst effects of the virus and help Pacific countries vaccinate their people is essential. This assistance will also have public health benefits for Australians. Experts warn that the next COVID variant could emerge in the Pacific due to exceedingly low vaccination rates across the region.<sup>192</sup>
- 4.134 Vaccination rates in the Pacific remain well behind schedule. Under two-thirds (60 per cent) of Vanuatians are vaccinated, less than a third of Solomon Islanders (32 per cent), and just 7 per cent of Papua New Guineans have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the country is expected to reach only a third of its population by late 2026.<sup>193</sup>
- 4.135 By early 2021, the Government of Australia had in place advance purchase agreements for vaccine supplies to be provided to the region, had supported the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access facility, and had created a regional vaccine access and health security initiative to support vaccine initiatives across the Pacific and beyond.<sup>194</sup> The government also claimed to have 'ample redundancy of vaccines for boosters', enabling it to supply Pacific neighbours, if required.<sup>195</sup>
- 4.136 As of 21 November 2021, Australia had contributed 11.4 million doses predominantly of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to the Pacific, constituting two-thirds (66 per cent) of the region's supply. However, uptake was extremely slow across the region following safety concerns with the vaccine.<sup>196</sup> Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator of the National COVID Vaccine Taskforce,

---

<sup>191</sup> See for example, Global Health Alliance Australia, *Submission 353*; Mr Benjamin Cronshaw, *Submission 33*, p. 4; and Global Citizen, *Submission 174*, pp. 2–5.

<sup>192</sup> The Pacific Project, 'Experts warn Papua New Guinea is potential breeding ground for new Covid variants', *The Guardian*, 13 December 2021.

<sup>193</sup> Lowy Institute, '[Vaccinating the Pacific](#)' (accessed 15 March 2022).

<sup>194</sup> Department of Health, question on notice, 29 January 2021 (received 19 February 2021), document no. 580. See also, Ms Frances Adamson, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2020, p. 44.

<sup>195</sup> Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 29 September 2021, p. 33.

<sup>196</sup> The Pacific Project, 'Some Pacific countries will take years to vaccinate 50% of adult population, modelling shows', *The Guardian*, 21 November 2021.

told the committee that, wherever possible, 'we are moving AstraZeneca to [the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade] for sharing out into the Pacific'.<sup>197</sup>

### **Recommendation 16**

**4.137 The committee recommends that the Australian Government increase its contribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Pacific regional countries and increase its provision of technical support related to the promotion and delivery of mass vaccination campaigns.**

---

<sup>197</sup> Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce, Department of Health, *Committee Hansard*, 29 September 2021, p. 39. Lt General Frewen subsequently told the committee, 'we're now looking at options for the donation of mRNA vaccines, out into regional, Pacific and South-East Asia as well'. See *Committee Hansard*, 7 December 2021, p. 5.

# Chapter 5

## Conduct of the inquiry

### Recommendation 17

- 5.1 The committee recommends that a Royal Commission be established to examine Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to inform preparedness for future COVID-19 waves and future pandemics.

### Recommendation 18

- 5.2 The committee recommends that the Australian Government publicly release all previous and future minutes of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee to promote transparency and accountability and provide the public with access to the health advice that informs government decisions around community safety, livelihoods and personal freedom.

### Recommendation 19

- 5.3 The committee recommends that the Senate consider referring to the Senate Standing Committee on Procedure a review of mechanisms to compel compliance with a committee's legitimate entitlement to receive the information it has requested, to ensure that there is greater accountability for unanswered questions on notice and public interest immunity claims that are not accepted by the committee and the Senate.
- 5.4 The COVID-19 pandemic has been the defining issue of the 46<sup>th</sup> Parliament. As the scale of the pandemic became apparent, the normal processes of government were displaced. State and territory border closures that would become an ongoing feature of the pandemic limited the capacity for parliamentarians to easily travel to Canberra for ordinary sittings. On 23 March 2020 after sitting for a single day to pass urgent pandemic response measures the Parliament adjourned, and it was expected that it would not meet again for some months. The measures passed by the Parliament were extraordinary and far-reaching, enabling the government to respond to the pandemic and in doing so, to profoundly affect the rights and liabilities of all Australians.<sup>1</sup>
- 5.5 Emergency law-making undertaken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the Australian Parliament's capacity to provide meaningful scrutiny

---

<sup>1</sup> See, George Williams, 'No good reason to hide powers from parliament's eye', *The Australian*, 6 December 2020.

of proposed laws, particularly in identifying and addressing the impact of emergency powers on the rights of individuals.<sup>2</sup>

- 5.6 It was clear that the Parliament needed a mechanism to ensure ongoing scrutiny of the government's pandemic response. In April 2020, UNSW Dean of Law George Williams observed the need to head off long term damage to our democracy brought about by the suspension of parliament at this critical moment in history, and said:

...even if it is thought too dangerous to recall Parliament, more must be done to enable its core functions to continue...a way of giving Australians confidence that democratic processes have not been completely abandoned.<sup>3</sup>

- 5.7 Further urgent pandemic response measures necessitated another single-day of parliamentary sitting on 8 April 2020 and provided the opportunity for the Senate to establish this committee to inquire into the Australian Government's (government) response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It did so with strong bipartisan support.<sup>4</sup> The committee became the primary mechanism for parliamentary oversight of the Australian Government's response to COVID-19—of the 'formidable and truly remarkable set of powers' handed to the government in order to navigate the crisis.<sup>5</sup>

- 5.8 At the committee's first public hearing on 23 April 2020, committee Chair, Senator Katy Gallagher, highlighted the importance of the inquiry:

This committee is a key vehicle to provide accountability, transparency and scrutiny of the Australian government's response to the pandemic for the Australian people. Over the next 18 months we will work tirelessly to shine a light on every aspect of the national response.<sup>6</sup>

- 5.9 As it turns out, the committee's role has lasted for a longer period.
- 5.10 Whilst the Parliament has been able to meet more frequently than envisaged, some sittings have been cancelled and others conducted in a limited fashion. With frequent changes in the pandemic response, the committee has been able to quickly respond to changing circumstances and has fulfilled this duty for two years.

---

<sup>2</sup> See, Sarah Moulds, 'Scrutinising COVID-19 laws: An early glimpse into the scrutiny work of federal parliamentary committees', *Alternative Law Journal*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2020, pp. 180–187.

<sup>3</sup> George Williams, 'Parliamentary break leaves hole in our democracy', *The Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law, UNSW Law* (originally published in *The Australian*, 6 April 2020), (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, *Senate Hansard*, 8 April 2020, pp. 1908–1909.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Edgar, 'Law-making in a crisis: Commonwealth and NSW coronavirus regulations', *Australian Public Law*, 30 March 2020 (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>6</sup> *Committee Hansard*, 23 April 2020, p. 1.

- 5.11 The powers of the Senate and its committee system to scrutinise the activities of the Executive government have arguably never been more important. In the face of an unprecedented transfer of power to executive government and its agencies there was no other mechanism as effective or immediately available to scrutinise the government, and with its cooperation, hold it to account.<sup>7</sup>
- 5.12 Over the last two years, the committee has heard over 200 hours of evidence from 679 witnesses at 56 public hearings—seven of which where all witnesses appeared virtually. The committee also published over 555 submissions and nearly 2240 individual answers to questions on notice on its website.<sup>8</sup> The committee was also able to draw on evidence provided to other parliamentary committees, and to the Senate and the House of Representatives themselves.
- 5.13 The majority of the committee’s attention focused on witnesses from government departments, in particular from the health and treasury portfolios, as well as from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- 5.14 Regrettably, the Australian Government’s early rhetorical support for the committee has waned and the government has not conducted itself in a transparent manner, repeatedly obstructing the work of this committee, as detailed in this chapter. The Prime Minister was unwilling to subject the decisions of his government to parliamentary scrutiny, damaging the public’s trust in their leaders at a time when it was so desperately needed.

### **Lacking in transparency**

- 5.15 Nowhere was this lack of transparency more apparent than in relation to the National Cabinet. The National Cabinet was speedily established in the initial days of the pandemic response as a means of engaging all state and territory first ministers and the Prime Minister. It was central to the Commonwealth’s management of the pandemic. A well-functioning National Cabinet should have been transparent and accountable, with its decisions subject to scrutiny and oversight. This has not been the case.
- 5.16 In its submission to this inquiry, the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association emphasised this point, arguing:

Critical to the success of the rapid decisions and actions that need to be taken during the COVID-19 pandemic is transparency around the factors driving decisions.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> See, Andrew Edgar, 'Law-making in a crisis: Commonwealth and NSW coronavirus regulations', *Australian Public Law*, 30 March 2020 (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Australian Parliament, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *Additional documents: Answers to Questions on Notice*, (accessed 31 March 2022).

<sup>9</sup> Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, *Submission 200*, p. 3.

- 5.17 The peak body pointed specifically to the need to disclose the scientific evidence underpinning the decisions of the National Cabinet as 'critical for building public confidence and trust'.<sup>10</sup>
- 5.18 Yet, the government has erroneously maintained that the National Cabinet is a committee of Cabinet and thereby subject to Cabinet confidentiality and limitations on access to documents through the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.<sup>11</sup> On this basis, it has refused to disclose the deliberations of the National Cabinet (even in confidence), thereby frustrating the efforts of this committee—as well as other committees and those of individual senators—to gain a fuller understanding of the government's pandemic response. The New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties criticised this practice, submitting, 'the "Cabinet-in-confidence" classification is routinely abused to shield information from being publicly accessible'.<sup>12</sup> As a consequence, the Parliament has been unable to adequately fulfil its responsibility to scrutinise and hold to account the government.
- 5.19 The government has refused to disclose vital information relating to the decisions and deliberations of the National Cabinet, despite a ruling on 5 August 2021 by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal that the National Cabinet was *not* a subcommittee of the federal cabinet and its documents therefore not covered by cabinet exemption.<sup>13</sup> In doing so, it has operated as though it only needs to comply with legal requirements of its own choosing, not according to law or the powers of the Parliament.

## Obstruction

- 5.20 This lack of transparency is illustrative of a pattern of behaviour in which the government has routinely obstructed the Senate's access to information. Indeed, this committee's second interim report detailed seven public interest immunity claims (that is, a claim through which the government seeks to withhold information from Parliament that it believes would not be in the public interest to disclose) made by government ministers over information requested by this committee. The committee resolved *not* to accept any of the seven claims on the grounds provided.<sup>14</sup> This committee's third interim report detailed a further

---

<sup>10</sup> Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, *Submission 200*, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Cabinet Handbook: 14<sup>th</sup> edition*, 2020, pp. 30–31.

<sup>12</sup> New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties, *Submission 456*, p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> Administrative Appeals Tribunal of Australia, Patrick and Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Freedom of Information) [2021] AATA 2719 (5 August 2021). See also Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *Third interim report: Public interest immunity claims*, December 2021, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *Second interim report: Public interest immunity claims*, February 2021, p. 1. Note, on 15 March 2021 the Senate agreed to the committee's recommendations

three public interest immunity claims made on behalf of the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP. Again, the committee resolved *not* to accept any of the three claims on the grounds provided.<sup>15</sup>

- 5.21 On 23 November 2021, the Senate passed a motion rejecting public interest immunity claims made in relation to the National Cabinet on the grounds of cabinet confidentiality.<sup>16</sup> Yet, the government has continued to withhold such information from the Senate and the Australian public, denying either's right to scrutinise its deliberations and decisions or those of the National Cabinet.<sup>17</sup>
- 5.22 The government has repeatedly ignored the Senate's orders for the production of documents—both in relation to the work of this committee as well as other matters before the Senate. In response to this committee's second and third interim reports and the Senate's orders for the production of documents, the Government continued to reiterate the same claims of public interest immunity that were previously rejected by this committee.<sup>18</sup> This is not an acceptable response; the only acceptable response is to produce the information ordered by the Senate.
- 5.23 On 2 December 2021, Senator Colbeck wrote to the President of the Senate, again restating the public interest immunity claims already rejected by this committee in its third interim report. Senator Colbeck noted the committee's rejection of the claims, but made the following misleading assertion:

Whether a public interest immunity claim is accepted or rejected is a matter for the Senate, and while the Select Committee on COVID-19 has rejected the claims advanced by the Government, the Senate has not.<sup>19</sup>

- 5.24 The committee notes the role of committees in determining a public interest immunity claim, as detailed in *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*:

---

to order the production of documents which the government had withheld from the committee. See, *Journals of the Senate*, No. 93, 15 March 2021, pp. 3253–3256.

<sup>15</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *Third interim report: Public interest immunity claims*, December 2021, p. 1. Note, on 1 December 2021 the Senate agreed to recommendations to order the production of documents which the government had withheld from the committee. See, *Journals of the Senate*, No. 132, 1 December 2021, pp. 4413–4415.

<sup>16</sup> *Journals of the Senate*, No. 127, 23 November 2021, p. 4279.

<sup>17</sup> See for example, Department of Health, answer to question on notice, document no. 715, 6 August 2021 (received 1 December 2021); and Treasury, answer to question on notice, document no. 727, 14 January 2022 (received 16 February 2022).

<sup>18</sup> See for example, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Sport and Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, *Senate Hansard*, 2 December 2021, pp. 7121–7122.

<sup>19</sup> See, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, *Letter to the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon Slade Brockman*, dated 2 December 2021 (accessed 31 March 2022).

Legislative and general purpose standing committees and most select committees possess the full range of inquiry powers, enabling them, if necessary, to summon witnesses and order the production of documents.<sup>20</sup>

5.25 Whilst the resolution of the Senate of 13 May 2009, known as the “Cormann Order”, makes clear that:

If, after considering a statement by a minister provided under paragraph (3), the committee concludes that the statement does not sufficiently justify the withholding of the information or document from the committee, the committee shall report the matter to the Senate.<sup>21</sup>

5.26 It would not be necessary to undertake such a process if the government was more willing to provide information reasonably requested by the committee, rather than prosecuting every public interest immunity claim through the Senate, and even then refusing to comply.

5.27 The government’s disregard for the Senate and its committees is also manifest in long delays in responses to questions taken on notice and responses that frequently do not answer the questions asked. This is symptomatic of a broader disdain for Parliamentary scrutiny and the rights of Australians to know the basis on which the decisions are taken that so profoundly impact their lives.

5.28 As of the tabling date for this report, nearly 450 answers to questions on notice to government departments by this committee have not yet been received, amounting to around 17 per cent of all questions asked.

5.29 A report by the Australia Institute pointed to the ‘loss of a public record of decision-making’ through the National Cabinet.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, as this committee’s second interim report concluded:

[The actions of the government] have compromised the committee's ability to scrutinise government decisions with a profound impact on lives [sic] of Australians. The committee is concerned that they reflect a pattern of conduct in which the government has wilfully obstructed access to information that is crucial for the committee's inquiry.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Harry Evans and Rosemary Laing, eds, *Odgers’ Australian Senate Practice*, 14<sup>th</sup> edition, Department of the Senate, 2016, p. 500.

<sup>21</sup> *The Senate, Standing Orders and other orders of the Senate, Procedural orders of continuing effect*, July 2021, PO 10 (5).

<sup>22</sup> Billy Browne, *State revival: The role of the states in Australia’s COVID-19 response and beyond*, The Australia Institute, Discussion paper, July 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, *Second interim report: Public interest immunity claims*, February 2021, p. 1.

## Ministerial appearances

- 5.30 The Prime Minister has painted a picture of a government cooperating with the Senate to scrutinise the COVID-19 response. Indeed, in a media interview on 28 January 2022, Mr Morrison claimed one of his ministers had appeared before the committee, 'on many, many occasions... he's appeared before [this committee] on countless occasions'.<sup>24</sup> The Prime Minister even took credit for the work of the committee, claiming, 'we set up the committee at the start of COVID because we wanted to ensure there was an ongoing oversight and visibility on everything we've been doing'.<sup>25</sup>
- 5.31 The reality, however, was that the minister in question, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, had appeared before the committee on only two prior occasions.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, of the nearly 700 witnesses to appear before this committee, only three have been ministers of this government: Senator Colbeck;<sup>27</sup> former Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance;<sup>28</sup> and Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Families and Social Services.<sup>29</sup>
- 5.32 These ministers have not all appeared willingly before the committee. The Prime Minister's comments above were in relation to Senator Colbeck declining to appear before the committee on 14 January 2022. Senator Colbeck cited the impact his appearance would have on the 'urgent and critical work of the Department' in addressing the outbreak of Omicron,<sup>30</sup> yet he attended a cricket test match in Tasmania on the scheduled date of the public hearing, prompting public outrage given the impact of omicron in aged care settings, for which he was responsible.<sup>31</sup>
- 5.33 The Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, also declined the committee's invitation to appear on 25 May 2020. The Treasurer cited as the basis for his refusal convention that a House of Representatives minister should appear

---

<sup>24</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, '[Interview with Neil Breen, 4BC](#)', *Transcript*, 28 January 2022.

<sup>25</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, '[Interview with Neil Breen, 4BC](#)', *Transcript*, 28 January 2022.

<sup>26</sup> Note, Senator Colbeck subsequently appeared a third time on 2 February 2022.

<sup>27</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 4 August 2020; *Committee Hansard*, 21 August 2020; and *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, pp. 14–34.

<sup>28</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 9 June 2020, pp. 3–39.

<sup>29</sup> See, *Committee Hansard*, 18 August 2020, pp. 47–58.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, to the Chair Senator Gallagher, received 10 January 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 17.

through their representative ministers in the Senate—in this case—Senator Cormann, then-Minister for Finance.<sup>32</sup> However, whilst this convention means that the Senate could not compel a minister from the House of Representatives to appear, such an appearance is not unprecedented, with a House of Representatives Minister having appeared as recently as 2014. In the case of Mr Frydenberg, Senator Cormann subsequently appeared before the committee on 9 June 2020.

## Lessons for the Senate

- 5.34 The work of this committee—and by extension the Senate—has been obstructed by the government at a time when it was exercising extraordinary powers that demanded constant and visible scrutiny by the Parliament. Failings within the Australian Public Service have also been exposed, as senior departmental officials' initial candour and willingness to provide evidence diminished over time. Questions remain as to whether public officials may have been inappropriately constrained in presenting evidence to the committee.
- 5.35 The Senate is responsible for holding the government to account, and responsible governments submit themselves to scrutiny. The government failed to do this at a time when its '[e]xtraordinary powers must be balanced by vigilance and accountability'.<sup>33</sup>
- 5.36 The Senate may wish to seek advice on whether its systems and procedures are sufficient to ensure the Parliament's access to the information it needs to perform its vital oversight and scrutiny functions in the future, and if not, how these might be improved.

**Senator Katy Gallagher**  
**Chair**

---

<sup>32</sup> See, Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, Letter from the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, to the committee Chair, received 25 May 2020, document no. 4.

<sup>33</sup> George Williams, '[Parliamentary break leaves hole in our democracy](#)', *The Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law, UNSW Law* (originally published in *The Australian*), (accessed 31 March 2022).

# Coalition Senators' dissenting report

## Introduction

- 1.1 The Morrison Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, guided by the medical experts, has delivered one of the lowest rates of loss of life and one of the strongest economic recoveries in the world.
- 1.2 Australians have experienced a once in a generation pandemic. It has been tough, but we should be rightfully proud that Australia is one of the few countries to come out of the pandemic stronger—saving over 40 000 lives and vaccinating over 95 per cent of Australians,<sup>1</sup> protecting livelihoods and our way of life.
- 1.3 Strong and careful economic management meant that we could put in place the health and economic measures in line with the best advice of the medical experts to protect Australian lives and livelihoods during the pandemic.
- 1.4 As former deputy chief medical officer Dr Nick Coatsworth has reflected:

We can be rightly proud of what we have achieved as Australians in the face of what was the challenge of our lifetime. We will emerge a stronger, healthier and more prosperous nation for our efforts.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 As mentioned in previous interim reports, while this committee was initially established with bipartisan support and a genuine desire to investigate issues of concern during a rapidly evolving pandemic, the committee has regrettably been used a vehicle in which Labor senators have pursued partisan attacks on the government—which is reflected in the commentary in the majority report and was at times blatantly apparent during public hearings.
- 1.6 Contrary to what is asserted in the majority report, the fact that this committee has heard over 200 hours of evidence from 679 witnesses at 56 public hearings, published over 555 submissions and nearly 2240 individual answers to questions on notice reflects a remarkably high degree of government cooperation with this committee, especially in light of the significant time and resources that is expended by public servants.
- 1.7 As mentioned in the third interim report, the parliamentary scrutiny of the Morrison Government's response to the pandemic can be compared favourably to any state parliamentary oversight. It is regrettable that parliamentary committees scrutinising the performance of state governments have only been put in place temporarily or just recently, have held few public hearings and have

---

<sup>1</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, 'Press Conference – Clayton, Victoria' *Transcript*, 24 March 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Nick Coatsworth, 'Welcome to 2022, the year this pandemic ends', *The Age*, 1 January 2022.

often been chaired by government chairs—which is not the approach that the Morrison Government took when this committee was established.<sup>3</sup>

## Health response

- 1.8 The Morrison Government acknowledged the risks and acted early, declaring the COVID-19 pandemic on 27 February 2020, before the World Health Organization declared a pandemic on 11 March 2020.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.9 Our response to the pandemic has followed a uniquely Australian path, getting the balance right between our health and economic objectives. We have invested over \$42 billion in our health response, and we have successfully suppressed the virus with a strategy of closing international borders in a timely manner, quarantining return travellers, building our health system capacity, social distancing and sensible restrictions, and strong testing, tracing and hygiene practices. We thank all Australians for their efforts.

### *Rollout of Australia's highly successful vaccination program*

- 1.10 While many other countries have reintroduced strict restrictions, we have been able to keep large sectors of our economy open and functioning while never letting our guard down on protecting Australians from future effects of the virus. This is why the Morrison Government recently finalised an agreement with global pharmaceutical company Moderna that secures the production of up to 100 million Australian-made mRNA doses every year, the first of its kind in the southern hemisphere. This landmark agreement is part of a 10-year strategic partnership with the Commonwealth, Moderna and the Victorian Government which will support local industry and meet ongoing COVID-19 vaccine needs including any other new and innovative respiratory mRNA vaccines.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.11 Everyone in Australia aged five years and over is eligible for a free COVID-19 vaccination. At the time of this report, 95 per cent of Australians aged 16 years and over have received at least two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, making Australia one of the most vaccinated nations in the world. Boosters are being rolled out with strong uptake and primary courses are being offered to children aged five and over.

---

<sup>3</sup> Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, *Senate Hansard*, 8 April 2020, pp. 1908–1909.

<sup>4</sup> Ben Doherty and Katharine Murphy, '[Australia declares coronavirus will become a pandemic as it extends China travel ban](#)', 27 February 2020; World Health Organization, '[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19](#)', 11 March 2020.

<sup>5</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister of Australia, '[Partnership secures Australian-made mRNA Vaccines](#)', *Media Release*, 24 March 2022.

1.12 As of 2 April 2022:

- over 12.9 million people have received a booster dose which is over 67 per cent of those who are eligible, with eligibility for booster doses opening on 8 November 2021;
- over 84 per cent of children aged 12 to 15 years have had one dose and over 80 per cent have had both doses;
- over 52 per cent of children aged 5 to 11 years have had one dose since the program commenced on 10 January 2022;
- over 91 per cent of aged care residents living in residential aged care facilities (RACF) have received two doses, and over 93 per cent of eligible aged care residents have received a booster;
- over 88 per cent of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants living in shared disability accommodation have received at least one dose, with over 87 per cent having received two doses. Over 87 per cent of eligible NDIS participants in residential accommodation have received a booster;
- the rollout to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians also continues, with over 84.2 per cent having received at least a first dose and over 80 per cent receiving both doses. Over 51 per cent of eligible Indigenous Australians aged over 16 years have received a booster; and
- over 94.5 per cent of NDIS workers are fully vaccinated and over 96.7 per cent of aged care workers are fully vaccinated, ensuring that our most vulnerable cohorts and essential workers are the highest priority in our vaccination program.<sup>6</sup>

1.13 The data shows that Australia's vaccination program is, by any international comparison, highly successful and we have ensured that our vulnerable populations and essential workers are at the highest priority and remain so as we secure our recovery from the pandemic.

1.14 We thank the assistance of the Australian Defence Force and the Rural Flying Doctor Services for delivering vaccines to rural, regional and remote communities.<sup>7</sup>

1.15 The Australian Government takes our vaccination program and the efforts of our health professionals on the frontline seriously. On 11 August 2021, Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly noted that misinformation undermines the efforts of all those Australians who have acted responsibly and compassionately to protect their community, and that it devalues the lives of

---

<sup>6</sup> Department of Health, *COVID-19 vaccine rollout update*, 3 April 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Shannon Jenkins, 'ADF heads to western NSW as state records 633 COVID-19 cases', *The Mandarin*, 18 August 2021; Royal Flying Doctor Service, *COVID-19: Responding to Need*, 30 November 2021 (accessed 6 April 2022).

those who have suffered from COVID-19 and for those who have lost loved ones.<sup>8</sup>

- 1.16 This is why the Australian Government has a COVID-19 mythbusting website that corrects the myths and misinformation about COVID-19,<sup>9</sup> and the Department of Health launched an 'Is it True?' portal on 14 March 2021 in the early days of the vaccination rollout which provides reputable information on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. The Department of Health has information fact sheets in 63 languages providing accurate, evidence-based answers to common questions about COVID-19 vaccines for multicultural communities.<sup>10</sup>
- 1.17 It is highly regrettable that some have undermined public confidence in our vaccination rollout, such as comments by Labor's hand-picked federal candidate in Higgins who on social media and during an episode of ABC's Q&A baselessly undermined the safety and effectiveness of the AstraZeneca vaccine at a critical time of our country's vaccination rollout.<sup>11</sup>
- 1.18 Additionally, it was particularly regrettable that Queensland's Chief Health Officer further undermined public confidence by suggesting that she would not recommend under 40-year-olds receive the AstraZeneca vaccine.<sup>12</sup>
- 1.19 It is likely we will see the re-circulation of COVID-19 and influenza viruses in winter, which we have not seen significant transmission of since 2019. Although it is difficult to predict the scale of these transmission events, the government is preparing for the contingency of large possible outbreaks. Therefore, the Morrison Government is investing \$2.1 billion to protect Australians against COVID-19 and influenza this winter in 2022.<sup>13</sup> The approach to managing COVID-19 and influenza over the winter months will focus on minimising the health impacts—with a particular focus on protect those most at risk of severe illness—while supporting the economy. The \$2.1 billion investment to support Australia's winter preparedness includes:

---

<sup>8</sup> Professor Paul Kelly, 'Chief Medical Officer opinion piece on stopping the spread of COVID-19 misinformation', *Statement*, 12 August 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government, *COVID-19 Mythbusting*, <https://www.australia.gov.au/covid-19-mythbusting>.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Health, *COVID-19 vaccination – COVID-19 vaccines: common questions (other languages)*, last updated 17 January 2022 (accessed 6 April 2022).

<sup>11</sup> Jonathan Kearsley, 'Labor preselects outspoken AstraZeneca critic to run as candidate in Higgins', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 July 2021,

<sup>12</sup> Stephanie Zillman, 'Queensland's Chief Health Officer rejects Prime Minister's comments on AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine for under-40s', *ABC News*, 30 June 2021.

<sup>13</sup> The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, '\$2.1 billion for winter preparedness health measures', *Media Release*, 11 March 2022.

- \$1.2 billion to protect the residential aged care and disability care sectors;
  - \$356 million to protect other vulnerable population groups; and
  - \$571 million for vaccines.
- 1.20 As part of this investment, the Morrison Government has extended the concessional Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) program until 31 July 2022, in partnership with the states, and the government will purchase six months' supply of personal protective equipment for aged care and disability requirements.
- 1.21 In addition, Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has recommended an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine to increase vaccine protection before winter for selected populations who are at greatest risk of severe illness. ATAGI has recommended that the rollout of the additional booster dose for these groups starts from April 2022, coinciding with the rollout of the 2022 influenza vaccination program to maximise our winter preparedness.<sup>14</sup>

### *PCR testing and RATs*

- 1.22 The majority report has exaggerated claims that the testing system had 'collapsed' in the Christmas 2021 period. It must be reiterated that up until 30 December 2021, the medical experts did not recommend the widespread use of RATs because of the stage in the pandemic that we were in at that time.<sup>15</sup> The earlier approach to suppress community transmission while vaccination rates were still low greatly depended on the highest accuracy of testing, hence the earlier reliance on polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests which have greater accuracy than RATs.
- 1.23 As evidence provided to this committee by Professor John Skeritt on 2 February 2022 noted:

The reason why it would have been quite inappropriate, and in fact dangerous, had we had home use rapid antigen testing in early and mid-2021 is that half of them, maybe more, would have given the wrong answer. So, you would have had people with false positives, and you also would have missed a significant number of infections.

...

When you have a low prevalence of cases in the community, if it's only one per cent of those who are being tested who are positive, you have 50, 60 or 70 per cent of results from rapid antigen tests just plain wrong—false

---

<sup>14</sup> Department of Health, [ATAGI Statement on recommendations on a winter booster dose of COVID-10 vaccine](#), 25 March 2022 (accessed 6 April 2022); the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, '[Winter COVID-19 dose recommended for Australians at higher risk](#)', *Media Release*, 25 March 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Health, [AHPPC statement on testing, tracing, isolating and quarantining in high levels of COVID-19 community transmission](#), 30 December 2021 (accessed 6 April 2022).

positives and a few false negatives. In the world we have now, where sadly the proportion of people who are infected with COVID is much higher, there are statistical reasons why the reliability of rapid antigen tests is much higher. That's why they were quite appropriate for New York in April 2021, but totally inappropriate for Australia in April, May and June 2021.<sup>16</sup>

1.24 Likewise, the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly also stated:

As Professor Skerritt mentioned, there was a consensus by those technical advisory groups that, in the Australian context at that time of low community transmission, rapid antigen tests were not the best way of diagnosing COVID-19 in Australia at that time. But they did recognise that there were certain times and places where they could be usefully employed. That was around the time when the initial TGA approval of point-of-care testing, as used by a health practitioner and supervised by a health practitioner, came into play.

...

All throughout that process, that balance and those principles have been constant. The particular one is in the context of low community transmission, as Australia has been in for the majority of the last two years, rapid antigen tests pose problems in terms of false negative and false positive tests, and the PCR testing arrangements are and remain the gold standard for diagnosis. I think it absolutely has its place in the context we're in now, but it did not previously have such a place except for very specific places of high risk, such as in aged-care facilities.<sup>17</sup>

1.25 Officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet gave evidence to this committee highlighting the views of the states and territories at that point in time:

The [state and territory] chief health officers and the AHPPC had a strong view that, with the case numbers that we were seeing in Australia at that time, and even if a variant arose that was more transmissible, the preference was for PCR testing, as the higher standard of testing, and that rapid antigen tests might become part of a complement of testing but that they would not be the mainstay of a testing response under the PCR testing system.<sup>18</sup>

1.26 In addition, the majority report fails to acknowledge the additional burden of interstate travel testing requirements that were introduced by some states had on the PCR testing system. Evidence to the committee highlighted the federal government had planned for significantly increased demand for PCR tests as we opened up, but the additional burden of test-to-travel requirements adopted

---

<sup>16</sup> Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation, Department of Health, Committee Hansard, 2 February 2022, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, Committee Hansard, 2 February 2022, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 3.

by some state governments was not foreseen as part of the nation's reopening plan.<sup>19</sup>

- 1.27 In December 2021, Victoria's COVID-19 response commander Jeroen Weimar noted the challenges of testing requirements for interstate travel had on Victoria's PCR testing capacity:

It is not a highly productive way to use a PCR testing system, and of course, it puts additional pressure on, so the additional queues and waiting times we're seeing at the moment are a by-product of that. We hope to move to a more sensible arrangement in future...jamming up the system with people who particularly are asymptomatic, particularly if they haven't been close contacts, if they're just needing tests for some other kind of bureaucratic reason – that's the kind of stuff that I think we'd like to reduce.<sup>20</sup>

- 1.28 Also in December 2021, NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet similarly noted:

There's no doubt that these PCR testing requirements, as the health minister calls them, the 'tourism tests', are putting substantial pressure on the system. And that's just not long queues, it's slowing down the turnaround time for NSW Health to be able to process those tests and get that info back to people who may be unwell or may have COVID.<sup>21</sup>

- 1.29 On 5 January 2022, National Cabinet agreed that up to 10 Rapid Antigen Tests over three months (a maximum of 5 in a month) will be made available free through pharmacies to people on pension, health care, DVA and low-income cards. National Cabinet also agreed that states and territories change public health orders to enable RATs to be used as confirmation of COVID-19, enabling widespread use.

- 1.30 Under the Australian Government's concessional RAT program, 5,620 pharmacies have delivered over 27.4 million RATs to more than 4.2 million eligible concession card holders as of 31 March 2022.<sup>22</sup>

- 1.31 As we vaccinate our population and secure our economic recovery, the federal government has invested in securing access to rapid antigen tests. We have invested more than \$1.6 billion to ensure equitable access to RATs to help detect COVID-19 and provide reassurance to Australians as we continue to live with

---

<sup>19</sup> Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Committee Hansard*, 2 February 2022, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Rachel Eddie and Cassandra Morgan, 'Weimar calls for 'sensible' travel rules as testing sites turn people away', *The Age*, 30 December 2021.

<sup>21</sup> David Wu, 'Dominic Perrottet urges states to drop traveller PCR requirement amid frustration over long queues at testing sites', *Sky News*, 26 December 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Department of Health, COVID-19 vaccine rollout update, 3 April 2022.

COVID.<sup>23</sup> More than 71.6 million RATs have been made available across all Department of Health delivery channels, including:

- 27.5 million distributed to aged care;
- 23.5 million accessed through pharmacies; and
- 19.7 million distributed through all other channels.

1.32 The Australian Government's record on securing supplies for COVID-19 tests can be compared to Labor's ill-advised thought bubbles. Anthony Albanese has suggested the government secure RATs from a company which had not been approved by the TGA and had in fact had their product recalled in massive numbers in the United States.<sup>24</sup> The federal government continues, with the advice of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), to make available RATs provided they meet the necessary regulatory requirements for reliability and accuracy.

### **Economic response**

1.33 The economic impacts that the pandemic has brought have been significant, which is why the government has committed, as at the 2022-23 Budget, \$314 billion in direct economic support to assist Australian workers and businesses throughout the pandemic, equivalent to 15.2 per cent of GDP.

1.34 The majority report has wrongly asserted that the Australian Government has rolled back economic support for workers and businesses in the reopening stage of the pandemic that we are now in. The support throughout the pandemic has been temporary, targeted and proportionate.

1.35 It has helped us steer us through the pandemic, which has seen Australia achieve better health and economic outcomes from COVID-19 than most other countries. As health restrictions have eased and vaccination rates have increased, the unprecedented level of government support provided over the last two years of the pandemic has evolved, as the pandemic has evolved.

### *JobKeeper*

1.36 The JobKeeper Payment played a crucial role in supporting and driving the economy, keeping businesses in business and individuals connected to their employer during the first year of COVID-19.

1.37 JobKeeper provided around \$88.8 billion in support to around 4 million individuals and around one million businesses, 99 percent of which were small

---

<sup>23</sup> Department of Health, *Budget 2022-23 – Response to COVID-19 Pandemic – Securing Access to rapid antigen tests (RATs)*, March 2022.

<sup>24</sup> The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Leader of the Opposition, '*ABC Insiders: Discussing rapid antigen tests, aged care and more*', *Transcript*, 30 January 2022.

businesses and not-for-profit entities, and over 80 per cent of JobKeeper payments went to these entities.<sup>25</sup>

- 1.38 The Reserve Bank of Australia estimated that JobKeeper reduced total job losses by 700,000 between April and July 2020.<sup>26</sup>
- 1.39 Without the government's significant fiscal support, including JobKeeper, Treasury has estimated the peak of the unemployment rate would have been at least 5 percentage points higher, and remained above 12 per cent for two years.<sup>27</sup>

### *Pandemic response payments for individuals and support for businesses*

- 1.40 The Morrison Government has provided COVID-19 related payments to support individuals affected by the virus or by public health restrictions throughout the pandemic.
- 1.41 As of 27 March 2022, \$13.97 billion has been paid out in Commonwealth pandemic response payments, which includes the COVID-19 Disaster Payment and the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the Commonwealth and state governments have injected an estimated \$14.4 billion into the economy during 2021-22, with most going to small and medium sized businesses in the form of direct grants. The Commonwealth committed \$7.1 billion to these jointly funded business support packages.<sup>29</sup>

### *Our economic record*

- 1.42 As a result of the Morrison Government's support throughout the pandemic, our economy has shown formidable resilience. It has outstripped the performance of most advanced economies in the world, which was greatly assisted by entering the pandemic with a balanced budget delivered by our government's strong financial management.
- 1.43 Our AAA credit rating remains intact, one of only nine countries to achieve this. At 3.5 per cent, inflation in Australia running well below other advanced economies, such as 7 per cent in the United States and 5 per cent in the United Kingdom. Unemployment is at 4.2 per cent and we can now achieve an unemployment rate with a '3' in front of it this year, which is something we have not seen in Australia for almost half a century.

---

<sup>25</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, '[Insights from the first six months of JobKeeper](#)', *Media Release*, 11 October 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Reserve Bank of Australia, '[How many jobs did JobKeeper Keep?](#)', Research Discussion Paper, November 2020.

<sup>27</sup> The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer, '[Insights from the first six months of JobKeeper](#)', *Media Release*, 11 October 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Department of Health, '[COVID-19 vaccine rollout update](#)', 3 April 2022.

<sup>29</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, '[Budget 2022-23: Federal Financial Relations Budget Paper No. 3](#)', p. 2.

1.44 The Morrison Government's record in protecting lives and livelihoods compares positively to Labor's \$81 billion budget blowout in spending policies they announced during the pandemic. This includes expanding and extending JobKeeper, continuing the coronavirus supplement, and Anthony Albanese's \$6 billion vaccine incentive payment to give Australians a cash payment for a vaccine they have already received. The \$81 billion in additional spending that Labor called for is the type of reckless spending that would have put at risk Australia's AAA credit rating and create an even larger debt bill, spending that clearly was not necessary to get the low unemployment rates and economic outcomes we have achieved at the other side of the pandemic.<sup>30</sup>

**Senator James Paterson**  
Deputy Chair

**Senator Perin Davey**  
Member

---

<sup>30</sup> Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, 'Doorstop – Parliament House, ACT', *Transcript*, 9 February 2022.

# Appendix 1

## Glossary

**Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)** — comprised of all state and territory Chief Health Officers, it provides advice to the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council and the *National Cabinet* relating to infectious diseases.

**Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)** — advises the Minister for Health on the medical administration of vaccines and other immunisation issues in Australia. A COVID-19 Working Group was established within ATAGI to provide advice to the Minister on the immunisation program for COVID-19 vaccines, specifically.

**COVID-19** — an infectious disease spread by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. COVID-19 was first identified in December 2019 and was declared a public health emergency of international concern in January 2020.

**Delta (B.1.617.2)** — a contagious variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that was first identified in late 2020 and quickly became the dominant strain in many countries. Individuals infected with Delta faced more severe symptoms and were more likely to require hospitalisation than those infected by preceding variants of the virus.

**JobKeeper** — an employee wage subsidy paid by the Australian Government to businesses that met revenue decline thresholds during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. JobKeeper was largest component of the government's economic stimulus measures during the pandemic.

**JobSeeker** — the main income support payment for Australians aged 22 to retirement age who are looking for work, or who are temporarily unable to work or study due to illness, injury or people bereaved following the death of a partner.

**Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines** — most vaccines use an inactive virus to stimulate an immune response in the recipient. This promotes a rapid and effective immune response if the recipient is exposed to the virus in the future. In contrast, some newer types of vaccine teach cells how to produce a disease-specific protein to trigger an immune response. These are mRNA vaccines. If the recipient of an mRNA vaccine is later exposed to the virus against which they were vaccinated, their immune system will recognise the specific protein of the virus and quickly mount an attack before it can cause serious illness.

**National Cabinet** — comprised of all state premiers and territory chief ministers, chaired by the Prime Minister. National Cabinet was established as a subcommittee of Cabinet in March 2020 to oversee the health and economic

response to COVID-19 in Australia. Implementation and decisions remain the responsibility of respective Commonwealth, state, and territory governments.

**National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board (NCC)** — see *National COVID-19 Coordination Commission*.

**National COVID-19 Coordination Commission** — a body formed in March 2020 to advise the government on mitigating the economic and social impacts of the pandemic, consisting primarily of business leaders and senior public servants. It was superseded in July 2020 by the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board (NCC).

**National Coordination Mechanism** — established in March 2020 to provide a consultative forum for coordination with state and territory governments, non-government organisations, and industry.

**National plan to transition Australia’s national COVID-19 response (National Plan)** — a four-step transition plan for Australia’s national COVID-19 response, agreed to by the National Cabinet in July 2021. The four phases of the Plan include: vaccinate, prepare, and pilot; vaccination transition; vaccination consolidation; and a final post-vaccination phase.

**Omicron (variant B.1.1.529)** — a highly-infectious variant of SARS-CoV-2 that was identified in November 2021 and rapidly spread across the world. Community transmission of Omicron was first reported in Australia in early December 2021. BA.2 is a seemingly more transmissible sub-variant of Omicron that was identified in Australia in January 2022 and quickly became the dominant strain of the virus.

**Rapid antigen tests (RAT)** — a quick test for COVID-19 infections that is simple enough to be performed by individuals at home or in the workplace without supervision. RATs take around 10–15 minutes to yield a result and work much like an at-home pregnancy test. RATs are less accurate than the laboratory-based polymerase chain reaction tests but are generally considered reliable when used repeatedly by the same individual.

**Ribonucleic acid (RNA)** — a single-stranded chain of cells that processes protein and may carry the genetic information of a virus like COVID-19.

**Reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR or PCR)** — a highly-sensitive laboratory-based system for testing for COVID-19. PCR tests pick up miniscule amounts of ribonucleic acid or RNA, a single-stranded chain of cells that processes protein and may carry the genetic information of a virus like COVID-19. PCR testing is relatively expensive and can take hours or days to yield a result.

**Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)** — the agency within the Department of Health responsible for regulating and ensuring access to medicines and therapeutic goods.

## Appendix 2

### Timeline of key decisions and milestones

**Table 2.1 Timeline of key decisions and events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Key event</b>
<b>31 December 2019</b>	Department of Health first notified of undiagnosed pneumonia in China.
<b>14 January 2020</b>	World Health Organisation confirmed the potential for human-to-human transmission of COVID-19.
<b>20 January 2020</b>	National Incident Room activated to coordinate the health sector emergency response.
<b>21 January 2020</b>	Human coronavirus with pandemic potential was declared as a listed human disease under the Biosecurity Act 2015.
<b>23 January 2020</b>	Enhanced border measures commenced at international ports.
<b>25 January 2020</b>	First case of COVID-19 in Australia confirmed.
<b>30 January 2020</b>	Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) commenced daily meetings.
<b>1 February 2020</b>	Travel restrictions imposed on foreign nationals arriving from mainland China.
<b>18 February 2020</b>	Government released the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus.
<b>25 February 2020</b>	Applications opened for grant funding to support COVID-19 vaccine development.
<b>1 March 2020</b>	Travel restrictions expanded to foreign nationals arriving from other countries.
<b>5 March 2020</b>	National Coordination Mechanism established.
<b>11 March 2020</b>	\$2.4 billion health package announced.
<b>12 March 2020</b>	\$17.6 billion economic stimulus package announced.

<b>13 March 2020</b>	Council of Australian Governments agreed to establish National Cabinet; National Cabinet endorses restrictions on gatherings of over 500 people.
<b>15 March 2020</b>	Quarantine imposed for all international arrivals; social distancing measures commenced and restrictions placed on large gatherings; and cruise ship arrivals from foreign ports temporarily banned.
<b>17 March 2020</b>	Australians overseas advised to return to Australia.
<b>18 March 2020</b>	Travel advice for all overseas travel raised to 'do not travel'.
<b>18 March 2020</b>	Human biosecurity emergency declared under Biosecurity Act 2015.
<b>19 March 2020</b>	<i>Pratique</i> granted for passengers to disembark the <i>Ruby Princess</i> in Sydney.
<b>20 March 2020</b>	Australia's borders closed to all non-citizens and non-residents.
<b>22 March 2020</b>	\$66 billion economic support package for households and businesses announced.
<b>22 March 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to implement stage 1 restrictions on social gatherings, including at restaurants, cafes, sporting venues, cinemas, and places of worship; Government recommended against all non-essential travel within Australia.
<b>24 March 2020</b>	Ban on Australians travelling overseas instated.
<b>25 March 2020</b>	National COVID-19 Coordination Commission announced; non-urgent elective surgery suspended.
<b>27 March 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to mandatory 14-day self-isolation in hotel facilities for international arrivals.
<b>29 March 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to moratorium on evictions for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress; agreed to further public health restrictions.
<b>30 March 2020</b>	\$130 billion economic package (including JobKeeper) announced.
<b>2 April 2020</b>	Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package announced.
<b>11 April 2020</b>	Outbreak in Newmarch House (aged care facility) in New South Wales began.

<b>26 April 2020</b>	COVIDSafe app launched.
<b>1 May 2020</b>	Government announced residential aged care sector support package.
<b>4 May 2020</b>	Government announced \$352m in support of global COVID-19 efforts, including \$15m to develop vaccines and diagnostics.
<b>8 May 2020</b>	Three-stage plan to begin easing lockdown restrictions announced.
<b>22 May 2020</b>	Treasury revealed that only half of the estimated 6.5 million Australians would access Jobkeeper.
<b>26 May 2020</b>	\$250 million JobMaker plan announced.
<b>12 June 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to reduce some public health restrictions.
<b>20 June 2020</b>	Public health restrictions reinstated in Victoria.
<b>9 July 2020</b>	First case reported in the COVID-19 outbreak at St Basil's Home for the Aged Care.
<b>10 July 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to a national review of hotel quarantine arrangements; agreed to implement further caps on international arrivals.
<b>12 July 2020</b>	Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package ended.
<b>16 July 2020</b>	JobTrainer Skills Package announced.
<b>17 July 2020</b>	\$400 million incentive to boost jobs for screen industry announced.
<b>20 July 2020</b>	Outbreak at the Heritage Care Epping Gardens residential aged care facility commenced.
<b>21 July 2020</b>	Prime Minister announced the extension of JobKeeper, at a reduced rate.
<b>19 August 2020</b>	Prime Minister announced a supply arrangement with AstraZeneca for access to its COVID-19 vaccine.
<b>21 August 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed to resume the Seasonal Worker Programme and Pacific Islander Labour Scheme to alleviate workforce shortages.

<b>4 September 2020</b>	National Cabinet agreed that the Commonwealth would work collaboratively with state and territory governments to develop a plan to 'reopen' Australia by Christmas.
<b>18 September 2020</b>	Government committed to having Australians stranded overseas home by Christmas 2020.
<b>23 October 2020</b>	The Commonwealth and all states and territories (except Western Australia) agreed in principle to adopt the Framework for National Reopening by Christmas 2020.
<b>5 November 2020</b>	Government announced vaccine deals with Novavax and Pfizer.
<b>9 November 2020</b>	CSL commenced manufacture of the AstraZeneca vaccine in its Melbourne facility.
<b>26 November 2020</b>	Nearly 37 000 Australians reported to be still stranded overseas.
<b>11 December 2020</b>	University of Queensland vaccine trial discontinued.
<b>7 January 2021</b>	Prime Minister announced Australia's COVID-19 vaccine national roll-out strategy would commence late February 2021, with a target of 4 million doses by the end of March 2021, including aged care residents and disability care residents.
<b>25 January 2021</b>	TGA granted provisional approval for the Pfizer vaccine.
<b>15 February 2021</b>	First batch of the Pfizer vaccine (142 000 doses) arrived in Australia; TGA grants provisional approval for the AstraZeneca vaccine.
<b>21 February 2021</b>	First person in Australia received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
<b>22 February 2021</b>	Phase 1a of the vaccination rollout commenced.
<b>27 February 2021</b>	32 000 vaccine doses (of the government's 60 000 target) administered.
<b>3 March 2021</b>	Approximately 15 000 people vaccinated in NSW, including two thirds of frontline hotel quarantine workers.
<b>4 March 2021</b>	First dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine administered in Australia.
<b>5 March 2021</b>	Export of 250 000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to Australia is blocked by the European Commission.

---

<b>9 March 2021</b>	Government released COVID-19 Vaccination Program Implementation Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
<b>11 March 2021</b>	Announcement of a \$1.2 billion support package for the tourism and aviation sector as part of the National Economic Recovery Plan.
<b>15 March 2021</b>	Reports that some European countries, including Germany, Italy and France, pausing their rollout of the AstraZeneca vaccine following concerns of serious side effects.
<b>17 March 2021</b>	Delivery of the vaccine to general practices commenced; The government announced arrangements to provide vaccine doses and medical assistance to Papua New Guinea.
<b>21 March 2021</b>	TGA approved the manufacture of the AstraZeneca vaccine by CSL in Australia.
<b>22 March 2021</b>	Vaccination phase 1b commenced.
<b>23 March 2021</b>	Locally made AstraZeneca vaccine became available for use in Australia.
<b>24 March 2021</b>	CSL released its first batch of the locally made AstraZeneca vaccine.
<b>31 March 2021</b>	Phase 1a of the vaccine rollout reached only 600 000 of the planned 4 million.
<b>1 April 2021</b>	First reported case in Australia of person developing a clotting disorder following vaccination with the AstraZeneca vaccine.
<b>8 April 2021</b>	The government accepted ATAGI advice regarding preference for the Pfizer vaccine for adults under the age of 50; AstraZeneca recommended for those over the age of 50.
<b>9 April 2021</b>	The Australian Government announced it had secured 20 million additional doses of Pfizer vaccine.
<b>13 April 2021</b>	Second reported case in Australia of person developing a clotting disorder following vaccination with the AstraZeneca vaccine.

---

<b>14 April 2021</b>	Prime Minister requested National Cabinet meet twice per week to 'tackle head-on' challenges in the vaccine rollout; Prime Minister suggested that 'mass vaccination options', done in partnership with the states and territories, will become a part of Australia's vaccines strategy.
<b>16 April 2021</b>	TGA announced third reported case of thrombosis and thrombocytopenia linked to AstraZeneca vaccine resulting in the death of a 48-year-old person.
<b>20 April 2021</b>	Department of Health acknowledged that only around 6.5 per cent of disability facilities reached in vaccine rollout.
<b>22 April 2021</b>	National Cabinet agreed to recalibrate the delivery model for the vaccination rollout in light of ATAGI advice on AstraZeneca.
<b>27 April 2021</b>	Government announced a 'temporary pause' on direct flights between Australia and India; requires all future passengers to a return a negative PCR test and a rapid antigen test.
<b>30 April 2021</b>	National Cabinet noted the significant increase in cases in India; government announced a two-week travel ban for Australians returning from India; imposes fines and prison sentences for breaches.
<b>2 May 2021</b>	Commencement of vaccinations for Australians aged between 50 to 70, with the AstraZeneca vaccine, at Commonwealth respiratory clinics and state mass vaccination centres.
<b>5 May 2021</b>	Phase 2a of the rollout commenced.
<b>7 May 2021</b>	National Cabinet announced facilitated commercial flights from India to Australia will recommence on 15 May 2021; nearly 10 000 Australians reported to be stranded in India, including 173 unaccompanied minors.
<b>13 May 2021</b>	Moderna announced it has reached an agreement with government for the supply of 25 million doses of its vaccines.
<b>17 May 2021</b>	NSW began vaccinating people aged 40 to 49 with the Pfizer vaccine; commencement of vaccination of Australians aged over 50 at GP clinics.
<b>24 May 2021</b>	Weekly average doses of vaccine exceeded 500 000 for the first time.

---

<b>26 May 2021</b>	Victoria announced a state-wide lockdown.
<b>3 June 2021</b>	Government announced temporary COVID-19 Disaster Payment.
<b>7 June 2021</b>	First COVID-19 vaccinations in pharmacies commenced.
<b>8 June 2021</b>	Vaccine eligibility expanded.
<b>10 June 2021</b>	Emergency measures under the Biosecurity Act 2015 are extended.
<b>11 June 2021</b>	Prime Minister announced that 20 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be donated to Pacific and SE Asia region countries.
<b>17 June 2021</b>	ATAGI recommended that the Pfizer vaccine is the preferred vaccine for those aged 16 to under 60.
<b>23 June 2021</b>	Local government areas NSW declared a COVID-19 hotspots.
<b>24 June 2021</b>	TGA granted provisional determination for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.
<b>25 June 2021</b>	Greater Sydney and parts of NSW entered lockdown.
<b>9 July 2021</b>	Prime Minister announced the National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response; inbound passenger arrival caps to be reduced by 50 per cent by 14 July 2021 due to the Delta.
<b>9 July 2021</b>	National Cabinet signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on Data Sharing.
<b>13 July 2021</b>	ATAGI shortened recommended interval between first and second dose of AstraZeneca to 4–8 weeks.
<b>15 July 2021</b>	Greater Melbourne and parts of Victoria declared COVID-19 hotspots; Victoria announces 5-day lockdown for parts of state.
<b>20 July 2021</b>	Victorian lockdown extended by a further seven days; Metropolitan Adelaide declared as a COVID-19 hotspot for a period of seven days.
<b>22 July 2021</b>	TGA granted provisional approval for the Pfizer vaccine for adolescents aged 12 years and over.

---

<b>6 August 2021</b>	National Cabinet noted that PCR testing would continue to be the priority testing method; agreed to further work on RATs.
<b>9 August 2021</b>	TGA granted provisional approval for the Moderna (mRNA) vaccine; Australia supplied 500 000 vaccine doses to Timor-Leste and Fiji.
<b>15 August 2021</b>	Government announced a test of COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs) in residential aged care facilities in Sydney.
<b>2 September 2021</b>	Emergency measures under the Biosecurity Act 2015 extended.
<b>6 September 2021</b>	Four million doses of the Pfizer vaccine arrived in Australia from the UK following a vaccine swap deal.
<b>12 September 2021</b>	Government announced supply of an additional one million doses of the Moderna vaccine from EU member states; an additional \$50 million announced to support vaccine communications campaign.
<b>13 September 2021</b>	Bookings begin for 12 to 15-years-olds to receive a vaccine.
<b>17 September 2021</b>	National Cabinet received an update on Doherty Institute modelling of additional outbreak scenarios.
<b>24 September 2021</b>	Government committed to providing 60 million vaccine doses to Indo-Pacific countries by the end of 2022 (3.2 million doses already provided)
<b>25 September 2021</b>	Two thirds of Australians over the age of 16-years (75.8%) had received at least one vaccine dose and over half (51.5%) were fully vaccinated.
<b>27 September 2021</b>	Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Royal Commission) publishes a draft committee report describing vaccine rollout as 'seriously deficient'; TGA announces regulatory changes allowing approved companies to supply RATs from 1 November 2021.
<b>29 September 2021</b>	Government announced winding down of COVID-19 Disaster Payment.
<b>13 October 2021</b>	Treasury revealed that JobMaker had reached just 1 per cent of the 450 000 jobs it was targeting.

---

<b>14 October 2021</b>	The Department of Health provided evidence to committee that vaccination rates for First Nations Australians began falling behind the general population from April 2021.
<b>28 October 2021</b>	Government announced boosters for those who received two doses at least six months prior.
<b>8 November 2021</b>	Booster program commenced for immunocompromised Australians and high priority groups.
<b>18 November 2021</b>	Biosecurity measures extended in the Northern Territory.
<b>24 November 2021</b>	WHO notified of the Omicron variant and, two days later, designated it a variant of concern.
<b>27 November 2021</b>	Australia introduced biosecurity measures for people arriving from parts of Africa.
<b>28 November 2021</b>	First cases of the Omicron variant confirmed in Australia.
<b>29 November 2021</b>	Government announced a pause to the planned 1 December 2021 reopening of Australia's international borders to 15 December 2021.
<b>30 November 2021</b>	WHO declared the Omicron strain to be a variant of concern; six cases detected in Australia.
<b>3 December 2021</b>	Government announced an additional \$540 million in funding to support COVID-19 response measures and COVID-19 medical research.
<b>5 December 2021</b>	TGA provisionally approved the Pfizer vaccine for use in children aged 5 to 11.
<b>8 December 2021</b>	TGA provisionally approved the Moderna vaccine (Spikevax) for use as a booster vaccine.
<b>10 December 2021</b>	Government extended human biosecurity measures for a further two months; Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment eligibility rules change.
<b>14 December 2021</b>	Government announced a deal with Moderna to manufacture mRNA vaccines in Australia.
<b>30 December 2021</b>	National cabinet agreed to advice to reset test, trace, isolate and quarantine arrangements in light of Omicron; set a new definition for close contacts.
<b>5 January 2022</b>	Up to ten RATs over three months to be made available to concession card holders.

<b>13 January 2022</b>	National Cabinet reaffirmed the National Plan to Transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response; agreed the National Framework for Managing COVID-19 in Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care.
<b>1 February 2022</b>	Government announced \$210 million in funding to support aged care workforce, including bonus payments to aged care workers; Australian Competition and Consumer Commission published RAT pricing, suggesting price mark ups 'difficult to justify'.
<b>7 February 2022</b>	Government announced up to 1700 Australian Defence Force personal to be deployed to the aged care sector.
<b>21 February 2022</b>	International borders reopened to fully vaccinated visa holders.
<b>11 March 2022</b>	Over \$2 billion announced to protect Australians against COVID-19 and influenza in winter, targeting aged care and disability sectors, vulnerable populations, and vaccines; National Cabinet decided to seek health advice to support ending quarantine for close contacts.
<b>15 March 2022</b>	Government announced end of ban on international cruise ships on 17 April 2022.
<b>20 March 2022</b>	Health experts warned of risks associated with easing public health restrictions, rising national case numbers, and the spread of the BA.2 Omicron subvariant.
<b>24 March 2022</b>	Government announced an agreement with Moderna for the production of mRNA vaccines in Australia.
<b>25 March 2022</b>	Government announced that COVID-19 emergency measures made under the Biosecurity Act 2015 will end on 17 April 2022.
<b>25 March 2022</b>	ATAGI recommended a fourth vaccine dose for people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 from four months after their initial booster dose.

## Appendix 3

### Public hearings and witnesses

*Thursday, 23 April 2020*

Committee Room 2S1  
Parliament House  
Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Professor Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Caroline Edwards, Secretary

*Tuesday, 28 April 2020*

Committee Room 2S1  
Parliament House  
Canberra

*Department of Treasury*

- Dr Steven Kennedy, Secretary
- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Ms Meghan Quinn, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Ms Roxanne Kelley, Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Foreign Investment Group
- Mr James Kelly, Acting Deputy Secretary, Markets Group
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division
- Mr Roger Brake, Division Head, Foreign Investment Division
- Mr Hector Thompson, Acting Division Head, Individuals and Indirect Tax Division

*Thursday, 30 April 2020*

Committee Room 2S1  
Parliament House  
Canberra

*Department of Social Services*

- Ms Kathryn Campbell AO CSC, Secretary
- Mr Shane Bennett, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Liz Hefren-Webb, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Catherine Rule, Deputy Secretary

*Services Australia*

- Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Annette Musolino, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Payments and Integrity Group
- Ms Michelle Lees, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Delivery Group
- Mr Russell Egan, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Design Group

*National Disability Insurance Agency*

- Mr Martin Hoffman, Chief Executive Officer

*NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission*

- Mr Graeme Head AO, Commissioner

*Tuesday, 5 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Border Force*

- Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner

*Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment*

- Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary
- Ms Lyn O'Connell PSM, Deputy Secretary, Biosecurity and Compliance Group

*Department of Home Affairs*

- Mr Michael Pezzullo, Secretary

*Wednesday, 6 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Attorney-General's Department*

- Ms Sarah Chidgey, Deputy Secretary, Integrity and International Group

*Digital Transformation Agency*

- Mr Randall Brugeaud, Chief Executive Officer

*Department of Health*

- Ms Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary
- Mr Paul McBride, First Assistant Secretary, Health Economics and Research Division

*Thursday, 7 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Federal Police*

- Mr Reece Kershaw, Commissioner
- Mr Brett Pointing, Deputy Commissioner, Operations

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation (via videoconference)
- Ms Kirsten Fish, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice (via videoconference)
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group (via videoconference)
- Mr Ramez Katf, Chief Information Officer (via videoconference)
- Mr Jeremy Geale, Chair, COVID Taskforce

*Department of Treasury*

- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division

*Wednesday, 13 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Professor Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary
- Mr Gavin Matthews, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Health Division
- Dr Lucas de Toca, Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Primary Care Response

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Mr Philip Gaetjens, Secretary
- Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Associate Secretary
- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary, Economy, Industry and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Cath Patterson, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Policy
- Ms Caroline Millar, Deputy Secretary, National Security

*National COVID-19 Coordination Commission*

- Mr Peter Harris AO, Chief Executive Officer

*National Indigenous Australians Agency*

- Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Letitia Hope, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Operations and Delivery
- Mr Blair Exell, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Policy and Programs

*Tuesday, 19 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Education, Skills and Employment*

- Dr Michele Bruniges AM, Secretary
- Dr Ros Baxter, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care
- Ms Alex Gordon, Deputy Secretary, Schools
- Mr Rob Heferen, Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International
- Mr Marcus Markovic, Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Enabling Services
- Mr Nathan Smyth, Deputy Secretary, Employment
- Ms Nadine Williams, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Training
- Mr Simon Gotzinger, Acting General Counsel
- Ms Kylie Crane, First Assistant Secretary, Payment and Engagement Division, Early Childhood and Child Care
- Mr Dom English, First Assist Secretary, Higher Education Group
- Ms Janine Pitt, First Assistant Secretary, Employment Programs and Activation
- Ms Karen Sandercock, First Assistant Secretary, International
- Mr Mark Sawade, First Assistant Secretary, Funding and Data Collection Division
- Mr George Thiveos, First Assist Secretary, Apprenticeship and Workforce Skills Division
- Mr Ivan Neville, Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Research and Analysis
- Ms Linda White, Assistant Secretary, Workforce and Apprenticeships Industry

*Thursday, 21 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Attorney-General's Department*

- Mr Martin Hehir, Deputy Secretary, Industrial Relations Group
- Ms Alison Durbin, First Assistant Secretary, Employment Conditions
- Mr Greg Manning, First Assistant Secretary, Employee Entitlement Safeguards and Policy

- Ms Janey Kuzma, First Assistant Secretary, Industrial Relations Legal (via teleconference)
- Ms Rachel Volzke, Assistant Secretary, Employment Standards and Organisations (via teleconference)
- Ms Sharon Huender, Assistant Secretary, Industrial Relations Strategy

*Fair Work Commission*

- Ms Bernadette O'Neill, General Manager
- Mr Murray Furlong, Executive Director, Tribunal Services Branch
- Ms Ailsa Carruthers, Executive Director, Client Services Delivery Branch

*Fair Work Ombudsman*

- Ms Sandra Parker PSM, Fair Work Ombudsman
- Mr Michael Campbell, Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman, Corporate
- Ms Kristen Hannah, Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman, Strategy, Engagement and Communications
- Mr Mark Scully, Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman, Operations
- Mr Jeremy O'Sullivan, Chief Counsel
- Ms Nicky Chaffer, Executive Director, Communications
- Ms Lynda McAlary-Smith, Executive Director, Compliance and Enforcement
- Ms Antonia Parkes, Executive Director, Advice, Support and Assistance
- Mr Russell Thackeray, Chief Financial Officer

*Department of Treasury*

- Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary
- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Ms Meghan Quinn, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Ms Katrina di Marco, Division Head, Tax Analysis Division
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division
- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Mr Chris Leggett, Assistant Secretary, Law Design Office

*Tuesday, 26 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission*

- Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner
- Mrs Christina Bolger, Executive Director, Regulatory Policy and Performance
- Ms Ann Wunsch, Executive Director, COVID-19 Taskforce

*Department of Health*

- Professor Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary
- Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care
- Ms Tania Rishniw, Acting Deputy Secretary, Health Systems Policy and Primary Care
- Ms Amy Laffan, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance
- Mr Mark Roddam, First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health

*Thursday, 28 May 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Reserve Bank of Australia*

- Mr Philip Lowe, Governor

*Australian Prudential Regulation Authority*

- Mr Wayne Byres, Chair
- Mrs Helen Rowell, Deputy Chair
- Mr John Lonsdale, Deputy Chair
- Mr Geoff Summerhayes, Executive Board Member

*Australian Securities and Investments Commission*

- Mr James Shipton, Chair
- Ms Karen Chester, Deputy Chair
- Mr Daniel Crennan QC, Deputy Chair
- Ms Cathie Armour, Commissioner
- Mr Sean Hughes, Commissioner
- Ms Danielle Press, Commissioner
- Mr John Price, Commissioner

*Tuesday, 2 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Ms Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary
- Dr Lucas de Toca, Acting First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Primary Care Response Team
- Mr Gavin Matthews, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Health

*Department of Social Services*

- Ms Kathryn Campbell AO CSC, Secretary
- Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security
- Ms Liz Hefren-Webb, Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities
- Mr Adrian Hudson, Acting Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Catherine Rule, Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers
- Mr Nathan Williamson, Deputy Secretary, COVID-19 Taskforce

*National Indigenous Australians Agency*

- Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Kevin Brahim, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Operations and Delivery
- Mr Blair Exell, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Policy and Programs
- Mr Ryan Bulman, Group Manager, Economic Policy and Programs
- Mr Sam Jeffries, Group Manager, Central Region

*Outback Stores*

- Mr Michael Borg, Chief Executive Officer

*Thursday, 4 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Mr Phil Gaetjens, Secretary
- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary Economic, Industry and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary, Governance Group
- Ms Caroline Millar, Deputy Secretary, National Security
- Mr Lachlan Colquhoun, First Assistant Secretary, National Security Division
- Mr Matthew Roper, Acting First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Social Policy and Implementation

*National COVID-19 Coordination Commission*

- Mr Neville Power, Chair
- Mr Malcolm Thompson, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

*Tuesday, 9 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance*

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation
- Ms Kirsten Fish, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice
- Mr Jeremy Geale, Chair, COVID-19 Response Committee
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group
- Mr James O'Halloran, Deputy Commissioner, JobKeeper Payment Program

*Department of Treasury*

- Dr Steven Kennedy, Secretary
- Ms Meghan Quinn, Deputy Secretary, Markets Group
- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Ms Katrina Di Marco, Division Head, Tax Analysis Division
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division
- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Ms Vicki Wilkinson, Division Head, Social Policy Division
- Ms Laura Berger-Thompson, Principal Advisor, Macroeconomic Conditions Division

*Tuesday, 23 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance*

- Mr Paul Murphy, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Matthew Chesher, Director of Legal and Policy
- Ms Helen Dallimore, Member
- Ms Fiona Donovan, Member
- Ms Nadine Garner, Member
- Ms Ruth Hazelton, Member

*Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association*

- Mr Gerard Dwyer, National Secretary

*United Workers Union*

- Mr Tim Kennedy, National Secretary
- Mrs Jessica Liersch, Member

*Australian Council of Trade Unions*

- Ms Michele O'Neil, President
- Mr Chris Watts, Senior Policy Advisor

*Wednesday, 24 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House  
Canberra

*Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

- Mr James Pearson, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Industry Group*

- Mr Innes Willox, Chief Executive Officer

*Business Council of Australia*

- Mr Tim Reed, President

*Council of Small Business Organisations Australia*

- Mr Peter Strong, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman*

- Ms Kate Carnell AO, Ombudsman
- Dr Craig Latham, Deputy
- Ms Alexandra Hordern, Director

*Thursday, 25 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Dr Peter Collignon AM, Private capacity*

*Dr Raina MacIntyre, Private capacity*

*Adjunct Professor Bill Bowtell AO, Private capacity*

*Dr Norman Swan, Private capacity*

*Australian Medical Association*

- Dr Tony Bartone, President
- Dr Martin Lavery, Secretary General

*Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation*

- Ms Annie Butler, Federal Secretary
- Ms Lori-Anne Sharp, Assistant Federal Secretary

*Tuesday, 30 June 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*A New Approach, Australian Academy of the Humanities*

- Ms Kate Fielding, Program Director

*National Association for the Visual Arts*

- Ms Esther Anatolitis, Executive Director

*Regional Arts Australia*

- Ms Ros Abercrombie, Executive Director

*Regional Arts NSW*

- Ms Elizabeth Rogers, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Major Performing Arts Group*

- Ms Bethwyn Serow, Executive Officer
- Ms Mary Jo Capps AM, Chair
- Mr Patrick McIntyre, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Theatre Company
- Ms Libby Christie AM, Chief Executive Officer, The Australian Ballet

*BlakDance*

- Ms Merindah Donnelly, Executive Producer

*Screen Producers Australia*

- Mr Mathew Deaner, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Holly Brimble, Director of Policy

*Australian Festivals Association*

- Ms Julia Robinson, General Manager

*Australian Recording Industry Association*

- Mr Dan Rosen, Chief Executive Officer

*Live Performance Australia*

- Ms Evelyn Richardson, Chief Executive

*Australia Council for the Arts*

- Mr Adrian Collette AM, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Wendy Were, Executive Director Advocacy and Development

*Office for the Arts, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications*

- Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Caroline Fulton, Assistant Secretary, Creative Industries
- Ms Justine Curnow, Assistant Secretary, Arts COVID Recovery and Response

*Wednesday, 1 July 2020*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Foodbank Australia*

- Ms Brianna Casey, Chief Executive Officer

*Red Cross*

- Mr Noel Clement, Director, Australian Programs

*St Vincent de Paul Society*

- Mr Toby oConnor, Chief Executive Officer

*UnitingCare Australia*

- Ms Claerwen Little, National Director
- Ms Corinne Dobson, Senior Analyst
- The Hon Bronwyn Pike, Chief Executive Officer, Uniting Victoria and Tasmania LTD

*Australian Federation of Disability Organisations*

- Mr Ross Joyce, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Trevor Carroll, Vice President
- Mr Patrick McGee, National Manager, Policy, Advocacy and Research
- Mr Bryn Overend, Principal Lawyer, Social Security Rights Victoria
- Dr Karen Soldatic, Associate Professor, Western Sydney University

*Carers Australia*

- Ms Liz Callaghan, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Sue Elderton, National Policy Manager
- Ms Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Carers ACT

*Children and Young People with Disability Australia*

- Ms Mary Sayers, Chief Executive Officer

*People with Disability Australia*

- Mr Jeff Smith, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms El Gibbs, Director, Media and Communications
- Ms Romola Hollywood, Director, Policy and Advocacy

*First Peoples Disability Network Australia*

- Mr Damian Griffs, Chief Executive Officer

*Thursday, 2 July 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Mr Saul Eslake, Private capacity*

*Market Economics*

Mr Stephen Koukoulas, Managing Director

*The Australia Institute*

- Dr Richard Denniss, Chief Economist
- Mr David Richardson, Senior Research Fellow

*Grattan Institute*

- Dr John Daley, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Brendan Coates, Household Finances Program Director
- Dr Stephen Duckett, Health Program Director
- Ms Danielle Wood, Budget Policy and Institutional Reform Program Director

*Institute of Public Affairs*

- Mr Daniel Wild, Director of Research
- Mr Morgan Begg, Research Fellow

*Australian Council of Social Service*

- Dr Cassandra Goldie, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Peter Davidson, Principal Advisor
- Ms Charmaine Crowe, Senior Advisor Social Security

*Tuesday, 21 July 2020*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Mr Nicholas Moore, Private capacity*

*Transport Workers' Union of Australia*

- Mr Nick McIntosh, Assistant National Secretary
- Ms Darlene Bailey, Member

*Australian Services Union*

- Ms Linda White, Assistant National Secretary
- Ms Maree Keygan, Australian Airports Regional Manager, Air Niugini

*Flight Attendants' Association of Australia*

- Ms Teri O'Toole, Secretary, International Division
- Mr Gareth Uren, Secretary, National Division

*Qantas Airways Limited*

- Mr Andrew Parker, Group Executive, Government, Industry, International, Sustainability
- Mr Andrew Finch, General Counsel and Group Executive, Office of the Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Ian Hosegood, Director, Medical Services

*Department of Treasury*

- Ms Meghan Quinn PSM, Deputy Secretary, Markets Group
- Ms Kate O'Rourke, Head, Markets Taskforce

*Tuesday, 28 July 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Council of Social Service*

- Dr Cassandra Goldie, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Jacqueline Phillips, Director of Policy and Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Charmaine Crowe, Senior Advisor Social Security

*National Tertiary Education Union*

- Dr Alison Barnes, National President
- Dr Terri MacDonald, National Research Officer

*Australian Services Union, NSW and ACT Branch*

- Ms Natalie Lang, Branch Secretary
- Ms Emeline Gaske, National Campaign and Communications Coordinator

*National Union of Students*

- Ms Molly Willmott, National President
- Mr Ali Mohammad Amin, Welfare Officer

*Universities Australia*

- Ms Catriona Jackson, Chief Executive
- Ms Anne-Marie Lansdown, Deputy Chief Executive

*Group of Eight*

- Professor Margaret Gardner AC, Chair

*Regional Universities Network*

- Professor Helen Bartlett, Chair

*Charles Sturt University*

- Professor Heather Cavanagh, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Engagement

*TAFE Directors Australia*

- Mr Craig Robertson, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Ronald Jackson, Director, Strategy and Tertiary Education

*Department of Education, Skills and Employment*

- Mr Rob Heferen, Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International
- Ms Nadine Williams, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Training
- Mr Dom English, First Assistant Secretary, Higher Education
- Mr Tim Ffrench, General Counsel
- Ms Mary McDonald, First Assistant Secretary, VET Quality and Policy
- Ms Karen Sandercock, First Assistant Secretary, International
- Mr George Thiveos, First Assistant Secretary, Apprenticeships and Workforce Skills
- Ms Belinda Campbell, Assistant Secretary, Workforce and Apprenticeships Services
- Ms Clare Sharp, Assistant Secretary, National Skills Reform Taskforce
- Mr Adam Weideman, Assistant Secretary, Economic Response, Taskforce

*Thursday, 30 July 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of the Treasury*

- Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary
- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Mr Luke Yeaman, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Mr Ian Beckett, Division Head, Macroeconomic Modelling and Policy Division
- Mr Matt Brine, Division Head, Environment, Industry and Infrastructure Division
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Ms Katrina Di Marco, Division Head, Tax Analysis Division
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division

- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Mr Jonathan Rollings, Division Head, Budget Policy Division
- Ms Vicki Wilkinson, Division Head, Social Policy Division
- Mrs Laura Berger-Thomson, Principal Adviser, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Mr Merrick Peisley, Principal Adviser, Environment, Industry and Infrastructure Division

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Mr Jeremy Geale, Chair, COVID-19 Response Committee
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement
- Ms Deborah Jenkins, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice

*Department of Social Services*

- Ms Kathryn Campbell AO CSC, Secretary
- Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security
- Ms Liz Hefren-Webb, Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities
- Mr Adrian Hudson, Acting Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Catherine Rule, Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers
- Mr Nathan Williamson, Deputy Secretary, COVID-19 Taskforce
- Mr Andrew Harvey, Chief Finance Officer
- Ms Mary McLarty, Acting Group Manager, Participation Payments

*Services Australia*

- Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Amanda Cattermole, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr Paul Creech, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Payments and Integrity Group
- Mr Russell Egan, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Design Group
- Ms Michelle Lees, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Delivery Group
- Ms Annette Musolino, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Income Compliance Taskforce.
- Mr Jason McNamara, General Manager, Debts and Appeals Division
- Ms Debbie Mitchell, General Manager, COVID-19 Closure Taskforce

*Tuesday, 4 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians*

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care
- Ms Amy Laffan, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance

*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission*

- Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner

*Thursday, 6 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Education, Skills and Employment*

- Mr Nathan Smyth, Deputy Secretary, Employment
- Ms Nadine Williams, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Training
- Ms Renae Houston, First Assistant Secretary, VET Quality and Policy
- Ms Benedikte Jensen, First Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Strategy
- Ms Margaret Kidd, First Assistant Secretary, Delivery and Employer Engagement
- Ms Mary McDonald, First Assistant Secretary, Skills Reform Taskforce
- Mr Ty Emerson, Assistant Secretary, Job Seeker Participation and Compliance Branch
- Ms Melissa Ryan, First Assistant Secretary, New Employment Services Model
- Ms Robyn Shannon, First Assistant Secretary, Quality, Integrity and Evidence
- Mr George Thiveos, First Assistant Secretary, Apprenticeship and Workforce Skills
- Ms Belinda Campbell, Assistant Secretary, Workforce and Apprenticeships Services
- Mr Ivan Neville, Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Research and Analysis
- Ms Clare Sharp, Assistant Secretary, National Skills Reform Taskforce
- Mr Adam Weiderman, Assistant Secretary, Economic Response Taskforce
- Mr Tim Ffrench, General Counsel

*Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications*

- Mr Simon Atkinson, Secretary
- Dr Rachel Bacon, Deputy Secretary
- Mr David Hallinan, Deputy Secretary
- Mr Brendan McRandle PSM, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Pip Spence PSM, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Secretary
- Mr Richard Windeyer, Deputy Secretary
- Mr Richard Wood, Acting Deputy Secretary
- Mr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Jessica Hall, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Gayle Milnes, First Assistant Secretary
- Mr Simon Moore, Acting First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Marisa Purvis-Smith, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Janet Quigley, First Assistant Secretary
- Mr Phil Smith, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Natalie Broughton, Acting Assistant Secretary, COVID Regional Policy and Programs
- Mr Daniel Caruso, Assistant Secretary, COVID Recovery Infrastructure Investment Stimulus
- Mr Jason Dymowski, Acting Assistant Secretary, COVID Domestic Policy & Programs
- Mr Phil McClure, Assistant Secretary, COVID Financial Assistance
- Ms Cindy McTaggart, Acting Assistant Secretary, Airports
- Mr Jim Wolfe, Assistant Secretary, COVID International

*Tuesday, 11 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Mr Phil Gaetjens, Secretary
- Ms Deb Anton, Acting Deputy Secretary Social Policy
- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary Economy, Infrastructure and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary Governance and APS Reform
- Ms Caroline Millar, Deputy Secretary National Security and International Policy
- Mr Lachlan Colquhoun, First Assistant Secretary National Security Division
- Mr Trevor Jones, Assistant Secretary Disaster Preparedness and Response Branch

*National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board*

- Mr Neville Power, Chair
- Mr Malcom Thompson, Deputy CEO

*Department of Education, Skills and Employment*

- Dr Michele Bruniges AM, Secretary
- Mr Tim Ffrench, General Council
- Dr Ros Baxter, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care
- Ms Alex Gordon, Deputy Secretary, Schools
- Mr Rob Heferen, Deputy Secretary, Higher Education, Research and International
- Mr John Baker, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Funding and Data Collection Division
- Mr Dom English, First Assistant Secretary, Higher Education
- Dr James Hart, First Assistant Secretary, Payment Policy and Engagement Group
- Mr David Pattie, First Assistant Secretary, Improving Student Outcomes Division
- Ms Karen Sandercock, First Assistant Secretary, International
- Mr Jeff Willing, Assistant Secretary, Coordination and Engagement Branch

*Friday, 14 August 2020*

Committee Room 2R1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly Acting Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Caroline Edwards, Associate Secretary
- Mr Paul McBride, First Assistant Secretary, Medical Benefits
- Mr Daniel Keys, Chief Information Officer and Chief Security Officer

*Digital Transformation Agency*

- Mr Randall Brugeaud, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Peter Alexander, Chief Digital Officer
- Mr Anthony Warnock, Head of Government Technology, Digital Delivery and Corporate Division

*Department of Treasury*

- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Mr Luke Yeaman, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Ms Katrina di Marco, Division Head, Tax Analysis Division

- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division
- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Mr Hector Thompson, Acting Division Head, Individuals and Indirect Tax Division
- Ms Vicki Wilkinson, Division Head, Social Policy Division
- Mrs Laura Berger-Thomson, Principal Adviser, Macroeconomic Conditions Division

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhom, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group
- Ms Deborah Jenkins, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice
- Mr Jeremy Geale, Deputy Commissioner, Review and Dispute Resolution

*Tuesday, 18 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Families and Social Services*

*Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment*

- Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary
- Ms Rosemary Deininger, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Emily Canning, First Assistant Secretary, Biosecurity Operations Division
- Ms Nicola Hinder, Assistant Secretary, Meat Exports

*Australian Border Force*

- Mr Michael Outram, Commissioner
- Ms Cheryl-anne Moy, Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Erin Dale, Acting Deputy Commissioner Operations
- Ms Kaylene Zakharoff, Acting Deputy Commissioner Support
- Ms Pip de Veau, General Counsel
- Ms Kylie Rendina, Assistant Commissioner Border Patrol and Coordination Command
- Ms Claire Rees, Acting Group Manager, Immigration Detention Group

*Australian Defence Force*

- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC AM, Commander Defence COVID-19 Task Force
- Rear Admiral Sarah Sharkey, Surgeon General
- Mr Tony Fraser, Deputy Secretary Capability Acquisition

*Department of Social Services*

- Ms Kathryn Campbell AO CSC, Secretary
- Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary
- Ms Liz Hefren-Webb, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Catherine Rule, Deputy Secretary
- Mr Nathan Williamson, Deputy Secretary
- Mr Andrew Harvey, Chief Finance Officer
- Mr Adrian Hudson, Acting Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Mary McLarty, Acting Group Manager, Participation Payments Group

*Services Australia*

- Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Paul Creech, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Payments & Integrity Group
- Mr Russell Egan, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Design Group
- Ms Michelle Lees, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Customer Service Delivery Group
- Ms Annette Musolino, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Income Compliance Taskforce
- Ms Amanda Cattermole, Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Kirsty Faichney, General Manager, Families, Children and Target Services Division
- Ms Laura Gannon, Acting General Manager, COVID-19 Closure Taskforce
- Mr Jason McNamara, General Manager, Debts and Appeals Division

*Thursday, 20 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Tourism Industry Council*

- Mr Simon Westaway, Executive Director

*Tourism Accommodation Australia*

- Mr Martin Ferguson, Chairman
- Mr Michael Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

- Mr John Hart, Executive Chair, Australian Chamber Tourism Committee
- Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment and Skills, and Director, Tourism

*Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia*

- Mr Peter Strong, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Airports Association*

- Mr James Goodwin, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Regional Tourism*

- Ms Coralie Bell, Chairperson

*Tourism and Transport Forum*

- Ms Margy Osmond, Chief Executive Officer

*United Workers Union*

- Ms Jo Briskey, National Political Coordinator, Parliamentary Affairs
- Ms Josephine Annink, Industrial Member, Casinos
- Mr Chris Ball, Industrial Member, Casinos
- Mr Adam Quill, Industrial Member, Pubs and Clubs

*Australian Federation of Travel Agents*

- Mr Tom Manwaring, Chairman
- Mr Darren Rudd, Chief Executive Officer

*Business Events Council of Australia*

- Dr Vanessa Findlay, Chair
- Mr Andrew Hiebl, Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux

*Australian Trade and Investment Commission*

- Mr Tim Beresford, Acting Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Robert Donnelly, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr Dom Bilbie, Head of Client Programs

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- Ms Frances Adamson, Secretary
- Ms Mary Balzary, First Assistant Secretary, Soft Power, Communications and Scholarships Division
- Mr James Baxter, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Trade Negotiations
- Mr Craig Chittick, First Assistant Secretary, United States and Indo-Pacific Strategy Division
- Mr Tom Connor, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Southeast Asia Division
- Dr Jenny Gordon, Chief Economist
- Ms Amanda Gorely, Ambassador for Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation, and First Assistant Secretary, International Security Division
- Ms Danielle Heinecke, First Assistant Secretary, Pacific Operations and Development
- Mr Jamie Isbister, Ambassador for the Environment & First Assistant Secretary, Economic Growth and Sustainability Division
- Ms Elly Lawson, First Assistant Secretary, North Asia Division

- Ms Kate Logan, Chief of Protocol
- Mr Simon Newnham, Chief Legal Officer
- Mrs Elizabeth Peak, First Assistant Secretary, Human Development and Governance Division
- Ms Cathy Raper, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit
- Mr Daniel Sloper, Chief People Officer
- Mr Gerald Thomson, First Assistant Secretary, Pacific Bilateral
- Mr Murali Venugopal, Chief Finance Officer
- Ms Elizabeth Ward, First Assistant Secretary, Trade, Investment and Business Engagement Division
- Dr Fiona Webster, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division
- Dr Stephanie Williams, Ambassador for Regional Health Security
- Ms Suzanne McCourt, Assistant Secretary, Sanctions Crime and Sea Law Branch
- Mr Ben Milton, Assistant Secretary, Corporate Law Branch
- Ms Ruth Stone, Assistant Secretary, Human Rights Policy and Social Inclusion Branch

*Tourism Australia*

- Ms Phillipa Harrison, Managing Director
- Mr Mark Craig, Executive General Manager, Corporate Services
- Mr Bede Fennell, Executive General Manager, Corporate Affairs

*Friday, 21 August 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians*

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care
- Ms Amy Laffan, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance

*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission*

- Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner

*Thursday, 10 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Finance*

- Ms Rosemary Huxtable PSM, Secretary
- Dr Stein Helgeby, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Resource Management
- Mr Andrew Jagers, Deputy Secretary, Commercial and Government Services
- Ms Clare Walsh, Deputy Secretary, Business Enabling Services
- Mr Matt Yannopoulos, Deputy Secretary, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Ms Tracey Carroll, First Assistant Secretary, Financial Analysis, Reporting and Management Division, Governance and Resource Management
- Mr Andrew Danks, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Procurement and Insurance Division, Commercial and Government Services
- Mr David De Silva, First Assistant Secretary, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services, Business Enabling Services
- Mr Scott Dilley, First Assistant Secretary, Governance Division, Governance and Resource Management
- Mr Martin Graham, First Assistant Secretary, Social Policy Division, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Ms Stacie Hall, First Assistant Secretary, Commercial Investments Division, Commercial and Government Services
- Mr Nick Hunt, First Assistant Secretary, Property and Construction Division, Commercial and Government Services
- Ms Amanda Lee, First Assistant Secretary, Budget Policy and Coordination Division, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Mr Libor Pelecky, First Assistant Secretary, Industry, Education and Infrastructure Division, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Mr Iain Scott, First Assistant Secretary, Corporate Services Division, Business Enabling Services

*Productivity Commission*

- Mr Michael Brennan, Chair
- Ms Nina Davidson, Head of Office

*Tuesday, 15 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Mental Health Australia*

- Dr Leanne Beagley, Chief Executive Officer

*Community Mental Health Australia*

- Mr Bill Gye OAM, Chief Executive Officer

*headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation*

- Mr Jason Trethowan, Chief Executive Officer

*Lifeline Australia*

- Mr John Brogden AM, Chairman
- Dr Anna Brooks, National Manager Lifeline Research Foundation

*Mental Health Victoria*

- Mr Angus Clelland, Chief Executive Officer

*Beyond Blue*

- Mr Alastair Stott, Chief Services Officer

*Black Dog Institute*

- Professor Helen Christensen AO, Executive Director and Chief Scientist

*National Mental Health Commission*

- Ms Christine Morgan, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Alison Morehead, Deputy, Strategy

*Thursday, 17 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of the Treasury*

- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Mr Luke Yeaman, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, Acting Division Head, JobKeeper Division
- Ms Katrina di Marco, Division Head, Tax Analysis Division
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division
- Mr Trevor Power, Division Head, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Mr Hector Thompson, Acting Division Head, Individuals and Indirect Tax Division
- Ms Vicki Wilkinson, Division Head, Social Policy Division

- Ms Laura Berger-Thomson, Principal Adviser, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Ms Michelle Dowdell, Principal Adviser, Strategic Policy Coordination Division
- Mr Merrick Peisley, Principal Adviser, Centre for Population

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group
- Ms Deborah Jenkins, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice
- Mr James O'Halloran, Deputy Commissioner, JobKeeper Payment Program

*Department of Social Services*

- Ms Catherine Rule, Deputy Secretary, COVID-19 Response for Disability

*National Disability Insurance Agency*

- Mr Martin Hoffman, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Lisa Studdert, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

*NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission*

- Mr Graeme Head AO, Commissioner
- Ms Samantha Taylor PSM, Registrar

*Tuesday, 22 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Women's Legal Services Australia*

- Ms Angela Lynch AM, Chief Executive Officer, Women's Legal Service Qld
- Ms Helen Matthews, Spokesperson

*Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre*

- Associate Professor Kate Fitz-Gibbon, Director
- Dr Silke Meyer, Deputy Director
- Dr Marie Segrave, Associate Professor
- Dr Naomi Pfitzner, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

*Australian Women Against Violence Alliance*

- Ms Tina Dixon, Acting Program Manager

*Family Day Care Australia*

- Mr Andrew Paterson, Chief Executive Officer

*National Foundation for Australian Women*

- Professor Helen Hodgson, Chair, Social Policy Committee
- Associate Professor Sally Moyle, Member, Social Policy Committee
- Dr Kathleen MacDermott, Member, Social Policy Committee

*Women in Super*

- Ms Catherine Wood, National Chair

*Economic Security4Women*

- Mrs Roselynn Anderson, Chair
- Mrs Sharen Page, Finance and Project Officer

*Australian Human Rights Commission*

- Ms Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Ms Catherine Hawkins, First Assistant Secretary, Office for Women
- Ms Elizabeth Brayshaw, Assistant Secretary, Women's Safety and International Engagement
- Ms Margaret Thomas, Acting Assistant Secretary, Women's Economic Security, Programs and Leadership

*Workplace Gender Equality Agency*

- Ms Libby Lyons, Director
- Dr Janin Bredehoeft, Research and Analytics Executive Manager

*Thursday, 24 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Individuals Impacted by Repatriation and Travel Issues*

- Peta, private capacity
- Mrs Deanne Vowels, private capacity
- Mrs Claire Burles, private capacity
- Margaret, private capacity
- Ms Sarah Eifermann, private capacity
- Ms Fiona Wright, private capacity
- Mr Pieter Den Heten, private capacity
- Gina, private capacity

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary Economy, Industry and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary Governance and APS Reform
- Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary Social Policy

- Ms Caroline Millar, Deputy Secretary National Security and International Policy
- Mr Lachlan Colquhoun, First Assistant Secretary National Security Division
- Ms Nicole Spencer, Assistant Secretary Infrastructure, Population, Agriculture and Regional Development

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- Ms Frances Adamson, Secretary
- Ms Mary Balzary, First Assistant Secretary, Executive Division
- Ms Cathy Raper, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit
- Dr Fiona Webster, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division
- Mr Daniel Sloper, Chief People Officer
- Ms Kate Logan, Assistant Secretary, Protocol Branch
- Mr Murali Venugopal, Chief Finance Officer, Finance Division

*Australian Border Force*

- Mr Michael Outram APM, Commissioner
- Mr Tim Fitzgerald, Acting Assistant Commissioner Border Patrol and Coordination Command

*Department of Home Affairs*

- Mr Michael Pezzullo AO, Secretary

*Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications*

- Mr Simon Atkinson, Secretary
- Ms Christine Dacey, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Janet Quigley, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Aviation Issues Management Division
- Mr Richard Wood, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Aviation Response Programs

*Tuesday, 29 September 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care
- Dr Nick Hartland, First Assistant Secretary, In-home Aged Care
- Ms Amy Laffan, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance

*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission*

- Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner

*Thursday, 26 November 2020*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Individuals Impacted by Repatriation and Travel Issues*

- Carly, private capacity
- Mr David Jeffries, private capacity
- Mrs Kate Jeffries, private capacity
- Ms Fiona Wright, private capacity

*Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary Governance and APS Reform
- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary, Economy, Industry and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy
- Ms Nicole Spencer, Head COVID-19 Response Taskforce
- Mr Lachlan Colquhoun, First Assistant Secretary, National Security Division

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- Mr Tony Sheehan, Deputy Secretary of the International Security, Humanitarian and Consular Group
- Mr Murali Venugopal, Chief Financial Officer
- Ms Frances Lisson, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit
- Ms Kate Logan, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division

*Department of Home Affairs*

- Mr Andrew Kefford PSM, Deputy Secretary
- Ms Peta Dunn, First Assistant Secretary
- Mr Michael Willard, First Assistant Secretary
- Ms Kylie Rendina, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Operational Strategy and Coordination, Australian Border Force
- Mr Tim Fitzgerald, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Operational Coordination and Planning Command, Australian Border Force

*Department of Health*

- Professor Paul Kelly, Acting Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Caroline Edwards, Associate Secretary

*Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications*

- Ms Christine Dacey, Deputy Secretary
- Mr Richard Wood, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Aviation Response Programs

*Thursday, 28 January 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Royal Australasian College of Physicians*

- Professor John Wilson AM, President

*Australian Medical Association*

- Dr Omar Khorshid, President

*Pharmacy Guild of Australia*

- Mr George Tambassis, National President
- Ms Suzanne Greenwood, Executive Director

*AstraZeneca Australia (via videoconference)*

- Ms Alice Morgan, Market Access Director
- Dr Carla Swemmer, Senior Medical Director

*Pfizer Australia and New Zealand*

- Dr Krishan Thiru, Medical Director, Developed Asia
- Ms Louise Graham, Director, Market Access

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Ms Hope Peisley, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce, Vaccine Policy

*Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation Group

*Advisory Committee on Vaccines*

- Professor Allen Cheng, Chair

*Thursday, 11 February 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of the Treasury*

- Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary
- Ms Maryanne Mrakovcic, Deputy Secretary, Revenue Group
- Ms Jenny Wilkinson, Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group
- Mr Luke Yeaman, Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group
- Ms Philippa Brown, First Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Policy Division
- Mr Mark Cully, First Assistant Secretary, Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy Division
- Ms Katrina Di Marco, First Assistant Secretary, Tax Analysis Division
- Mr Robert Jeremenko, First Assistant Secretary, Market Conduct Division
- Mr Trevor Power, First Assistant Secretary, Macroeconomic Conditions Division
- Ms Sam Reinhardt, First Assistant Secretary, Corporate and International Tax Division
- Ms Vicki Wilkinson, First Assistant Secretary, Social Policy Division
- Ms Laura Berger-Thomson, Assistant Secretary, Macroeconomic Forecasting Branch
- Ms Michelle Dowdell, Assistant Secretary, Strategic Policy Coordination Branch
- Mr Robb Preston, Assistant Secretary, Retirement Income Policy Division

*Australian Taxation Office*

- Ms Kirsten Fish, Acting Second Commissioner, Law Design and Practice Group
- Mr Jeremy Hirschhorn, Second Commissioner, Client Engagement Group
- Mr Will Day, Deputy Commissioner, Integrated Compliance
- Mr James O'Halloran, Deputy Commissioner, Economic Stimulus Branch

*Tuesday, 2 March 2021*

Committee Room 2R1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Professor Robert Booy, Private capacity*

*Professor Raina MacIntyre, Private capacity*

*CSL Limited*

- Dr Beverley Menner, Executive Director, COVID Vaccine Projects Lead
- Mr Christopher Larkins, Senior Vice President, Manufacturing Operations, Seqirus

*Tuesday, 9 March 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Mr Phil Gaetjens, Secretary
- Mr Simon Duggan, Deputy Secretary, Economy, Industry and G20 Sherpa
- Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy
- Mr Paul Grigson, Deputy Secretary, Vaccine Strategy Integration
- Ms Nicole Spencer, Head of Taskforce, COVID-19 Response
- Mr Malcolm Thompson, Head of Taskforce, National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board

*Thursday, 11 March 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Tracey Duffy, Acting Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation
- Ms Hope Peisley, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Policy Branch, Vaccine Taskforce Division
- Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People, Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Dr Jane Cook, First Assistant Secretary, Medicines Regulation Division
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Primary Care Response Team

*Tuesday, 20 April 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Australian Government Chief Medical Officer
- Adj Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation
- Ms Lisa Schofield PSM, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Primary Care Response

*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Professor Allen Cheng, Co-chair

*Tuesday, 27 April 2021*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Medical Association*

- Dr Omar Khorshid, President

*The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners*

- Associate Professor Charlotte Hespe, Chair RACGP NSW & ACT

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Primary Care Response Team
- Ms Lisa Schofield PSM, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce

*Thursday, 29 April 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Hotels Association*

- Mr Stephen Ferguson, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Anthony Brierley, General Manager ACT

*Tourism Accommodation Australia*

- Mr Micheal Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

*Australian Tourism Industry Council*

- Mr Simon Westaway, Executive Director

*Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Communications*

- Ms Christine Dacey, Deputy Secretary Transport
- Ms Janet Quigley, First Assistant Secretary Domestic Aviation and Reform
- Mr Richard Wood, First Assistant Secretary International Aviation, Technology and Services
- Mr Jim Wolfe, Assistant Secretary, International Aviation
- Mr Jason Dymowski, Assistant Secretary, Domestic Aviation and Reform

*Australian Trade and Investment Commission*

- Ms Kelly Ralston, Acting Deputy CEO
- Mr Rob Donnelly, Chief Operating Officer

*Friday, 7 May 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- The Hon Barry O'Farrell AO, High Commissioner to India
- Mr Gary Cowan, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit
- Ms Frances Lisson, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit
- Ms Lynette Wood, First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division
- Ms Marie-Charlotte McKenna, Acting Assistant Secretary, International Law Branch

*Department of Health*

- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer

*Monday, 21 June 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Ms Caroline Edwards PSM, Associate Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC AM, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Teena Blewitt, A/g Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People, Communication and Parliamentary
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Lisa Schofield PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce

*Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Health Products Regulation

*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Dr Christopher Blyth, Co-chair

*Friday, 23 July 2021*

Committee Room 2S1, Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC AM, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Teena Blewitt, A/g Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Mr Paul McBride, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Evidence and Research
- Ms Lisa Schofield, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People, Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Ms Bronwyn Field, First Assistant Secretary, Portfolio Strategies
- Mr David Mulhall, First Assistant Secretary, Disability Group, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce

*Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation

*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Professor Allen Cheng, Co-Chair
- Dr Christopher Blyth, Co-Chair

*Friday, 30 July 2021*

Committee Room 2S1 Parliament House,  
Canberra

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy
- Mr James Chisholm, First Assistant Secretary, Industry, Infrastructure and Environment
- Mr David Pullen, Assistant Secretary, Infrastructure, Transport, Agriculture and Regional
- Mr Matthew Flint, Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Response Taskforce

*Department of Finance*

- Mr Andrew Jagers, Deputy Secretary, Commercial and Government Services
- Ms Anna Harmer PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Government and Defence Division, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Ms Amanda Lee, First Assistant Secretary, Budget Policy and Coordination Division, Budget and Financial Reporting
- Ms Kylie Dennis, Assistant Secretary, Commercial and Government Services

*Department of Home Affairs*

- Mr Michael Pezzullo AO, Secretary
- Mr Michael Willard, Acting Deputy Secretary, Immigration and Settlement Services
- Ms Sandra Jeffery, Assistant Secretary, Temporary Visas and Border Measures

*Australian Border Force*

- Mr Michael Outram APM, Commissioner

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- Mr Tony Sheehan, Deputy Secretary, International Security, Humanitarian and Consular Group
- Ms Frances Lisson, First Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Coordination Unit

- Ms Kate Logan, First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division

*Tuesday, 21 September 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Clinical Associate Professor Nick Coatsworth, Private capacity*

*Professor Mary-Louise McLaws, Private capacity*

*Dr Chandini Raina MacIntyre, Private capacity*

*Dr Greg Kelly, Private capacity*

*Australian Medical Association*

- Dr Omar Khorshid, Federal President

*Murdoch Children's Research Institute*

- Professor Andrew Steer, Theme Director, Infection and Immunity Research Theme
- Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Theme Director, Population Health

*National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance*

- Professor Kristine Macartney, Director

*Tuesday, 28 September 2021*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC AM, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ben Peoples, Chief of Staff, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Jackie Davis, Chief Counsel, Legal and Assurance Division
- Ms Teena Blewitt, Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Tania Rishniw, Deputy Secretary, Primary and Community Care
- Mr Paul McBride, Acting Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Evidence and Research Group
- Dr Nicholas Hartland, Acting Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care Group

- Dr James Hart, First Assistant Secretary, Operation COVID Shield
- Ms Lisa Schofield, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Taskforce
- Dr Lucas De Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Program Implementation and Primary Care Response
- Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Ms Celia Street, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection and Response Division
- Mr Simon Cotterell, First Assistant Secretary, Primary Care Division
- Ms Jane Wagner, Assistant Secretary, Strategic Procurement Branch
- Ms Perdi Mitchell, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Operations Data and Reporting
- Ms Hope Peisley, Assistant Secretary, Program Policy and Design Division
- Ms Rachelle Davis, Acting Assistant Secretary, Logistics Branch

*Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation

*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Dr Christopher Blyth, Co-Chair
- Professor Allen Cheng, Co-Chair

*Thursday, 30 September 2021*

Committee Room 2S1

Parliament House

Canberra

*Services Australia*

- Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Jarrod Howard, General Manager, Health Programmes
- Ms Kathryn Haigh, Chief Counsel, Legal Services
- Mr Charles McHardie, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Transformation Projects
- Ms Michelle Lees, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Vaccination Certificate Delivery Taskforce

*Digital Transformation Agency*

- Mr Peter Alexander, Acting Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Jonathon Thorpe, General Manger, Whole of Government Governance and Sourcing

*Thursday, 14 October 2021*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Mayor Stephen Lawrence, Dubbo Regional Council, Private capacity*

*Mayor Darriea Turley AM, Mayor, Broken Hill City Council, Private capacity*

*Professor Cameron Stewart, Private capacity*

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Mr Ben Peoples, Chief of Staff, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Teena Blewitt, Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Celia Street, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection and Response Division
- Dr Lucas De Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Program Implementation and Primary Care Response Division
- Mrs Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Mrs Sheryl Hedges, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous and Remote COVID-19 Policy and Implementation National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Mrs Michelle Steele, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Remote Policy Implementation Branch
- Mr Nick Henderson, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Operations Branch
- Ms Rachelle Davis, Acting Assistant Secretary, Logistics Branch

*National Indigenous Australians Agency*

- Mr Blair Exell, Acting Chief Executive Officer
- Mrs Letitia Hope, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Mrs Justine Fievez, Branch Manager - Strategic Implementation and Standardisation

*South West Aboriginal Medical Service*

- Ms Lesley Nelson, Chief Executive Officer

*Rural and Remote Medical Services*

- Mr Mark Burdack, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Amanda Kelly, A/g Manager

*First Peoples Disability Network Australia*

- Mr Damian Griffis, Chief Executive Officer

*Maranguka Backbone Organisation*

- Mr Alistair Ferguson, Founder and Executive Director

*National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation*

- Ms Patricia Turner, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Jason Agostino, Medical Advisor

*Tuesday, 16 November 2021*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth*

- Ms Penny Dakin, Chief Executive Officer

*UNICEF Australia*

- Ms Nicole Breeze, Director of Australian Programs and Child Rights

*Murdoch Children's Research Institute*

- Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Theme Director, Population Health
- Professor Andrew Steer, Theme Director, Infection and Immunity Research Theme

*Thrive by Five, Minderoo Foundation*

- The Honourable Jay Weatherill AO, Chief Executive Officer

*Tuesday, 7 December 2021*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC, AM, Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Dr Sonya Bennett, Deputy Chief Medical Officer
- Ms Teena Blewitt, Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing
- Mr Charles Wann, Deputy Secretary, Corporate Operations
- Ms Tania Rishniw, Deputy Secretary, Primary and Community Care

- Ms Jackie Davis, Chief Counsel, Legal and Assurance Division
- Ms Alison McMillan, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
- Mr Ben Peoples, Chief of Staff, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Ms Celia Street, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection and Response Division
- Ms Helen Grinbergs, First Assistant Secretary, Service Delivery Division
- Mr Paul McBride, First Assistant Secretary, Strategy, Evidence and Research Division
- Ms Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Dr Lucas de Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Program Implementation and Primary Care Response Division
- Dr James Hart, First Assistant Secretary, Operation COVID Shield
- Mr Paul McCormack, First Assistant Secretary, Financial Management Division
- Ms Bronwyn Field, First Assistant Secretary, Portfolio Strategies Division
- Ms Hope Peisley, Assistant Secretary, Program Policy and Design Division
- Ms Allison Jones, Assistant Secretary, Science and Investment
- Ms Jodie Grieve, Assistant Secretary, People, Communication and Parliamentary Division
- Ms Rachelle Davis, Assistant Secretary, Logistics Branch
- Mr Perdi Mitchell, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Operations Data and Reporting
- Ms Yvette Sims, Assistant Secretary, Commercial Vaccination Providers Branch

#### *Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation
- Dr Jane Cook, First Assistant Secretary, Medicines Regulation
- Ms Elspeth Kay, Assistant Secretary, Pharmacovigilance and Special Access
- Dr Grant Pegg, Assistant Secretary, Prescription Medicines Authorisation

#### *Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Professor Christopher Blyth, Co-chair

*Wednesday, 2 February 2022*

Committee Room 2S3

Parliament House

Canberra

*Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians*

*Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

- Ms Alison Frame, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy
- Ms Kristin Tilley, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Supply Chain Resilience
- Mr John Neil, Assistant Secretary, COVID-19 Health Priorities
- Mr Tim Wong, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Supply Chain Resilience
- Ms Genevieve Quilty, First Assistant Secretary, Social Policy Division
- Ms Rachel Llyod, Assistant Secretary, Risk Analysis and Response Taskforce

*Department of Health*

- Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary
- Professor Paul Kelly, Australian Government Chief Medical Officer
- Lieutenant General John Frewen DSC, AM, Coordinator General, Operation COVID Shield
- Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing
- Mr Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care
- Ms Tania Rishniw, Deputy Secretary, Primary and Community Care
- Mr Charles Wann, Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Teena Blewitt, Deputy Coordinator General, National COVID Vaccine Taskforce
- Mr Ben Peoples, Chief of Staff, Operation COVID Shield
- Ms Miriam Moore, Acting Chief Counsel
- Mr Stephen Bouwhuis, General Counsel
- Mr Paul McBride, Acting Deputy Secretary, Strategy Evidence and Research Group
- Ms Adriana Platona, First Assistant Secretary, Technology Assessment and Access Division
- Ms Sarah Norris, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection and Response Division
- Ms Allyson Essex, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Health Economics Research Division
- Dr Lucas De Toca, First Assistant Secretary, Program Implementation and Primary Care Response Division
- Mr Simon Cotterell, First Assistant Secretary, Primary Care Division
- Mrs Rachel Balmanno, First Assistant Secretary, People Communication and Parliamentary Division

- Ms Tracey Duffy, First Assistant Secretary, Medical Devices and Product Quality Division
- Dr Jane Cook, First Assistant Secretary, Medicines Regulation Division
- Ms Gillian Mitchell, First Assistant Secretary, Regulatory Practice and Support Division
- Ms Helen Grinbergs, First Assistant Secretary, Services Delivery Division
- Ms Trish Garrett, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Operations and Data
- Mr David Hicks, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Financial Management Division
- Ms Louise Riley, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Medical Benefits Division
- Ms Fifine Cahill, Assistant Secretary, National Health Reform Branch
- Ms Yvette Sims, Assistant Secretary, Commercial Vaccination Providers Branch
- Ms Perdi Mitchell, Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Data and Reporting
- Ms Anna Lutz, Assistant Secretary, Disability Rollout
- Mr Russell Herald, Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Rollout
- Mr David Laffan, Assistant Secretary, Pharmacy Branch - Technology Assessment and Access Division
- Mr James Benson, Assistant Secretary, Funding Operations and Analysis Branch

*Therapeutic Goods Administration*

- Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary, Health Products Regulation

*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation*

- Professor Nigel Crawford, Chair

## Appendix 4

### Submissions and additional information

#### *Submissions*

- 1 Department of Defence
- 2 Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio
- 3 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
  - Attachment 1
- 4 UNSW Sydney
- 5 Ms Leanne Clarke
- 6 *Name Withheld*
- 7 Mr Andrew Trembath
- 8 Amnesty International
- 9 Mr Rod Madgwick
- 10 Ms Jo Culshaw
- 11 Dr Martin Taylor
- 12 Medical Consumers Association
- 13 Mr Ian McGarrity
  - 13.1 Supplementary to submission 13
- 14 Mr Andrew Streeter
- 15 i3 Consultants WA
- 16 Waddington Educational Resources
- 17 Mr Kevin Pietsch
- 18 Mr Stephen McKenzie
- 19 Ms Lynda Leigh
- 20 *Name Withheld*
- 21 *Name Withheld*
- 22 Ms Madeline Taylor
- 23 Mr Bruce Parr
- 24 *Name Withheld*
- 25 *Name Withheld*
- 26 Mrs Lynne McVeigh
- 27 Family Day Care Australia
  - 27.1 Supplementary to submission 27
  - Attachment 1
- 28 Mr Geoff McVeigh
- 29 ART ON THE MOVE
- 30 Mr Mark Webb
- 31 Human Rights Law Centre
  - 31.1 Supplementary to submission 31

- 32 Dr Scott Watkins
- 33 Mr Benjamin Cronshaw
- 34 Dr Malcolm Brown
- 35 Emeritus Professor Margaret Nowak
- 36 Rabobank
  - Attachment 1
- 37 Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
- 38 Justice for Refugees SA
- 39 Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama and Performance Studies (ADSA)
- 40 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, The Australian National University
  - Attachment 1
- 41 AusBiotech
- 42 CircuitWest
- 43 *Name Withheld*
- 44 *Name Withheld*
- 45 *Name Withheld*
- 46 *Name Withheld*
- 47 *Name Withheld*
- 48 Early Childhood Australia
- 49 Mr Marcus De Battista
- 50 Australian Home Childcare Association
- 51 Propel Youth Arts WA
- 52 Dental Hygienists Association of Australia
- 53 Inspired Family Day Care
- 54 Victorian Government
- 55 Mr Peter Sainsbury
- 56 Dr Luke Nottage and Dr Tom van Laer
- 57 Coffs Skydivers
- 58 Mr Jan Timmerman
- 59 Ms Catherine Robertson
- 60 4Links Technology Pty Ltd
  - Attachment 1
- 61 Whistleblowers Australia
- 62 Australian Beverages Council Limited
- 63 Community Child Care Association
- 64 National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
  - Attachment 1
- 65 Mr Michael Dillon
- 66 Danila Dilba Health Service
- 67 Midcoast Family Day Care
- 68 Refugee Advice & Casework Service

- 69 Dr Dinesh Palipana
- 70 Ms Paula Howell & Ms Michelle Scott
- 71 Allume Energy Pty Ltd
- 72 Registered Real Estate Salespersons' Association of SA
- 73 Community Information & Support Victoria
- 74 Dr Kate Galloway
- 75 Mr David Sanderson
- 76 Civil Liberties Australia
- 77 Shoal Group
- 78 Quinn Consultants
- 79 Human Rights Law Centre – Joint Submission
- 80 ReBUILD Australia Working Group
- 81 COVID 19 Safe Elders Group
- 82 Federation of Australian Historical Societies
- 83 Environment Victoria
- 84 Prospection Pty Ltd
- 85 Pathology Technology Australia
- 86 Australian Medical Association
- 87 Mr Ryan Phillips
- 88 Equality Rights Alliance
- 89 Secora
- 90 RSPCA Australia
- 91 Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change
- 92 VOICE Australia
- 93 Professor Cat Hope
- 94 Grandmothers for Refugees
- 95 Career Development Association of Australia Inc
- 96 Institute for Integrated Economic Research Australia
- 97 South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance
- 98 Youth Arts Sector
- 99 Climate Action Hobart
- 100 Hastings Parents for the Environment
- 101 Rural Australians for Refugees
- 102 National Council of Churches in Australia
- 103 Social Cyber Institute
- 104 Northrop Grumman Australia
- 105 Ms Kate Larsen
- 106 Ms Mikhaila Binyon, Ms Maithili Mishra and Ms Elliette Kirkbride
- 107 Wesley Asylum Seeker Welcome Place
- 108 Combined Refugee Action Group
- 109 Liberal Democratic Party
- 110 Regional Universities Network
- 111 Stroke Foundation

- 112 Cairns Regional Council
- 113 Youth Health Forum
- 114 Environmental Action Group
- 115 Wester'ly
- 116 People with Disabilities WA
- 117 National Association for the Visual Arts
- 118 Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance
  - Attachment 1
- 119 Love Makes A Way Melbourne
- 120 Lifeline Australia
- 121 Centre for Multicultural Youth and Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia
- 122 Australian Council of Trade Unions
- 123 United Workers Union
- 124 Transparency International Australia
- 125 Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
- 126 Australian Capital Territory Government
- 127 Infrastructure Partnerships Australia
- 128 Ms Zali Steggall OAM MP
- 129 Business NSW
- 130 Australian Council of Social Service
- 131 Oncology Massage Limited
- 132 Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- 133 Doctors for the Environment Australia
- 134 Association of Counselling Psychologists
  - Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
- 135 ANU Postgraduate and Research Students' Association
- 136 Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union
- 137 Australasian Sonographers Association
- 138 Impact Investment Group
- 139 Australian Library and Information Association
- 140 University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association
- 141 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services
- 142 Community and Public Sector Union
- 143 Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
- 144 Australian Services Union
  - 144.1 Supplementary to submission 144
  - Attachment 1
- 145 Professor Jon Altman
- 146 Australian Education Union
- 147 Electrical Trades Union of Australia

- 148 The Australia Institute
- 149 Finance Sector Union
- 150 Public Interest Advocacy Centre
- 151 CPA Australia and Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
- 152 Modern Money Australia
- 153 All Together Now
- 154 Australian Marine Conservation Society
- 155 James Cook University
- 156 Dr Alexandra Grey
- 157 Farmers for Climate Action
- 158 Beyond Zero Emissions
- 159 Australian Banking Association
- 160 Ms Marion Crooke, Mr Max Thomson and Ms Helen Bowman
- 161 Health Services Union
- 162 Australian Tourism Industry Council
- 163 Community Housing Industry Association
- 164 Anglicare Australia
- 165 Swoop Aero
- 166 AusHeritage
- 167 Australian Museums and Galleries Association
- 168 Women With Disabilities Australia
  - Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
- 169 Thorne Harbour Health
- 170 Rainbow Health Victoria
  - Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
- 171 Human Rights For All
- 172 Council of Single Mothers and their Children
- 173 Australian Subcontractors Association
- 174 Global Citizen
- 175 Dr Karleen Gribble
- 176 State And Territory Alcohol and Other Drug Peaks Network
- 177 Beyond Blue
- 178 Settlement Services International
- 179 economic Security4Women
- 180 Australian Youth Affairs Coalition
- 181 Bicycle Network
- 182 Consumer Action Law Centre
- 183 Public Law and Policy Research Unit
- 184 Children and Young People with Disability Australia
- 185 Lung Foundation Australia
- 186 Exercise and Sports Science Australia

- 
- 187 Colour Code
  - 188 National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
  - 189 University Art Museums Australia
  - 190 Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance
  - 191 Ballarat Arts Alive
  - 192 Queensland Advocacy Incorporated
  - 193 University of South Australia Justice and Society Unit
  - 194 Ausfilm
  - 195 Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
  - 196 Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW
  - 197 Capricorn Enterprise
  - 198 Ernst and Young
  - 199 Australian Society of Anaesthetists
  - 200 Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
  - 201 *Name Withheld*
  - 202 *Name Withheld*
  - 203 Doctors Reform Society
  - 204 Australian Health Care Reform Association
  - 205 Australian Society of Authors
    - 205.1 Supplementary to submission 205
  - 206 HealthMatch Pty Ltd
  - 207 Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union
  - 208 Allied Health Professions Australia
  - 209 Mr Robert Sturrock
    - Attachment 1
  - 210 Merck Healthcare Pty Ltd
  - 211 International SRHR Consortium
    - Attachment 1
  - 212 Mr Mark Delaney
  - 213 ReachOut
  - 214 Medical Technology Association of Australia
  - 215 Settlement Council of Australia
  - 216 Independent Brewers Association
  - 217 Ms Lenna Reinhard
  - 218 Environmental Defenders Office
  - 219 Professor Vanessa Tomlinson
  - 220 New South Wales Society of Labor Lawyers
  - 221 Australian Federation of Air Pilots
  - 222 National Foundation for Australian Women
  - 223 Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers and the Australian Maritime Officers Union
    - 223.1 Supplementary to submission 223

- Attachment 1
- 224 Adult Learning Australia
- 225 Australian Academy of Science
- 226 International Transport Workers' Federation
- 227 Fair Work Ombudsman
- 228 National Asthma Council Australia
- 229 Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
  - Attachment 1
- 230 Grattan Institute
- 231 Australia Council for the Arts
- 232 Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC)
- 233 Medicines Australia
- 234 CHOICE
- 235 First Nations Performing Arts sector
- 236 Research Australia
  - 236.1 Supplementary to submission 236
- 237 Queensland Human Rights Commission
- 238 Australian Psychological Society
- 239 Non-Smokers' Movement Of Australia Inc.
- 240 Arts Industry Council of Victoria
- 241 The George Institute for Global Health
- 242 Buddhist Council of NSW
- 243 Dr Bret Hart
- 244 National Disability Services
- 245 International Council of Museums Australia (ICOM Australia)
- 246 Institute of Public Affairs
- 247 Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- 248 UnitingCare Australia
- 249 *Confidential*
- 250 Theatre Network Australia
- 251 Australian Major Performing Arts Group
  - Attachment 1
- 252 Ausdance NSW
- 253 Performing Arts Connections Australia
- 254 Live Performance Australia
- 255 Symphony Services Australia
- 256 Artsource
- 257 Ausdance National
- 258 St Vincent de Paul Society
- 259 People with Disability Australia
  - Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2

- 260 Ms Sarah Miller
- 261 Australian Institute of Company Directors
- 262 Australian Finance Industry Association
- 263 *Confidential*
- 264 *Confidential*
- 265 *Confidential*
- 266 *Confidential*
- 267 *Confidential*
- 268 *Confidential*
- 269 *Confidential*
- 269.1 Confidential
- 270 *Confidential*
- 271 *Confidential*
- 272 *Confidential*
- 273 *Confidential*
- 274 Australian Festivals Association
- Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
- 275 Universities Australia
- 276 Queensland Churches' Environmental Network
- 277 Australian Community Children's Services
- 278 Ms Claire Powell
- 279 Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations NSW
- 280 Mr Cliff Stephens
- 281 Economic Justice Australia
- 282 Mr Yingiya Mark Guyula, Independent Member for Nhulunbuy
- 283 Northern Territory Department of Health
- 284 Children First Alliance
- 285 Community Early Learning Australia
- 286 Build-to-Rent
- 287 Australian Council of Deans of Health Science (ACDHS)
- 288 Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
- 289 Accountability Round Table
- 290 Australian Religious Response to Climate Change
- 291 Lighter Footprints Inc
- 292 Extinction Rebellion Grey Power Victoria
- 293 People for the Plains Inc.
- 294 Publish What You Pay, Tax Justice Network, and Centre for International Corporate Tax Accountability and Research (Joint Submission)
- Attachment 1
- 295 Friends of the Earth (Australia)
- 296 Common Grace

- 297 ClimActs and LIVE
- 298 Geelong Sustainability
- 299 North West Protection Advocacy
- 300 350 Australia
- 301 Australian Conservation Foundation
  - Attachment 1
- 302 Farming, Conservation and Community Groups - NSW
- 303 Wilderness Society Newcastle
- 304 Catholics in Coalition for Justice and Peace
- 305 Darebin Climate Action Now
- 306 Wando Conservation and Cultural Centre
- 307 Lock the Gate Alliance
- 308 Mr Andrew Ray, Ms Bridie Adams, Ms Charlotte Michalowski and Ms Kate Renehan
- 309 Australian Parents for Climate Action
- 310 Centre for Comparative Constitutional Studies
- 311 Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)
- 312 Jesuit Social Services
- 313 Work + Family Policy Roundtable
- 314 Australian Human Rights Institute
- 315 Small Giants
- 316 Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health (WATCH)
- 317 Ms Liz Reen
- 318 Mr Pascal Rodrigue
- 319 The Snap Forward Feminist Network
- 320 Family & Relationship Services Australia (FRSA)
- 321 Australian Council of State Schools Organisations (ACSSO)
  - Attachment 1
- 322 National Employment Services Association (NESA)
- 323 Dr Sangeetha Pillai
- 324 Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC)
- 325 Australian Physiotherapy Association
- 326 Complementary Medicines Australia
- 327 Uniting NSW.ACT
- 328 Medical Association for the Prevention of War (Australia)
- 329 Centre for Culture and Technology
- 330 Mr Humphrey Boogaerdt
- 331 Malaysian Students' Council of Australia (MASCA) National
- 332 Stryker South Pacific
- 333 The Humanitarian Group
- 334 Asthma Australia
- 335 Greenpeace Australia Pacific
- 336 Mr Mark Brownlee

- 337 Blind Citizens Australia
- 338 Flight Attendants' Association of Australia
- 339 100% Renewables Research group ANU
- 340 Chamber of Arts and Culture WA
- 341 Early Learning Association Australia
- 342 National Rural Health Alliance
- 343 Parents Victoria
- 344 Mr Ross Daniels, Ms Sharon Smith, Dr Lee Coaldrake and Mr Samuel Daniels
- 345 Women's Legal Services Australia
- 346 Mr Graeme Batterbury
- 347 Ms Joanna Knott OAM
- 348 Ms Christina Harris
- 349 Mr Joe Hattley
- 350 MIGA
- 351 Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre
- 352 Financial Rights Legal Centre
- 353 Global Health Alliance Australia
- 354 Refugee Advocacy Network
- 355 Refugee Council of Australia
- 356 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- 357 Australian Breastfeeding Association
- 358 Citizen's Climate Lobby
- 359 Diversity Arts Australia
- 360 Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials
- 361 Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- 362 The Usefulness of Art
- 363 National Refugee Led Advisory and Advocacy Group
- 364 Arid Lands Environment Centre
- 365 Institute of Public Accountants
- 366 Super Consumers Australia
- 367 NSW Aboriginal Land Council
- 368 World Animal Protection
- 369 The Group of Eight (Go8)
- 370 SNAICC
- Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
  - Attachment 3
  - Attachment 4
- 371 Mx Hannah Gillard
- 372 Malaysian Progressives in Australia and MASCA Victoria
- 373 Dr Karina Powers
- 374 Australian Airports Association
- 375 Teach For Australia

- 376 Change the Record
- 377 Mr Tim Flynn
- 378 Australian Libraries Copyright Committee
- 379 Australian Council of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Associations
- 380 Victoria Legal Aid
- 381 Maules Creek Branch – Country Women’s Association of NSW
- 382 Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)
- 383 Offshore Migration Agents
- 384 Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
- 385 Quality Aged Care Action Group
- 386 The Centre for Public Integrity
  - Attachment 1
  
- 387 Young Women's Advisory Group
- 388 Lung Health Alliance
- 389 Mountway Finance
- 390 NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby
- 391 Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
- 392 Australian Disability and Aged Care OPCAT Working Group
- 393 The Hon Michael Gunner MLA, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
- 394 Professor Jennifer Martin and Professor Richard Head
- 395 Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)
- 396 Catholic Health Australia
- 397 Screen Producers Australia
- 398 Aged Care Crisis
  - Attachment 1
  
- 399 Castan Centre for Human Rights Law
- 400 National Capital Educational Tourism Project
- 401 Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT)
  - Attachment 1
  
- 402 Australian Bar Association
- 403 Seniors Rights Service
- 404 Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
- 405 Dr Sebastian Cordoba
- 406 Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- 407 Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA)
- 408 Health Employees Superannuation Trust Australia (HESTA)
- 409 Visa Cancellations Working Group
- 410 Religions for Peace Australia
- 411 Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA)
- 412 YWCA Canberra
- 413 Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA)

- Attachment 1
- 414 Police Federation of Australia
- 415 Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the Northern Territory (APO NT)
- 416 Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA)
- 417 yourtown
- 418 Mr Thomas Spencer
- 419 Ms Laura Bando
- 420 Social Ventures Australia and the Centre for Social Impact
- 421 Early Learning and Care Council of Australia
- 422 Independent Higher Education Australia
- 423 National Capital Attractions Association
- 424 Australian Human Rights Institute
- 425 Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes
- 426 SBS
- 427 Accountable Income Management Network (AIMN)
- 428 Australian Association of Social Workers
- 429 Australian Local Government Association
- 430 National Catholic Education Commission
- 431 Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN)
- 432 National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU)
- 433 Equality Australia
  - Attachment 1
- 434 The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
- 435 CPA Australia
- 436 IDT Australia
- 437 Chief Executive Women
- 438 Refugee Legal
- 439 Migration and Refugee Research Network
- 440 Consumers Health Forum of Australia
- 441 inTouch
- 442 Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)
- 443 Victorian Multicultural Commission
- 444 Volunteering Australia
  - 444.1 Supplementary to submission 444
- 445 Council of Academic Public Health Institutions Australasia (CAPHIA)
- 446 Public Affairs Commission - Anglican Church of Australia
- 447 'concerned Australians'
- 448 Public Health Association of Australia
  - Attachment 1
- 449 National Association of Tenants' Organisations
- 450 Palliative Care Australia
  - Attachment 1

- 451 Community Legal Centres Australia
- 452 APRA AMCOS
  - Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
- 453 Australian Women Against Violence Alliance
- 454 Climate and Health Alliance
- 455 Law Council of Australia
- 456 NSW Council for Civil Liberties
- 457 Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre
- 458 Mallee Family Care
- 459 National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group (NRAAG)
- 460 Latrobe City Council
- 461 The Salvation Army
- 462 NSW Young Lawyers
- 463 COVID Policing Project
- 464 Clifton Productions
  - 464.1 Supplementary to submission 464
- 465 Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia
- 466 Australian and International Pilots Association
- 467 Ms Liz Symonds
- 468 Mr Shane DeVries
- 469 *Name Withheld*
- 470 Miss Christene Squires
- 471 Mr Kevin Swan
- 472 Mr John Grimwade
- 473 Ms Meg O'Leary
- 474 Mr Ivan Maronian
- 475 Ms Kerrie Reitano
- 476 *Name Withheld*
- 477 *Name Withheld*
- 478 *Name Withheld*
- 479 *Name Withheld*
- 480 *Name Withheld*
- 481 Ms Vicky Siler
- 482 *Name Withheld*
- 483 Ms Fiona Press
- 484 Dr Sebastian Cordoba
- 485 Mr Salvatore Babones
- 486 *Name Withheld*
- 487 *Name Withheld*
- 488 *Name Withheld*
- 489 *Name Withheld*
- 490 *Name Withheld*

- 
- 491 *Name Withheld*  
492 *Name Withheld*  
493 Accommodation Association  
494 *Name Withheld*  
495 *Name Withheld*  
496 *Name Withheld*  
497 Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis  
498 *Name Withheld*  
499 Aged and Community Services Australia  
500 Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative  
501 Dr Vineeth George  
502 *Confidential*  
503 Ms Rachel Smylie  
504 Mr Alec Roberts  
505 Mr Mark Zanker  
506 Mr Ian Burrell  
507 Mr Francois Brun  
508 Em.Prof Chilla Bulbeck  
509 Ms Helen Small  
510 Ms Anne Cahill Lambert  
511 Dr Kathryn Antioch  
512 Ms Diane Lee  
513 Dr Geralyn McCarron  
514 Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network  
515 Community Legal Centres NSW, Kingsford Legal Centre and the HIV/AIDS  
Legal Centre  
516 Ms Lucy Morrell  
517 Mr Quentin Zervaas  
518 Ms Annie Fuller  
519 Mr Etienne Swanepoel  
520 Mr Jim Mussared  
521 Ms Melissa Harrison  
522 AstraZeneca  
523 Pfizer Australia  
524 CSL Limited  
525 Mr Andrew Blake  
526 Mr Adamm Ferrier  
527 Ms Eva Johansson  
528 Mr Adrian Ingleby  
529 *Name Withheld*  
530 *Name Withheld*  
531 *Name Withheld*  
532 *Name Withheld*

- 533 *Name Withheld*
- 534 Torres Shire Council
- 535 Ms Sarah Eifermann
- Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
  - Attachment 3
  - Attachment 4
  - Attachment 5
- 536 Mr Simon Thewlis
- Attachment 1
- 537 Hello Sunday Morning
- 538 Mr James Schnadhorst
- Attachment 1
- 539 *Confidential*
- 540 *Confidential*
- 541 *Confidential*
- 542 *Name Withheld*
- 543 R U OK?
- 544 Lock the Gate Alliance
- 545 Town of Port Hedland, Civic Centre
- 546 Mr Peter Crooks
- 547 *Confidential*
- 548 Commissioner for Children and Young People SA
- 549 Rights Resource Network SA
- 550 Access Easy English
- Attachment 1
  - Attachment 2
  - Attachment 3
  - Attachment 4
  - Attachment 5
  - Attachment 6
  - Attachment 7
  - Attachment 8
- 551 Dr Matthew Rimmer
- 552 *Name Withheld*
- 553 *Name Withheld*
- 554 *Name Withheld*
- 555 Maritime Union of Australia
- 556 Andrew Trembath
- 557 Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation

*Additional Information*

- 1 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 April 2020 by Mr Robert Jeremenko, Division Head, Retirement Income Policy Division, Department of the Treasury, received 28 April 2020.
- 2 Additional information regarding the Advance to the Finance Minister, provided by Ms Rosemary Huxtable PSM, Secretary of the Department of Finance, received 12 May 2020.
- 3 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020 by Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Associate Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, received 14 May 2020.
- 4 Treasury Ministerial Submission: Economic Impacts - Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome – 30 January 2020, received 19 May 2020.
- 5 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020 by Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, received 21 May 2020.
- 6 Letter from Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury and Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of the Australian Taxation Office relating to the JobKeeper program, received 22 May 2020.
- 7 Response by Anglicare Sydney to evidence given by the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 8 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020 by Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation at the Australian Taxation Office, received 9 June 2020.
- 9 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020 by Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary, Governance Group at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, received 10 June 2020.
- 10 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020 by various witnesses from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 17 June 2020.
- 11 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020 by Ms Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary of the Department of Health, received 18 June 2020.
- 12 Response to Ernst and Young Submission 198 by Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, received 22 June 2020.
- 13 Discussion paper regarding the impact of COVID-19 on women, provided by Mr Gerard Dwyer, National Secretary of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, received 24 June 2020
- 14 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 25 June 2020 by Mr Bill Bowtell, received 25 June 2020.
- 15 Opening statement provided by Mr Trevor Carroll, Vice President of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, appearing at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020, received 1 July 2020.

- 16 Excerpt of chart pack, provided by Mr Saul Eslake at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 July 2020, received 2 July 2020.
- 17 JobKeeper proposal document, provided by Mr David Richardson, Senior Research Fellow with The Australia Institute, received 21 July 2020.
- 18 Additional information, provided by Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, received 7 August 2020.
- 19 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020 by Ms Amy Laffan, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance Division, Department of Health, received 20 August 2020.
- 20 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 14 August 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 21 August 2020.
- 21 Report on the independent review of the COVID-19 outbreak at Newmarch House, provided by Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, received 24 August 2020.
- 22 Letter provided by Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, Deputy Secretary, Governance and APS Reform with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, clarifying evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 23 Letter of correction to evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020 by Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, received 2 September 2020.
- 24 Letter relating to evidence provided at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, provided by Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, received 31 August 2020.
- 25 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 28 August 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 4 September 2020.
- 26 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 11 September 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 18 September 2020.
- 27 Letter of correction to evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020 by Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, received 29 September 2020.
- 28 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 25 September 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 7 October 2020.
- 29 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update, covering additional date ranges of 25 September 2020 to 1 October 2020 and 2 October 2020 to 8 October 2020, provided by Services Australia, received 13 October 2020.

- 30 Employment and Jobactive data - monthly update for September 2020, provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 13 October 2020.
- 31 Additional information for evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 15 September 2020, provided by Mental Health Australia and Community Mental Health Australia, received 28 September 2020.
- 32 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 9 October 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 16 October 2020.
- 33 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020 by Margerate (private capacity), Individual Impacted by Repatriation and Travel Issues, received 23 October 2020.
- 34 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020 by Mr Murali Venugopal, Chief Finance Officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, received 23 October 2020.
- 35 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 22 October 2020, provided by Services Australia, received 26 October 2020.
- 36 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 30 October 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 9 November 2020.
- 37 Letter relating to evidence provided by Dr Collignon at a public hearing in Canberra on 25 June 2020, provided by Dr MacIntyre, received 26 June 2020.
- 38 Letter of correction to evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020 by Andrew Parker, Group Executive of Qantas, received 28 July 2020.
- 39 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 13 November 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 20 November 2020.
- 40 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 19 November 2020, provided by Services Australia, received 23 November 2020.
- 41 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 3 December 2020, provided by Services Australia, received 8 December 2020.
- 42 Employment and Jobactive data - monthly update for October 2020, provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 9 December 2020.
- 43 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 27 November 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 9 December 2020.
- 44 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 and by earnings and partner earnings as at 11 December 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 18 December 2020.

- 45 Employment and Jobactive data - monthly update for November 2020, provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 21 December 2020.
- 46 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 17 December 2020, provided by Services Australia, received 21 December 2020.
- 47 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 25 December 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 8 January 2021.
- 48 Income support payment data by earnings and partner earnings as at 25 December 2020 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 8 January 2021.
- 49 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 7 January 2021, provided by Services Australia, received 11 January 2021.
- 50 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 8 January 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 15 January 2021.
- 51 Employment and jobactive data - monthly update for December 2020, provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 28 January 2021.
- 52 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 21 January 2021, provided by Services Australia, received 27 January 2021.
- 53 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 29 January 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 5 February 2021.
- 54 Income support payment data by earnings and partner earnings as at 29 January 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 5 February 2021.
- 55 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 4 February 2021, provided by Services Australia, received 8 February 2021.
- 56 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 12 February 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 19 February 2021.
- 57 Employment and jobactive data - monthly update for January 2020, provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, received 19 February 2021.
- 58 Pandemic leave disaster payment data - fortnightly update as at 18 February 2021, provided by Services Australia, received 22 February 2021.
- 59 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 26 February 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 5 March 2021.
- 60 Income support payment data by earnings and partner earnings as at 26 February 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 5 March 2021.

- 61 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 12 March 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 19 March 2021.
- 62 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 18 March 2021, received from Services Australia on 22 March 2021.
- 63 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of February 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 26 March 2021.
- 64 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 31 March 2021, received from Services Australia on 6 March 2021.
- 65 Income support payment data by state and statistical area level 2 as at 26 March 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 6 April 2021.
- 66 Income support payment data by earnings and partner earnings as at 26 March 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 6 April 2021.
- 67 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 09 April 2021. The report was received on 16 April 2021.
- 68 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 15 April 2021, received from Services Australia on 23 April 2021.
- 69 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021 by Mr Charles Wann, Acting Chief Operating officer with the Department of Health, received 16 February 2021.
- 70 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 29 April 2021, received from Services Australia on 3 May 2021.
- 71 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of March 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 11 May 2021.
- 72 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 30 April 2021. The report was received on 12 May 2021.
- 73 Income support payment data by earnings and partner earnings as at 30 April 2021 provided by the Department of Social Services, received 12 May 2021.
- 74 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 14 May 2021. The report was received on 21 May 2021.
- 75 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 13 May 2021, received from Services Australia on 25 May 2021.
- 76 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of April 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 03 June 2021.

- 77 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 27 May 2021, received from Services Australia on 08 June 2021.
- 78 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 10 June 2021, received from Services Australia on 15 June 2021.
- 79 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of May 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 21 June 2021.
- 80 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 21 May 2021. The report was received on 21 June 2021.
- 81 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 21 May 2021. The report was received on 21 June 2021.
- 82 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 11 June 2021. The report was received on 21 June 2021.
- 83 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 24 June 2021, received from Services Australia on 02 July 2021.
- 84 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 25 June 2021. The report was received on 2 July 2021.
- 85 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 25 June 2021. The report was received on 2 July 2021.
- 86 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 8 July 2021, received from Services Australia on 16 July 2021.
- 87 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by State/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 9 July 2021. The report was received on 19 July 2021.
- 88 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of June 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 21 July 2021.
- 89 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 30 July 2021. The report was received on 6 August 2021.
- 90 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 30 July 2021. The report was received on 6 August 2021.
- 91 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 13 August 2021. The report was received on 20 August 2021.

- 92 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 27 August 2021. The report was received on 06 September 2021.
- 93 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 27 August 2021. The report was received on 06 September 2021.
- 94 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 10 September 2021. The report was received on 17 September 2021.
- 95 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report – a fortnightly report as at 9 September 2021, received from Services Australia on 20 September 2021.
- 96 Letter of correction of evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2021 by Mr Tony Sheehan, Deputy Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 97 Letter regarding fortnightly update on Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment. Update now includes COVID-19 Disaster Payment.
- 98 Letter to Dr Brendan Murphy from Senator Gallagher regarding a request for the modelling provided at National Cabinet as well as outstanding questions on notice from the Department of Health.
- 99 Letter from Dr Brendan Murphy to Senator Gallagher in reply to the request for the modelling provided at National Cabinet as well as outstanding questions on notice from the Department of Health.
- 100 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment data report and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report – a fortnightly report as at 24 September 2021, received from Services Australia on 28 September 2021.
- 101 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 24 September 2021. The report was received on 1 October 2021.
- 102 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 24 September 2021. The report was received on 1 October 2021.
- 103 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of August 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 7 October 2021.
- 104 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of July 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 7 October 2021.
- 105 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 8 October 2021. The report was received on 15 October 2021.

- 106 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of September 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 19 October 2021.
- 107 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 21 October 2021, received from Services Australia on 26 October 2021.
- 108 Updated Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 21 October 2021, received from Services Australia on 28 October 2021.
- 109 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 29 October 2021. The report was received on 5 November 2021.
- 110 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 29 October 2021. The report was received on 5 November 2021.
- 111 Letter provided by Professor Mary McLaws, clarifying evidence given at a public hearing in Canberra on Tuesday 21 September 2021, received 23 September 2021.
- 112 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 4 November 2021, received from Services Australia on 12 November 2021.
- 113 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 12 November 2021. The report was received on 19 November 2021.
- 114 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 18 November 2021, received from Services Australia on 23 November 2021.
- 115 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 26 November 2021. The report was received on 3 December 2021.
- 116 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 26 November 2021. The report was received on 3 December 2021.
- 117 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment data report—a fortnightly report as at 2 December 2021, received from Services Australia on 7 December 2021.
- 118 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 10 December 2021. The report was received on 20 December 2021.
- 119 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of October 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 20 December 2021.

- 120 Monthly provision of data on employment figures and jobactive case load demographics for the month of November 2021 provided by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment on 20 December 2021.
- 121 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 31 December 2021. The report was received on 12 January 2022.
- 122 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 31 December 2021. The report was received on 12 January 2022.
- 123 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 14 January 2022. The report was received on 21 January 2022.
- 124 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 28 January 2022. The report was received on 4 February 2022.
- 125 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 28 January 2022. The report was received on 4 February 2022.
- 126 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 11 February 2022. The report was received on 18 February 2022.
- 127 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 25 February 2022. The report was received on 4 March 2022.
- 128 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 25 February 2022. The report was received on 4 March 2022.
- 129 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 11 March 2022. The report was received on 18 March 2022.
- 130 Fortnightly report from the Department of Social Services on income support payments by state/territory and Statistical Area Level 2, as at 25 March 2022. The report was received on 4 April 2022.
- 131 Monthly report from the Department of Social Services on income support recipients by earnings and partner earnings, with data as at 25 March 2022. The report was received on 4 April 2022.
- 132 Australian Health Protection Principal Committee meeting documents dated between 26 February 2020 to 31 March 2020, as provided to Senator Gallagher by the Department of Health in response to a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 1982, received 17 February 2022.

*Answer to Question on Notice*

- 1 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally on 29 April 2020, received 5 May 2020.
- 2 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force, asked by Senator Patrick on 28 April 2020 and Senator Keneally on 29 April 2020, received 5 May 2020.
- 3 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Paterson, Keneally, Di Natale, Siewert, Lambie and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 April 2020, received 5 May 2020.
- 4 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher, Paterson, Keneally, Di Natale and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 April 2020, received 6 May 2020.
- 5 Update to an answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 April 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 6 Answers to written questions on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senator Patrick on 28 April 2020, received 6 May 2020.
- 7 Answers to questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Gallagher, Whish-Wilson, Keneally, Patrick, Paterson, Watt, Siewert, Davey and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 April 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 8 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 April 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 9 Answer to a written question on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Lambie on 1 May 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 10 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher, Siewert, Davey and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 11 Answers to questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senators Paterson, Siewert, Lambie, Patrick, Davey and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 12 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 7 May 2020, including updated answers provided on 30 September 2020.
- 13 Answers to questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Agency, asked by Senators Keneally and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 7 May 2020.
- 14 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 8 May 2020.
- 15 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 8 May 2020.

- 16 Answers to questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission, asked by Senators Lambie and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 8 May 2020.
- 17 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 8 May 2020.
- 18 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Agency, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 8 May 2020.
- 19 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 23 April 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 20 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher, Lambie, Patrick and Siewert on 28 April 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 21 Answers to questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senators Watt and Davey at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 22 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 23 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senators Rice and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 24 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs and Australian Border Force, asked by Senators Gallagher, Paterson, Patrick and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 25 Answers to questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senators Keneally and McKim at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 26 Answers to written questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 12 May 2020.
- 27 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 13 May 2020.
- 28 Answers to questions on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senators Patrick, Keneally, Watt and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 13 May 2020.
- 29 Answers to written questions on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 13 May 2020.
- 30 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senators Davey and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 13 May 2020.
- 31 Answer to question on notice by the Australian Federal Police, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020, received 14 May 2020.
- 32 Answers to questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Siewert on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.

- 33 Answer to question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 34 Answers to questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 35 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 36 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Rice on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 37 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Rice on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 38 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 39 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Patrick on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 40 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally on 8 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 41 Answers to questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Paterson, Lambie and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020, received 15 May 2020.
- 42 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Patrick on 8 May 2020, received 18 May 2020.
- 43 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally on 8 May 2020, received 18 May 2020.
- 44 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 8 May 2020, received 18 May 2020.
- 45 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Patrick on 8 May 2020, received 18 May 2020.
- 46 Answer to written question on notice by the Australian Federal Police, asked by Senator Patrick on 8 May 2020, received 18 May 2020.
- 47 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 April 2020, received 19 May 2020.
- 48 Update to an answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 April 2020, received 26 May 2020.
- 49 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Lambie on 28 April 2020, received 19 May 2020.
- 50 Answer to question on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020, received 19 May 2020.
- 51 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Sheldon, Siewert and Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 19 May 2020.
- 52 Answers to questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 20 May 2020.

- 53 Revised answers to written questions on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 22 May 2020.
- 54 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 22 May 2020.
- 55 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 22 May 2020.
- 56 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 22 May 2020.
- 57 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators McKim and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 22 May 2020.
- 58 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Siewert and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 25 May 2020.
- 59 Answer to written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 25 May 2020.
- 60 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Patrick, Griff, Gallagher, Siewert and Keneally on 8 May 2020, received 25 May 2020.
- 61 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 26 May 2020.
- 62 Answers to written questions on notice by the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 27 May 2020.
- 63 Answers to written questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 27 May 2020.
- 64 Answers to written questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Patrick on 28 April 2020, received 27 May 2020.
- 65 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Public Service Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 27 May 2020.
- 66 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 27 May 2020.
- 67 Answer to question on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 28 May 2020.
- 68 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 28 May 2020.
- 69 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 29 May 2020.
- 70 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 8 May 2020, received 29 May 2020.

- 71 Answers to written questions on notice by Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 29 May 2020.
- 72 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 29 May 2020.
- 73 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 1 June 2020.
- 74 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 2 June 2020.
- 75 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 2 June 2020.
- 76 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 2 June 2020.
- 77 Answers to questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senators Davey, Gallagher, Keneally and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 78 Answer to question on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 79 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Rice on 22 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 80 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 81 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senators Paterson, Siewert, Keneally, Davey and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 82 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 83 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Gallagher, Paterson, Watt, Patrick, Davey, Keneally, Faruqi and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 84 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Sheldon on 8 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 85 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Lambie on 15 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 86 Answers to questions on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senators Gallagher, Paterson, Siewert, Keneally, Davey and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 87 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Patrick and Siewert on 8 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 88 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher and Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.

- 89 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 90 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 April 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 91 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 92 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 4 June 2020.
- 93 Answer to written questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 94 Answer to written question on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 95 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Gallagher, Siewert, Faruqi and Lambie on 22 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 96 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Gallagher and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 97 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senators Rice, Griff and Keneally on 22 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 98 Answer to written question on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 on 22 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 99 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 100 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 5 June 2020.
- 101 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Siewert and Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 9 June 2020.
- 102 Answers to questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Whish-Wilson, Keneally, Paterson, Watt and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 May 2020, received 9 June 2020.
- 103 Answer to written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 9 June 2020.
- 104 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 9 June 2020.
- 105 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.
- 106 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.

- 107 Answers to questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senators Keneally and Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.
- 108 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.
- 109 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.
- 110 Answer to written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 1 May 2020, received 10 June 2020.
- 111 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 11 June 2020.
- 112 Answers to written questions on notice by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 11 June 2020.
- 113 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Agency, asked by Senator Griff on 29 May 2020, received 11 June 2020.
- 114 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 8 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 115 Answers to questions on notice by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, asked by Senators Gallagher and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 116 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senators Siewert and Keneally on 29 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 117 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 118 Answer to written question on notice by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, asked by Senator Griff on 29 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 119 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 120 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Di Natale and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 121 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 8 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 122 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 12 June 2020.
- 123 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 15 June 2020.
- 124 Answer to written question on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Siewert on 22 May 2020, received 15 June 2020.

- 125 Answers to questions on notice by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, asked by Senators Watt, Paterson and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 May 2020, received 15 June 2020.
- 126 Answers to written questions on notice by the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, asked by Senator Gallagher on 25 May 2020, received 16 June 2020.
- 127 Answers to questions on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senators Siewert and McCarthy at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 17 June 2020.
- 128 Answer to question on notice by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 17 June 2020.
- 129 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 3 June 2020, received 17 June 2020.
- 130 Answer to question on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator McCarthy at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 18 June 2020.
- 131 Answer to question on notice by Services Australia on behalf of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator McCarthy at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 18 June 2020.
- 132 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 18 June 2020.
- 133 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher, Siewert and Griff on 29 May 2020, received 23 June 2020.
- 134 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 23 June 2020.
- 135 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 24 June 2020.
- 136 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 24 June 2020.
- 137 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 24 June 2020.
- 138 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 24 June 2020.
- 139 Answers to questions on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senators McCarthy and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 140 Answers to written questions by Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 141 Answer to written question on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 12 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.

- 142 Answers to questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Gallagher, Patrick, Whish-Wilson, Watt, Davey and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 143 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 15 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 144 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 145 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 146 Answer to question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 147 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 148 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators McCarthy and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 149 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Griff and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 150 Answer to written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 151 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 152 Answer to question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 153 Answer to written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Lambie on 15 May 2020, received 25 June 2020.
- 154 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 April 2020, received 26 June 2020.
- 155 Answers to written questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 26 June 2020.
- 156 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 26 June 2020.
- 157 Answer to question on notice by Dr Peter Collignon AM, asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 25 June 2020, received 29 June 2020.
- 158 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 29 June 2020.
- 159 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 29 June 2020.
- 160 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 30 June 2020.

- 161 Answer to written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 15 May 2020, received 1 July 2020.
- 162 Answers to written questions on notice by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 2 July 2020.
- 163 Answer to written question on notice by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, asked by Senator Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 2 July 2020.
- 164 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Gallagher on 19 May 2020, received 3 July 2020.
- 165 Answer to written question on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Griff on 19 June 2020, received 3 July 2020.
- 166 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 3 July 2020.
- 167 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 3 July 2020.
- 168 Answers to questions on notice by the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 June 2020, received 3 July 2020.
- 169 Answer to a written question on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 19 June 2020, received 6 July 2020.
- 170 Answer to a written question on notice by the Australia Council, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 6 July 2020.
- 171 Answers to written questions on notice by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 6 July 2020.
- 172 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 19 June 2020, received 7 July 2020.
- 173 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 19 June 2020, received 7 July 2020.
- 174 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 7 July 2020.
- 175 Answers to questions on notice by the Australian Medical Association, asked by Senators Di Natale and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 25 June 2020, received 7 July 2020.
- 176 Answer to a written question on notice by The Australia Institute, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 July 2020, received 7 July 2020.
- 177 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 8 July 2020.
- 178 Answer to question on notice by Regional Arts NSW, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020, received 8 July 2020.
- 179 Answer to a written question on notice by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 8 July 2020.

- 180 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 9 July 2020.
- 181 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 9 July 2020.
- 182 Answer to a written question on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senator Patrick on 26 June 2020, received 10 July 2020.
- 183 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 10 July 2020.
- 184 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 10 July 2020.
- 185 Answers to written questions on notice by Treasury, asked by Senators Griff and Gallagher on 19 June 2020, received 10 July 2020.
- 186 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 26 June 2020, received 10 July 2020.
- 187 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 13 July 2020.
- 188 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 13 July 2020.
- 189 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 14 July 2020.
- 190 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senators Gallagher and Hanson-Young at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020, received 14 July 2020.
- 191 Answer to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 14 July 2020.
- 192 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 15 July 2020.
- 193 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 9 June 2020, received 15 July 2020.
- 194 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Public Service Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 15 July 2020.
- 195 Answers to written questions on notice by the National Disability Insurance Scheme, asked by Senator Griff on 19 June 2020, received 15 July 2020.
- 196 Answer to a written question on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 16 July 2020.
- 197 Answer to a written question on notice by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 16 July 2020.
- 198 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 16 July 2020.

- 199 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Keneally, Paterson, Davey, Siewert, and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 16 July 2020.
- 200 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 16 July 2020.
- 201 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Siewert on 19 June 2020, received 17 July 2020.
- 202 Answers to written questions on notice by the Digital Transformation Agency, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 17 July 2020.
- 203 Answers to written questions on notice by Airservices Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 17 July 2020.
- 204 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 205 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 206 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Keneally and Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 207 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Patrick and Dodson at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 208 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Watt and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 209 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 May 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 210 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 13 May 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 211 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 23 April 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 212 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 22 July 2020.
- 213 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020, received 27 July 2020.
- 214 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 27 July 2020.
- 215 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 5 June 2020, received 27 July 2020.
- 216 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 29 May 2020, received 27 July 2020.
- 217 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher and Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 27 July 2020.

- 218 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 27 July 2020.
- 219 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 10 July 2020, received 29 July 2020.
- 220 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 29 July 2020.
- 221 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher, received 29 July 2020.
- 222 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher, received 29 July 2020.
- 223 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert, received 29 July 2020.
- 224 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher, received 29 July 2020.
- 225 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Griff on 17 July 2020, received 29 July 2020.
- 226 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 227 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 July 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 228 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 17 July 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 229 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Gallagher on 3 July 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 230 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 June 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 231 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 29 July 2020.
- 232 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 30 July 2020.
- 233 Answers to a written question on notice by the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre, asked by Senator Griff on 17 July 2020, received 31 July 2020.
- 234 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Lambie on 10 July 2020, received 4 August 2020.

- 235 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 24 July 2020, received 4 August 2020.
- 236 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Watt, Rice and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020, received 4 August 2020.
- 237 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Gallagher on 17 July 2020, received 5 August 2020.
- 238 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 July 2020, received 6 August 2020.
- 239 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020, received 7 August 2020.
- 240 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senators Whish-Wilson, Watt, Siewert and Keneally, received 10 August 2020.
- 241 Answer to a question on notice by the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 11 August 2020.
- 242 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 20 July 2020.
- 243 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 24 July 2020, received 7 August 2020.
- 244 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 24 July 2020, received 10 August 2020.
- 245 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 27 July 2020, received 10 August 2020.
- 246 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 27 July 2020, received 7 August 2020.
- 247 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 11 August 2020.
- 248 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 11 August 2020.
- 249 Answers to questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senators Patrick and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 11 August 2020.
- 250 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Education Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Keneally, Faruqi, Patrick, Davey and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 July 2020, received 11 August 2020.
- 251 Answers to questions on notice by the Australia Taxation Office, asked by Senators Siewert, Patrick, Keneally, and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 12 August 2020.

- 252 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Education Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Faruqi at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 July 2020, received 12 August 2020.
- 253 Answers to questions on notice by Qantas Airways Limited, asked by Senators Gallagher, Rice, Patrick and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020, received 11 August 2020 (undredacted version received on 21 July 2020).
- 254 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 24 July 2020, received 13 August 2020.
- 255 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Siewert, Whish-Wilson, Patrick and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 13 August 2020.
- 256 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 31 July 2020, received 13 August 2020.
- 257 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 31 July 2020, received 13 August 2020.
- 258 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Patrick and Whish-Wilson at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 259 Answers to written on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 31 July 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 260 Answers to written questions on notice by the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, the Hon David Littleproud MP, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 261 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 262 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Council of Social Service, asked by Senator Siewert on 3 August 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 263 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 264 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 265 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 266 Answers to questions on notice by Universities Australia, asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 July 2020 and Senator Faruqi in writing on 3 August 2020, received 17 August 2020.
- 267 Answers to written questions on notice by the Regional Universities Network, asked by Senator Faruqi on 3 August 2020, received 17 August 2020.

- 268 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 17 August 2020.
- 269 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Social Services, asked by Senators Watt and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 August 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 270 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher on 7 August 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 271 Answers to written questions on notice by Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 7 August 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 272 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 24 July 2020, received 13 August 2020.
- 273 Answers to written questions on notice by the Group of Eight, asked by Senator Faruqi on 3 August 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 274 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Faruqi on 31 July 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 275 Answers to written questions on notice by Charles Sturt University, asked by Senator Faruqi on 3 August 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 276 Answers to a question on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 277 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 278 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 17 July 2020, received 18 August 2020.
- 279 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 5 June 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 280 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 281 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 282 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 283 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Lambie on 10 July 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 284 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 June 2020, received 19 August 2020.

- 285 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Di Natale at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 286 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 287 Answers to written questions on notice by the Australian Council of Social Service, asked by Senator Siewert on 3 August 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 288 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 289 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 31 July 2020, received 19 August 2020.
- 290 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 2 June 2020, received 19 August 2020. Revised version provided 2 September 2020.
- 291 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 20 August 2020.
- 292 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Griff on 17 July 2020, received 20 August 2020.
- 293 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Siewert, Gallagher, Keneally and Davey at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 20 August 2020.
- 294 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 20 August 2020.
- 295 Answer to a question on notice by the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 20 August 2020.
- 296 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 22 May 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 297 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 298 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 299 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Whish-Wilson at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 21 August 2020.

- 300 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 301 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 302 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 303 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 304 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 305 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 306 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Faruqi on 7 August 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 307 Answers to written questions on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Keneally on 7 August 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 308 Answers to questions on notice by the Treasury, asked by Senators Siewert, Whish-Wilson, Patrick, Keneally and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 309 Answers to written questions on notice by the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 31 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 310 Answer to a question taken on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 311 Answers to a written question on notice by the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Gallagher on 7 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 312 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Lambie on 10 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 313 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Hanson-Young on 13 July 2020, received 21 August 2020.
- 314 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senators Keneally and Hanson-Young at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 24 August 2020.

- 315 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 26 May 2020, received 24 August 2020.
- 316 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Siewert, Davey and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 24 August 2020.
- 317 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 2 June 2020, received 24 August 2020.
- 318 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senators Watt and Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020, received 24 August 2020.
- 319 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 25 August 2020.
- 320 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 25 August 2020.
- 321 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 25 August 2020.
- 322 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 25 August 2020.
- 323 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 26 August 2020.
- 324 Answers to questions on notice by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 31 August 2020.
- 325 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Lambie on 10 July 2020, received 27 August 2020.
- 326 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 27 August 2020.
- 327 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 31 July 2020, received 26 August 2020.
- 328 Answers to questions on notice by Universities Australia, asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 July 2020, received 28 August 2020.
- 329 Answer to a question on notice by the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020, received 28 August 2020.
- 330 Answer to a question on notice transferred to the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Siewert to the Department of Social Services at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 28 August 2020.

- 331 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 22 May 2020, received 28 August 2020.
- 332 Answers to written questions on notice by the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on Thursday 13 August 2020, received 28 August 2020.
- 333 Answer to a question on notice transferred to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Patrick to the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 August 2020.
- 334 Answers to written questions on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senators Gallagher, Griff and Siewert, received 31 August 2020.
- 335 Answer to a written question on notice from the Minister for Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 31 August 2020.
- 336 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 13 May 2020, received 31 August 2020.
- 337 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, asked by Senator Patrick on 17 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 338 Answers to questions on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert at a hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 339 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senators Gallagher and Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 340 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senators Siewert and Paterson on 21 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 341 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 24 July 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 342 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 343 Answers to questions on notice from the Treasury, asked by Senators Whish-Wilson, Gallagher and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 344 Answers to written questions on notice from the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 17 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.
- 345 Answers to questions on notice from the Australian Border Force, asked by Senators Keneally, McKim and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 1 September 2020.

- 346 Answer to a question on notice from the Attorney-General's Department, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 3 September 2020.
- 347 Answers to written questions on notice from Austrade and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Brown on 20 August 2020, received 2 September 2020.
- 348 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senators Siewert and Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 2 September 2020.
- 349 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 3 August 2020, received 2 September 2020.
- 350 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Steele-John at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 2 September 2020.
- 351 Answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Gallagher on 31 July 2020, received 3 September 2020.
- 352 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senators Gallagher, Paterson, Siewert and Steele-John at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 3 September 2020.
- 353 Answers to questions on notice from Austrade, asked by Senator Hanson-Young at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 3 September 2020.
- 354 Answer to a written question on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 21 August 2020, received 5 September 2020.
- 355 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senators Rice and Keneally on 21 August 2020, received 4 September 2020.
- 356 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 3 September 2020.
- 357 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senators McKim and Keneally on 21 August 2020, received 4 September 2020.
- 358 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senators Gallagher, Patrick, Paterson and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 4 September 2020.
- 359 Answers to questions on notice from Tourism Australia, asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 4 September 2020.
- 360 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 August 2020, received 7 September 2020.
- 361 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Whish-Wilson, Siewert, Gallagher and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 7 September 2020.

- 362 Answer to a written question on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 7 September 2020.
- 363 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 17 August 2020, received 7 September 2020.
- 364 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Steele-John at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 September 2020, received 7 September 2020.
- 365 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senators Gallagher, Whish-Wilson, Siewert and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 9 September 2020.
- 366 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 17 August 2020, received 9 September 2020.
- 367 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 9 September 2020.
- 368 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 9 September 2020.
- 369 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 10 September 2020.
- 370 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 10 September 2020.
- 371 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 August 2020, received 11 September 2020.
- 372 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 28 August 2020, received 11 September 2020.
- 373 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, asked by Senator Keneally on 28 August 2020, received 11 September 2020.
- 374 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 14 September 2020.
- 375 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 14 September 2020.
- 376 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Paterson on 28 August 2020, received 14 September 2020.
- 377 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 6 May 2020, received 15 September 2020.
- 378 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 15 September 2020.

- 379 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senators Di Natale and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 15 September 2020.
- 380 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Paterson on 21 August 2020, received 15 September 2020.
- 381 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senators Davey and Gallagher on 21 August 2020, received 15 September 2020.
- 382 Answers to questions on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senators Keneally, Gallagher and Whish-Wilson at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 16 September 2020.
- 383 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senators Gallagher and Paterson on 17 August 2020, received 16 September 2020.
- 384 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 16 September 2020.
- 385 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senators Gallagher, Davey and Rice at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 18 September 2020.
- 386 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs by Senator McKim on 4 August 2020, received 18 September 2020.
- 387 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senators Faruqi, Watt, Lambie, Davey and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 18 September 2020.
- 388 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment asked by Senators Gallagher and Faruqi on 17 August 2020, received 18 September 2020.
- 389 Answers to written questions on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 390 Answer to a question on notice from Lifeline Australia asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 15 September 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 391 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 392 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 393 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 4 August 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 394 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Griff on 7 August 2020, received 21 September 2020.

- 395 Answers to written questions on notice from the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, asked by Senator Griff on 7 August 2020, received 21 September 2020.
- 396 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Rice on 21 August 2020, received 22 September 2020.
- 397 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 398 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 13 May 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 399 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Paterson, Whish-Wilson, Watt, Siewert, Gallagher, Lambie and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 400 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 401 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 402 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 403 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Griff on 17 July 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 404 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Watt, Siewert and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 405 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Patrick on 17 August 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 406 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 28 August 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 407 Answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Taxation Office asked by Senator Siewert on 11 September 2020, received 23 September 2020.
- 408 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 13 May 2020, received 24 September 2020.

- 409 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Lambie and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 410 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 411 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 412 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 26 June 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 413 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 414 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Patrick on 17 August 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 415 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 28 August 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 416 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Finance asked by Senators Gallagher, Davey and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 10 September 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 417 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Finance asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 September 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 418 Answers to questions on notice from the Productivity Commission asked by Senators Gallagher and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 10 September 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 419 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 24 September 2020.
- 420 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator McKim on 11 September 2020, received 25 September 2020.
- 421 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator McKim on 11 September 2020, received 25 September 2020.
- 422 Answers to questions on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 423 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher, Watt, Siewert and Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.

- 424 Answers to written questions on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 425 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 426 Answers to written questions on notice from the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians asked by Senator Griff on 7 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 427 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Siewert, Keneally, Gallagher and Di Natale at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 428 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 429 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Keneally and Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 430 Answers to written questions on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 431 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 432 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 433 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 434 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 28 September 2020.
- 435 Answers to questions on notice from the Australian Taxation Office asked by Senators Siewert and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 29 September 2020.
- 436 Answer to a question on notice from the Black Dog Institute asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 15 September 2020, received 29 September 2020.
- 437 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Bureau of Statistics asked by Senator McKim on 18 September 2020, received 1 October 2020.
- 438 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 1 October 2020.

- 439 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Federal Police asked by Senator Keneally on 18 September 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 440 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 441 Answer to a question on notice by the Department of Health asked by Senator Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 442 Answers to written questions on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Keneally on 21 August 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 443 Answers to written questions on notice from Services Australia asked by Senator Gallagher on 18 September 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 444 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher on 25 September 2020, received 2 October 2020.
- 445 Answer to a written question on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 446 Answer to a question on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 August 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 447 Answer to a question on notice by the Australian Taxation Office asked by Senator Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 448 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 May 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 449 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 7 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 450 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 451 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 452 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Siewert on 28 August 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 453 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 4 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 454 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 455 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senators Watt and Stoker at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.

- 456 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 457 Answers to questions on notice from the National Disability Insurance Agency asked by Senators Stoker and Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 458 Answers to questions on notice from the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 6 October 2020.
- 459 Answers to questions on notice from Family Day Care Australia asked by Senators Siewert and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 7 October 2020.
- 460 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 7 October 2020.
- 461 Answer to a written question on notice by the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 4 September 2020, received 7 October 2020.
- 462 Answer to a written question on notice by Services Australia asked by Senator Gallagher on 21 August 2020, received 8 October 2020.
- 463 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Gallagher, Brockman and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 8 October 2020.
- 464 Answer to a question on notice from the Attorney-General's Department asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 465 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 466 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Federal Police asked by Senator Griff on 25 September 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 467 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Industry, Science Energy and Resources asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 468 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 469 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 470 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 9 October 2020.
- 471 Answers to questions on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator McKim at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 12 October 2020.

- 472 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senators McKim and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 12 October 2020.
- 473 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 12 October 2020.
- 474 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Finance asked by Senator Gallagher on 25 September 2020, received 12 October 2020.
- 475 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 13 October 2020.
- 476 Answer to a question on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator McKim at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 13 October 2020.
- 477 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Defence asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 13 October 2020.
- 478 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Patrick on 5 June 2020, received 13 October 2020.
- 479 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senators Watt and Stoker at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 14 October 2020.
- 480 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 14 October 2020.
- 481 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 14 October 2020.
- 482 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 14 October 2020.
- 483 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher on 21 September 2020, received 15 October 2020.
- 484 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 15 October 2020.
- 485 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Gallagher, Keneally, Rice and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 15 October 2020.
- 486 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 15 October 2020.
- 487 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 15 October 2020.

- 488 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 16 October 2020.
- 489 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 16 October 2020.
- 490 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 16 October 2020.
- 491 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senators Keneally and Brockman at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 16 October 2020.
- 492 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 16 October 2020.
- 493 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 494 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Siewert and Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 495 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Gallagher and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 496 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 497 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Paterson on 13 August 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 498 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Defence asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 499 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources asked by Senator Siewert on 21 September 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 500 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 August 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 501 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 19 October 2020.
- 502 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 19 October 2020.

- 503 Answer to a question on notice from Beyond Blue asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 15 September 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 504 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 505 Supplementary answer to a question on notice from the Attorney-General's Department asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 506 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 507 Answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Federal Police asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 508 Answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 509 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 510 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 511 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 512 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 513 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 12 June 2020, received 20 October 2020.
- 514 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 515 Correction to an answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 516 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Border Force asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 517 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Paterson and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 518 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 519 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 520 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Keneally and Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.

- 521 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert on 15 May 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 522 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher on 22 May 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 523 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Patrick and Gallagher on 5 June 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 524 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Watt and Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 525 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 526 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 September 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 527 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 528 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 August 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 529 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 530 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 21 October 2020.
- 531 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 15 September 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 532 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 25 September 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 533 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher, Siewert and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 534 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 2 October 2020, received 22 October 2020.
- 535 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 23 October 2020.
- 536 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 23 October 2020.

- 537 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 23 October 2020.
- 538 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator McKim at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 26 October 2020.
- 539 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Keneally on 2 October 2020, received 26 October 2020.
- 540 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Brockman at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September, received 28 October 2020.
- 541 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Gallagher on 2 October 2020, received 28 October 2020
- 542 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senators Rice and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020, received 5 November 2020.
- 543 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 25 September 2020, received 6 November 2020.
- 544 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 21 August 2020, received 9 November 2020.
- 545 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Rice at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 9 November 2020
- 546 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Keneally and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 10 November 2020.
- 547 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Defence asked by Senator Lambie at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 June 2020, received 6 July 2020.
- 548 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Defence asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 June 2020, received 8 July 2020.
- 549 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs asked by Senator Griff on 17 August 2020, received 13 November 2020.
- 550 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 27 July 2020, received 17 November 2020.
- 551 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 August 2020, received 17 November 2020.

- 552 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020, received 19 November 2020.
- 553 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2020, received 20 November 2020.
- 554 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 August 2020, received 23 November 2020.
- 555 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senators Rice and Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 24 September 2020, received 23 November 2020.
- 556 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 23 November 2020.
- 557 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 25 November 2020.
- 558 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 30 November 2020.
- 559 Answers to questions on notice from the Australian Border Force, asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 November 2020, received 11 December 2020.
- 560 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 November 2020, received 8 January 2021.
- 561 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 November 2020, received 8 January 2021.
- 562 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020, received 28 January 2021.
- 563 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 September 2020, received 2 February 2021.
- 564 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Griff and Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 4 February 2021.
- 565 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 4 February 2021.
- 566 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 4 February 2021.
- 567 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 9 October 2020, received 4 February 2021.
- 568 Answer to a written question on notice from AstraZeneca asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 4 February 2021.

- 569 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Medical Association asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 8 February 2021.
- 570 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 November 2020, received 10 February 2021.
- 571 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 January 2021, received 10 February 2021.
- 572 Answer to a written question on notice from the Australian Taxation Office asked by Senator Gallagher on 18 December 2020, received 10 February 2021.
- 573 Answer to a written question on notice from Pfizer Australia asked by Senators Keneally, Siewert and Paterson on 28 January 2021, received 11 February 2021.
- 574 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 November 2020, received 16 February 2021.
- 575 Answer to a question on notice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 16 February 2021.
- 576 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 16 February 2021.
- 577 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 17 February 2021.
- 578 Answers to written questions on notice from the Royal Australasian College of Physicians asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 19 February 2021.
- 579 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher and Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021, received 19 February 2021.
- 580 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Siewert and Gallagher on 29 January 2021, received 19 February 2021.
- 581 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 22 February 2021.
- 582 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 29 January 2021, received 23 February 2021.
- 583 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 24 July 2020, received 24 February 2021.
- 584 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senators Rice and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 November 2020, received 1 March 2021.
- 585 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health and Cabinet asked by Senators Siewert and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 3 March 2021.

- 586 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health and Cabinet asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 4 March 2021.
- 587 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 16 March 2021.
- 588 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 17 March 2021.
- 589 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Keneally and Siewert on 21 August 2020, received 17 March 2021.
- 590 Answer to question on notice from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment asked by Senators Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 06 August 2020, received 18 March 2021.
- 591 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021, received 23 March 2021.
- 592 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Treasury asked by Senators Gallagher and Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 February 2021, received 23 March 2021.
- 593 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 12 February 2021, received 23 March.
- 594 Answer to written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 23 March 2021.
- 595 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Griff on 7 August 2021, received 23 March 2021.
- 596 Answers to written question on notice from Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians asked by Senator Griff on 7 August 2021, received 23 March 2021.
- 597 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 23 March 2021.
- 598 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senators Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020, received 23 March 2021.
- 599 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 26 February 2021, received 23 March.
- 600 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Siewert on 26 May 2020, received 23 March 2021.
- 601 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 August 2020, received 23 March 2021.
- 602 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021, received 24 March 2021.

- 603 Answers to written question on notice from the Department of Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 12 February 2021, received 24 March 2021.
- 604 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 24 March 2021
- 605 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Gallagher on 12 February 2021, received 24 March 2021.
- 606 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Gallagher on 7 August 2020, received 24 March 2021.
- 607 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Social Services asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020, received 24 March 2021.
- 608 Answer to a question on notice from CSL, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 March 2021, received 15 March 2021.
- 609 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021, received 15 April 2021.
- 610 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 15 April 2021.
- 611 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senators Gallagher, Siewert and Watt at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 March 2021, received 15 April 2021.
- 612 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 29 September 2020, received 19 April 2021.
- 613 Answers to questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 March 2021, received 19 April 2021.
- 614 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 September 2020, received 21 April 2021.
- 615 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 11 May 2021.
- 616 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 28 January 2021, received 11 May 2021.
- 617 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 12 May 2021.
- 618 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 26 February 2021, received 12 May 2021.
- 619 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 January 2021, received 12 May 2021
- 620 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Lambie on 10 July 2020, received 12 May 2021.
- 621 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Davey on 13 May 2020, received 12 May 2021.

- 622 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 13 May 2021.
- 623 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, asked by Senator Siewert on 29 April 2021, received 13 May 2021.
- 624 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 January 2021, received 17 May 2021.
- 625 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 April 2021, received 17 May 2021.
- 626 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Gallagher on 14 May 2021, received 28 May 2021.
- 627 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 26 April 2021, received 11 June 2021.
- 628 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Patrick on 07 May 2021, received 11 June 2021.
- 629 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 April 2021, received 17 June 2021.
- 630 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 27 April 2021, received 17 June 2021.
- 631 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Gallagher on 11 February 2021, received 18 June 2021
- 632 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Siewert on 11 February 2021, received 18 June 2021
- 633 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Patrick on 07 May 2021, received 21 June 2021.
- 634 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Siewert on 07 May 2021, received 21 June 2021.
- 635 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 April 2021, received 8 July 2021
- 636 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 March 2021, received 8 July 2021.
- 637 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 27 April 2021, received 8 July 2021.
- 638 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 26 May 2020, received 13 July 2021.
- 639 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 16 July 2021.
- 640 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 30 July 2021.
- 641 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Keneally on 7 May 2021, received 30 July 2021.
- 642 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Keneally on 7 May 2021, received 30 July.

- 643 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Keneally on 9 March 2021, received 3 August 2021.
- 644 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Siewert on 9 March 2021, received 3 August 2021.
- 645 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally at a hearing in Canberra on 11 June 2020, received 3 August 2021.
- 646 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Watt at a hearing in Canberra on 11 June 2020, received 3 August 2021.
- 647 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Keneally on 9 March 2021, received 6 August 2021.
- 648 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 21 June 2021, received 10 August 2021.
- 649 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 23 July 2021, received 10 August 2021.
- 650 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 10 August 2021.
- 651 Updated answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health (AQoN. 580), asked by Senator Siewert on 29 January 2021, received 11 August 2021.
- 652 Answers to spoken questions on notice from the Department of Finance, asked by Senator Gallagher on 30 July 2021, received 12 August 2021.
- 653 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 16 August 2021.
- 654 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 23 July 2021, received 16 August 2021.
- 655 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 23 August 2021.
- 656 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 15 July 2021, received 24 August 2021.
- 657 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 15 July 2021, received 25 August 2021.
- 658 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 21 June 2021, received 25 August 2021.
- 659 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 25 August 2021.
- 660 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Lambie on 30 July 2021, received 25 August 2021.

- 661 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Defence, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 27 August 2021.
- 662 Answer to a written question on notice from the Productivity Commission, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 30 August 2021.
- 663 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 31 August 2021.
- 664 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Gallagher on 30 July 2021, received 1 September 2021.
- 665 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 1 September 2021.
- 666 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 2 September 2021.
- 667 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 August 2021, received 3 September 2021.
- 668 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 28 January 2021, received 6 September 2021.
- 669 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Home Affairs, asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 8 September 2021.
- 670 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 10 September 2021.
- 671 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 10 September 2021.
- 672 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally on 5 July 2021, received 14 September 2021.
- 673 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, asked by Senator Keneally on 2 July 2021, received 14 September 2021.
- 674 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 August 2021, received 21 September.
- 675 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 April 2021, received 28 September 2021.
- 676 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 10 August 2021, received 29 September 2021.
- 677 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 29 September 2021.
- 678 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 August 2021, received 29 September 2021.
- 679 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 29 September 2021.

- 680 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 29 September 2021.
- 681 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 August 2021, received 30 September 2021.
- 682 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 August 2021, received 1 October 2021.
- 683 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 23 July 2021, received 1 October 2021.
- 684 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 27 August 2021, received 15 October.
- 685 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 16 September 2021, received 15 October.
- 686 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 7 August 2020, received 15 October.
- 687 Answers to spoken questions on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senator Patrick on 30 September 2021, received 18 October 2021.
- 688 Answer to a spoken question on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senator Kitching on 30 September 2021, received 18 October 2021.
- 689 Answers to spoken questions on notice from Services Australia, asked by Senator Gallagher on 30 September 2021, received 18 October 2021.
- 690 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Steele-John on 23 September 2021, received 19 October 2021.
- 691 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 September 2021, received 19 October 2021.
- 692 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 21 October 2021.
- 693 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 15 July 2021, received 21 October 2021.
- 694 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 25 October 2021.
- 695 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Siewert on 23 July 2021, received 25 October 2021.
- 696 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 September 2021, received 25 October 2021.
- 697 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 16 September 2021, received 25 October 2021.
- 698 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 25 October 2021.
- 699 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 26 October 2021.

- 700 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 27 October 2021.
- 701 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 27 October 2021.
- 702 Answer to a question on notice from the National Indigenous Australians Agency asked by Senator Cox at a public hearing in Canberra on 14 October 2021, received 27 October 2021.
- 703 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health, asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 28 October 2021.
- 704 Answers to written questions on notice from the Australian Taxation Office, asked by Senator Steele-John on 23 September 2021, received 29 October 2021.
- 705 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Treasury, asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 29 October 2021.
- 706 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 September 2021, received 29 October 2021.
- 707 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 September 2021, received 29 October 2021.
- 708 Answer to a question on notice from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute asked by Senator Keneally at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 September 2021, received 8 October 2021.
- 709 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 08 October 2021, received 12 November 2021.
- 710 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet asked by Senator Gallagher on 08 October 2021, received 25 November 2021.
- 711 Answer to a question on notice from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute asked by Senator Paterson at a public hearing in Canberra on 16 November 2021, received 30 November 2021.
- 712 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 30 July 2021, received 30 November 2021.
- 713 Answer to a question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021, received 1 December 2021.
- 714 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 16 September 2021, received 1 December 2021.
- 715 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 1 December 2021.
- 716 Answers to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 14 October 2021, received 9 December 2021.

- 717 Answer to a question on notice from CSL, asked by Senator Gallagher at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 March 2021, received 15 March 2021.
- 718 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 September 2021, received 27 January 2022.
- 719 Answers to written questions on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 20 September 2021, received 27 January 2022.
- 720 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 6 August 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 721 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Keneally on 28 September 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 722 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 28 September 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 723 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 724 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 October 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 725 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 8 October 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 726 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Davey on 7 December 2021, received 1 February 2022.
- 727 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of the Treasury asked by Senator Gallagher on 14 January 2022, received 16 February 2022.
- 728 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Patrick on 2 February 2022, received 8 March 2022.
- 729 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 1 October 2021, received 28 March 2022.
- 730 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Lambie on 2 February 2022, received 28 March 2022.
- 731 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Steele-John on 2 February 2022, received 28 March 2022.
- 732 Answer to a spoken question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Rice on 2 February 2022, received 28 March 2022.
- 733 Answer to a written question on notice from the Department of Health asked by Senator Gallagher on 14 January 2022, received 30 March 2022.

### *Correspondence*

- 1 Correspondence from Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury to the committee Chair, received 6 May 2020.
- 2 Correspondence from Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury to the committee Chair, received 19 May 2020.
- 3 Correspondence from Chair, Senator Katy Gallagher on behalf of the committee to Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury, sent on 22 May 2020.

- 4 Correspondence from the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP to the committee Chair, received 25 May 2020.
- 5 Letter from Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security with the Department of Social Services to the committee Chair, received 29 July 2020.
- 6 Correspondence from the Australian Medical Association to the committee Chair, received 11 August 2020
- 7 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Mr Michael Outram APM, Commissioner, Australian Border Force, sent on 12 August 2020.
- 8 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, sent on 12 August 2020.
- 9 Correspondence from Dr Helen Haines MP to the committee Chair, received 12 August 2020.
- 10 Correspondence and related documents from Mr Michael Outram APM, Commissioner, Australian Border Force, provided in response to the Chair's letter of 12 August 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 11 Correspondence and related documents from Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, provided in response to the Chair's letter of 12 August 2020, received 14 August 2020.
- 12 Correspondence between Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health and the committee relating to cases of COVID-19 in Victorian aged care facilities. Correspondence ranges from 20 August 2020 to 12 September 2020.
- 13 Correspondence between Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer of Services Australia and the committee relating to answers provided to questions on notice. Correspondence ranges from 15 September 2020 to 30 September 2020.
- 14 Correspondence between Steve McCann, Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of LendLease Group Services Pty Limited and Senator Rex Patrick. Correspondence ranges from 22 September 2020 to 28 September 2020.
- 15 Correspondence between CSL and the committee relating to their appearance at a public hearing. Correspondence ranges from 23 December 2020 to 27 January 2021.
- 16 Letter from The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aging to the Chair Senator Gallagher received 27 April 2021.
- 17 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services sent on 7 January 2022.
- 18 Letter from Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, to the Chair Senator Gallagher received 10 January 2022.

- 19 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services sent on 10 January 2022.
- 20 Letter from Ms Foster, acting secretary for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, to the Chair Senator Gallagher received 10 January 2022.
- 21 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Ms Foster, acting secretary for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, sent on 11 January 2022.
- 22 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Ms Shakespeare, acting secretary for the Department of Health, sent on 18 January 2022.
- 23 Correspondence from Ms Shakespeare, acting secretary for the Department of Health committee, to the Chair Senator Gallagher, sent on 19 January 2022.
- 24 Correspondence from committee Chair, on behalf of the committee to Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services sent on 19 January 2022.
- 25 Correspondence from Mr Ry Atkinson, Strategic Campaigner at Amnesty International, to Senator Gallagher, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19, sent on 22 February 2022.

#### *Form Letters*

- 1 Form letter example received from 1700 individuals.
- 2 Form letter example received from 117 individuals.

#### *Media Releases*

- 1 Media Release: COVIDSafe Application
- 2 Media Release: Reopening submissions

#### *Tabled Documents*

- 1 Opening statement tabled by Ms Caroline Edwards, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 April 2020.
- 2 Opening statement tabled by Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 April 2020.
- 3 Document detailing payment recipient numbers tabled by Ms Kathryn Campbell AO CSC, Secretary of the Department of Social Services at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020.
- 4 Document detailing cash payments by various categories tabled by Mr Martin Hoffman, Chief Executive Officer of the National Disability Insurance Agency at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020.
- 5 Document relating to participant requested reviews tabled by Mr Martin Hoffman, Chief Executive Officer of the National Disability Insurance Agency at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020.

- 6 Document relating to social security and welfare claims processing tabled by Ms Rebecca Skinner, Chief Executive Officer of Services Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 April 2020.
- 7 Opening statement tabled by Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020.
- 8 Opening statement tabled by Mr Michael Pezzullo, Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020.
- 9 Opening statement tabled by Commissioner Michael Outram APM, Commissioner of the Australian Border Force at a public hearing in Canberra on 5 May 2020.
- 10 Opening statement tabled by Mr Randall Brugeaud, Chief Executive Officer of the Digital Transformation Agency at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 May 2020.
- 11 Opening statement tabled by Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation at the Australian Taxation Office at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020.
- 12 Opening statement tabled by Mr Reece Kershaw, Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, at a public hearing in Canberra on 7 May 2020.
- 13 Opening statement tabled by Mr Philip Gaetjens, Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020.
- 14 Opening statement tabled by Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC, Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, at a public hearing in Canberra on 13 May 2020.
- 15 Opening statement tabled by Dr Michele Bruniges AM, Secretary of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020.
- 16 Document detailing data on education and training, childcare, and JobKeeper, tabled by Dr Michele Bruniges AM, Secretary of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 May 2020.
- 17 Opening statement tabled by Ms Caroline Edwards, Secretary of the Department of Health, at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020.
- 18 Opening statement tabled by Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner, of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020.
- 19 Opening statement tabled by Professor Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 May 2020.
- 20 Opening statement tabled by Mr Philip Lowe, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 May 2020.
- 21 Opening statement tabled by Mr James Shipton, Chair of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 May 2020.

- 22 Opening statement tabled by Mr Wayne Byres, Chair of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 May 2020.
- 23 Opening statement tabled by Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC, Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020.
- 24 Updated opening statement by Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC, Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020, received 3 June 2020.
- 25 Opening statement tabled by Mr Michael Borg, Chief Executive Officer of Outback Stores at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 June 2020.
- 26 Opening statement tabled by Mr Neville Power, Chair of the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 June 2020.
- 27 Opening statement tabled by Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation at the Australian Taxation Office at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020.
- 28 Updated opening statement by Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation at the Australian Taxation Office at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020, received 9 June 2020.
- 29 Opening statement tabled by Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020.
- 30 Timeline of key dates and actions regarding the JobKeeper payment tabled by Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020.
- 31 Excerpt of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules tabled by Senator Rex Patrick at a public hearing in Canberra on 9 June 2020.
- 32 Petition to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts from the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance tabled by Mr Paul Murphy, Chief Executive Officer of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 June 2020.
- 33 Opening statement tabled by Dr Raina MacIntyre at a public hearing in Canberra on 25 June 2020.
- 34 Opening statement tabled by Ms Kate Fielding, Program Director with A New Approach, Australian Academy of the Humanities at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020.
- 35 Opening statement tabled by Ms Ros Abercrombie, Executive Director of Regional Arts Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020.
- 36 Opening statement tabled by Ms Elizabeth Rogers, Chief Executive Officer of Regional Arts NSW at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020.
- 37 Opening statement tabled by Ms Bethwyn Serow, Executive Officer of the Australian Major Performing Arts Group at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020.

- 38 Opening statement tabled by Mr Adrian Collette AM, Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council for the Arts at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 June 2020.
- 39 Opening statement tabled by Ms Brianna Casey, Chief Executive Officer of Foodbank Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020.
- 40 Document pertaining to food availability tabled by Ms Brianna Casey, Chief Executive Officer of Foodbank Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020.
- 41 Opening statement tabled by Ms Claerwen Little, National Director of UnitingCare Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020.
- 42 Opening statement tabled by Mr Trevor Carroll, Vice President of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020.
- 43 Opening statement tabled by Mr Damian Griffs, Chief Executive Officer of First Peoples Disability Network (Australia) at a public hearing in Canberra on 1 July 2020.
- 44 Opening statement tabled by Mr Stephen Koukoulas, Managing Director of Market Economics at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 July 2020.
- 45 Opening statement tabled by Mr Saul Eslake at a public hearing in Canberra on 2 July 2020.
- 46 Opening statement tabled by Mr Nick McIntosh, Assistant National Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union of Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020.
- 47 Opening statement tabled by Ms Linda White, Assistant National Secretary of the Australian Services Union at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020.
- 48 Opening statement tabled by Ms Teri O'Toole, Secretary, International Division of the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020.
- 49 Opening statement tabled by Mr Andrew Parker, Group Executive, Government, Industry, International, Sustainability with Qantas Airways Limited at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 July 2020.
- 50 Opening statement tabled by Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020.
- 51 Report on income support payments by earnings and partner earnings tabled by Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security of the Department of Social Services at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020.
- 52 Report on income support payments by state tabled by Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security of the Department of Social Services at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020.
- 53 Report on income support payments by statistical area level 2 tabled by Mr Shane Bennett, Acting Deputy Secretary, Social Security of the Department of Social Services at a public hearing in Canberra on 30 July 2020.

- 54 Opening statement tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020.
- 55 Opening statement tabled by Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 4 August 2020.
- 56 Opening statement tabled by Mr Simon Atkinson, Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020.
- 57 Opening statement given to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee on 9 June 2020, tabled by Mr Simon Atkinson, Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 August 2020.
- 58 Opening statement tabled by Mr Neville Power, Chair of the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020.
- 59 Opening statement tabled by Dr Michele Bruniges AM, Secretary of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020.
- 60 Childcare support data tabled by Dr Ros Baxter, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care, Department of Education, Skills and Employment at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 August 2020.
- 61 Opening statement tabled by Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment at a public hearing in Canberra on 18 August 2020.
- 62 Opening statement tabled by Mr Chris Jordan AO, Commissioner of Taxation with the the Australian Taxation Office at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 September 2020.
- 63 Opening statement tabled by Mr Andrew Paterson, Chief Executive Officer of Family Day Care Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020.
- 64 Opening statement tabled by Ms Catherine Wood, National Chair of Women in Super at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020.
- 65 Report by Per Capita: The 'Herstory' of superannuation, August 2020, tabled by Ms Catherine Wood, National Chair of Women in Super at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020.
- 66 Early release of super fund data analysis by Women in Super tabled by Ms Catherine Wood, National Chair of Women in Super at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020.
- 67 Opening statement tabled by Ms Roselynn Anderson, Chair of economic Security4Women at a public hearing in Canberra on 22 September 2020.
- 68 Opening statement tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020.

- 69 Opening statement tabled by Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Commissioner of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission at a public hearing in Canberra on 29 September 2020.
- 70 Screenshots of Facebook posts pertaining to DFAT phone banking tabled by Senator the Hon Kristina Keneally, Committee member at a public hearing in Canberra on 26 November 2020.
- 71 Opening statement tabled by Dr Krishan Thiru, Medical Director, Developed Asia, Pfizer Australia and New Zealand at a public hearing in Canberra on 28 January 2021.
- 72 Opening statement tabled by Dr Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 11 March 2021.
- 73 Daily Vaccine Roll-out Data tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 20 April 2021.
- 74 Investment in COVID-19 Health Response and Vaccination as at 15 April 2021 tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health, received 20 April 2021.
- 75 Daily Vaccine Roll-out Data update tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 27 April 2021.
- 76 Opening statement tabled by Professor Paul Kelly, Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 07 May 2021.
- 77 Document detailing COVID-19 Cases Acquired and Cases in Howard Springs, tabled by the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 07 May 2021.
- 78 Daily Vaccine Roll-out Data update tabled by Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health at a public hearing in Canberra on 21 June 2021.
- 79 Letters of correspondence between Senator Gallagher and Professor Paul Kelly at a public hearing in Canberra on 23 July 2021.