

Portfolio Overview

Structure and functions

The Attorney-General's portfolio covers a broad range of law and justice matters and services including legal policy and services to the Commonwealth; administrative, constitutional, civil, family, and international law; law reform; bankruptcy estate administration and regulation; Commonwealth courts and tribunals; legal aid; native title; national and international human rights issues; censorship; the provision of protective services to property and individuals; criminal law and law enforcement; national security; and some aspects of customs and border control.

The portfolio's agencies progress government priorities including direct services to the community within a legislative framework; the purchase of services on behalf of the community; the provision of services to the Government, Ministers, Commonwealth Departments and agencies and the provision of services to other clients.

The structure of agencies within the portfolio is aligned to the Government's overall commitment to a fairer and safer Australian society. The portfolio comprises the Attorney-General's Department and a number of statutory and non-statutory bodies. The Department is the central policy and coordinating agency within the portfolio.

Portfolio agencies are grouped in the agency budget statements in the order set out below.

- **Legal policy and services to the Commonwealth** – to advance and protect the interests of the Commonwealth, its ministers and agencies by the provision of sound, constructive, highly professional and timely legal policy advice and legal services:
 - Australian Government Solicitor (see below)
 - Office of Parliamentary Counsel

- **Community affairs** – to enhance and promote the rights of individuals and their reasonable access to justice:
 - Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
 - Australian Law Reform Commission
 - Office of Film and Literature Classification

- **The justice system** – to promote the effective and timely adjudication of disputes and resolutions of questions of law in courts and tribunals with appropriate jurisdictions; and to interpret and uphold the Australian Constitution:
 - Federal Court of Australia
 - Family Court of Australia
 - Administrative Appeals Tribunal (pending the establishment of the Administrative Review Tribunal)
 - National Native Title Tribunal
 - High Court of Australia

- **Maintenance of law, order and safety** – to contribute to the maintenance of law and order, combat crime and respond effectively to acts of politically motivated violence; maintain effective measures against espionage and subversive activities and against attacks directed at individuals, information and assets; and maintain effective border management:
 - Australian Customs Service
 - Australian Federal Police (including the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence)
 - National Crime Authority
 - Australian Institute of Criminology
 - Criminology Research Council
 - Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre
 - Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
 - Australian Security Intelligence Organisation

The 2000–01 Budget

The measures in the 2000–01 Budget for the portfolio are:

- \$104.3m additional resourcing over four years for a continued Australian civilian police presence in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor;
- \$45.6m additional resourcing over four years and \$17.5m in estimated indexation amounting to \$63.1m over four years in additional funding for legal aid;
- \$27.3m additional resourcing over four years for the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Customs Service to implement law enforcement measures to address the rapid growth of unauthorised arrivals in Australia;
- \$25.3m additional resourcing over three years for the National Crime Authority to continue targeting of serious and large scale fraud and related crime against the Commonwealth;
- \$24.6m additional resourcing over four years in capital and departmental resourcing to enable the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation to enhance its capabilities;
- \$20.0m additional resourcing over four years for diversionary programs for juveniles in the Northern Territory;
- \$10.4m additional resourcing in 2000–01 to meet increased security arrangements for diplomatic and consular missions in Australia;
- \$8.0m additional resourcing over four years to ensure appropriate management of Commonwealth involvement in native title litigation;
- \$4.7m additional resourcing in 2000–01 for microwave video link capacity for Commonwealth and State law enforcement agencies;
- \$1.4m additional resourcing in 2000–01 for agencies in my portfolio (and \$0.6m for the Defence portfolio) for the protection of the national information infrastructure;

- \$17.6m additional resourcing over four years to establish the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). The savings in the Attorney-General's and Immigration and Multicultural Affairs portfolios from economies of scale and administrative efficiencies arising from the merger of the tribunals is \$31.1m over four years;
- \$17.5m savings over four years in the Australian Customs Service through increasing competitive tendering and contracting; and
- \$8.0m savings over four years in my Department through the implementation of a reform program.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST)

In this document all estimates of expenses, assets and appropriation revenues are net of recoverable GST.

The price of outputs is expected to reduce in 2000–01 when compared with that of 1999–00 in respect of cost reductions from Government tax reforms. This applies only to material agencies in the portfolio: the Department, the Family Court of Australia, the Australian Customs Service and the Australian Federal Police.

The Australian Government Solicitor

The Australian Government Solicitor (AGS), a Commonwealth statutory authority, was incorporated under the *Judiciary Act 1903* on 1 September 1999. AGS is a leading national legal services provider serving the Government and its agencies, and through them, the public interest. AGS is a Government Business Enterprise and is a Public Trading Enterprise under the direction of its Chief Executive Officer, Ms Rayne de Gruchy. AGS is accountable to Parliament through its shareholder ministers, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Finance and Administration.

As AGS is not part of the general government sector and receives no appropriation from government, AGS is not included in the Agency Budget Statements section of this document.

Structure of Attorney-General's Portfolio Outcomes

Attorney-General

The Hon Daryl Williams AM QC MP

Minister for Justice and Customs

Senator the Hon Amanda Vanstone

Attorney-General's Department

Secretary : Mr Robert Cornall

Outcome 1: An equitable and accessible system of federal law and justice.

Outcome 2: Coordinated security, crime prevention and law enforcement arrangements.

Australian Government Solicitor

CEO : Ms Rayne de Gruchy

The Australian Government Solicitor is a Public Trading Enterprise.

Office of Parliamentary Counsel

First Parliamentary Counsel : Ms Hilary Penfold

Outcome 1: Parliamentary democracy and an effective statute book.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

President : Professor Alice Tay

Outcome 1: An Australian society in which the human rights of all are respected, protected and promoted.

Australian Law Reform Commission

President : Professor David Weisbrot

Outcome 1: The development and reform of aspects of the laws of Australia to ensure that they are equitable, modern, fair and efficient.

Office of Film and Literature Classification

Director : Mr Des Clark

Outcome 1: Australians make informed decisions about films, publications and computer games which they, or those in their care may view, read or play.

Federal Court of Australia

Registrar : Mr Warwick Soden

Outcome 1: Through its jurisdiction, the Court will apply and uphold the rule of law to deliver remedies and enforce rights and in so doing, contribute to the social and economic development and well-being of all Australians.

Family Court of Australia

CEO : Mr Richard Foster

Outcome 1: Serving the interest of the Australian community by ensuring families and children in need can access high quality services.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal

Registrar : Ms Kay Ransome

Outcome 1: To provide aggrieved persons and agencies with timely, fair and independent merits review of administrative decisions over which the Tribunal has jurisdiction.

National Native Title Tribunal

Registrar : Mr Christopher Doepel

Outcome 1: Recognition and protection of Native Title.

High Court of Australia

Chief Executive and Principal Registrar : Mr Christopher Doogan

Outcome 1: Interpreting and upholding the Australian Constitution and performing the functions of the ultimate appellate Court in Australia.

Australian Customs Service

CEO : Mr Lionel Woodward AO

Outcome 1: Effective border management that, with minimal disruption to legitimate trade and travel, prevents illegal movement across the border, raises revenue and provides trade statistics.

Australian Federal Police

Commissioner : Mr Michael Palmer AO APM

Outcome 1: The investigation and prevention of crime against the Commonwealth and protection of Commonwealth interests in Australia and overseas.

Outcome 2: Policing activity creates a safe and secure environment in the ACT.

National Crime Authority

Chairperson : Mr Gary Crooke QC

Outcome 1: An integrated and national response to organised crime.

Australian Institute of Criminology

Director : Dr Adam Graycar

Outcome 1: To inform government activities which aim to promote justice and reduce crime.

Criminology Research Council

Director, Dr Adam Graycar

Outcome 1: Criminological research which informs the Commonwealth and States.

Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre

Director : Ms Elizabeth Montano

Outcome 1: A financial environment hostile to money laundering, major crime and tax evasion.

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Director : Mr Damian Bugg QC

Outcome 1: To contribute to the safety and well-being of the people of Australia and to help protect the resources of the Commonwealth through the maintenance of law and order and by combating crime.

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation

Director-General of Security : Mr Dennis Richardson

Outcome 1: A secure Australia for people and property, for government business and national infrastructure, and for special events of national and international significance.