

OFF THE STREETS: Crackdown on illegal guns and unexplained wealth

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Modernising the service

Reforms aim for stronger leadership.

The roles, responsibilities and official values of the parliamentary and public services will be updated to better reflect current best practice and contemporary needs under amendments passed by federal parliament.

The changes in the Public Service Amendment Bill 2012 and the Parliamentary Service Amendment Bill 2013 focus on better definition of functions and responsibilities of departmental secretaries and senior executives; an update to the values which guide the work and conduct of staff of the public and parliamentary services; and an increased role for the commissioners which oversee the services.

The amendments follow recommendations in a report titled *Ahead of the game: blueprint for the reform of Australian government administration*, which called for comprehensive reform to modernise the way public services are delivered.

Speaking on the Public Service Bill, Special Minister of State Gary Gray said the amendments would strengthen the management and leadership of the public service and help to embed new practices and behaviours into its culture.

“The bill recognises that the delivery of high-quality services and policy advice requires effective and committed leadership, supported by a public service that is efficient, driven by its desire to serve the community, and contemporary in its outlook,” Mr Gray said.

Both bills were passed by parliament with unanimous support from all parties. •



Law Enforcement, particularly the recommendation to involve the Australian Crime Commission in pursuing unexplained wealth orders.

“This really hits criminals where it hurts – taking away the proceeds of their illicit activities.”

“The ACC has significant coercive powers to force witnesses to answer questions, and those significant powers – which are unavailable to other law enforcement agencies – would have been very helpful in pursuing proceeds of crime.”

The Law Enforcement Committee made a total of 18 recommendations on the bill, all of which the government has committed to support in whole or in part through further action and legislation. •