

# RTI 0521 – Planning documents for the 2020 Queensland Parliament Estimates hearing, prepared by the Office of the Director-General

## Purpose of contextual information

The purpose of this document to provide further context around the scope of the Estimates Team, Office of the Director-General and their role in preparing all witnesses and advisors for the Parliamentary Estimates Hearing for the Health and Ambulance Services portfolios.

## Scope of work

- The Deputy Premier is the Minister for the Health and Ambulance Services portfolios. These portfolios are overseen by the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.
- Entities under the Health and Ambulance Services portfolios include:
  - Department of Health, including the Queensland Ambulance Service.
  - 16 Hospital and Health Services
  - Queensland Mental Health Commission
  - QIMR Berghofer
  - Office of the Health Ombudsman
  - Health and Wellbeing Queensland
- The Estimates Team, ODG responsible for developing preparatory materials to support all 23 witness within the portfolio, who may be directly questioned by the Committee, and any advisers asked to attend the hearing.
- The breadth of the estimates hearing means that questions are related to expenditure by all entities within the portfolio.
- To ensure all witnesses are well equipped for the hearing, the Estimates Team coordinates a comprehensive briefing package. This briefing pack may be used to prepare for the hearing, to assist them to answer a question or to formulate responses to a question taken on notice during the hearing.
- It is an offence under the Queensland Criminal Code for a person to knowingly give a false answer to a question during an estimates hearing. Consequently, it is imperative anyone appearing before the Committee has access to comprehensive, clear and accurate information.
- Either side of the estimates hearing there is significant work undertaken to ensure witnesses are adequately supported. This includes: providing support to departmental staff preparing briefing materials (such as training and brief review), practice sessions for witnesses and advisers to ensure they are across parliamentary protocol, responding to Questions on Notice provided by the Committee before the hearing and respond to any questions taken on notice at the hearing.
- Outside of estimates preparation, members of the Estimates Team support other key work priorities across the department as needed, including the preparation of incoming government briefs in an election year.
- Since it was announced that the 2020-21 budget will be postponed due to COVID-19, members of the Estimates Team have been deployed to assist in the COVID-19 response, working alongside the State Health Emergency Coordination Centre, including being involved in responding to incoming correspondence from members of the public, internal reporting and providing secretariat support to COVID-19 governance arrangements.