



Audit committee to scrutinise arrangements for national funding agreements

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit announces a new inquiry into the arrangements surrounding national funding agreements.

The Chair of the Committee, Rob Oakeshott MP (Member for Lyne, NSW) said that “the Committee is going to look at and report on the operation of funding agreements between the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments, including the National Agreements entered into under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.”

The Committee will specifically consider:

1. the changing dynamics of grants to states and territories, the types of grants that are made and the principles, agreements and legislation governing these grants;
2. the extent to which the current systems for funding agreements satisfy the requirements of all levels of government, and any suggestions for changes to the process;
3. the need to balance the flexibility to allow states and territories to determine their own priorities with mechanisms for monitoring accountability and ensuring that the objectives of funding agreements are being achieved, noting the role of the COAG Reform Council; and
4. the adequacy of parliamentary scrutiny of funding agreements, noting that such agreements are typically negotiated at executive-to-executive level.

Mr Oakeshott MP added; “the previous audit Committee prepared a report into the *Auditor Generals Act 1997*, which was tabled on 10 February 2011. That report highlighted the difficulty of balancing flexibility with accountability with regards to national funding agreements. This inquiry seeks to build on that work, and examine the issue in greater detail.”

Submissions for the inquiry will close on **Friday, 8 April 2011**. Details on making a submission can be found at

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/documnts/howsub.htm>

For more information: please contact the Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, on telephone 02 6584 2911 or the Committee Secretary on telephone (02) 6277 4615 or visit the inquiry’s website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jcpaa/ .