



## **\$45 billion in national funding agreements scrutinised**

The value for money of the \$45 billion in federal funds paid to state and territory governments in 2010-11<sup>1</sup> will come under scrutiny when the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit hears from independent schools, a national body representing 700 disability organisations and the Australian National Audit Office in Canberra this Friday.

Committee Chair Rob Oakeshott said: "The Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations has been described as 'the most significant reform of Australia's federal relations in decades.'<sup>2</sup> As a consequence, the Committee wants to ensure that the new framework provides for adequate parliamentary scrutiny of national funding agreements, and these are issues that the Committee will explore at Friday's public hearing."

According to the Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations, the new arrangements will:

*"...greatly improve public transparency of these payments and the ability of the Parliament to scrutinize the payment arrangements."*<sup>3</sup>

However, in its submission to the Committee's inquiry, the ANAO states that:

*"without clear, adequate and consistent reporting against meaningful performance measures, the Parliament is constrained in its ability to understand and assess how Commonwealth funding is contributing to the achievement of value-for-money outcomes in areas covered by national funding agreements."*<sup>4</sup>

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit will conduct the first public hearing for its inquiry into national funding agreements in Canberra on **24 June 2011**. The Committee will hear from the following organisations:

1. The Australian National Audit Office
2. The Independent Schools Council of Australia
3. National Disability Services

The hearing will commence at **9.30 am** in **Committee Room 1R1, Parliament House**

The inquiry's website can be found at

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jcpaa/natagree/index.htm>

**For media comment:** please contact the Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, on telephone (02) 6584 2911

**For more information:** for information about the hearing, please contact the Committee Secretary on telephone (02) 6277 4615.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aph.gov.au/budget/2010-11/content/bp3/html/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.budget.gov.au/2011-12/content/bp3/html/bp3\\_06\\_appendix\\_a.htm](http://www.budget.gov.au/2011-12/content/bp3/html/bp3_06_appendix_a.htm)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/>

<sup>4</sup> Submission No. 1, p. 6.