CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services is established pursuant to the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001.* Section 243 specifies the Committee's duties which include:

> (a) to inquire into, and report to both Houses on:
>
> > (i) the activities of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) or the Panel, or matters connected with such activities, to which, in the Parliamentary Committee's opinion, the Parliament's attention should be directed;
> >
> > …
>
> (b) to examine each annual report that is prepared by a body established by this Act and of which a copy has been laid before a House, and to report to both Houses on matters that appear in, or arise out of, that annual report and to which, in the Parliamentary Committee's opinion, the Parliament's attention should be directed.

General comments

1.2 In order to fulfil its duties pursuant to section 243, the Committee held a public hearing on 2 December 2002 to examine ASIC's annual report which stands referred to this Committee. The Committee also took the opportunity to examine officers from ASIC on matters that had been drawn to the Committee's attention during the year.

1.3 The Committee heard evidence from Mr David Knott, Chief Executive Officer, and other officers from ASIC. The list of witnesses is in Appendix 1

Record of proceedings

1.4 A copy of the Hansard transcript is tabled for the information of the Parliament. The transcript is also available through the internet at http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard.

Additional information

1.5 Written material provided by ASIC in response to questions taken on notice by Committee members is in Appendix 2.

Acknowledgments

1.6 The Committee expresses its gratitude to Mr Knott and ASIC officers who appeared before the Committee and who provided the Committee with additional information following the proceedings.