



Sluggish job creation weighs down stimulus effects

Public hearing 8 February 2012 in Canberra

Federal parliament's Audit Committee will this week investigate the Auditor-General's concerns that a multi-million dollar government jobs fund provided only limited economic stimulus and delayed employment opportunities.

"The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit is concerned with the Auditor-General's findings that the \$150m Infrastructure Employment Projects stream of the Jobs Fund did not achieve the anticipated economic stimulus objectives within the designated timeframe," Committee Chair Rob Oakeshott said.

The Infrastructure Employment Project was established in April 2009 to contribute to the Jobs Fund by quickly creating jobs in communities affected by the global recession. However, the ANAO audit highlighted that it took over a year before any jobs were reported as either created or retained. Alarming, of the approved contracted projects, none were located in the Government's designated Priority Employment Areas.

Administrative deficiencies were also identified, including departure from the intent of the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines, absence of an implementation strategy and program guidelines which did not clearly outline the processes for projects to be considered for funding.

The Department of Infrastructure and Transport, the Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Australian National Audit Office will appear before the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit to discuss the findings in the ANAO Audit Report No. 7 2011–12 *Establishment, Implementation and Administration of the Infrastructure Employment Projects Stream of the Jobs Fund*.

"The Committee is particularly interested to see whether key issues highlighted by the Auditor-General have been addressed. We want to ensure that the failings of the Infrastructure Employment Project are not repeated in future projects and that much needed jobs are successfully delivered to communities with the greatest need," Mr Oakeshott said.

The hearing will be held on **Wednesday 8 February**, from **12:00 noon to 1:00 pm** in **Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House Canberra**.

Broadcast:

Live broadcasting through <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting>

An electronic copy of the program can be found at http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jcpaa/auditgen11_11/hearings.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 Secretariat on telephone (02) 6277 4615, e-mail jcpaa@aph.gov.au, or visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jcpaa/index.htm>