



JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

A guide for responding to Committee recommendations

This guide will assist Commonwealth entities in preparing responses to recommendations made by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA).

Summary

| Type of response | Government Response | Executive Minute |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Type of recommendation | Policy | Administrative |
| Who | Government minister | Entity Accountable Authority |
| How | Tabled in Parliament | Provided directly to Committee via Secretariat |
| When | Within 6 months of tabling | Within 6 months of tabling |

There are two types of responses to JCPAA recommendations:

1. Government Responses—relating to policy recommendations
2. Executive Minutes—relating to administrative recommendations

Policy focused recommendations, such as suggested legislative change, require a government response tabled in Parliament from the relevant government Minister. This process is identical to government responses to all other committees of Parliament.

Administrative focused recommendations for which the entity's Accountable Authority has responsibility, such as suggested improvements to an entity's governance approach or performance information, are responded to by way of an Executive Minute. The Department of Finance issues [guidance](#) on internal government processes for the development of Government Responses and Executive Minutes. Executive Minutes are provided directly to the JCPAA via the Secretariat—see the template attached and secretariat contact details below. The Committee typically publishes the response on its website and later tables the response in Parliament.

What should be included in a response?

The Government Response or Executive Minute should:

- address the substance and intent of each recommendation and related report content;
- state whether the recommendation is *agreed*, *agreed with qualification*; or *not agreed*, and explain the rationale for this position;
- outline action taken or planned, and a timeframe to implement each recommendation that is *agreed* or *agreed with qualification*; and
- address relevant issues concisely and be free of extraneous detail.

If the JCPAA considers a Government Response or Executive Minute to be inadequate, it may request further information or decide to re-open its inquiry.

When is a response due?

Responses to committee reports are required within six months of tabling, under a [resolution of the House of Representatives](#) passed on 29 September 2010.

How to get more information

Contact:

Committee Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: +61 2 6277 4615
Fax: 02 6277 2220
jcpaa@aph.gov.au

(Template for response on Entity letterhead)

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|-------------------------|
| EXECUTIVE MINUTE |
|-------------------------|

on
JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT
REPORT [No.]
[report name]

General comments

An entity can provide background information to supplement the responses on the specific recommendations. This might, for example, explain the policy and legislative context for the entity's actions in response to the recommendations. It might also provide an overview of the strategies or administrative actions being undertaken by the entity relevant to the recommendations.

Response to each specific recommendation

Recommendation No: XX.

Re-state recommendation text

Summary of response: agreed, agreed with qualification, or not agreed

Supporting rationale:

- *address the substance and intent of each recommendation and related report content;*
- *explain the rationale for each position taken against the recommendation;*
- *outline action taken or planned, and a timeframe to implement each recommendation that is agreed or agreed with qualification; and*
- *where there are responses to a recommendation from more than one entity, state the entity name followed by its response under each recommendation. Entities can provide a joint response where this makes sense in light of shared responsibilities*

Signed by

Accountable Authority of Department/Entity