



Report calls for better practice regional grants administration

Parliament's Public Accounts Committee today presented its report on three Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) reports from 2014-15:

- Audit Report No. 9, *Design and Conduct of the Third and Fourth Funding Rounds of the Regional Development Australia Fund*
- Audit Report No. 19, *Management of the Disposal of Specialist Military Equipment*
- Audit Report No. 20, *Administration of the Tariff Concession System*

Committee Chair Dr Andrew Southcott MP said that a key finding from the review of these reports was the need for better practice, both in terms of regional grants administration and the implementation of audit report recommendations.

"In particular, the Committee agreed with the ANAO that there was not a clear trail through the assessment stages of rounds three and four of the Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF) to demonstrate that the projects awarded funding were those with the greatest merit in terms of the published program guidelines".

"The Committee found that there needed to be greater adherence to identified principles of better practice grants administration", Dr Southcott said.

The Committee's report includes recommendations directed at:

- the ANAO to: establish a standing audit focus on regional grants administration; include a new section on 'Regional grants administration' in the ANAO guide on *Implementing Better Practice Grants Administration*; and undertake a follow-up audit of the effectiveness of grants administration by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and a future audit of the department's implementation of audit recommendations
- the Department of Finance, to update the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines as necessary to reflect recent audit findings on grants administration
- the ANAO, to undertake a follow-up audit of Defence reforms concerning the disposal of specialist military equipment
- the Department of Defence, to develop training and handover procedures for staff in the Australian Military Sales Office
- the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, to report back to the Committee on its progress implementing audit recommendations
- the ANAO, to consider undertaking a future cross-agency audit of the administration of the Tariff Concession System, following finalisation of the current organisational restructuring

Copies of the report and further information about the inquiry can be accessed via the Committee's website at: www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa.

For media comment: please contact Committee Chair, Dr Andrew Southcott MP, on 0402 579 674 (Matthew Hee)

For information about the inquiry and public hearing: please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4615, email jcpaa@aph.gov.au, or visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa>