



Defence chief recalled – Audit committee to probe Defence reform lag

A senior Defence chief has been recalled to front a parliamentary committee investigating reform lags in military capability development.

Federal Parliament's Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit is examining the findings of the Australian National Audit Office report, *Capability Development Reform 2013-14*.

Vice Admiral, Peter Jones, Chief of Defence's Capability Development Group will appear before the inquiry at a public hearing on Monday, 7 April. The Committee has recalled Vice Admiral Jones to answer further questions following an initial hearing on 6 March.

Committee chair, Dr Andrew Southcott MP, said he was disappointed at the results of the most recent audit into capability development reform, which is one of the highest spending area for the Commonwealth Government.

'Defence's ability to deliver military capability on time and on budget has been a significant concern to successive Governments. The initial project selection and advice to government is critical to the success to the whole lifetime of defence acquisition and maintenance.

The lack of appropriate skills, and problems of accountability have been recurring themes in numerous independent, internal and parliamentary reviews' Dr Southcott said.

The committee will conduct a second hearing to examine the reasons for reform lag and whether recent reforms will result in lasting change.

Dr Southcott said that with expenditure in the multi-billions of dollars the Government, the Parliament and the public are entitled to high standards of accountability. It is critical that Defence is able to produce clear and reliable cost estimations, to track projects over time and ensure Ministerial and Cabinet authority for projects.

'In times of fiscal constraint, effective control over the defence budget is essential to ensure Australians see value for their tax dollar and has an effective Defence Force,' he said.

PUBLIC HEARING: Monday 7 April 2014 from 9.00 am - 12.00 pm Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra.

More information about the hearings can be found at the committee's website www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa. The hearing will be broadcast live at: www.aph.gov.au/live

For media comment: please contact Committee Chair, Dr Andrew Southcott MP (Marion Themeliotis 0413747351).

For information about the hearing: please contact the committee secretariat by telephone (02) 6277 4574, e-mail jcpaa@aph.gov.au, or visit the committee

website [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of Representatives_Committees?url=jcpaa/audit_reports_53_26_6/hearings.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jcpaa/audit_reports_53_26_6/hearings.htm).