



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

**Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Defence Sub-Committee**

MEDIA RELEASE
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*Chair: Senator David Fawcett
Deputy: Hon Alan Griffin MP*

Committee recommends enhancing Defence reporting to increase transparency

The Parliament's Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade today tabled the report for its *Review of the Defence Annual Report 2013-14*. As part of its review the Committee considered the adequacy and quality of reporting.

The Committee recommends that the Department of Defence enhance reporting on a number of areas including Project Suakin, the Joint Strike Fighter Program, the quantum of unfunded liabilities held by Defence, the Fuel Services Branch, and Defence and Veterans' Affairs mental health programs.

Chair of the Defence Sub-Committee, Senator David Fawcett (SA), said that Defence is currently undertaking a range of significant projects and programs and it is important for the public to be aware of the progress.

"Through the course of the review, the Sub-Committee became aware of the lack of detailed information and transparency in reporting. Increasing the quality of reporting in a number of areas will enhance accuracy and increase transparency and accountability," Senator Fawcett said.

The Committee also makes a number of other recommendations in its report including that the Department of Defence:

- further develop the 'Jobs Families Project' and strategic planning and appointment process to ensure employees are competent in their role and have the relevant experience;
- develop more innovative ways to recruit, especially in science, technology and engineering fields;
- ensure the physical standards are fit for purpose and exercise flexibility on a case-by-case basis;
- develop methods to collect and collate data on the On Base Advisory Service;
- explore options to engage and collaborate with industry on fuel management and security; and
- prepare an effective consultation and communication framework for use in ongoing and future redevelopments, in partnership with Defence Housing Australia.

Reviews of Defence annual reports have been conducted annually by the Committee in successive Parliaments since 2002.

"This process is an important oversight activity that the Defence Sub-Committee considers to be a key part of its role," Senator Fawcett said.

A copy of the report and information about the inquiry, including submissions, can be obtained from the Committee's website www.aph.gov.au/jfadt.

For media comment: please contact the Sub-Committee Chair, Senator David Fawcett, on (08) 8205 1040 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 3418 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313, via email at jscfadt@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>