



Supplementary statement by Coalition Members of the Committee

Coalition Members of the Public Works Committee (PWC) express in the strongest possible terms their objection that the normal role of the Committee in supervising the expenditure of public monies has been deliberately usurped by an act of the majority of the Parliament in respect to the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

The NBN represents the largest financial commitment to a work in the history of the Parliament and it is a travesty that the PWC's normal good work in scrutinizing the activity of Government Departments in the national interest has been prevented on this project.

Notwithstanding that this Annual Report makes reference to this particular exemption, the Report waxes lyrically on the need for Departments to provide the PWC with the following:

- (a) the stated purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose
- (b) the necessity for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work
- (c) the most effective use that can be made, in the carrying out of the work, or the monies to be expended on the work
- (d) where the work purports to be of a revenue producing character, the amount of revenue that it may be reasonably expected to produce
- (e) the present and prospective public value of the work
- (f) that procurement processes satisfy the high standards of probity for Commonwealth projects.

Notwithstanding that a special Joint House Committee has been established for the NBN, this new Committee does not possess the power of the PWC.

The PWC prides itself on the rigorous pursuit of all the above principles and has the capacity to refuse projects if it is not satisfied on any of them.

Opposition Members of the PWC are not confident that all of the above principles are being observed in respect to the NBN nor that the new Joint Committee has the equivalent power of the PWC including the consideration of commercial in confidence information.

Coalition Members therefore record their protest in this supplementary statement at this blatant repudiation of the good work of the PWC and its vigorous oversight of public expenditure over many Parliaments

John Forrest MP (Deputy Chair)
Member for Mallee

Karen Andrews MP
Member for McPherson

Patrick Secker MP
Member for Barker

Senator Sue Boyce
Senator for Queensland