

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

5.10 The Committee recommends the order be retained while the new AusTender system for reporting procurement contracts is implemented, with departments and agencies tabling statements through their ministers in accordance with paragraph (1) of the order, that they had fulfilled their reporting obligations by placing the information required under paragraph (2) of the order in the AusTender system.

Recommendation 2

5.11 The Committee recommends DOFA, in consultation with ANAO, relevant parliamentary committees and stakeholders, consider reporting arrangements for non-procurement contracts and explore the development of a reporting mechanism comparable to the new AusTender system for this category of contract, and report to the Committee the outcome of this process within six months of the tabling of this report.

Recommendation 3

5.14 The Committee recommends agencies, if they have not done so already, implement ANAO recommendations to improve the accuracy and completeness of contract information with stronger internal controls and quality assurance for checking data, and report that they have done so through their ministers' tabling statements made under paragraph (1) of the order.

Recommendation 4

5.17 The Committee recommends that to improve data quality and internal governance agencies include procurement and contract activity in regular business and management reporting to agency executives and, where necessary, internal audit and governance committees.

Recommendation 5

5.20 The Committee recommends DOFA and agencies consult ANAO on examples from compliance audit testing which illustrate provisions that are classified appropriately and those that are not, for inclusion in guidance and training in relation to the order.

Recommendation 6

5.23 The Committee recommends all agencies provide adequate training and education to staff responsible for managing contracts and complying with the order, either through internal training or programs provided externally.

Recommendation 7

5.32 The Committee recommends DOFA include in guidance advice to the effect that, in relation to a refusal to disclose information based on a claim of commercial confidentiality for a contract, the Parliament, and its committees and members, may:

- test the validity of any claim by reference to DOFA's process chart for agency staff dealing with confidentiality of information in contracts; and
- refer the contract to the Auditor-General for examination.

Recommendation 8

5.36 The Committee requests ANAO consider including ASIO and ASIS regularly in its compliance audits under the order on a three-yearly basis.

Recommendation 9

5.41 The Committee recommends the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, in the next set of guidelines for annual reporting, include a requirement for agencies to include a note in their annual reports referring readers to the AusTender site for information on contracts and consultancies. Depending on the outcome of any decision on the DOFA proposal to rationalise procurement reporting, it may be necessary for agencies to also include a note explaining changes to reporting requirements for procurement contracts.

Recommendation 10

5.49 The Committee recommends that the order be extended to cover CAC Act bodies from 1 July 2007.

Recommendation 11

5.53 The Committee reaffirms its suggestion that the Department of the House of Representatives comply voluntarily with the order. If the Senate agrees with this suggestion, the Committee requests the President of the Senate convey its suggestion to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Recommendation 12

5.59 The Committee recommends DOFA provide a general report on the implementation of the recommendations in this report and the performance of the new single reporting mechanism, by not later than the last day in September 2007.

Recommendation 13

5.61 The Committee recommends the Senate amend paragraph (7) of the order, to read: 'The Finance and Public Administration Committee consider the ongoing operation of the order and report on relevant developments from time to time'.

