



Report tabled on Great Barrier Reef regulation

Parliament's Public Accounts Committee today presented its inquiry report on three Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) reports relating to Great Barrier Reef permit regulation; Defence vehicle fleet replacement; and test and evaluation of Defence acquisitions.

Committee Chair, the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, said the Committee was strongly concerned by the Auditor-General's finding that shortcomings in the regulatory processes and practices of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority had undermined the effectiveness of the permit system as a means of managing risks to the Marine Park.

"The Committee has recommended accelerated implementation of initiatives to address this matter," Mr Macfarlane said.

"On Defence's medium and heavy vehicle fleet replacement program, the Committee has recommended that Defence ensure lessons learned from the failed first tender process for this area are embedded in standard operating procedures."

"The Committee has also recommended Defence improve its test and evaluation processes for major equipment acquisitions, noting that several past ANAO audits and external reviews had identified deficiencies in this area," Mr Macfarlane said.

The Committee's report includes recommendations directed at:

- the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to: appropriately accelerate its projected timeframe for implementation of the audit recommendations; implement a more effective performance framework for this area; and report back to the Committee on its implementation of improvements to permit application assessment, compliance management and response to non-compliance
- the Department of Defence to: provide evidence that lessons learned from acquisitions have been firmly embedded in standard operating procedures; and report back to the Committee on coordination of test and evaluation across the department, improvements to performance reporting, and implementation of competency and training arrangements

The Committee's inquiries drew on three ANAO reports: *Australian Defence Force's Medium and Heavy Vehicle Fleet Replacement (Land 121 Phase 3B)*, Audit Report No. 52 (2014-15); *Regulation of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Permits & Approvals*, Audit Report No. 3 (2015-16); and *Test & Evaluation of Major Defence Equipment Acquisitions*, Audit Report No. 9 (2015-16).

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 the Committee Chair's office on 0447 539 124 (Will Rollo)

For information about the report: 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>