

Dear Tim,

It is now some time since I submitted my Supplementary Submission to the JCPAA Inquiry into Government Contracting. I welcomed your acknowledgement of my submission, but note that it has not yet been formally accepted by the Committee and included on the Submissions website.

No doubt the Committee will have noted that the Case Study I used (the Defence F-35 Project) has been subject to much change and controversy since my original Submission. Much of this change and its dangers for Australia, both financial and national security, has been included in my Supplementary Submission, but over recent days, further controversy has surfaced.

The Committee may note that Defence's responses to this controversy has been witnessed by the Committee over the past decade or more. Instead of rational debate based upon known facts emanating from the validated Reports from the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E), Defence habitually resists questioning by:

- Shifting discussion away from the key points needed to be answered.
- Shooting the Messenger. That is, denigrating critics (including Parliamentary oversight bodies) for their lack of 'real project status knowledge', which is of course is always 'classified', notwithstanding that it has often been fully covered by DOT&E Reports. Critics raising real and important matters are often attacked personally, and rebutted by highly involved apologists from Defence who have no relevant knowledge or experience in the area.
- Leaving the door open if caught out. Pleas that Defence has been so advised by its Service Chiefs, so Defence's opinions must be soundly based. If not, there is a ready excuse.

I do hope that the Committee will note these techniques being used by Defence to rebut past and current very serious and real threats to the F-35 Project, and thus Australia's airpower capabilities and national security.

I would also much appreciate your advice as to when my Supplementary Submission may be accepted and posted.

Kind Regards,

Ted Bushell