



Great Barrier Reef permits in audit spotlight

Regulation of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park permits and approvals will be the focus of a public hearing tomorrow by Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, as part of its review of Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) reports.

The Committee will hear from representatives of the ANAO and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

Committee Chair, the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, said that one means by which GBRMPA helps to manage ecological sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is by granting permits for particular activities, and monitoring and enforcing permit holders' compliance with permit conditions.

"The ANAO concluded that, while GBRMPA has well-established arrangements for processing and assessing permit applications, there were weaknesses in the quality and completeness of the assessments undertaken against regulatory requirements. The ANAO also identified shortcomings with permit monitoring and responding to non-compliance".

"The Committee will be interested to hear more from GBRMPA and the ANAO about these matters", Mr Macfarlane said.

The ANAO's findings and recommendations are set out in Report No. 3 (2015-16), *Regulation of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Permits and Approvals*.

Public hearing date: Thursday, 11 February 2016

Venue: Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra

Program: 11.15am-12.30pm—ANAO and GBRMPA

Further information about the Committee's inquiry, including the program for the hearing, can be accessed from the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa. The hearing will also be streamed live at http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch_Parliament.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair's office on (07) 4632 4144 (Will Rollo)

For information about the inquiry and public hearing: 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>.