



## INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISIONS OF THE AUSTRALIAN CIVILIAN CORPS BILL 2010

In response to the call for submissions from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade the Australian Public Service Commission expresses its support to the proposed Australian Civilian Corp Bill. The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps has consulted with the Commission in its development of the legislation, as well as other supporting governance tools such as drafts of the Code of Conduct and Values.

The objective of our consultation has been to ensure that where practicable the Australian Civilian Corps Bill and Public Service Act are consistent. We have also had discussions on the transfer mechanisms of public servants from the Public Service Act to the Australian Civilian Corps Bill, and how any instances of misconduct will be addressed for these personnel.

In response to the two areas of particular interest to the standing committee the Commission is unable to comment on the issues of costs and logistics, and adequate protection for Australian Civilian Corps personnel when overseas in crisis situations. However, we understand that the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps has taken expert advice on this issue in the bill's development.

With regards to the issue of the possible conflict of interest of AusAID staff joining the register the Commission considers the existing procedures applicable to the APS to be sufficient for the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps to apply in the selection and management of personnel on the ACC register. Furthermore, precluding the inclusion of AusAID staff could be detrimental to the overall objectives of the Australian Civilian Corps.

The Commission is confident that the transfer of public servants from the Public Service Act to the Australian Civilian Corps Bill will not result in any loss of terms and conditions (such as leave entitlements).

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps has agreed to continue to consult with the Commission on elements of the subordinate legislation that will govern the Australian Civilian Corps operation. These include its Values and Code of Conduct as well as issues relating to Commonwealth employers releasing staff to work with the Australian Civilian Corps.

The Australian Public Service Commission also perceives membership in the Civilian Corps as a unique development opportunity for skilled public servants who are interested in supporting other nations in time of crisis.

Ms Carmel McGregor  
Deputy Australian Public Service Commissioner

22 October 2010