

## Work in Progress

### Introduction

3.1 This section provides a brief description of Committee inquiries and other activities active as at 30 June 2004.

### Review of Auditor-General's Reports, 2003-2004, First and Second Quarters

3.2 The Committee reviewed at public hearings three of the 10 reports tabled by the ANAO between 1 July 2003 and 31 October 2003. The three reports reviewed were:

- Audit Report No. 1, *Administration of Three Key Components of the Agriculture – Advancing Australia (AAA) Package*;
- Audit Report No. 4, *Management of the Extension Option Review - Plasma Fractionation Agreement*; and
- Audit Report No. 6, *APRA's Prudential Supervision of Superannuation Entities*.

3.3 Public hearings were held in Canberra in February and March 2004.

- 3.4 The Committee also reviewed three of the 14 audit reports tabled by the ANAO between 1 November 2003 and 31 January 2004. The three reports chosen for review at public hearings were:
- Audit Report No. 11, *Annual Performance Reporting*;
  - Audit Report No. 21, *Special Employee Entitlements Scheme for Ansett Group Employees (SEESA)*; and
  - Audit Report No. 24, *Agency Management of Special Accounts*.
- 3.5 Public hearings for these reports were held in Canberra in May and June 2004.
- 3.6 At the end of the reporting period, the Committee was deliberating on its findings. The report of the Review of Auditor-General's Reports, 2003-2004, First and Second Quarters is expected to be tabled in the 2004-2005 financial year.

### **Review of Auditor-General's Reports, 2003-2004, Third Quarter**

- 3.7 The Committee also chose three of the 18 audit reports tabled by the Australian National Audit Office between 1 February 2004 and 16 April 2004 to review in greater detail at public hearings. The three reports to be examined are:
- Audit Report No. 25, *Intellectual Property Policies and Practices in Commonwealth Agencies*;
  - Audit Report No. 34, *The Administration of Major Programs*; and
  - Audit Report No. *The Commonwealth's Administration of the Dairy Industry Adjustment Package*.
- 3.8 As of June 30 2004, public hearings were being planned for Canberra in August and September 2004.

## Indigenous Law and Justice Inquiry

- 3.9 On 25 March 2004 the Committee announced an inquiry into indigenous law and justice with the following terms of reference:

As part of its statutory responsibility to examine reports from the Auditor-General, the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit is expanding its review of *Audit Report No. 13, 2003-2004, ATSYS Law and Justice Program*—including its four components of Legal Aid; Law and Justice Advocacy; Family Violence Prevention; and Prevention, Diversion and Rehabilitation—to inquire and report on issues including:

- a) the distribution of the resources of Indigenous legal aid services between criminal, family and civil cases;
- b) the coordination of Indigenous legal aid services with Legal Aid Commissions through measures such as memoranda of understanding;
- c) the access for Indigenous women to Indigenous-specific legal services; and
- d) the ability of Law and Justice program components to recruit and retain expert staff.

The Committee will take into account the 2004 tender for Indigenous legal aid services.

- 3.10 In April 2004 the Committee sent out over 100 brochures soliciting submissions from parties with an interest in indigenous law and justice. The Committee also sent out over 800 questionnaires to indigenous communities and community groups seeking responses to questions about accessibility to legal aid.
- 3.11 The first public hearing for the inquiry was held in Canberra on 16 June 2004. As of 30 June 2004, further public hearings are being planned for New South Wales, the Northern Territory and South Australia. The Committee has not set a date for finalising the inquiry.

