



Energising public sector performance

Assessing the performance of public sector agencies was a key theme of a report tabled today by the Parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.

The committee reviewed the results of a pilot audit of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO – Report No.28). The audit found agencies were experiencing challenges in implementing meaningful KPIs and that there were problems with the administrative framework supporting KPIs.

Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, said “high quality performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation should be more than aspirational: it should be *demanded*”.

“To get the most out of the performance framework there needs to be strong leadership and sustained effort, both within the Government and in the Parliament”, Mr Oakeshott said.

“This is essential if we want to promote a culture in the public service that values performance measurement and improvement.”

The committee recommended prioritisation of a review of the KPI framework with the aim of providing clear policy and guidance to agencies in time for the 2014–15 financial year.

The committee also supported the Auditor-General's call for evaluation to be built into the design and implementation of programs, and for funding to be allocated for this purpose.

The committee also examined the ANAO's audit of the first round of the Energy Efficiency Information Grants program (Report No.17). The \$40 million program was aimed at encouraging energy efficiency in business and non-profit organisations. The committee agreed with the ANAO's conclusion that, while aspects of the program were managed well, there were significant administrative shortcomings in the assessment phase.

Mr Oakeshott said, “The committee was encouraged to see that key lessons from the audit appear to have been learned and applied by the department in the program's second funding round. Our hope is that any future audit of the program will find that better resource allocation and documentation practices have resulted in more acceptable administration outcomes.”

An electronic copy of the report can be downloaded from the committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa> under 'Review of Auditor-General's Reports – Nos. 11 to 31'.

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