
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Report 415

**Review of Auditor-General's Reports tabled between
September 2008 and January 2009**

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

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Canberra

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Foreword

The Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit, as prescribed by the Public Accounts and Audit Committee Act 1951 examines all of the reports of the Auditor-General tabled in the Parliament. This report details the findings of the Committee's examination of audit reports tabled between September 2008 and January 2009.

The five reports chosen by the Committee cover a range of agencies and highlight a number of areas of concern, including the need to adequately and effectively report progress towards goals, and to maintain accurate and up-to-date customer records.

The Committee reviewed the Business Partnership Agreement between the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Centrelink. While the Committee was pleased to find that inter-agency dispute resolution had been improved, we are disappointed to find that the agencies have not managed to fully implement an ANAO recommendation from 2004 to ensure that the Business Partnership Agreement is kept up to date. Accordingly we recommend that the agencies fully implement this recommendation before the commencement of the next Business Partnership Arrangement in 2010.

As a result of the investigation into Centrelink's Tip-off Management System, we found that Centrelink were acting quickly to implement all ANAO recommendations. Through the hearing process, the Committee found that Centrelink was still retaining data consisting of unsubstantiated claims against a number of customers. The retention of this information has the potential to prejudice further claims made against a customer, and we are therefore recommending that Centrelink ensure that such information is deleted from the Tip-off Recording System as soon as it is identified.

In reviewing the management of Disability Employment Services by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Education, we found the agencies had effectively planned, managed and implemented their policy initiatives. We were satisfied with their

implementation of the ANAO's recommendations, but still found that the agencies were unable to report effectively on progress towards achieving the objective of enhancing the quality of life of people with a disability. Accordingly, we recommended that the agencies monitor and report on progress towards achieving this goal.

In this batch of reports, we also examined the Australian Sports Commission's management of the Active After-school Communities Program. This program provides support to service providers who deliver after-school physical activity sessions for primary school children. The program has proven to be popular with students, and it has been well implemented, considering the rapidity of its roll-out. We were concerned at the ANAO finding that some adults working on the program had not completed the appropriate working with children checks, but found in its hearing that these had now been completed and were mandatory, and that waivers were no longer available. We note that it is difficult to report on the success of the program outside of anecdotal evidence, but noting that the development of motor skills is a key factor in developing a love of physical activity. We recommended that the Australian Sports Commission determine ways to measure the development of motor skills, and that they seek to have funding for the measurement of motor skills development included in their next funding bid.


Finally the Committee looked at the administration of Job Network Outcome Payments. We were pleased to see the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations addressing the issues noted in the audit report. However, we remain concerned that it is difficult to determine the contribution outcome payments make to Job Network expenditure, and recommend the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations provide disaggregated financial data on estimated and actual expenditure on outcome payments.

Sharon Grierson MP
Chair



Membership of the Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Chair | Ms Sharon Grierson MP (Chair) | |
| Deputy Chair | Mr Petro Georgiou MP (Deputy Chair) | |
| Members | Hon Dick Adams MP (from 17/08/09) | Senator Guy Barnett (from 11/02/09) |
| | Hon Bob Baldwin MP (until 25/09/08) | Senator Mark Bishop |
| | Hon Arch Bevis MP | Senator Sue Boyce (until 11/01/09) |
| | Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP (from 25/09/08) | Senator David Bushby |
| | Mr David Bradbury MP | Senator David Feeney |
| | Mr Jamie Briggs MP (from 25/09/08) | Senator Kate Lundy |
| | Mr Mark Butler MP (until 15/06/09) | |
| | Ms Catherine King MP | |
| | Mr Scott Morrison MP (until 25/09/08) | |
| | Mr Shayne Neumann MP | |
| Mr Stuart Robert MP | | |



Membership of the Sectional Committee

Chair Ms Sharon Grierson MP (Chair)

Members Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP (from 25/9/08) Senator Guy Barnett (from 11/2/09)

Mr David Bradbury MP

Senator David Feeney

Mr Jamie Briggs MP (from 25/9/08)

Ms Catherine King MP

Mr Shayne Neumann MP

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| | Ms Natalya Wells |



List of abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| AASC | Active After-school Communities |
| AEM | Assurance Expectation Matrices |
| ANAO | Australian National Audit Office |
| APM | Active Participation Model |
| ASC | Australian Sports Commission |
| BGF | Block Grant Funding (model) |
| BPA | Business Partnership Agreement |
| CBF | Case Based Funding |
| CCTP | Community Coach Training Program |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CFM | Centrelink Funding Model |
| COAG | Council of Australian Governments |
| CSTDA | Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement |
| DEEWR | Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations |
| DEN | Disability Employment Network |
| DEWR | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations |

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| DMI | Disability Maintenance Instrument |
| ESC | Employment Services Contract |
| FaHCSIA | Department of Families, Housing, Community Service and Indigenous Affairs |
| FMA Act | <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i> |
| JCA | Job Capability Assessment |
| JNM | Job Network Member |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| OSHCS | Out of School Hours Care Services |
| SLA | Service Level Agreement |
| TIPS | Tip-off Processing Site |
| TORS | Tip-off Recording System |



List of recommendations

2 The Business Partnership Agreement between the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Centrelink

Recommendation 1 11

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Centrelink ensure their Business Partnership Agreement be completed and kept up to date before the commencement of the next Business Partnership Agreement in 2010.

3 Centrelink's Tip-off System

Recommendation 2 21

The Committee recommends that Centrelink fully implement Recommendation Number 1 from the Australian National Audit Office Report Number 7 2008-09 and ensure that information in a tip-off deemed to no longer require any action be permanently deleted from the Tip-off Recording System as soon as it is identified as such.

4 Disability Employment Services

Recommendation 3 34

That the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations report within 12 months of the tabling of this report, on progress towards achieving the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement objective of 'striving to enhance the quality of life experienced by people with disability through assisting them to live as valued and participating members of the community'.

5 Active After-school Communities Program

Recommendation 4 43

The Committee recommends that the Australian Sports Commission determine ways in which to measure the development of motor skills of children participating in the Active After-school Communities Program, and that it seeks to have funding for the measurement of motor skills included in its next funding bid.

6 Administration of Job Network Outcome Payments

Recommendation 5 52

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations provide disaggregated financial data on the estimated and actual expenditure on outcome payments and service fees paid for the Job Network program in its annual reports.