

The Hon Kevin Andrews MP

**Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service**

17 FEB 2005

The Chairman
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Suite R1.108
Parliament House
Canberra

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

REPORT No. 402

Dear Chair

I refer to Recommendation No. 6 contained in the 402nd report of the JCPAA, *Review of the Auditor-General's reports 2003-2004* tabled in Parliament on 13 August 2004.

As advised by the Department on 28 October 2004, the matter was considered to be administrative in nature and after consulting with the Department of Treasury, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations took the lead responsibility for the response.

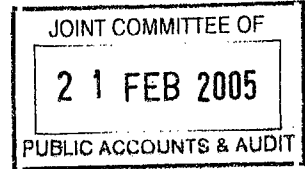
Attached is the joint response to the Committee from the agencies.

Yours sincerely


KEVIN ANDREWS



Australian Government
Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations



EXECUTIVE MINUTE

on

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

REPORT No. 402

Review of Auditor-General's Reports 2003-04: First & Second Quarters

General comments

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations welcomes the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit's assessment that the Department managed the implementation of SEESA efficiently given the time constraints placed upon it. The Department notes the Committee's acknowledgement that the task of assessing and prioritising the contract negotiations in the short time available was well balanced.

The Department notes that a number of minor administrative matters raised in the Report should be viewed in the context of the overall success of the scheme and the speed with which it had to be implemented.

Response to the recommendation(s)

Recommendation No. 6 Paragraph 6.47

- The Department of the Treasury, in conjunction with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, resolve the income tax uncertainty experienced by the private sector administrator of the Special Employee Entitlements Scheme for Ansett Group Employees (SEESA) prior to any future use of the SEESA model.

The Department supports the JCPAA recommendation. Treasury and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations have been asked to work together to resolve the uncertainty that arose due to the use of the SEESA model. This work is underway and will inform any future similar use of the model.

Peter J. Boxall
Secretary

4 February 2005