

Committee's Conclusions

- 1. The Defence Housing Authority approached the Committee to consider having this project exempted from the Committee's consideration in the context of an urgent need to provide housing for Defence personnel in Darwin.**
- 2. The Committee was unable to agree to this request—the proposed \$17 million project triggered the statutory requirements for Committee consideration and the grounds for exemption were not met.**
- 3. Subsequently, when the proposal was referred to the Committee in September 1999, the Committee required further details from Defence Housing Authority as the supporting documentation was inadequate.**
- 4. By early March 2000, there was no longer an urgent need for the fifty new homes and the Defence Housing Authority terminated the project. In mid-March it was revealed that the Board of the Defence Housing Authority had not given final approval for the project when it was referred to the Committee.**
- 5. Given the Committee's oversighting role, it believes this chronology is far from satisfactory.**
- 6. The Committee's examination of the proposal revealed inadequacies in Defence Housing Authority processes in relation to this reference.**
- 7. The inquiry provides an example of the need for the Committee's scrutiny of major projects no matter how urgent they may be perceived or represented to be.**

Committee's Recommendation

- 8. In the Committee's opinion, this reference has been poorly managed, and given the possible serious ramifications, considers this matter should be referred to the Australian National Audit Office for further investigation.**