

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

2.49 The committee recommends that the Auditor-General consider a review of the 2014 Department of Social Services community service tendering process. This review should include an assessment of how the process fared against each of the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines seven key principles:

- **robust planning and design;**
- **collaboration and partnership;**
- **proportionality;**
- **an outcomes orientation;**
- **achieving value with relevant money;**
- **governance and accountability; and**
- **probity and transparency.**

Recommendation 2

2.52 The committee recommends that the Auditor-General consider reviewing the 2014 community service tendering process conducted by the Department of Social Services (DSS) with a view to updating the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines. Specifically, the committee draws the Auditor-General's attention to the effect that the truncated timelines of the 2014 process had on poor engagement with the sector, which in turn has been expressed in a general sense of stakeholder disenfranchisement.

2.53 The committee recommends that the Auditor-General analyse the 2014 DSS tendering process to assess the need for specific guidance on the following issues:

- **whether there is merit in requiring certain documentation—such as funding priorities and the selection criteria for applicants—to be in the public domain for a certain period of time prior to the commencement of the application process;**
- **whether stakeholders should be consulted at the outset on how best to structure the tendering process when there are multiple program rounds under consideration;**
- **whether there is merit in setting a maximum number of program rounds that can be called for in a given time period;**
- **whether there is merit in setting a standard that requires a minimum period of advance notice of service procurement processes;**

- whether there is merit in setting minimum time periods for the pre-application process, the application period and the period for successful applicants to sign a contract;
- whether there is merit in setting a maximum time period for the commissioning agency to notify successful tenderers and provide feedback to unsuccessful tendered;
- the merit of a two stage process for discretionary grant funding applications, beginning with an Expression of Interest followed by a closed grant round for successful EOI applicants; and
- whether there is merit in setting a standard that requires that new contracts are finalised within a minimum time prior to the end of existing service contracts.