

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

SENATE

RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

**REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION OF
ANNUAL REPORTS**

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REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Senate Standing Orders

1.1 In accordance with Senate Standing Order 25 (21), annual reports of departments and agencies shall stand referred to the legislation committees in accordance with an allocation of departments and agencies in a resolution of the Senate. Each committee shall:

- (a) Examine each annual report referred to it and report to the Senate whether the report is apparently satisfactory.
- (b) Consider in more detail, and report to the Senate on, each annual report which is not apparently satisfactory, and on the other annual reports which it selects for more detailed consideration.
- (c) Investigate and report to the Senate on any lateness in the presentation of annual reports.
- (d) In considering an annual report, take into account any relevant remarks about the report made in debate in the Senate.
- (e) If the committee so determines, consider annual reports of departments and budget-related agencies in conjunction with examination of estimates.
- (f) Report on annual reports tabled by 31 October each year by the tenth sitting day of the following year, and on annual reports tabled by 30 April each year by the tenth sitting day after 30 June of that year.
- (g) Draw to the attention of the Senate any significant matters relating to the operations and performance of the bodies furnishing the annual reports.
- (h) Report to the Senate each year whether there are any bodies which do not present annual reports to the Senate and which should present such reports.¹

1.2 In accordance with Standing Order 25(21), *Procedural Orders of Continuing Effect*, the Senate agreed that two departments should be allocated to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee:

1 *Standing orders and other orders of the Senate*, February 2000, pp 27-28. (This Standing Order was amended 24 August 1994, 13 February 1997, 11 November 1998 and 3 December 1998).

Transport and Regional Services and
Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry.²

Requirements and purpose of annual reports

1.3 Annual reports are required to adhere to the *Requirements for Annual Reports* (updated May 2000), issued by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The requirements were approved by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit on 5 April 2000, under subsections 63(2) and 70(2) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

1.4 The primary purpose of the annual reports of departments is accountability, in particular to the Parliament. Further, annual reports serve to inform the Parliament (through the responsible Minister), other stakeholders, educational and research institutions, the media and the general public about the performance of departments in relation to services provided. They are a key reference document, a document for internal management and form part of the historical record.³

1.5 Requirements for non-statutory authorities are outlined in the *Reporting requirements for the annual reports of non-statutory bodies*, dated 8 December 1987. Statutory authorities whose operations are not similar to departments are to comply with the *Guidelines for the Content, Preparation and Presentation of Annual Reports by Statutory Authorities* (1982).

Reports dealing with Government Companies

1.6 In its report entitled *Government companies and their reporting requirements* published in November 1989, the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration noted that ‘reporting requirements under companies legislation are less than the requirements faced by Departments and statutory authorities’.⁴ Notwithstanding this view, the Committee examined these reports in order to establish that comprehensive and useful information has been presented.

1.7 The Committee considers that accountability to Parliament should be the central objective of annual reports and therefore the need for Government companies to comply with the *Reporting requirements for the annual reports of non statutory bodies*.⁵

2 *Standing orders and other orders of the Senate*, Procedural orders of continuing effect, Committees: No 1, February 2000, p 117.

3 *Requirements for Annual Reports*, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, May 2000, p.2.

4 Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration, *Government Companies and their reporting requirements*, November 1989, p. 2.

5 Senate. *Hansard*, Vol S.124, 8 December 1987, pp. 2643-5.

Timing of presentation of reports

1.8 As stated in Standing Order 25(21)(f), legislation committees are required to report on annual reports tabled by 31 October each year by the tenth sitting day of the following year. Committees are also required to report on annual reports tabled by 30 April each year by the tenth sitting day after 30 June of that year.

Reports referred to the Committee

1.9 This report examines the annual reports referred to the Committee between 1 May 2000 and 31 October 2000.

1.10 During this period thirty eight reports were referred to the Committee. These reports included:

- 2 Departments;
- 29 statutory authorities;
- 2 non-statutory authorities;
- 3 companies and
- 2 other reports not requiring review.

A complete list of the reports referred to the Committee appears at Appendix 1.

General Comments

1.11 In accordance with the Senate Standing Orders, the Committee is required to report to the Senate on whether the reports are ‘apparently satisfactory’. In making this assessment, the Committee considers aspects such as the timeliness of presentation and compliance with relevant reporting guidelines.

1.12 The Committee is pleased to note that the annual reports examined adhere to the reporting requirements satisfactorily and have maintained a high standard of presentation. Where relevant, the majority of reports detail programs and activities with a focus on performance measurement against outcomes and goals in relation to forecasts listed in Portfolio Budget Statements.

1.13 The Committee has made individual comments in this report on each of the annual reports examined. Subject to these assessments, the Committee considers that all annual reports examined in this report are ‘apparently satisfactory’.

Reports not examined

1.14 The Committee is not obliged to report on corporate plans or equity and diversity plans. One equity and diversity plan and one movement compliance statement were referred to the Committee:

Airservices Australia – National Equity and Diversity Program 1998-2001 – Progress Report 1999-2000 and

Airservices Australia – Movement compliance Statement for Sydney Airport for the period 1 April to 30 June 2000.

Senator Winston Crane

Chairman

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

March 2001

CHAPTER 2

DEPARTMENTAL ANNUAL REPORTS

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 1999-2000

2.1 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Annual Report Volumes 1 and 2 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines referred to in Section 63 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

2.2 Volume 1 of the report provides an overview of the Department, organisational structure and operations. It details the Department's achievements and highlights during 1999-2000 and provides information on all aspects relating to the specific requirements as outlined in *Requirements for Annual Reports, May 2000*. Volume 2 provides details of the Department's performance progress and outcomes against the 1999-2000 Portfolio Budget Statements.

Departmental Overview

2.3 The report defines the Department's role as helping agricultural, food, fisheries and forestry industries become more competitive, profitable and sustainable. The Department has a broad range of responsibilities which include providing research, policy advice, programs and services to assist industry. These responsibilities encompass Australia's food supply chain from the producer to the consumer.¹

2.4 The report provides a comprehensive overview of AFFA's overall priorities for 1999-2000, as well as, the priorities and responsibilities assigned to the major units within the organisational structure. The major organisational units are the Industries Development Group, Competitiveness and Sustainability Group, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Bureau of Rural Sciences and Management Services.

2.5 The Committee notes the changes to the Department's outcomes and outputs during 1999-2000. The report outlines the new outcome/output framework, which will be reported on in the 2000-2001 Annual Report. This highlights the differences between the framework reported on in this report and the new structure, primarily simplified from two Departmental outcomes to one and an increase from six outputs to ten. The structure for 2000-2001 is discussed in the section '*Department in Transition*'.

2.6 The Committee also notes that AFFA has adopted a new planning and operating framework for 2000-2001 based on sub-outputs and projects. This framework places more emphasis on individual teams to deliver project results.

1 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Annual Report 1999-2000, Volume 1, p. 7.

2.7 Changes to the Department's outcomes/outputs and planning and operating environment also endorses AFFA's aim to become more customer and results focussed. The Department intends to do this by improving opportunities for staff and information and management support systems; improving the alignment and integration of effort to achieve results, increased commitment to performance measurement and evaluation and by seeking a stronger leadership role on key responsibilities of both international and national importance.²

Report on Performance

2.8 The annual report provides detailed information on the various programs and sub-programs including the roles and functions of major groups and programs during 1999-2000. Volume 2 of the report details performance achieved against the indicators and targets stated in the 1999-2000 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS). It comprehensively details performance of Budget measures; performance against overall effectiveness indicators and performance of individual groups. Each section provides information regarding the results achieved for each program.

2.9 In terms of financial performance, the report states that the year was a demanding one for the Department's financial management. Movement toward a full accrual basis of accounting, increased responsibility for cash management and internal changes to effect the new financial system has prompted the Department to initiate considerable investment in new skills, people and processes.³

2.10 The Committee notes that the Department made a financial loss for the year. The report states that a significant proportion of the loss was attributed to non-recurring expenditure including the initial costs associated with the outsourcing of corporate functions. Although acknowledging that the overall result is disappointing, the report states that the result 'reflects the increasing demands of managing a significant cost base in times of increasing competition for Government revenues'.⁴ The Committee also notes the Departments' assurance that strategies have been developed to return future financial performance to one reflecting a surplus position.

Management and Accountability

2.11 In terms of staffing, the Committee notes that the Department has moved toward a single Certified Agreement for all staff. This is a departure from previous agreements whereby individual groups could negotiate agreements separately. The result was five separate workplace Certified Agreements which were negotiated under the previous Department. The Committee is pleased with the introduction of a single agreement for all staff but acknowledges that some staff, such as those under the AQIS Meat Program Agreement and the Senior Executive Service have continued with separate agreements.

2.12 The report provides details on a number of internal and external audits. The Committee notes that the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) issued seven Auditor-General's reports, which made reference to AFFA. The report lists all of these reports and provides an overview of two reports that were of particular significance to the Department.

2 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Annual Report, Volume 1, pp. 20-21.

3 Ibid, p. 57.

4 Ibid.

The Committee also notes the number of inquiries conducted by Parliamentary Committees during 1999-2000.

Comment

2.13 The Committee commends the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for producing a comprehensive and well presented annual report.

Department of Transport and Regional Services 1999-2000

2.14 The Department of Transport and Regional Services Annual Report was tabled in the Senate on 10 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines referred to in Section 63 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

2.15 The report is structured in four parts. Part one provides an overview of the issues and developments affecting the Department during 1999-2000, performance and an outlook for 2000-2001. Part two reports on the Department's performance in relation to portfolio outcomes and achievements against the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS). Part three details operations including management and accountability. Finally, Part four provides information of the Department's financial performance.

2.16 The report details key achievements and highlights throughout the year and has provided information in accordance with the requirements outlined in *Requirements for Annual Reports, May 2000*.

Departmental Overview

2.17 The Department's role is described as promoting 'economic, social and regional development by enhancing Australia's infrastructure performance'.⁵ The Department has a number of responsibilities and functions focussing on services to industry and other Government agencies including research, industry development and trade promotion; services to communities; policy advice and ministerial services; program and revenue administration and regulatory and investigative services.⁶

2.18 In terms of the trends for 1999-2000, the report states that the year was characterised by high levels of public interest in regional Australia and transport safety.

2.19 The report states that major activities were directed toward the Portfolio Outcome *Linking Australia through transport and regional services* with the PBS being prepared on a service delivery basis to reflect outputs and services. The Committee notes that this report reflects a change in the structure of the reporting of outcomes and outputs from previous years. The former output class/program structure has been redesigned to reflect output groups and has been further enhanced by using divisional groupings.

5 Department of Transport and Regional Services Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 9.

6 Ibid.

Report on Performance

2.20 The annual report provides comprehensive information on the divisional groupings during 1999-2000 and includes details of functions and activities, performance measures and performance achieved. These groupings include: Corporate Support; Airports; Australian Transport Safety Bureau; Aviation; Cross-Modal and Maritime Transport; Economic Research and Environment; Land Transport; Regional Services, Development and Local Government and Territories and Regional Support.

2.21 The Committee notes that the Department has included a report on the Regional Australia Summit that provides an overview of the summit's outcomes and achievements.

2.22 The report states that the 1999-2000 financial year was the first year the Department operated under an accrual basis of accounting. The Committee is pleased to note that the Department finished the year with an operating surplus of \$24.5 million. This represents a \$50 million improvement on the previous year and a \$7 million improvement on the 1999-2000 Budget.⁷

Management and Accountability

2.23 The report provides details on both internal and external audits. The Committee notes that the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) issued three reports, which included recommendations on the operations of the Department. The recommendations involve the upgrading of administrative processes; alignment of programs with the Department of Finance and Administration (Dofa) and fraud control arrangements. The Committee also notes the number of inquiries undertaken by Parliamentary Committees during 1999-2000. The report also states that the Ombudsman received 34 complaints about Departmental actions during 1999-2000. Of these, 13 were investigated. The Committee notes that in four cases, 'an arguable agency defect' was found, 'no apparent agency defect in six cases and three cases indeterminate'.⁸

Comment

2.24 The Committee considers that the Department of Transport and Regional Services has produced a comprehensive and well written annual report.

Conclusion

2.25 The annual reports of the Departments examined in this report are considered by the Committee to be apparently satisfactory.

7 Ibid, p. 219.

8 Ibid, p. 202.

CHAPTER 3

ANNUAL REPORTS OF STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio

Australian Dairy Corporation

3.1 The Australian Dairy Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared under Section 123 of the *Dairy Produce Act 1986* and section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (CAC) Act 1997*.

3.2 The report provides a comprehensive overview of the Corporation's objectives and activities. The Corporation states that its statutory objective is to 'undertake a range of marketing or regulatory functions to enhance the profitable production and marketing of Australian dairy produce'.¹ Each program review details the aims, context, strategies, performance measures and outputs and outcomes against the Corporations objectives.

3.3 In terms of performance, the report presents a positive outcome for the Corporation during the reporting year. This is reflected in the Corporation's achievements in relation to both the domestic and export markets.

3.4 The Committee notes that the Corporation's subsidiary, Austdairy Ltd (ADL) experienced a difficult business environment during 1999-2000. The report attributes this to the delay in the sale of ADL's interests in its joint venture the Thai Dairy Industries Co (TDI) resulting in ADL extending support to TDI. Additionally, the sale delay also impacted on ADL's trading income.

Australian Dried Fruits Board

3.5 The Boards annual report was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. It was prepared under the Australian Horticultural Corporation Act 1987 and section 9 of the CAC Act 1997.

3.6 The report provides a concise review of the activities and program performance of the Board during 1999-2000. It measures performance against objectives, strategies, outputs and performance indicators.

3.7 The Committee notes that atypical rain patterns have caused crop losses over the 1999-2000 period. Losses were estimated at 33% in 1999 and 17% in 2000 resulting in a significant decline in exports. 4,685 tonnes of season 1998/1999 sultanas were exported in

1 Australian Dairy Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 15.

1999-2000; a marked decline from the 13,916 tonnes exported of 1997/1998 season sultanas in the previous year.²

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

3.8 The annual report of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with section 88 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and section 9 of the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.9 AFMA has met all reporting requirements. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the Authority's activities in relation to its responsibilities in the day to day management of Commonwealth fishery resources. In doing so, AFMA has grouped the fishery resources into 21 fisheries identified by species, fishing methods and/or geographical area.

Australian Horticultural Corporation

3.10 The annual report of the Australian Horticultural Corporation (AHC) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared under the *Australian Horticultural Corporation Act 1987* and section 9 of the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.11 AHC has met all reporting requirements. The report provides a useful account of the Corporation's activities. Performance measurement has been assessed in accordance with statutory objectives and outputs against the Annual Operating Plan.

Australian Landcare Council

3.12 The Australian Landcare Council annual report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The Council operates under the *Natural Resources Management (Financial Assistance) Act 1992*. The report was prepared in accordance with the provisions of section 27 of the Act.

3.13 The report provides an overview of the activities of the Council as well as, the key issues affecting landcare management in Australia.

3.14 In terms of financial arrangements, the report states that expenses incurred by the Council are paid from the Natural Resources Management Fund administered by AFFA. The report notes that each year the Council prepares an annual operating budget based on its meeting plans. The operating budget for 1999-2000 was \$265,910 with actual expenditure of \$190,275. The report also provides secretariat costs of \$154,023 for the year.³ However, no financial statements providing a breakdown of costs and allocations against the operating budget was included in the report. The Committee is of the view that the provision of financial statements detailing allocations and expenditure would provide a more transparent view of the operations of the Council.

2 Australian Dried Fruits Board Annual Report, pp.4-5.

3 Australian Landcare Council Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 27.

Australian Pork Corporation

3.15 The 1999-2000 annual report of the Australian Pork Corporation (APC) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the *Pig Industry Act (PIA) 1986* and the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.16 The APC has met all reporting requirements. The report provides a useful account of the Corporation's activities during 1999-2000. Performance measurement of outputs has been assessed in accordance with objective and performance indicators. The report notes that some performance indicators do not provide planned and actual detail as some outputs were requested by industry and not originally planned for.

3.17 The report notes that the Corporation completed the 1999-2000 year with a total income and expenditure surplus of \$6,813,901.⁴

Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation

3.18 The Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation Act 1980* and section 9 of the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.19 The report provides a comprehensive overview of the Corporation's activities during 1999-2000. The appendices include detailed information on the various cropping regions including events that impacted on vintage quality and quantity. Also included in the appendices were statistics detailing consumption and production of wine and brandy.

3.20 The report notes that the industry had a successful year, with buoyant operating conditions that saw the value of exports increasing by 36.4% over the previous year. Also noted was a surplus operating result of \$550,774. This was \$449,787 more than the projected surplus detailed in the 1999-2000 Annual Operating Plan.

Australian Wool Research and Promotion Organisation

3.21 The 1999-2000 Annual Report of the Australian Wool Research and Promotion Organisation (AWRAP) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report was prepared under the *Australian Wool Research and Promotion Act 1993* and section 9 of the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.22 All reporting requirements have been met. AWRAP's report provides a comprehensive overview of its eight key objectives and a full account of its performance relative to these objectives, outcomes, strategies and targets detailed in the 1999-2000 Operating Plan. The report also provides a review of AWRAP's activities and programs in relation to industry, growers, consumers and sport.

3.23 The report describes the year as one of change, results and delivery. The report notes that the Wool Industry Future Directions Taskforce Report and WoolPoll 2000 provided guidelines for the structure of a new woolgrower funded R&D company and wool services company. Operating revenues increased 16% to \$138.2 million compared to

4 Australian Pork Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 25.

1998/1999. Also noted was an increase of 19% in wool revenue to \$91.8 million. The report also states that operating expenditure decreased by 21% from the previous year.⁵

3.24 In terms of staffing, the Committee notes that AWRAP reduced staff numbers by 16 and its subsidiary, The Woolmark Company reduced staff by 94 during 1999-2000.

National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals

3.25 The annual report was tabled in the Senate on 31 October 2000. It was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Administration) Act 1992* and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (CAC) Act 1997*.

3.26 The report meets all reporting requirements. It provides a concise overview of the Authority's operations and functions. It measures performance through performance indicators stated in its corporate and operational plans.

3.27 In terms of financial performance, the Committee notes that the Authority recorded a \$2.3 million surplus for 1999-2000 with revenue increasing by 5.8% over the previous year. The report states that a 4.4% increase in levies and registration renewals contributed to a revenue increase and overall surplus.⁶

National Rural Advisory Council

3.28 The annual report of the Rural Adjustment Scheme Advisory Council (NRAC) and the National Rural Advisory Council (RASAC) was tabled in the Senate on 31 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the *Rural Adjustment Act 1992*.

3.29 The 1999-2000 report is characterised by legislative amendments to the *Rural Adjustment Act 1992*, which established NRAC as a statutory consultative body replacing RASAC. The amendment expanded the new NRAC's role to include advice on EC applications and broader rural adjustment issues to the Minister. NRAC has also continued to provide advice on the direction and funding of rural adjustment initiatives.

3.30 The report provides a concise overview of the Council's activities and program initiatives in relation to rural adjustment. The report also provides examples of case studies demonstrating how the Council's schemes and programs assist rural communities. All reporting requirements have been met.

Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority

3.31 The annual report of the Northern Territories Fisheries Joint Authority covers the 1998-1999 period. It was tabled in the Senate on 4 October 2000. The Authority is subject to the provisions of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* and the *Fisheries Act 1988 (Northern Territory)*.

5 AWRAP Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 2.

6 National Registration Authority Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 16.

3.32 The report provides an overview of the condition of the fisheries and management arrangements. The authority also oversees a number of research projects conducted by the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (NTDPIF).

3.33 The Committee notes that as a joint authority no financial statements have been included in the report, however, the report notes that the NTDPIF received \$56,500 in licence fees for Joint Authority fisheries.⁷ A breakdown of expenditure for the Authority and costs for research programs/projects included in the report would assist the Committee.

Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority

3.34 The annual report for the 1998-1999 financial year was tabled in the Senate on 29 August 2000. The Authority operates under the provisions of the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984 (Commonwealth)*.

3.35 The report describes the Authority's activities and the condition of the fisheries in the Torres Strait. It also provides an overview of the management arrangements for the protected zone fisheries. The Committee notes that the report contains a concise overview of the Authority's research activities and overall expenditure.

Research and Development Corporations/Councils

3.36 The Committee has reviewed the annual reports of the research and development corporations listed below. With the exception of the Horticultural Research and Development Corporation, these annual reports were prepared in accordance with the *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989* and section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (CAC) Act 1997*. The Horticultural Research and Development Corporation operates under the provisions of the *Horticultural Research and Development Corporation Act 1987* and the *CAC Act 1997*. These reports were tabled in the Senate on 30 and 31 October 2000. A list of these Corporations and their tabling date is at Appendix 1.

- Cotton Research and Development Corporation
- Dairy Research and Development Corporation
- Dried Fruits Research and Development Council
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
- Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation
- Grains Research and Development Corporation
- Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation
- Horticultural Research and Development Corporation
- Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation
- Pig Research and Development Corporation

7 Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority Annual Report 1998-99, p. 10.

- Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
- Sugar Research and Development Corporation and
- Tobacco Research and Development Corporation.

3.37 Each of these Corporations has produced comprehensive reports providing a detailed overview of their functions and objectives. The reports provide a concise review of activities and program performance measured against objectives and inputs/outputs. The majority of reports have made effective use of visual aids including pie charts, graphs and tables to enhance activities and statistical information. The reports meet all reporting requirements.

3.38 The Committee has made specific review and comment on some research and development corporations where the Committee felt this was required.

Cotton Research and Development Corporation

3.39 The report of the Cotton Research and Development Corporation 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 31 October 2000. The report was prepared in accordance with the *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989* and the *CAC Act 1997*.

3.40 The Corporation has met all reporting requirements. The report provides a very good account of the Corporation's activities in relation to its objectives. The report also details key issues relating to crop disease and water reform and their impact on industry.

3.41 The report notes that the Corporation revised its outcome/outputs framework to better reflect linkages between programs and achievements of research and development.

3.42 The Committee notes that the Corporation employed the services of a number of contractors/consultants. While a total expenditure figure of \$146,378.26 was provided, a breakdown of individual expenditure for each contractor/consultant and service would be helpful.

Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation

3.43 The report of the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation (GWRDC) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. It was prepared in accordance with the *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989* and *CAC Act 1997*.

3.44 The GWRDC annual report meets all reporting requirements. The report notes that although overall administrative costs increased during 1999-2000, primarily to manage a larger investment base, the GWRDC reduced administrative expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure from 9.3% in 1998-1999 to 7.3% in 1999-2000.⁸

8 Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 14.

Transport and Regional Services Portfolio

Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation

3.45 The Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation Annual Report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *Albury-Wodonga Development Act 1973*.

3.46 The report provides an overview of the Corporation's core activity of land and asset management, development and sales.

3.47 The Committee notes the requirement for the Corporation to gradually wind down its operations and sell assets. Also noted was a decrease in receipts from 1998-99 totals. In terms of staffing, the report notes that the Corporation reduced staffing during 1999-2000 in line with its commitment to wind down the organisation with four staff members being retrenched. The Corporation has met all reporting requirements.

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

3.48 The 1999-2000 annual report of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) was tabled in the Senate on 11 October 2000. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *Australian Maritime Safety Authority Act 1990* and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

3.49 The report provides a concise overview of the Authority's major activities for the 1999-2000 year. The Authority has measured performance by reviewing outputs against key measures/targets and achievements. The review incorporates good use of graphs providing visual aids to assist readers. The Authority has met all reporting requirements.

International Air Services Commission

3.50 The International Air Services Commission Annual Report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *International Air Services Commission Act 1992* and section 63 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

3.51 The Commission is responsible for the allocation of international air route capacity to Australian airlines. The report provides an overview of the Commission's activities and a summary of performance in relation to outputs. The Committee was pleased to note that the Commission expenditure was less than its allocation. For 1999-2000, the Commission spent 88% of its budget with total output costs at \$879,000.⁹ The Commission has met all reporting requirements.

National Capital Authority

3.52 The annual report was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*.

9 International Air Services Commission Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 15.

3.53 The report provides a comprehensive overview of the Authority's key initiatives and achievements during 1999-2000. A feature of the report is the maps detailing proposed areas for major works and areas designated for events. The report is also enhanced by the use of pictures and graphs, which contribute to a well designed product.

3.54 The report notes that the 1999-2000 year was the first accrual budget year and involved a review of the Authority's performance measures to enable evaluation of performance under the new framework. In terms of staffing, the Committee notes that the Authority increased its staff by seven as a result of the new accrual accounting framework and an expanded role on cultural awareness. The Committee also notes that the Authority reported an increase in revenue and decrease in expenses for the 1999-2000 year.

Conclusion

3.55 The annual reports of the statutory authorities examined in this report are considered by the Committee to be apparently satisfactory.

CHAPTER 4

ANNUAL REPORTS OF NON STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio

Australian Greenhouse Office

4.1 The Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) Annual Report was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. Initially established in April 1998 as a prescribed agency, the Australian Greenhouse Office became an Executive Agency of Government under the *Public Service Act 1999* in March 2000. The Australian Greenhouse Office regards its change in status as Government recognition of the increasing importance of Greenhouse issues.

4.2 The report provides a detailed account of the AGO's operations and activities, particularly in relation to strategy development, reduction of emissions, enhancing natural resources and education of greenhouse issues. The AGO has met all reporting requirements.

Transport and Regional Services Portfolio

National Road Transport Commission

4.3 The 1999-2000 annual report of the National Road Transport Commission (NRTC) was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. The NRTC is an independent body established under two inter-government agreements between Commonwealth and State/Territory governments. It was established under the *National Road Transport Commission Act 1991*.

4.4 The report notes that the 1999-2000 year was characterised by the most significant reform since the Commissions inception. The report states that 38 initiatives were implemented by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments.¹ The report provides an overview of the current reforms and other activities including productivity and innovation, safety, environmental impacts, heavy vehicle charges and remote area reform. The NRTC has met all reporting requirements.

Companies

Australian River Co Limited

4.5 The report for the Australian River Co was tabled in the Senate on 30 October 2000. It covers the period 7 December 1998 to 30 November 1999.

1 National Road Transport Commission Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 2.

4.6 The report notes that the principal activity of the Company was as the head charter/lessee of four vessel leases. The reporting year was characterised by a restructure of the Company with the completion of the sale process of the company's core operating businesses. The report also states that the Government had not yet announced its intention for the final structure of the Company.

Essendon Airport Limited

4.7 The 1999-2000 annual report of Essendon Airport Limited (EAL) was tabled in the Senate on 31 October 2000. Essendon Airport Limited was established on 1 July 1998. It is a Commonwealth owned company responsible for the operations and management of Essendon Airport.

4.8 The report notes that the 1999-2000 year was the second year of operation for EAL. The year is described as one of consolidation with substantial contracts renegotiated resulting in an after tax profit of \$141,577.

Sydney Airports Corporation Limited

4.9 The Sydney Airports Corporation Limited (SACL) Annual Report 1999-2000 was tabled in the Senate on 31 October 2000. SACL is a Commonwealth owned company responsible for the operations and management of four Sydney Basin airports:

- Sydney (Kingsford Smith)
- Bankstown
- Camden
- Hoxton Park.

4.10 The Committee notes that SACL has had a successful year with an after tax profit of \$42.9 million and a 6% increase in total revenue.² The report provides a concise business review of the Company's aviation assets and facilities, retailing activities, commercial trading, property and capital works.

Conclusion

4.11 The Committee considers that the annual reports of the non-statutory authorities examined in this report are apparently satisfactory.

2 Sydney Airports Corporation Limited Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 4.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF ANNUAL REPORTS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE DURING THE PERIOD 1 MAY 2000 TO 31 OCTOBER 2000 AND DATE OF TABLING IN THE SENATE

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY PORTFOLIO

Date Tabled

Department of State

- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry -
Volumes 1 and 2 Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000

Statutory Authorities

- Australian Dairy Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Dried Fruits Board – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Fisheries Management Authority –
Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Horticultural Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Landcare Council – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Pork Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation – Report 1999-00 30 October 2000
- Australian Wool Research and Promotion Organisation –
Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Cotton Research and Development Corporation and Cotton
Research and Development Corporation Selection Committee
– Reports 1999-2000 31 October 2000
- Dairy Research and Development Corporation -
Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Dried Fruits Research and Development Council –
Report 1999-2000 31 October 2000
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation -
Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000

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- Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Grains Research and Development Corporation and Grains Research and Development Corporation Selection Committee – Reports 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation and Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation Selection Committee – Reports 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Horticultural Research and Development Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Land and Water Research and Development Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals – Report 1999-2000 31 October 2000
 - Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority – Report 1998-1999 04 October 2000
 - Pig Research and Development Corporation - Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Rural Adjustment Scheme Advisory Council and National Rural Advisory Council Report 1999-2000 including Rural Adjustment Scheme – Reports 1999-2000 31 October 2000
 - Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Sugar Research and Development Corporation and Sugar Research and Development Corporation Selection Committee – Reports 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Tobacco Research and Development Corporation - Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
 - Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority – Report 1998-1999 29 August 2000

Non-Statutory Bodies

- Australian Greenhouse Office – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000

TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Department of State

- Department of Transport and Regional Services -
Report 1999-2000 10 October 2000

Statutory Authorities

- Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation –
Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- Australian Maritime Safety Authority – Report 1999-2000 11 October 2000
- International Air Services Commission – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000
- National Capital Authority – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000

Non-Statutory Authorities

- National Road Transport Commission – Report 1999-2000 30 October 2000

Companies

- Australian River Co Limited (formerly ANL Ltd)
Report 7 December 1998-30 November 1999 03 October 2000
- Essendon Airport Limited – Report 1999-2000 31 October 2000
- Sydney Airports Corporation Limited - Report 1999-2000 31 October 2000

Other

- Airservices Australia – National Equity and Diversity Program
1998-2001 – Progress Report 1999-2000 01 November 2000
- Airservices Australia – Movement compliance Statement for
Sydney Airport for the period 1 April-30 June 2000 30 August 2000

