
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Report 421

The role of the Auditor-General in scrutinising
government advertising

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

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Foreword

This report, *The role of the Auditor-General in scrutinising government advertising*, completes an inquiry by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit of the 42nd Parliament. After consideration of the report and its findings the current Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit has decided to adopt this report.


I would like to commend the Chair of the previous committee, Ms Sharon Grierson, and all Committee members on the work of this inquiry and this report. The report is a comprehensive consideration of the issues which resulted from the Auditor-General having a role in scrutinising government advertising.

The current Committee agrees with the only recommendation of the report and reiterates that it is important that any substantial proposed changes to the role of the Auditor-General are first reviewed by this Committee on behalf of the Parliament.

The Committee seriously considered the option of continuing to scrutinise government advertising, due to it being such a subjective area of government spending. However, following advice from the Auditor-General, the Committee satisfied itself that the Auditor-General's forward works program will achieve this same purpose.

The current Committee therefore looks forward to hearing from the Auditor-General in the forthcoming report regarding the implementation of the new system for scrutinising government advertising, due to be tabled in the Spring 2011 parliamentary session. This report will examine both the processes involved and agencies' compliance with the Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns for Australian Government Departments and Agencies (March 2010).

Mr Robert Oakeshott MP
Chair



Membership of the Committee

43rd Parliament

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42nd Parliament

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The Hon Arch Bevis MP	Senator Mark Bishop
The Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP	Senator David Bushby (until 02/02/10)
Mr David Bradbury MP	Senator David Feeney
Mr Jamie Briggs MP	Senator Helen Kroger (from 02/02/10)
Mr Mark Butler MP (until 15/06/09)	Senator Kate Lundy
Ms Catherine King MP	
The Hon Sussan Ley MP (from 03/02/10)	
Mr Shayne Neumann MP	
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List of abbreviations

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
AUASB	Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board
CAB	Communications Advice Branch
CAS	Central Advertising System
ESSP	Economic Security Strategy Payment
Finance	Department of Finance and Deregulation
FMA Act	<i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>
GCU	Government Communications Unit
ICC	Independent Communications Committee
IDCC	Interdepartmental Committee on Communications
IPAA	Institute of Public Administration Australia
JCPAA	Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
MCGC	Ministerial Committee on Government Communications
NESB	Non-English speaking backgrounds
PM&C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



List of recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that any substantial proposed changes to the role of the Auditor-General, in accordance with his standing as an Independent Officer of the Parliament, be first reviewed by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.