



Appendix G - Action taken by Centrelink on Report 31

Centrelink JCPAA Response — Progress Against ANAO Audit Recommendations

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
1. Centrelink's Customer Charter and Community Consultation Program (Audit Report No. 32 2004-05)			
1	The ANAO recommends that, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Australian Government's Client Service Charter Principles, Centrelink include in its Customer Charter measurable service standards to: (a) better inform customers of the level of service to expect; and (b) provide an improved basis for measuring, monitoring and reporting, both internally and externally, the agency's performance against its Charter.	1 (a) Centrelink is undertaking a major review of the Centrelink Customer Charter in 2005. 1 (b) The new Charter will include measurable standards that customers have identified as important to them and will provide a basis for measuring, monitoring and reporting Centrelink's performance against the Charter. IN PROGRESS	28 February 2006
2	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink: (a) implement adequate systems to monitor community consultation nationally, and to identify, at the national level, common issues/trends that are emerging at the local level to allow identification of service improvement and cost savings; and (b) put in place quantitative indicators, such as targets and cost effectiveness measures, in addition to descriptive indicators, when assessing and reporting its consultations with community stakeholders.	2 (a) Centrelink has investigated the most cost effective options for a community consultation monitoring system. As a result Centrelink will implement a Top 5 Issues approach to recording and monitoring feedback from the community. This approach relies on Centrelink Areas identifying the top 5 issues in their Area that have been raised by the community and reporting these. 2 (b) Work is under way to identify the value of community sector relationships. IN PROGRESS	COMPLETED Recommendations made to Centrelink Executive. 30 September 2005 Recommendations to be made to Centrelink Executive.

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
2. Centrelink's Customer Satisfaction Surveys (Audit Report No. 33 2004-05)			
1	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink include: (a) the objectives of the satisfaction surveys in all reports from the surveys; (b) in the objectives, for all its satisfaction surveys, the accuracy requirements for each survey; and (c) in the Customer Service Centre survey's objectives, advice that the survey data are used for performance management of individual Customer Service Centres. IN PROGRESS	1 (a) (b) (c) Objectives of surveys and accuracy level information for National and Customer Service Centre Surveys are now included in reports, as is advice that survey data is used for performance management information; for Call Centres this will occur by the end of September 2005.	30 September 2005
2	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink include in reports from the satisfaction surveys the type of sample used and the effect of a quota approach on calculating error estimates.	2. Type of sample used and effect of quota approach information for national and Customer Service Centre Surveys now included in reports; for Call Centres this will occur by the end of September 2005. Research has been conducted to investigate the quota approach; the report was received at the end of July 2005, and will be analysed by the end of September 2005. IN PROGRESS	30 September 2005
3	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink: (a) undertake further research on the characteristics of those customers who are excluded from the survey sample, in order to ascertain whether any significant bias is introduced from the exclusions; and (b) in reporting information from the surveys, inform users of the data as to the nature of the exclusions from the survey, the rationale for them, and the related implications for the interpretation of survey results.	3 (a) Exclusions information for National and Customer Service Centre Surveys now included in reports; for Call Centres this will occur by the end of September 2005. 3 (b) Final decision on sampling strategies and appropriate weighting of results will be made by the end of December 2005. IN PROGRESS	30 September 2005 31 December 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
4	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) undertake research into the reasons that a significant number of customers selected for the Customer Service Centre survey, on the basis of DOCs raised indicating they had visited a Customer Service Centre, subsequently advise the market research company they have not visited a Customer Service Centre at the time reported in the DOC;</p> <p>(b) undertake further research into the inclusion in the Customer Service Centre survey of those customers who only lodged a form or updated personal details during their visit to the Customer Service Centre, to ascertain whether any significant bias is introduced from their inclusion; and</p> <p>(c) in reporting information from the surveys, inform users of the data as to the related implications of these inclusions for the interpretation of survey results.</p>	<p>4 (a) Appropriate inclusions in the samples for surveys are currently being investigated.</p> <p>4 (b) A final decision on sampling strategies and appropriate weighting of results will be made by the end of December 2005.</p> <p>4 (c) An explanation of the context of results is now included in all reports from July 2005.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 December 2005</p> <p>31 December 2005</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>
5	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) regularly analyse the non-response rates for each of the major satisfaction surveys to identify the nature of the non-response and any associated bias;</p> <p>(b) include this information in any reports of the survey data; and</p> <p>(c) consider weighting the data appropriately to minimise non-response bias.</p>	<p>5 (a) (b) Non-response information for National and Customer Service Centre Surveys now included in reports; for Call Centres this will occur by the end of September 2005.</p> <p>5 (c) Research commissioned to investigate non-response rates to surveys; the report was received at the end of July 2005, and will be analysed by the end of September 2005.</p> <p>Any action to address non-response rates will be taken by the end of December 2005.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>30 September 2005</p> <p>31 December 2005</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
6	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) undertake research to identify whether concerns regarding anonymity and confidentiality impact adversely on customers' willingness to participate in Centrelink surveys, and whether these concerns lead to significant bias in the survey results;</p> <p>(b) include clear indications at the beginning of the survey regarding the uses and purpose of the survey; and</p> <p>(c) include clearer statements in the introductory and closing sections of the surveys regarding the confidentiality of customer information, particularly that identifying information is kept confidential from Centrelink.</p>	<p>6 (a) Research commissioned to investigate whether anonymity and confidentiality concerns created bias in survey results; report received at the end of July 2005 and will be analysed by the end of September 2005.</p> <p>6 (b) (c) Introduction to surveys was changed in March 2005 in line with ANAO recommendations to stress anonymity and confidentiality. Following investigation of customer understanding of the introduction further changes will be undertaken.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>30 September 2005 31 December 2005</p>
7	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink review the quality of its satisfaction survey questionnaires and, where appropriate, make changes to increase the usefulness and accuracy of the information gathered.</p>	<p>7. Research commissioned to investigate quality of questionnaires; report was received at the end of July 2005 and will be analysed by the end of September 2005. A decision on the findings is expected by end of December 2005</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>30 September 2005 31 December 2005</p>
8	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink undertake quality assurance checking of data and analysis provided to it by its satisfaction survey consultants.</p>	<p>8. Annual and monthly data quality checking of National and Customer Service Centre Survey results respectively has commenced. Monthly quality checking of Call Centre Surveys will be included by the end of September 2005.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>30 September 2005</p>
9	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink, in its reports which use survey data, ensure the reporting is transparent regarding the source of the data and its limitations, to enable readers to properly interpret the data and have confidence in the results.</p>	<p>9. As well as additions to survey reports to improve the transparency of methodology, Centrelink Annual Report 2004-05 will include this information.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 October 2005</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
10	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink ensure that performance measures under the purchaser! Provider arrangements with the various portfolio departments now responsible for income support payments are appropriate for the purpose, and that targets are set at a sufficient level to assess performance achievement.	10. In negotiating new agreements with purchasing agencies, consideration is being given to including appropriate satisfaction measures in those agreements. IN PROGRESS	Various dates apply to completion of purchaser department agreements.
11	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink review its use of an average for its top line KPI Overall Customer Satisfaction with the last contact with Centrelink. Other KPI measures under Goal C: Customer also be reviewed to ensure they measure what they purport to measure.	11. Negotiations are continuing on the appropriate measures for inclusion in Centrelink's new Balanced Scorecard. IN PROGRESS	31 October 2005
12	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink: (a) introduce an internal quality control process to ensure that performance measures in Area and Customer Service Centre Business Improvement Plans are appropriate and adequate, and that the use of the top line satisfaction number is supplemented by other selected measures; and (b) provide additional training to staff at the Area and Customer Service Centre levels on performance indicators, to ensure they have a good understanding of their use and limitations.	12 (a) Relevant Centrelink Branches are working together to develop a Quality Assurance process to ensure that appropriate customer service improvement activity and measures are included in local Area, Customer Service Centre and Call Centre business plans. 12 (b) A Business Planning Guide for managers and staff was released in August 2005 and provides advice on understanding and using performance indicators. IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005 COMPLETED
13	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink include confidence interval information in its Area and Customer Service Centre satisfaction reports.	13. Confidence interval information for national and Customer Service Centre Surveys is now included in reports; for Call Centres this will occur by the end of September 2005.	30 September 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
3. Centrelink's Complaints Handling System (Audit Report No. 34 2004-05)			
1	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink take prompt action to address the finding of its October 2003 internal audit report on Customer Complaint Management, which identified that there is a significant inconsistency across the customer service network in the frequency of prompt resolution of complaints at the point at which they are received.	1. Action has been taken to address the October 2003 internal audit finding. More detailed investigation has been undertaken of Area Customer Relations Unit data over the July 2004 - June 2005 period to identify trends and differences across Areas' recording of complaint resolutions. Where any Areas are showing marked variation this is being investigated, and remedial action taken to address any instances of inconsistent recording. IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005
2	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink: (a) re-commence surveying customers regarding their awareness of its complaints handling system; and (b) as part of its overall communications strategy, identify ways to enhance customer awareness of its complaints handling system.	2(a) Seven new questions were included in November 2004 National Customer Survey to assess customers' knowledge of, and experiences with, Centrelink's complaints handling system. 2(b) Communications Division has begun consultation with stakeholders on a draft customer communications strategy to address awareness issues in relation to complaints, review and appeals for all customer groups including non-English speaking and Indigenous customers, and others vulnerable due to low literacy levels. First communication products to be produced by 31 December 2005. IN PROGRESS	COMPLETED 31 December 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
3	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink redesign its Internet website to:</p> <p>(a) ensure that a search on the term 'complaint' provides pertinent information to customers and stakeholders on its complaints handling system;</p> <p>(b) provide customers and stakeholders with more explicit information as to the various avenues by which to lodge a complaint;</p> <p>(c) ensure that information on Centrelink's complaints handling system is easily identifiable by customers and stakeholders; and</p> <p>(d) allow customers, and stakeholders to lodge a complaint without being required to navigate through numerous webpages.</p>	<p>3 (a) (b) (c) (d) Action has been taken to enable quick access to feedback mechanisms, including new content on complaints handling.</p> <p>Customers can now directly access complaints handling avenues via a 'hot button' on Centrelink internet homepage. Similarly, a search on the term 'complaint' gives customers access to complaints handling avenues. Other developmental work on the website is continuing to support these initial changes.</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>	COMPLETED
4	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink regularly survey its customers and staff regarding their satisfaction with the complaints handling process.</p>	<p>4. New questions were added to the National Customer Survey in November 2004. See response to Recommendation 2(a)</p> <p>Centrelink is to undertake the joint Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals (SOCAP) ITMI Australia P/L complaints culture survey to identify staff views of the Centrelink complaints system. Subject to results of this survey, consultation will be held with People and Planning Division to determine approach to include relevant questions in future Staff Polls to assess staff satisfaction with the complaints handling system.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	COMPLETED 31 December 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
5	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink, in accordance with the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Good Practice Guide for Effective Complaint Handling:</p> <p>(a) include, in each avenue available for the lodgement of a complaint, an explicit statement that assures customers and stakeholders of the confidentiality of the information they provide; and</p> <p>(b) establish an internal follow-up procedure to address the risk of discrimination against customers or stakeholders who lodge a complaint.</p>	<p>5(a) Work is well advanced on a Centrelink Statement of Commitment to Service Recovery that will be available externally through various channels. The policy statement will address issues highlighted in ANAO recommendations covering complaints, review and appeals, and Charter commitments, including a statement of assurance on confidentiality of customer information and non-discrimination. Other communication products to be developed will also carry this assurance statement.</p> <p>5(b) Work is under way to establish an internal follow-up procedure. This will form part of a quality assurance process to include random sampling of customers providing feedback through Customer Relations Units to assess their satisfaction with the complaints handling system. The internal review mechanism will be in place to address cases of alleged retribution or discrimination arising from the submission of a complaint or other feedback to Centrelink.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 December 2005 31 January 2006</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
6	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink implement a system to:</p> <p>(a) improve and monitor national consistency in the way in which complaints are recorded, analysed and resolved by CRUs; and</p> <p>(b) facilitate the timely promulgation and adoption of better practice across all CRUs.</p>	<p>6(a) The Customer Relations Unit Protocols are being reviewed to improve consistency of recording, analysis and resolution of complaints.</p> <p>6(b) Each Customer Relations Unit is involved in the review of the Customer Relations Unit Protocols to involve them in the identification and sharing of better practice. The revised Protocols will be tested with CRU staff and other stakeholders for feedback before final promulgation as mandatory standards.</p> <p>Regular customer feedback data integrity checks also enable identification of better practices and their referral back to Area Customer Relations Units to improve performance.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	31 January 2006
7	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) improve controls for ensuring that all oral complaints are recorded in an appropriate and timely manner within the CFAD; and</p> <p>(b) revise the CES to include a greater range of relevant information to facilitate improved recording and analysis of oral complaints lodged at a Customer Service Centre.</p>	<p>7(a) Revised Customer Relations Protocols will include procedures for capturing and recording oral complaints. Implementation of an internal communication strategy will assist staff to recognize the importance of oral feedback as part of the service recovery function.</p> <p>7(b) The Customer Feedback Sheet (CFS) used by Centrelink staff to record oral complaints is being reviewed as part of communication strategy.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 December 2005</p> <p>30 September 2005</p> <p>31 December 2005</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
8	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) improve controls for ensuring that all completed comment cards are forwarded to the relevant CRU;</p> <p>(b) redesign the comment card to enhance customer awareness of its availability as an avenue to lodge a complaint;</p> <p>(c) identify ways of more generally improving customer awareness regarding the availability of comment cards as a feedback channel; and</p> <p>(d) identify ways of improving the current communication strategies implemented by Centrelink to increase DCALB customer awareness regarding the availability of comment cards and DCALB fact sheets.</p>	<p>8(a) Revised Customer Relations Protocols will include procedures for a focus on improved consistency of recording, analysis and resolution of complaints.</p> <p>8(b) The Protocols will include improved controls for the appropriate completion and forwarding of Customer Comment Cards to Customer Relations Units.</p> <p>8(c) and 8(d) Communication strategy for all customer groups, including DCALB and indigenous will seek to improve customer awareness of Customer Comment Cards as a feedback channel.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 January 2006 30 September 2005</p>
9	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop the necessary functionality within the CFAD to allow for the recording, monitoring and analysis of complaints lodged by all stakeholders within the business and community sectors.</p>	<p>9. A process of consultation has begun with internal and external stakeholders to identify options for capturing and reporting all stakeholder feedback as part of an integrated feedback system.</p> <p>It may take up to two years before the required level of functionality is available. Work is under way to provide interim enhancements to the Customer Feedback Approach Database (CFAD) to allow capture of feedback from all stakeholders.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 January 2006</p>
10	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop the necessary functionality within the CFAD to allow for the recording, monitoring and analysis of multiple complaints about the same issue, a particular staff member and/or Customer Service Centre.</p>	<p>10. As per Rec. 9, this issue will be addressed as part of the effort to develop an integrated systems capacity to capture all channels of customer feedback.</p> <p>The work under way includes an interim solution to enable the recording, monitoring and analysis of multiple complaints about the same issue, a particular staff member, and/or Customer Service Centre.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 January 2006</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
11	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) report on the full range of performance information on its complaints handling system identified as good practice by the Ombudsman's Good Practice Guide;</p> <p>(b) commence monitoring and reporting on telephone call wait times and telephone call drop out rates across the CRU network;</p> <p>(c) accurately report the true nature of all customer contacts recorded by the CRU network; and</p> <p>(d) implement a system to develop national consistency in the reporting and use of data obtained by its complaints handling system.</p>	<p>11(a) internal and external complaints performance reporting is under review. Centrelink will be evaluating external organisations' complaints handling systems, including their analysis and reporting arrangements, and methods to identify and act on systemic issues.</p> <p>11(b) CRU telephone traffic reporting (from standalone systems) is being mandated from 30 September 2005 as part of the review of CRU Protocols. Solutions for integrated reporting are also being investigated.</p> <p>11(c) Recommendation was partly addressed through input to 2003-2004 Annual Report on customer complaints handling, and is being further addressed in 2004-05 Annual Report.</p> <p>11(d) Revised Customer Relations Unit Protocols will include enhanced data integrity checking to ensure national consistency in the reporting and use of data</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 January 2006</p> <p>30 September 2005</p> <p>31 October 2005</p> <p>31 January 2006</p>
12	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink implement an effective quality assurance mechanism for the administration and monitoring of its complaints handling system.</p>	<p>12. Centrelink is implementing a two-level quality assurance regime: (1) data integrity and procedural checking at the Area and National level; (2) post-complaint follow-up surveying of customers.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 January 2006</p>

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
4. Centrelink's Review and Appeals System (Audit Report No. 35 2004-05)			
1	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink monitor and report on customer awareness of, and satisfaction with, the ODM reconsideration process.	1, 2, 3, 5. A broad review of Centrelink's internal review processes is well under way. Any changes flowing directly from the ANAO recommendations will be determined in light of the Review outcomes. A Steering Committee for the Review includes the Commonwealth Ombudsman, SSAT and the Welfare Rights Network. Trials to test 3 alternative models for internal review to be held. IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005 September/October 2005
2	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop a separate form for customers to request an ODM review, which records the customer's agreement not to proceed directly to an ARO review.	As per Rec 1 IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005 September/October 2005
3	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink explicitly inform customers, who request a review, that they are not obliged to agree to an ODM review but have a legislative right to go directly to an ARO.	As per Rec 1 IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005 September/October 2005
4	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink: (a) require staff to record all ODM reconsiderations on the APL system; and (b) include in relevant Centrelink internal reports information gathered through monitoring and reporting of ODM reconsiderations.	4 (a) In October 2004 all Centrelink staff were instructed to use the ODM/ARO referral script for ODM reconsiderations which automatically records them in the APL (appeals) management information system. 4 (b) Monthly management information reports on ODM reconsiderations are now prepared and distributed to the Area network with comments. COMPLETED	COMPLETED
5	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop and implement quality control processes for ODM reconsiderations.	As per Rec 1 IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005 September/October 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
6	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink monitor and report on customer awareness of their appeal rights and satisfaction with the appeals process, including any disincentive effects.	6. Centrelink will incorporate relevant questions into the November 2005 National Customer Survey to attempt to elicit customer awareness of, and satisfaction with, the review and appeals process, including disincentive effects. From December 2005, Centrelink will publish information booklets for customers informing them of the review and appeals processes. IN PROGRESS	30 November 2005 31 December 2005
7	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop, in consultation with DEWR, FaCS and DEST, performance indicators for the quality and cost of the appeals system.	7. Centrelink is working with DEST, DEWR and FaCS on issues relating to the quality and cost of the appeals system. Qualitative indicators are being negotiated with these departments as part of the Legal Services Protocol in the respective Business Partnership Agreements. IN PROGRESS	Various dates apply to completion of purchaser department agreements.
8	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink mandate and implement quality assurance processes for ARO decisions across the Centrelink network.	8. National quality assurance processes for AROs were implemented in July 2005. COMPLETED	COMPLETED
9	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop and implement a process for the accreditation of AROs, and monitor delivery of the training package and AROs' participation.	9. An accredited Diploma of Government for AROs is now available through the Organisational Learning and Development Branch, and a numbers of AROs have already enrolled. Supporting technical training modules are in preparation for publication in the Learning Library. IN PROGRESS	31 December 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
10	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink develop and implement national systems for the identification of better practice in ARO reviews and its timely distribution across the Centrelink network.	10. The new Legal Services Branch has taken responsibility for identifying and promoting best practice for AROs. The implementation of national Quality Assurance for AROs provides a means for identifying and sharing better practice. COMPLETED	COMPLETED
5. Centrelink's Value Creation Program (Audit Report No. 36 2004-05)			
1	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink undertake a study to determine the impact of the presence of Centrelink staff during the conduct of a VCW on the willingness of customers to provide open feedback.	1. Dr Andy Butlin was engaged to undertake an independent study on the VCW process to specifically examine the ANAO findings. His report was presented to Centrelink in August 2005, and addressed all the ANAO recommendations. The Report found that staff presence at VCWs should not undermine the willingness of customers to provide open feedback. COMPLETED	COMPLETED
2	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink put in place systems for monitoring the selection of customers for a VCW and the selection process used, in order to better understand how representative the selected customers are of Centrelink's customer base.	2. The Butlin Report found and Centrelink agrees there is insufficient quantitative data on customer selection. Future reporting will include information of the customer selection method used. Automated customer listings and a recruitment database are being trialled. Monitoring of selections to ensure appropriate representation of customers will be implemented by the end of October 2005. IN PROGRESS	31 October 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
3	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink put in place systems for monitoring the participation of staff in VCWs, to ensure coverage of staff and to facilitate the assessment of the extent of cultural change within the organisation.	3. The Butlin report found and Centrelink agrees that a specific selection process be implemented to ensure appropriate coverage. A strategy to address staff selection will be implemented by the end of October 2005. IN PROGRESS	31 October 2005
4	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink put in place systems for monitoring the implementation of outcomes from a VCW.	4. The Butlin Report found and Centrelink agrees that a range of strategies are required to ensure the outcomes are established, agreed and monitored. The VCW Team is examining how best to monitor the overall implementation of workshop outcomes, and an approach will be decided by end of October 2005. IN PROGRESS	31 October 2005
5	The ANAO recommends that Centrelink put in place systems for monitoring: (a) the location of VCWs to facilitate the achievement of national coverage; and (b) better practice in the conduct of VCWs and any alternative processes used by Centrelink Area offices.	5 (a) The Butlin Report found and Centrelink agrees there are a range of opportunities to improve systems monitoring. Centrelink will revise all report templates to include demographic information and statements on the limitations of the data contained in the report 5 (b) Opportunities to refocus VCWs and integrate them with other cultural change options will be examined as part of our effort to achieve better practice in the conduct of VCWs. IN PROGRESS	31 October 2005

Rec No.	Recommendation	Status	Milestone Date
6	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink:</p> <p>(a) put in place systems to effectively monitor the costs of the VCW program; and</p> <p>(b) inform customers that the payment they receive for attending a VCW is income for taxation purposes.</p>	<p>6 (a)(b) The Butlin Report found and Centrelink agrees that the current processes are cost effective and that (if it is the case) customers should be advised on the taxable nature of their payment.</p> <p>Appropriate means for monitoring the full VCW costs will be developed by the end of December 2005.</p> <p>Centrelink has sought a private ruling from the ATO on the taxability of VCW payments to customers; this ruling is expected by the end of September 2005.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>31 December 2005</p> <p>30 September 2005</p>
7	<p>The ANAO recommends that Centrelink takes the necessary actions to put in place systems to ensure that, in future procurements, it complies fully with the requirements of the Commonwealth's procurement policies and applicable legislation.</p>	<p>New procurement policies, procedures, system changes and training programs have been introduced to ensure that procurements comply with the requirements of the revised Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines with effect from 1 January 2005.</p> <p>Centrelink has a management consultancy procurement under way and a range of change management and cultural change companies will be selected to complement the existing work. Any future procurement will also go to open tender.</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>1 January 2005</p>

