



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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Chair: Mal Washer MP

Deputy Chair: Jennie George MP

Review of Green Procurement Audit highlights need for Sustainability Charter

A report released today by the House of Representatives Environment Committee reveals that managing the procurement dollar could be an important weapon towards the development of a sustainable Australia.

“The Committee was deeply concerned by the shortcomings in government agencies’ green procurement performances,” said Committee Chair, Dr Mal Washer, “and the apparent lack of a clear policy framework to drive ecologically sustainable practices.”

Australian government agencies spend around \$17 billion each year on goods and services. Their activities generate greenhouse gas emissions, office waste that goes into landfills, as well as utilizing other scarce resources such as water. As Australia has one of the world’s highest levels of water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions per capita, it is felt by the Committee that the environmental performance of government agencies certainly warrants closer examination.

In an office environment, the cost of office equipment goes beyond the purchase price. An environmental cost is also incurred; in the manufacture, use and subsequent disposal of office equipment and products.

“Green procurement is a market instrument to achieve sustainable consumption. Therefore, it is crucial that the Commonwealth government lead the way in implementing green procurement principles and practices.” Said Dr Washer.

As part of Committee’s inquiry into an Australian Sustainability Charter, the Committee has reviewed Audit Report No. 22, 2005-2006, Cross Portfolio Audit of Green Office Procurement. The Committee considers the Auditor-General’s report an important snapshot of government procurement and environmental behaviour.

The *Review of Green Office Procurement Audit* report is an interim report that contains no recommendations. However, it does highlight the need for action at the national level to develop a cohesive and coordinated approach to procurement and sustainability.

For media comment, please contact:

Committee Chair, Dr Mal Washer (Member for Moore, WA) on (02) 6277 2114.

For more detail on the inquiry and copies of the report, please contact:

The House Environment Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or access the full report by visiting the inquiry website at http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/envIRON/charter/interim_report.htm.

Members of the House of Representatives Environment Committee are Dr Mal Washer MP (Chair), Jennie George MP (Deputy), Russell Broadbent MP, the Hon Warren Entsch MP, Kelly Hoare MP, Harry Jenkins MP, the Hon Duncan Kerr MP, Stewart McArthur MP, Ken Ticehurst MP and Jason Wood MP.