

Introduction

- 1.1 One of the statutory duties of the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) is to examine all reports of the Auditor-General in terms of the significance of the program or issues raised; the significance of the findings; the arguments advanced by the audited agencies; and the nature of public interest in the report. The Committee is then required to report the results of its deliberations to both Houses of Parliament as it sees fit.
- 1.2 Upon consideration of 13 audit reports presented to the Parliament by the Auditor-General during the second quarter of 1999–2000, the JCPAA selected three reports for further scrutiny at a public hearing. The public hearing was conducted in Canberra on 16 May 2000.
- 1.3 The reports selected were:
 - *Audit Report No. 13, 1999–2000, Management of Major Equipment Acquisition Projects, Department of Defence;*
 - *Audit Report No. 14, 1999–2000, Commonwealth Debt Management, and*
 - *Audit Report No. 24, 1999–2000, Commonwealth Management and Regulation of Plasma Fractionation, Department of Health and Aged Care.*

Structure of the Report

- 1.4 This report draws attention to the main issues raised at the public hearing. Where appropriate, the Committee has commented on unresolved or contentious issues.

- 1.5 Chapter 2 of the report discusses the evidence taken relating to *Audit Report No. 13, 1999-2000*, on the management of major Defence acquisition projects.
- 1.6 Chapter 3 of the report addresses issues raised in relation to *Audit Report No. 14, 1999-2000*, on Commonwealth debt management.
- 1.7 Chapter 4 of the report discusses the evidence taken relating to *Audit Report No. 24, 1999-2000*, on the management and regulation of plasma fractionation.
- 1.8 In addition, the report provides an outline of the conduct of the Committee's review (Appendix A). The report should be read in conjunction with the transcript of evidence collected at the public hearing (Appendix D).