



PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORTS ON PROGRESS AT DEFENCE

Chair of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, Sharon Grierson MP, today presented a progress report on equipment acquisition and financial reporting in Defence to the House of Representatives.

Problems in Defence financial reporting and equipment acquisition have been the subject of a great deal of scrutiny over the last decade.

As a result of a series of critical audit reviews, a Senate inquiry and the Kinnaird Review in 2003, the Department has been under intense pressure to reform its processes and practices.

"It was time to review just how far the Department has come", Ms Grierson said.

"The JCPAA inquiry found that Defence has made significant progress on improving its financial position, and had demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Kinnaird review."

"However, the Committee still has a number of concerns."

"While the reform agenda is in train, it's time for Defence to focus on measuring the effectiveness and outcomes of that agenda in a more systematic and explicit way."

"Over and over again, the call has been made for greater transparency across the Department of Defence and the Committee hopes the public scrutiny which will accompany the annual Major Projects Report will go some way to providing the transparency and accountability the Australian public deserve."

"The Committee will monitor progress on this inquiry's findings, and is determined to hold Defence and the Defence Materiel Organisation to account."

"It has recommended that the Department address the JCPAA's findings and provide it with an update at a public hearing in 12 months."

"The Committee anticipates a full and considered response to its concerns, and looks forward to significant progress on finalising the Kinnaird reforms, measuring outcomes and improving transparency in that time."

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For more information: please contact the Committee chair, Sharon Grierson MP, on telephone 0412 291 654 or the inquiry secretary on telephone (02) 6277 2336 or visit the inquiry's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jpaa/defence/index.htm>