



JCPAA review of four Auditor-General reports

Next week the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit will be conducting two days of public hearings at Parliament House, Canberra, on the following four audit reports. The hearings will be held in Committee Room 1R1 from 10:30am – 3:30pm on Monday 4 April and Tuesday 5 April:

- **Audit Report No. 46, 2003–2004, *Client Service in the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Magistrates Court***
- **Audit Report No. 4, 2004–2005, *Management of Customer Debt (Centrelink)***
- **Audit Report No. 15, 2004–2005, *Financial Management of Special Appropriations***
- **Audit Report No. 18, 2004–2005, *Regulation of Non-prescription Medicinal Products***

A public hearing reviewing **audit report no. 46 will commence at 10:30am, Monday 4 April**, and will focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of the courts' client service arrangements for family law clients. The Committee is keen to examine whether both the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Magistrates Court are coordinating their activities to work effectively together. The Committee is concerned that "neither court is currently meeting its own designated targets in terms of the timeliness of services provided" said Mr Baldwin.

A public hearing reviewing **audit report no. 4 will commence at 1:30pm, Monday 4 April**, and will focus on outstanding 'benchmark' debt estimated to total almost \$1 billion with approximately 600,000 Centrelink customers possessing an outstanding debt. Mr Baldwin stressed that "it was important that Centrelink continue to improve its processes in the four core debt management processes of debt prevention, identification, raising and recovery activities in order to protect the Government's expenditure on its social welfare programs".

A public hearing reviewing **audit report no. 15 will commence at 10:30am, Tuesday 5 April**, and will focus on the financial management and reporting of Special Appropriations. Mr Baldwin said the Committee was concerned with the ANAO findings, which concluded that "there have been significant shortcomings in the financial management of various Special Appropriations."

A public hearing reviewing **audit report no. 18 will commence at 1:30pm, Tuesday 5 April**, and will focus on the Therapeutic Goods Administration's regulation of non-prescription medicinal products. Mr Baldwin said the Committee is concerned that there is a need for "more rigour around systems, procedures and resource management within the framework to provide assurance that non-prescription medicines are appropriately and cost-effectively regulated".

Under the Public Accounts and Audit Committee Act 1951 (PAAC Act), it is the duty of the Committee to examine all reports of the Auditor-General that are tabled in each House of the Parliament.

For media comment: please contact Mr Bob Baldwin MP on telephone 02-6277 4200.

All Auditor-General's reports can be found on the ANAO website at www.anao.gov.au

For **more information**, contact the inquiry secretary on telephone (02) 6277 4615 or visit the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jpaa/index.htm