

RECEIVED

4 MAY 2007



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

Our Ref: T20561

Mr Jason Sherd
Secretary
Joint Publications Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Inquiry into printing standards for documents presented to Parliament

Dear Mr Sherd

Thank you for your letter of 16 April 2007 to Ms Annabelle Pegrum, Chief Executive of the National Capital Authority, providing us with the opportunity to provide a submission to the above inquiry.

In response, I will focus on Annual Reports as this is the main publication that the National Capital Authority (NCA) presents to Parliament.

We acknowledge that the primary purpose of annual reports are to provide information on an agencies activity to Parliament, however, as noted in your discussion paper, annual reports have developed a secondary function, that of providing information on agencies activities to other stakeholders such as the general public. If annual reports were produced to the same standard of Portfolio Budget Statements for example, they would be less able to achieve this secondary function. Agencies, in achieving value for money, do not have the option of producing two reports, one for reporting to Parliament and the other for the use of other stakeholders.

The majority of text contained in the NCA's annual reports is black. Colour is used for chapter and section headings with the aim to improving the readability and layout of the report as well as to improve the overall appearance of the document. Likewise, photos are used for similar reasons and given the NCA's responsibilities and activities, they are an important tool for illustrating the Government's achievements. The NCA always endeavors to obtain value for money when producing any publication, regardless of whether it is presented to Parliament.

In your discussion paper, it states that the cost of a report printed in four colours can be over 70 percent higher than if printed in two colours. Preliminary inquires for the NCA 2006-07 annual report indicate that costs would be around 50 percent higher when using offset printing. However, utilising digital printing techniques can significantly reduce printing expenses as the cost is usually calculated per page and there are no requirements for initial set up such as printing plates. This makes it a cost effective option for smaller print runs of between 500 and 1000 reports which is in

Building the National Capital in the hearts of all Australians

T 02 6271 2888 | F 02 6273 4427 | www.nationalcapital.gov.au | email natcap@natcap.gov.au

Couriers & deliveries: Treasury Building, King Edward Terrace, Parkes ACT 2600 | Mailing: GPO Box 373 Canberra ACT 2601

ARN 75 149 374 427

the order of the NCA's average distribution for publications. Offset printing on the other hand, involves set up costs which increases the price for smaller print runs. In regards to the use of colour, if digital printing techniques are used, there is negligible cost differences between printing in black and white and full colour.

In regards to sanctions, providing a publication is prepared using the appropriate paper and binding techniques and that it meets any reporting obligations, the NCA does not believe that sanctions would be appropriate simply for apparent excessive use of colour.

The inquire should take into account improvements in printing technologies, namely digital printing techniques, which has reduced the cost of producing full colour reports. Stakeholders expectations have also increased over the years. In regards to the use of photos in annual reports, consideration should also be given to the role of individual agencies. In the NCA's case, we are an organization where colour photos or maps are important visual aids in most of the publications the NCA produces and best depict the design intent of the Government's commitment to the National Capital.

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in the inquiry process.



Phil Wales
Managing Director
Governance

4 May 2007