



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

## **Submission to the Joint Publications Committee Printing Standards for Documents Presented to Parliament**

### **Background**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) actively supports the current printing standards in terms of specific requirements for document size, binding and delivery requirements. Documents produced by DVA for presentation to Parliament comply to the spirit of the guidelines dealing with the use of colour.

The following submission responds to the items for discussion raised in the Committee's Discussion Paper of April 2007.

This submission makes a number of observations based on DVA's experience, particularly with the publishing of its annual report, in order to help inform the Committee's deliberations. It also offers comments as invited in the discussion paper.

### **Use of colour and illustrations**

DVA's annual reports typically employ the use of full colour covers and two colour printing for text pages. The use of these elements is discussed below.

#### *Covers*

The use of full colour on the covers is to allow the design of the publication to have uses broader than Parliamentary Paper requirements. While the design and structure of the DVA annual report broadly complies and fulfils the legislative requirements, it also functions as a principal corporate communication tool for other audiences including ex-service organisations, members of the veteran community, business partners and other agencies. The application of full-colour to the cover allows for contemporary and professional presentation of the Department's profile amongst these key stakeholders.

The use of full-colour also allows sufficient versatility to apply design linkages between the paper version of the report and the internet version, which is increasingly becoming the preferred channel of communication. The internet version of course has no financial restrictions on the use of colour. Other visual design linkages to principal documents such as corporate and strategic plans become available through the use of full colour covers.

### *Text pages*

The use of two colours (black plus one spot colour) for text pages is supported. DVA has published annual reports this way for the last six editions and intends to do so for 2006-2007. This facility allows for clearer communication of important and, at times, complex information in table and chart format where these devices are deemed to be the best way of communicating messages. The use of graphical tables and charts as decorative devices is discouraged.

The use of images and a secondary colour also aids reader navigation through the document by application to section and chapter dividers. Application of colour to page edges for example, provides a low-cost tab-like function also to aid navigation.

### **Cost of producing documents and value for money**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has placed considerable emphasis in developing and promoting html versions of annual reports and other Parliamentary Papers Series documents.

Print procurement has value for money principles applied through competitive pricing under contracted print panel arrangements. Stock control and reporting aims to reduce waste. The number of printed copies produced each year has declined following examination of unused stock at the end of each annual cycle. In recent years total printings have been 1600 copies. A judgement is made each year aimed at striking a balance between the unit cost of each copy while ensuring that adequate stock is available for the life of the document and minimising the risk of excess stock.

### **Sanctions**

It is recommended that the Committee place no further restrictions on the use of colour. The guidelines should be amended to allow for full colour printing of covers and the use of black plus one spot colour on text pages.

It is recommended that the Committee publish new standards and place the onus on agencies to comply.