

The Senate

Rural and Regional Affairs and
Transport Legislation Committee

Annual reports (No. 2 of 2006)

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Committee Secretariat

Ms Roxane Le Guen, Secretary
Ms Kyriaki Mechanicos, Research Officer

Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

phone: (02) 6277 3511
fax: (02) 6277 5811
e-mail: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au
internet: www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/rrat_ctte/index.htm

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List of Abbreviations

AMFA	Australian Fisheries and Management Authority
ARTC	Australian Rail Track Corporation
CAC Act	Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
DAA	Dairy Adjustment Authority
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
FMA Act	Financial management and Accountability Act 1997
FOI Act	Freedom of Information Act 1982
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
FWPRDC	Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation
GRDC	Grains Research and Development Corporation
GWRDC	Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation
MDCB	Murray-Darling Basin Commission
MIFCo	Maritime Industry Finance Company Ltd
NCA	National Capital Authority
OH&S Act	Occupational Health & Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991
PIERD Act	Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989
RIRDC	Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
SRDC	Sugar Research and Development Corporation
WEA	Wheat Export Authority

Chapter 1

Overview

1.1 The committee is responsible for examining the annual reports of departments and agencies within two portfolios:

- Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; and
- Transport and Regional Services.

Terms of reference

1.2 Under Senate Standing Order 25(21), annual reports of departments and agencies shall stand referred to the legislation committees in accordance with an allocation of departments and agencies in a resolution of the Senate. Each committee shall:

- (a) examine each annual report referred to it and report to the Senate whether the report is apparently satisfactory;
- (b) consider in more detail, and report to the Senate on, each annual report which is not apparently satisfactory, and on the other annual reports which it selects for more detailed consideration;
- (c) investigate and report to the Senate on any lateness in the presentation of annual reports;
- (d) in considering an annual report, take into account any relevant remarks about the report made in debate in the Senate;
- (e) if the committee so determines, consider annual reports of departments and budget-related agencies in conjunction with examination of estimates;
- (f) report on annual reports tabled by 31 October each year by the tenth sitting day of the following year, and on annual reports tabled by 30 April each year by the tenth sitting day after 30 June of that year;
- (g) draw to the attention of the Senate any significant matters relating to the operations and performance of the bodies furnishing the annual reports; and
- (h) report to the Senate each year whether there are any bodies which do not present annual reports to the Senate and which should present such reports.¹

1 Standing orders and other orders of the Senate, February 2002, pp. 27-28. (This Standing Order was amended 24 August 1994, 13 February 1997, 11 November 1998, 3 December 1998 and 13 February 2002).

Purpose of annual reports

1.3 The tabling and scrutiny of annual reports by Senate committees, under Standing Order 25(21), is an important element in the process of accountability to Parliament. The information provided in annual reports is placed on the public record and assists Parliament in its examination of the performance of departments and agencies and the administration of government programs.

Requirements

1.4 The annual reports are examined by the committee to determine whether they are timely and 'apparently satisfactory'. In forming its assessment, the committee considers whether the reports comply with the relevant legislation and guidelines for the preparation of annual reports:

- for departments of state and executive agencies these are: *Public Service Act 1999*, subsections 63(2) and 70(2), and the *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, updated June 2005 and approved by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit on 29 June 2005.
- for Commonwealth authorities and companies: the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (the CAC Act), sections 9, 36 and 48, and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*.
- for non-statutory bodies: the requirements are contained in the Government response to the report of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Government Operations on Non-statutory bodies, Senate *Hansard*, 8 December 1987, pp. 2643–45.

Reports referred to the committee

1.5 Standing Order 25(21)(f), requires committees to report on annual reports tabled by 30 April each year by the tenth sitting day after 30 June of that year. In this instance, that date is 6 September 2006. Committees are also required to report on annual reports tabled by 31 October each year by the tenth sitting day of the following year.

1.6 Annual reports which were tabled in the Senate or presented to the President between 1 November 2005 and 30 April 2006 are considered in this report. This includes annual reports submitted to the minister before 31 October 2005, but tabled subsequent to that date and therefore not considered as part of the committee's report, *Annual reports (No. 1 of 2006)*.

1.7 The committee examined 19 annual reports of agencies within the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio and 5 annual reports of agencies within

the Transport and Regional Services portfolio. A complete list of reports referred to the committee (including those not examined) appears at Appendix 1.

Reports not examined

1.8 The committee is not obliged to report on Acts, statements of corporate intent, surveys, corporate plans or errata. The following 7 documents were referred to the committee and have not been examined:

- Dairy Australia: Delivering for the dairy industry Annual Report 2004-05
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Corrigendum to the 2003-04 Annual Report
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Corrigendum to the 2004-05 Annual Report
- *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997* – Report to Parliament on Live-stock Mortalities for Exports by Sea for the Reporting Period 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2005
- *Stevedoring Levy (Collection) Act 1998* – Report for 2005
- Airservices Australia – National Equity and Diversity Program 2004-2007: Progress Report 2004-2005
- Airservices Australia – Corporate Plan July 2005-June 2010

Timeliness

1.9 Standing Order 25(21)(c) requires the committee to report to the Senate on the late presentation of annual reports.

1.10 As stated in the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, annual reports must be tabled in Parliament by 31 October each year, except where an agency's own legislation specifies a timeframe for its annual report.² Those agencies reporting under the CAC Act are required to provide their annual reports to the minister by the 15th day of the fourth month after the end of the financial year.³ Where the financial year ends on 30 June, this deadline translates to 15 October.

1.11 As noted in the committee's report, *Annual reports (No. 1 of 2006)*, a significant number of annual reports were tabled in the Senate after the appropriate deadlines, and consequently, will be examined in this report.⁴

2 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, p. 2.

3 *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, section 9.

4 *Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Annual reports (No. 1 of 2006)*, p. 3.

1.12 The committee is particularly concerned that of the 12 agencies subject to the CAC Act examined in this report, only one submitted its annual report to the minister by 15 October as required. The committee would like to commend the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) for adhering to its legislative responsibilities in this respect. However, due to the 2005 Parliamentary sitting calendar, the abovementioned report was not tabled until after the 31 October deadline. The committee expects that all agencies subject to the CAC Act will adhere to the relevant deadlines in the future.

1.13 The committee notes that as the Wheat Export Authority's (WEA) financial year ends on 30 September annually, it is not required to provide the minister with its annual report until 15 January the following year. The committee is disappointed that the WEA did not meet this deadline, and hopes that this will not occur again.

1.14 The following reports were presented to the Senate out of session, and formally tabled on the next sitting day of the Senate, 7 February 2006:

- Civil Aviation Safety Authority Annual Report 2004-05
- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2001-02
- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2002-03
- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2003-04

1.15 Although not subject to the timeframes in the CAC Act or the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA Act), there have been substantial delays in the tabling of the following reports:

- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2001-02
- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2002-03
- National Rural Advisory Council Annual Report 2003-04
- Queensland Fisheries Joint Authority Report 1 July 2003-30 June 2004

The committee has noted the delay in the presentation of these reports, and expects that the bodies in question will meet the required deadlines in the future.

1.16 As noted in the committee's report *Annual reports (No. 1 of 2006)*, the committee wrote to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AMFA), requesting advice about the significant delays in the tabling of a number of fisheries joint authorities annual reports.⁵ This letter was forwarded to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in May 2006, and the committee has yet to receive a response to its enquiry.

1.17 The committee recognises that some bodies are required to comply with the timeframes stipulated in their enabling legislation, and appreciates that the relevant

5 *Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Annual reports (No. 1 of 2006)*, p. 5.

deadlines are adhered to by those agencies. Nonetheless, the committee reminds all bodies that, as stated in the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, the Government maintains its policy that all annual reports are to be tabled by 31 October.⁶

Comments on reports

1.18 Under Standing Order 25(21)(a) the committee is required to scrutinise annual reports and inform the Senate as to whether they are 'apparently satisfactory'. The committee assesses compliance with the reporting guidelines specified by the legislation under which respective departments and agencies present their annual reports.

1.19 The committee is of the view that the reports examined are generally 'apparently satisfactory', although some do not comprehensively address all of the legislative requirements they are subject to. It is noted, however, that any divergence from these requirements is only minor in nature. The issues of most concern are discussed below.

1.20 As commented in the committee's previous reports on annual reports, although compliance indexes are no longer mandatory, the committee recommends their inclusion in annual reports. Compliance indexes greatly facilitate the committee's task of ensuring adherence to reporting requirements, and also aid agencies in demonstrating that all legislative obligations have been met.

1.21 The committee found that some compliance indexes were more useful than others. Unfortunately, many compliance indexes were not comprehensive and did not address all reporting requirements. Moreover, many of the page references given in the compliance indexes were either incorrect, or too broad to be useful. The committee commends those agencies which included compliance indexes for each piece of legislation they are required to report under, particularly AMFA, which had an exceptional compliance index and comprehensively addressed all its legislative obligations. A number of agencies have also adopted the recommended practice of including a nil, n/a or "-" entry where the body has nothing to report under an item, which has been appreciated by the committee.

1.22 The committee is pleased to note that the WEA included a compliance index in its *Annual Report 2004-05*, as recommended in the committee's *Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*. However, three authorities, the Dairy Adjustment Authority (DAA), the Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation (FWPRDC), and the Murray-Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) and two companies, the Maritime Industry Finance Company Ltd (MIFCo) and the Australian Rail Track Corporation Limited (ARTC) did not include compliance indexes in their annual

6 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, p. 2.

reports. This made it difficult for the committee to determine whether these reports complied with the relevant requirements.

1.23 In addition, the committee draws attention to the importance of an alphabetical index in assisting readers to navigate annual reports. The committee considers that the FWPRDC and the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation (GWRDC) would benefit from including indexes. Further, a number of indexes in annual reports examined were quite brief and unhelpful. In contrast, the index included in the National Capital Authority's (NCA) annual report was very comprehensive and easy to use.

1.24 The committee found that a number of agencies did not adequately address factors, trends or events affecting their performance, or the risks and opportunities faced by the agencies during the course of the financial year, as required under subsection 10(1)(b) of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*. The committee commends the AMFA and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation who both openly identified the challenges each agency faced and the strategies adopted to manage these.

1.25 The committee observed that some agencies, including the FWPRDC and the WEA, did not clearly identify whether or not they had any subsidiaries. The committee reminds agencies that they are obliged to report against section 15 of the CAC Act, which requires agencies to provide the minister with details of any subsidiaries formed, any interest acquired in existing companies or any significant business activity undertaken by the agency. If no such activity is undertaken, this should be reported as nil.

1.26 The committee calls attention to section 17 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005* which notes that the annual reports of Commonwealth authorities must include certain matters required by the relevant sections of the following legislation: *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) section 516A, *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) subsection 8(1), *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* (OH&S Act) section 74.⁷ The committee encourages agencies to look carefully at the reporting requirements under these pieces of legislation when compiling upcoming reports.

1.27 The committee observed that several agencies did not adequately address all of the requirements under section 516A (6) of the EPBC Act. The committee points to the AMFA annual report as an excellent example of how this requirement should be dealt with.

1.28 The committee was pleased to see that all agencies included a Freedom of Information statement. The committee did, however, identify significant omissions in

7 *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, section 17.

most agencies' attempts to address their obligations under subsection 8(1) the FOI Act. In particular, the committee found that only a few bodies actually provided information on arrangements that exist for others to participate in the agencies' policy formulation processes. Again, AMFA reported against this in an exceptional manner, as did the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) and the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

1.29 The committee also noted that a number of agencies omitted to provide details required under section 74(1)(c) of the OH&S Act, regarding their Occupational Health and Safety policy. The committee was pleased however, that most agencies provided adequate information on the measures taken to ensure the health and safety of their employees.

1.30 While the majority of agencies provided information on the activities undertaken in order to ensure compliance with the Commonwealth Disability Strategy, the committee draws attention to section 18 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, which specifically states that an assessment of an authority's performance in implementing the Strategy must be provided in accordance with the terms set out in the Guide to the Performance Reporting Framework.⁸ The committee encourages agencies to adopt this method of assessment in future reports.

1.31 The committee notes sections 6 and 7 of the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, which require a summary statement, separately listing new and ongoing consultancy contracts, in addition to a table containing further detailed information on consultancies in accordance with a mandatory proforma, and a summary statement regarding competitive tendering and contracting undertaken by the agency.⁹ As a matter of best practice, CAC Act bodies should comply with the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, and provide this information.

1.32 In a previous report *Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*, the committee raised concerns about some agencies' failure to report on consultancies and competitive tendering and contracting.¹⁰ However, the following agencies have failed again to provide the required information: Land and Water Australia, the Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC) and the FWPRDC. The RIRDC did not provide relevant information either. The committee is pleased to note that the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) has included information on consultancies in light of comments made in the committee's earlier report.

8 *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, section 18. This Guide can be accessed on the Commonwealth Disability Strategy website at <http://www.facs.gov.au/cds>.

9 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, pp. 11-13 and 26-29.

10 *Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*, pp. 5-6.

1.33 The committee is pleased to find that the WEA has implemented the suggestion made in the report *Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*, to list consultancy and contract services in the compliance index of its annual report.¹¹ The committee encourages other agencies which do not do so currently, to implement this practice.

1.34 While a number of agencies did provide information on consultancies and competitive tendering and contracting, many of them failed to present it in accordance with the mandatory proforma. The committee reminds agencies that the method of presentation for this information is specified quite explicitly in the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, and encourages agencies to abide by this proforma in the future.¹² The NCA's *Annual Report 2004-05* is highlighted as a perfect example of reporting in this instance.

Senate remarks on annual reports

1.35 In accordance with Senate Standing Order 25(21)(d), the committee is required to take into account remarks made in the Senate which are relevant to the annual reports under consideration.

1.36 While no substantive debate on annual reports within the committee's portfolios took place in the Senate, Senator Ian Campbell referred to CASA's *Annual Report 2004-05* while answering a question asked by Senator Allison in March 2006, regarding CASA and the aviation industry.¹³

Comment on significant matters

1.37 Finally, Senate Standing Order 25(21)(g) directs the committee to comment on significant matters raised in annual reports. The committee has considered the annual reports of the following agencies:

- Australian Fisheries Management Authority;
- Civil Aviation and Safety Authority;
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation;
- Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation;
- Grains Research and Development Corporation;
- Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation;
- Sugar Research and Development Corporation;
- Wheat Export Authority;

11 *Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*, p. 6.

12 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, pp. 11-13 and 26-29.

13 Senate *Hansard*, 30 March 2006, p. 240.

- Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd;
- Maritime Industry Finance Company Ltd;
- Dairy Adjustment Authority; and
- National Capital Authority.

Chapter 2

Annual Reports

2.1 The committee considered all of the following reports to be 'apparently satisfactory'. Comments are made to indicate where further improvement in legislative reporting is expected. The committee notes in particular that the inclusion of references to an agency's FOI Act reporting obligations and its main corporate governance practices, while repetitive, are requirements that must be met in an annual report. It is not good enough to refer readers of the report to an agency's website for such information.

Commonwealth Authorities

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

2.2 The committee notes that the qualifications of directors, and details of whether each director is executive or non-executive were not specified in the report. This however is a minor divergence from the requirements, and on the whole, the committee considers this an exemplary report. AMFA is commended for addressing all of its reporting requirements so comprehensively.

Civil Aviation Safety Authority

2.3 Section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, requires agencies to provide an outline of their organisational structure. CASA has presented an outline of its new organisational structure, implemented on 1 July 2005. Although this is useful, CASA has not provided an outline of the structure under which it operated during the financial year under review. Best practice would have been to include an outline of both structures.

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation

2.4 The committee notes the chart outlining the FRDC's operating context, which is an informative reference, but encourages the FRDC to also include a more detailed outline of its organisational structure in future reports, as required by section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*.

2.5 The committee also noted, with some interest, that readers of the annual report were referred to the FRDC's website for information relating to the responsibilities of various board committees. The FRDC is reminded that under section 15 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, it is required to include this information in its report.

2.6 The committee appreciates the FRDC's clear identification of companies in which it holds an interest, and commends the FRDC for including this information in its compliance index.

Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation

2.7 The committee is disappointed that the FWPRDC has again failed to include important aids to facilitate access to its report, such as an alphabetical index and a compliance index. The FWPRDC is reminded that section 6 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, regarding standards of presentation, states that reports 'must be constructed having regard to the interests of users.' It is expected that this will be remedied in the upcoming annual report.

2.8 The absence of any form of index made it difficult for the committee to assess if certain reporting requirements had been met under the CAC Act. Of particular concern was the difficulty encountered by the committee in determining if the FWPRDC had addressed its reporting requirements under its enabling legislation, namely the sections of the *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989* (PIERD Act), regarding the FWPRDC's activities involving patents, and details of any interest the FWPRDC holds in companies.¹

Grains Research and Development Corporation

2.9 The committee notes that no statement of corporate governance is included in the annual report; rather, readers are referred to the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Operating Manual for this information. The GRDC is reminded that section 15 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, requires a statement of the authority's main corporate governance practices to be included in the annual report.

2.10 Similarly, readers are referred to the GRDC website for details pertaining to the agency's FOI Act reporting obligations. The committee advises that all required information be included in the annual report proper in the future.

2.11 The committee found that the GRDC did not specifically indicate which of its research and development activities related to ecologically sustainable development, as required under subsection 28(1)(a)(ia) of the PIERD Act. The GRDC is encouraged to specify this information in upcoming reports.

Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation

2.12 The committee notes that some page references given in the compliance index of this report were incorrect. Furthermore, a number of reporting requirements were not included in the compliance index, and due to the absence of an alphabetical index, it was unnecessarily difficult to assess whether the GWRDC had satisfied all of its legislative requirements.

1 *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989*, sections 28(1)(a)(v)-(vii).

2.13 The committee notes that certain information required under the PIERD Act was not supplied, particularly concerning the GWRDC's activities regarding patents, and whether the GWRDC had formed, or held any interest in, any companies.²

2.14 While the GWRDC did state that no ministerial directions were issued in the period under review, the committee reminds the GWRDC that under section 12 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2005*, it must also report on any ministerial directions since the end of the financial year, and on those continuing from previous financial years.

Sugar Research and Development Corporation

2.15 The committee found that the SRDC provided aggregate funding figures for programs rather than the costs of individual projects. The latter information is required under section 28(1)(a)(ii) of the PIERD Act, and the committee encourages the SRDC to provide more specific amounts of its expenditure per project in future reports.

Wheat Export Authority

2.16 The committee wishes to make it clear that comments made in this report relate solely to the quality and content of the WEA's annual report, and should not be construed as being comments on the wider issues in which the WEA is involved.

2.17 The committee commends the WEA for implementing various suggestions made in the committee's report *Annual reports (No. 2 2005)*, as mentioned in paragraphs 1.22 and 1.33.³

2.18 The committee compliments the WEA on its clear method of recording results against outputs in readily understandable tables. The committee was also pleased to find that the efficiency of WEA's operations and strategies were clearly measured.

2.19 The committee did discern however, that the WEA did not report against section 15 of the CAC Act in its compliance index. This section requires agencies to provide the minister with details of any subsidiaries formed, any interest acquired in existing companies or any significant business activity undertaken by an authority. The WEA is reminded that if it has nothing to report against a particular requirement it should clearly indicate this with a nil entry.

2 *Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989*, sections 28(1)(a)(v)-(vii).

3 *Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Annual reports (No. 2 of 2005)*, pp. 4-6.

Commonwealth Companies

Australian Rail Track Corporation Limited

2.20 The committee considers that the ARTC annual report would benefit from a compliance index or at the very least a more comprehensive alphabetical index.

2.21 The committee notes that the ARTC did not specifically report on any significant events which may have affected the corporation's operations, or on any legal proceedings on behalf of the company, as required under the *Corporations Act 2001*.⁴ The committee encourages the ARTC to take these two requirements into consideration when preparing future reports.

2.22 The committee draws the ARTC's attention to the document *Printing standards for documents presented to Parliament* which clearly states that all documents that are to be presented to Parliament must be printed in international standard B5 size.⁵ The ARTC's 2005 annual report was an A4 sized document. The committee expects that the ARTC will take note of these printing standards when producing future reports.

Maritime Industry Finance Company Limited

2.23 The committee found that MIFCo omitted to report on any environmental reporting requirements it is subject to, or on any legal proceedings on behalf of the company, as required under the *Corporations Act 2001*.⁶ The committee reminds MIFCo that if these requirements do not apply to their operations, this should be indicated in the report.

Prescribed Agencies

Dairy Adjustment Authority

2.24 The committee believes that the DAA annual report would benefit from a more comprehensive alphabetical index. The inclusion of a compliance index would also be ideal.

2.25 The DAA is a prescribed agency under the FMA Act, and as such, is subject to the *Requirements for Annual Reports*. The committee observed that the DAA did not cover a number of its legislative obligations in its report, but was particularly concerned by its failure to provide a summary table of resources by outcomes as

4 *Corporations Act 2001*, sections 299(1)(d) and 300(14)-(15).

5 This document can be accessed at http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/publ/printing_standards.htm.

6 *Corporations Act 2001*, sections 299(1)(f) and 300(14)-(15).

required in subsection 11(3) of the *Requirements for Annual Reports*.⁷ The committee encourages the DAA to adhere closely to the checklist provided in Attachment F to the *Requirements for Annual Reports* in the compilation of upcoming reports.

2.26 The committee further notes that while the DAA has provided some information regarding consultancies, this detail is not presented in accordance with the mandatory proforma. The committee expects this will be remedied in future reports.

National Capital Authority

2.27 The committee compliments the NCA on the high standard of its annual report. The outcome and output structure was presented very clearly, and performance indicators were recorded in easily comprehensible tables. The committee also notes the NCA's flawless summary table of total resources used by outcomes, and identifies it as a perfect reporting example.

2.28 The committee does consider that the NCA annual report would benefit from a more comprehensive compliance index, as some difficulty was encountered in establishing compliance with various requirements, particularly whether or not any discretionary grant programmes are administered by the NCA. The committee recommends that the NCA implement the practice of recording a nil entry against requirements on which it has nothing to report.

2.29 The committee discerned that the NCA did not discuss its performance against its Customer Service Charter, and although it was noted that there were no instances of fraud during the period, no mention was made of whether the Chief Executive had certified the NCA's compliance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines. The NCA is reminded that these are both mandatory reporting requirements under the *Requirements for Annual Reports*, and encourages the NCA to ensure these areas are addressed more thoroughly in future reports.⁸

Senator the Hon. Bill Heffernan
Chair

7 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, pp. 8 and 30.

8 Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act Bodies*, June 2005, pp. 7-8.

Appendix 1

List of annual reports referred to the committee during the period 1 November 2005 to 30 April 2006

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
<i>Departments of State</i>					
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Corrigendum to the 2003-04 Annual Report	N/A	N/A	20/01/06	20/01/06	28/03/06
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Corrigendum to the 2004-05 Annual Report	N/A	N/A	20/01/06	20/01/06	28/03/06
<i>Statutory authorities</i>					
Australian Fisheries Management Authority – Report for 2004-05	<i>Section 88 of the Fisheries Administration Act 1991</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	20/09/05	26/10/05	27/10/05	08/11/05
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority – Report for 2004-05	<i>Agriculture and Veterinary Chemicals (Administration) Act 1992</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	13/09/05	01/11/05	01/11/05	08/11/05
Cotton Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	10/10/05	20/10/05	20/10/05	08/11/05

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	14/10/05	31/10/05	31/10/05	30/11/05
Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	26/08/05	19/10/05	19/10/05	08/11/05
Grains Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	10/10/05	28/10/05	28/10/05	08/11/05
Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	05/09/05	18/10/05	20/10/05	08/11/05
Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation (Land and Water Australia) – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	12/10/05	02/11/05	02/11/05	09/11/05
Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	30/09/05	12/10/05	14/10/05	08/11/05

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
Sugar Research and Development Corporation – Report for 2004-05	<i>Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development Act 1989</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	02/09/05	27/10/05	27/10/05	08/11/05
Wheat Export Authority – Report for 1 October 2003 to 30 September 2004	<i>CAC Act 1997</i>	13/12/05	14/03/06	14/03/06	29/03/06
<i>Prescribed Agencies</i>					
Dairy Adjustment Authority – Report for 2004-05	<i>Dairy Produce Act 1986</i> <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>	24/08/05	07/11/05	07/11/05	29/11/05
<i>Other</i>					
Australian Landcare Council – Report for 2003-04	<i>Natural Resource Management (Financial Assistance) Act 1992</i>	13/09/05	10/10/05	10/10/05	08/11/05
<i>Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997</i> – Report to Parliament on Live-stock Mortalities for Exports by Sea for the Reporting Period 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2005	<i>Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997</i>	N/A	02/02/06	02/02/06	28/03/06
Dairy Australia Limited – Report for 2004-05	<i>Dairy Produce Act 1986</i> <i>Corporations Act 2001</i>	28/10/05	30/01/06	01/02/06	28/02/06
Murray-Darling Basin Commission – Report for 2004-05	<i>Murray-Darling Basin Act 1993</i>	23/09/05	13/10/05	13/10/05	08/11/05
National Rural Advisory Council – Report for 2001-02	<i>Rural Adjustment Act 1992</i>	17/12/02			07/02/06*

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
National Rural Advisory Council – Report for 2002-03	<i>Rural Adjustment Act 1992</i>	Undated			07/02/06*
National Rural Advisory Council – Report for 2003-04	<i>Rural Adjustment Act 1992</i>	Undated			07/02/06*
National Rural Advisory Council – Report for 2004-05	<i>Rural Adjustment Act 1992</i>	Undated	22/02/06	22/02/06	29/03/06
Queensland Fisheries Joint Authority – Report for 2003-04	<i>Fisheries Management Act 1991 (Cth)</i>	No letter	16/02/06	16/02/06	28/03/06

* An asterisk denotes reports presented to the President out-of-session.

Department of Transport and Regional Services

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
<i>Statutory authorities</i>					
Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Report for 2004-05	<i>Civil Aviation Act 1988</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	14/10/05			07/02/06*
<i>Companies</i>					
Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd – Report for 2004-05	<i>Corporations Act 2001</i>	No letter	01/12/05	01/12/05	07/12/05
Maritime Industry Finance Company Ltd – Report for 2004-05	<i>Corporations Act 2001</i>	28/09/05	01/11/05	01/11/05	29/11/05
<i>Prescribed Agencies</i>					
National Capital Authority – Report for 2004-05	<i>ACT (Planning and Land Management Act) 1988</i> <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>	14/11/05	17/11/05	17/11/05	30/11/05

	Legislation	Letter of transmittal date	Date Sent to Minister	Date received by Minister	Tabling date*
<i>Other</i>					
Airservices Australia – Corporate Plan July 2005 to June 2010	<i>Airservices Act 1995</i> <i>CAC Act 1997</i>	28/04/05	19/10/05	19/10/05	08/11/05
Airservices Australia National Equity and Diversity Program 2004-2007 – Progress Report 2004-2005	<i>Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987</i>	N/A	19/10/05	19/10/05	08/11/05
International Air Services Commission – Report for 2004-05	<i>International Air Services Commission Act 1992</i>	01/09/05	07/09/05	07/09/05	08/11/05
<i>Stevedoring Levy (Collection) Act 1998</i> – Report for 2005	<i>Stevedoring Levy (Collection) Act 1998</i>	N/A	22/02/06	22/02/06	08/11/05

* An asterisk denotes reports presented to the President out-of-session.

