

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Since the formation of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee in March 2007, it has been my belief, as Chair of the Committee, that the preparation of the *Report on 2007-08 Financial and Performance Outcomes* should represent one of the main report outcomes of the Committee for the year, complementing the Committee's other core function on the Budget Estimates. The Committee has delivered on this expectation for 2007-08.

Consistent with the functions of the Committee, the *Inquiry into the 2007-08 Financial and Performance Outcomes* for 2007-08 encapsulates an examination of issues associated with accountability and transparency in public administration and public sector finances. The reporting of meaningful information in the report is designed to contribute to improved accountability and performance. This objective is particularly relevant, given the challenges facing Victoria from the global economic circumstances.

This report, which builds on the features of past outcomes reports of the Committee, captures new themes that include:

- risk management;
- procurement; and
- grants.

In commending the report to the Parliament, I encourage interested parties to examine its contents and the Government to implement the Committee's recommendations in full.

For the future, the Committee recognises that the *Growing Victoria Together* initiative, while remaining relevant as a macro strategic document of the Government, is only one of a number of key policies of the Government. For this reason, the Committee intends to expand the *Growing Victoria Together* section of the report to include an examination of performance against various other major policy pronouncements included in the Government's *Annual Statement of Government Intentions*.

This approach will present a unique and timely opportunity for the Committee to provide a snapshot of how the Government has performed in terms of delivering financial and performance outcomes against its policy objectives and targets across a wide range of contemporary fronts, three years into its term of office.

At this time next year, it is foreshadowed that the Government could be implementing a historic overhaul of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, a precursor for changes in government reporting to a greater emphasis on outcomes-based reporting. The Committee will maintain an ongoing interest to ensure Parliamentary reporting requirements by government are fulfilled in the transitional period to any new government directions on financial and performance outcomes reporting.

The Committee looks forward to tackling these challenges so that its reports remain at the forefront of excellence in accountability to Parliament.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish to extend my thanks to the Committee's Secretariat staff for their assistance in helping deliver this report within the Committee's tight schedule of inquiries. I wish also to extend the Committee's appreciation to Ministers, departments and agencies for their timely cooperation in assisting the Committee in this inquiry.



Bob Stensholt MP

Chair