

Anne Mancini

From: Anne Mancini [mancini_anna@optusnet.com.au]
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To: 'paec@parliament.vic.gov.au'
Subject: ministerial accountability

Ms. Jennifer Nathan
Assistant Executive Officer

Parliamentary Accounts and Estimates Committee Victoria

The Victorian Parliament is to be congratulated on its decision to develop the role of the Parliamentary Accounts and Estimates Committee in the life of Victoria. Our special concern is the confusion surrounding the traditional concept of ministerial responsibility. We are sure that all members of parliament are painfully aware of the great difficulties involved when deciding where ministerial accountability begins and ends. But they may not know of the proposals of the Accountability Working Party of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, which if implemented, could make the hard work of ministers and their department heads more manageable. The Working Party has based its document on the Howard government's Guide.

Without clarification of the concept of ministerial accountability, our governments will continue to lose experienced, valuable people as a matter of 'bad luck'. Our democratic governments cannot afford this wastage.

Victorian implementation of the measures listed in 'Why accountability must be renewed' published by the Accountability Working Party could have great significance not only in Victoria but in Australian parliamentary history. Victoria could lead the way to reform by other Australian parliaments.

We beg committee members to give ministerial accountability urgent priority on this agenda. Opportunities such as this, to 'make a difference' in Parliamentary History are few and far between.

Anne Mancini, John Gellie, 27 Valetta St Malvern (phone 95092208)

John Gellie
Anne Mancini



Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

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