



Media Release

Senator Penny Wong

Shadow Minister for
Public Administration & Accountability

Sharon Grierson, MP

Deputy Chair
Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit

Monday 25 June, 2007

LABOR CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION INTO SECRET DIRT UNITS

Labor has asked the Auditor-General to investigate secret Howard Government dirt units, which were revealed in *The Bulletin* last week.

Deputy Chair of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA), Sharon Grierson MP, has written to the Auditor-General, requesting an investigation into allegations raised in *The Bulletin*.

The move follows the JCPAA rejecting a request to bring the details of alleged secret taxpayer-funded dirt units under the scrutiny of the Audit Office.

Shadow Minister for Public Administration and Accountability, Penny Wong, said:

"It's become very clear that John Howard is using taxpayers' funds to pay for his re-election campaign.

"We know that dirt units exist, but we don't know how many there are, how many staff are working in these dirt units, and how much these are costing.

"John Howard has refused to come clean with the Australian people and tell them just how much taxpayers' money is being wasted on these secret dirt units."

Ms Grierson said:

"Australian taxpayers deserve to know that any suspected abuse of the *Financial Management & Accountability Act 1997* by any government, minister or department will be properly investigated".

"Without scrutiny, public cynicism about abuses of power by the Howard government can only grow. That's why I have now written to the Auditor-General requesting he investigate these matters."