



Australian Government
Department of Finance and Deregulation

David Tune PSM
Secretary

Our Ref: C10/914

Mr Ian McPhee PSM
Auditor-General
Australian National Audit Office
GPO Box 707
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear ^{Ian}~~Auditor~~-General

I refer to your letter to Minister Ludwig of 29 March 2010 commenting on the Hawke Report (*Independent Review of Government Advertising Arrangements*) and the proposed new Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns. The Minister has asked me to respond.

As you are aware, the Report was provided after an independent review undertaken by Dr Hawke, that was commissioned by the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and myself. The review arose from the original intent to undertake a review of the framework by July 2010 (as outlined in the Full Year Report on advertising expenditure published in September 2009) and concerns related to elements of the existing process for campaign advertising.

Recognising this commitment, the review was conducted as expediently as possible. As part of the Terms of Reference for the Review, the Government required the reviewer to seek your views as well as those of departmental secretaries and agency heads on the effectiveness of current arrangements, including on any areas of concern.

There is no doubt that your office played an essential role in establishing a robust, disciplined and much improved process for developing and reviewing advertising campaigns compared to the system that previously existed. This has resulted in an increased focus, discipline and rigour amongst agencies in the development and delivery of campaign advertising. This discipline will continue and the framework you have administered since July 2008 will essentially continue to underpin how government advertising is undertaken.

The new Guidelines aim to address areas of ambiguity, without diluting the need for campaigns to be: relevant to government responsibilities, factual, accessible, objective, efficient, effective and not directed at promoting party political interests. There is no 'softening in the application of requirements on agencies'; rather, the new governance framework aims to allocate responsibilities to those best placed to manage them, while retaining a significant independent review mechanism through the establishment of the Independent Communications Committee.

I am advised Minister Ludwig has suggested to members of the new Independent Communications Committee that it would be worthwhile for them to meet with you to share your lessons learned and perspectives on campaign advertising.

Under your general remit you are of course free to undertake an audit of any campaign or any aspect of the government advertising framework. I understand that Minister Ludwig has asked you to consider undertaking at least one audit per year on a campaign or the administration of the framework.

I look forward to working with you under the new arrangements.

Yours sincerely



David Tune

31 March 2010