

Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions

PGPA Act and Rule Independent Review – draft report response

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon the Draft Review of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule). The CDPP wishes to offer the following comments relating to a number of the recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation 21: We suggest that Finance should consider initiating a learning program similar to those offered by professional bodies such as CPA Australia, CA ANZ, the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Actuaries Institute, for audit committee chairs to facilitate sharing information about the performance of audit committee functions.

The recommended learning and discussion program is an excellent proposal but we suggest that the opportunity to participate should be extended to all audit committee members, not confined to audit committee chairs only. Also, that opportunities for non-Canberra based Audit Committee members to participate in this type of program and other guidance and support offered by Department of Finance would be enhanced by publishing the program well in advance and by utilising webinars and other web-based delivery models (which links to Recommendation 38 sub para (d) which is extracted below).

Recommendation 38: We suggest that Finance should consider enhancing its role in providing advice and support to Commonwealth entities and companies to reflect maturing practices by:

- (a) continuing communities of practice and one-on-one interactions with entities;
- (b) enhancing guidance material to be more pragmatic and practical in nature, with appropriate case studies, in consultation with entities and a cross-portfolio advisory committee;
- (c) periodically reviewing guidance material to ensure it remains appropriate; and
- (d) developing Finance's internet presence and its use of web-based materials.

Recommendation 29: [*Subject to implementation of Recommendation 30, below*] Annual reports should ideally be presented to the Parliament on or before 30 September. This would ensure the Parliament has annual reports available before the Senate Supplementary Budget Estimates hearings. Annual reports should be presented to the responsible minister no later than seven days before this date in order to meet this timeframe.

Adding Risk Reporting and Control Reporting to an agency's overall external reporting obligations, at the same time as reducing reporting timeframes for annual reports, may place an unreasonable resource burden on agencies, particularly small agencies.

Recommendation 30: CDPP supports the continued implementation by the Parliament and Finance of a fully digital platform and reporting process for annual reports and other relevant reporting requirements, with a view to phasing out hard copy reporting by 2019–20. Sufficient resources and funding would need to be allocated to achieve this goal.

CDPP

Australia's Federal Prosecution Service