



## Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham

Minister for Finance  
Leader of the Government in the Senate  
Senator for South Australia

REF: MS21-000001

The Hon Julie Bishop  
Chancellor  
Australian National University  
ANU House  
CANBERRA ACT 20

Dear Ms Bishop

I am writing as the Minister responsible for the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) to re-confirm the Government's expectations of corporate Commonwealth entities, and to seek your support to ensure that these expectations are fully met.

Recent events involving some entities have highlighted the need to remind all corporate Commonwealth entities of the governance and accountability obligations they have to the Commonwealth and the public. Accordingly, I am writing in similar terms to all corporate Commonwealth entities and Commonwealth companies.

As a corporate Commonwealth entity, Australian National University (ANU) is subject to both its enabling legislation and the PGPA Act. Under the PGPA Act, the Accountable Authority has a number of duties (at sections 15 to 19 of the PGPA Act), including to govern in a way that promotes the proper use and management of public resources for which the Council responsible.

These duties recognise that the public resources entrusted to entities by the Parliament, on behalf of the Australian people, are to provide goods and services to an appropriate standard. This includes, amongst other things, ensuring that public expenditure is efficient, effective, economical and ethical, and subject to appropriate approvals and controls.

The Accountable Authority and officials of the entity have a duty to carry out their functions using resources entrusted to ANU with care and diligence, amongst other requirements. In discharging these duties and exercising decision making powers, a commitment to the stewardship of public resources is necessary, and expenditure needs to be in accordance with the high standards expected by the community.

The Department of Finance (Finance) has published Resource Management Guides (RMGs) that provide detailed guidance on the PGPA Act, including (but not limited to):

- RMG 200: Duties of Accountable Authorities;
- RMG 201: Preventing, detecting and dealing with fraud;
- RMG 203: General duties of Officials; and
- RMG 206: Accountable Authority Instructions.

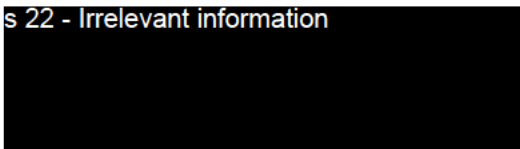
I strongly encourage the Accountable Authority to review the RMGs and regularly consider whether ANU's internal governance arrangements, policies, programs, procedures and guidance materials are appropriate, fit-for-purpose and that an appropriate system of internal controls has been established and maintained.

The Government expects that Accountable Authorities and all officials (including, where applicable, individual members of a governing body) are inducted on commencement regarding their personal obligations and ANU's obligations under the PGPA Act, other relevant legislation, any Ministerial Statements of Expectations and other Government guidance. Further, it is also good governance practice for regular training updates to be provided to those same officials, to ensure that all are kept fully informed of their obligations.

I appreciate your support and your leadership of ANU in maintaining these important governance functions. Should you or anyone from ANU wish, Finance can provide further information on the application of the PGPA Act by emailing [PGPA@finance.gov.au](mailto:PGPA@finance.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

s 22 - Irrelevant information



**Simon Birmingham**

21 January 2021