



14 June 2018

Ms Elizabeth Alexander AM
Mr David Thodey AO
PGPA Legislation & Rule Independent Review Secretariat
Department of Finance
1 Canberra Avenue
Forrest ACT 2609

Via email PGPAActReview@finance.gov.au

Dear Ms Alexander and Mr Thodey

Comments on the PGPA Legislation & Rule Independent Review Consultation Draft

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Consultation Draft of the review of the PGPA Legislation and Rule. I wish to provide brief comments on recommendations 30 and 31 which relate to the Parliament, and in particular the Senate.

Recommendation 30 (Digital reporting) – The Senate Department supports this initiative, noting in particular your observation that this will require the allocation of sufficient resources. The Senate department has received some seed funding for a project to enable receipt and publication of digital documents, however it is for the government to establish systems to compile digital reports and provide them to the parliament. The Senate department is already participating in a trial of digital reporting being conducted by the Department of Finance.

Recommendation 31 (Referral of annual reports to estimates committees) – Under Senate standing order 25(20), annual reports of Commonwealth agencies are automatically referred to Senate legislation committees, which are empowered to consider them in conjunction with their examination of estimates. The standing order lists a number of matters that committees should report on including the performance of the agency. In addition, legislation committees can undertake inquiries into the performance of agencies without a referral from the Senate, and the examination of annual reports or concerns raised at estimates hearings can be the first step in this process. In short, the Senate standing orders already provide for the scrutiny of annual reports and the performance of entities throughout the estimates cycle.

Please let me know if you require further information or background about these comments. The contact officer in the Senate Department is the Deputy Clerk of the Senate, Ms Maureen Weeks, who can be contacted on 6277 3360 or by email at depclerk.sen@aph.gov.au

I am happy for these comments to be published.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Richard Pye.

(Richard Pye)