



Senator Andrew Bragg
Liberal Senator for New South Wales

8 March 2023

Mr Grant Hehir
Auditor-General
Australian National Audit Office
GPO Box 707
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Hehir

I am writing to request the Australian National Audit Office ('ANAO') undertake an investigation into the costs of the ongoing legal dispute concerning the Commonwealth and Dr Monique Ryan MP.

An action has been brought in the Federal Court against Dr Ryan and the Commonwealth in relation to an employment dispute.

It was revealed to me by the Minister for Finance through question on notice no. 1380 that Commonwealth resources have been provided to Dr Ryan to cover legal costs. In addition, the Minister revealed that external legal advice and representation has been sought from legal service providers procured from the 'Whole of Government Legal Services Panel'.

I understand that the ANAO assesses the appropriateness of Commonwealth spending according to the standard of 'proper' provided in the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, which necessitates 'efficient, effective, economical and ethical' use of public resources.

I expect that the cost of this legal dispute to the taxpayer will be significant.

I believe that it is therefore suitable that the ANAO exercise its powers under section 11 of the *Auditor-General Act 1997* to conduct a financial statements audit into these matters.

I look forward to your consideration and response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Bragg', written over a white background.

Senator Andrew Bragg
Liberal Senator for New South Wales

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