



Senator Andrew Bragg
Liberal Senator for New South Wales

05 June 2024

Ms Rona Mellor
Auditor-General
Australian National Audit Office
GPO Box 707
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Ms Mellor

I am writing in relation to the contract for legal services between King & Wood Mallesons and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources regarding PSI Quantum.

At Senate Estimates, I asked the Departmental Officials about the value revision to the contract for legal services with King & Wood Mallesons about PSI Quantum.

In response to my question directed to Ms Janean Richards, the Chief Legal Counsel and Head of the Division for Legal and Integrity, about her personal engagement in the contractual revisions since 13 May 2024, it was stated:

“So, I commenced in this role formally from the 13th of May, so Senator I have not had personal engagement or been involved in the contracts set up with King & Wood Mallesons”

I note the AusTender website displays there have been amendments to increase the maximum value of the contract nine times, with the most recent revision occurring on 28 May 2024 to CN3993303. Furthermore, the interface displays the current contractual value at \$3 280 311, compared to the original value of \$282 300.

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.

In the case of significant expenditure of taxpayer funds, I am concerned that Ms Richards’ lack of engagement in these contractual revisions indicates an inappropriate governance structure for the management of this contract.

Accordingly, I am writing to seek your advice on the ANAO exercising its powers to conduct an audit of these matters to ensure the proper use of taxpayer funds.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Senator Andrew Bragg
Shadow Assistant Minister for Housing
Liberal Senator for New South Wales

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