



Audit Committee Chairs Forum

Friday, 12 July 2024



Welcome and opening remarks



Auditor-General Insights

Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General for Australia



Australian Government
The Treasury



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Climate-related financial disclosure – Corporations requirements

ANAO Audit Committee Chairs Forum

Hannah Skewes

12 July 2024

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Overview

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- Process to date
- Overview of climate disclosure legislation
 - Objective
 - Coverage and commencement
 - Reporting content
 - Location and assurance
 - Liability arrangements and review
- Next steps

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Process to date

State of play

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- Climate disclosure in Australia is currently voluntary
 - Obligations on listed entities to disclose material financial risks
 - Regulator guidance encourages use of TCFD framework
- Of the ASX100 companies that report on sustainability:
 - 78 per cent are voluntarily reporting against the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) (source: KPMG, 2023)
- *Treasury Laws Amendment Bill (Financial Market Infrastructure and other measures)* was introduced to Parliament 27 March 2024
 - Commences 1 January 2025, subject to passage

Processes

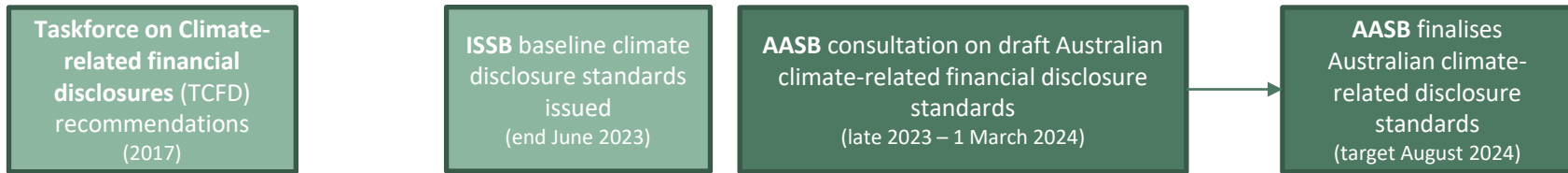
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Policy development



Passage and implementation

Standards development



Regulatory guidance



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Overview of climate-related financial disclosure requirements

Objective

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- Support transparent and comparable reporting of material climate-related risks and opportunities for investors and businesses
- Support regulators to assess and manage systemic risks to the financial system
- Support Australia's international reputation as an attractive destination for capital

Mandatory climate-related financial disclosures

Policy position statement

The Government is committed to improving the quality of climate-related financial disclosures, providing Australians and investors with greater transparency and more comparable information about an entity's exposure to climate-related financial risks and opportunities and climate-related plans and strategies.

Improving climate disclosures will support regulators to assess and manage systemic risks to the financial system as a result of climate change and efforts taken to mitigate its effects.

A rigorous, internationally aligned and credible climate disclosure regime will support Australia's reputation as an attractive destination for international capital and help draw the investment required for the transition to net zero. It will bring Australia in line with other jurisdictions, including the EU, UK, New Zealand and Japan.

This statement outlines the Government's policy positions related to: the scope of the reform (including entities covered), the content required in reports, the location of reporting, assurance requirements for disclosures, and the application of liability for disclosures. These policy positions reflect Option 1b as outlined in the Policy Impact Analysis.

Climate-related financial disclosures will be mandated through amendments to the Corporations Act 2007 (CA) (Corporations Act) and related legislation. Detailed sustainability and assurance standards will be made and maintained by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB).

Reporting entities

Who will be included?

- Large entities that are required to prepare and lodge annual reports under Chapter 2M of the Corporations Act will be required to disclose information about climate-related risks and opportunities. This includes listed and unlisted companies and financial institutions as well as registrable superannuation entities and registered investment schemes.
 - Large entities are defined using size thresholds equivalent to the existing Large Proprietary Company definition (this threshold will apply to **both listed and unlisted** companies).
 - Reporting by large entities will provide transparency to shareholders and support the efficient allocation of capital aligned with risks and opportunities.
- Asset owners (such as registrable superannuation entities and registered schemes) will be considered large if funds under management are more than \$5 billion.
 - Reporting by asset owners will support consistent reporting of climate-related risks and opportunities across the financial sector, noting the significance of these entities in Australia's financial system.
- Where entities are subject to both the annual reporting requirements under the Corporations Act and emissions reporting obligations under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (NGER Act) (NGER Act), they will be required to disclose regardless of size.
 - Reporting by NGER-covered entities is appropriate and proportionate to the risks they face.

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Mandatory climate-related financial disclosures | 1

Coverage and commencement

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- Large businesses and financial institutions, large GHG emitters
- Phased approach
 - Group 1 – Financial Year (FYs) commencing 1 January 2025 onwards
(subject to passage of legislation)
 - ~ASX200, large emitters
 - Group 2 – FYs commencing 1 July 2026 onwards
 - ~ASX300, large emitters and large asset owners
 - Group 3 – FYs commencing 1 July 2027 onwards
 - Group 3 equivalent to ‘large proprietary companies’, with two of the three following characteristics:
 - » \$50 million consolidated revenue
 - » \$25 million consolidated gross assets
 - » 100 or more employees
- All Government-owned companies and corporate entities
 - Led by Department of Finance

Reporting content

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- Climate disclosure statements must include:
 - Material climate-related financial risks and opportunities
 - Any strategies, governance processes and risk management procedures
 - Transition plans (if any)
 - Climate resilience scenario analysis
 - » At least against 1.5 degrees and >2.5 degrees warming outcomes
 - Metrics and targets
 - Scope 1 and 2 emissions from first reporting period
 - Scope 3 emissions from second reporting period
- AASB standards expected in August 2024
 - In line with *ISSB's IFRS S2 Climate-related disclosures*
- Group 3 materiality exemption

296D Climate statement disclosures

- (1) The climate statements for a financial year, and the notes to the climate statements, must together disclose all of the following:
 - (a) any:
 - (i) material financial risks there are for the entity; or
 - (ii) material financial opportunities relating to climate there are for the entity;that are required to be disclosed by sustainability standards made for the purposes of this paragraph;
 - (b) any metrics and targets of the entity relating to climate that are required to be disclosed by sustainability standards made for the purposes of this paragraph, including metrics and targets relating to:
 - (i) scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions; or
 - (ii) scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions; or
 - (iii) scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions (including financed emissions);
 - (c) any information that:
 - (i) is about governance of, strategy of, or risk-management by, the entity in relation to the risks, opportunities, metrics and targets mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b); and
 - (ii) is required to be disclosed by sustainability standards made for the purposes of this paragraph.
- (2) For the purposes of this section, the question of whether there are any of the following for an entity is to be worked out in accordance with sustainability standards made for the purposes of this subsection:
 - (a) a material financial risk relating to climate;
 - (b) a material financial opportunity relating to climate.
- (3) This section does not apply if subsection 296B(1) applies for the financial year.

Reporting location and assurance

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Reporting location

- Part of annual financial reporting obligations in the *Corporations Act*
- ‘Sustainability Report’ will be the fourth report within the annual reporting suite, initially will comprise:
 - Climate statement + notes
 - Directors’ declaration
 - Auditor’s report on sustainability
- Timing of lodgement will be consistent with current financial reporting requirements

Audit and assurance

- Mandatory audit over all disclosures by 1 July 2030
- Phased in over time, starting with assurance of scope 1 and scope 2 emissions from 1 January 2025
- Financial auditors will lead climate disclosure assurance and audit, supported by technical climate and sustainability experts when required
- Assurance standards to be developed, in line with IAASB final standards (once released in Sept 2025)
- AUASB will consult with industry to set out a timeline for phasing-in assurance and audit

Liability arrangements

- Climate-related financial disclosure requirements will be subject to the existing liability framework under the *Corporations Act*
- Three-year modified liability arrangements
 - Protections from private action for:
 - All forward looking statements (FY2025)
 - Scope 3 emissions, transition plans, scenario analysis (FY2025, FY2026, FY2027)
 - ASIC-only action during this time

Review

- Treasury, in consultation with the would conduct a review in 2028-29, with support of the Council of Financial Regulators (ASIC, APRA and RBA)

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Next steps

Next steps for implementation

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Questions?

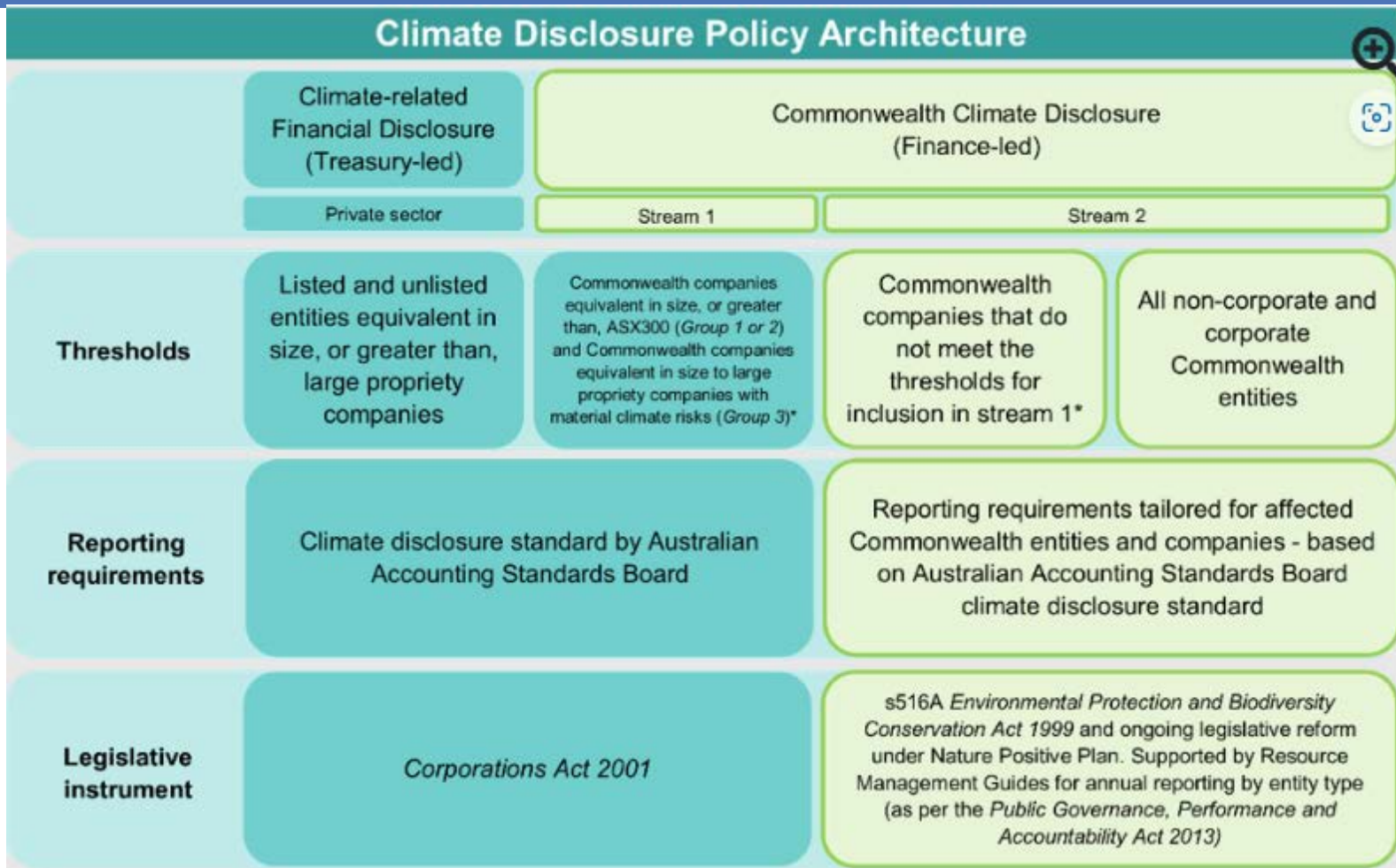


Developments in Commonwealth Climate Disclosures framework

Jane Meade

Group Executive Director
Professional Services Group

Policy architecture



Source: Department of Finance website



Development of CCD framework



Emissions reporting –
Commonwealth
entities
2022-23

AASB standards
consultation
(October 2023-March
2024)

CCD requirements
consultation (January
– April 2024)

Emissions reporting –
Commonwealth
companies
2023-24

CCD Pilot Guidance
issued
March 2024

RMG 135, 136, 137

AASB expected to
issue climate
disclosure standards
TBA

Finance expected to
issue CCD
requirements
TBA



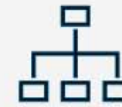
Stream 2 CCD Proposed Phased Implementation



Financial reporting year	Tranche	Entities				Other entities
2023-24	0 (Pilot)	All Departments of State				
		Entities that fulfil two of four thresholds				Other entities
			Employees	Consolidated Assets	Annual expense	
2024-25	1	Referenced in Part 1 of Climate Change (Consequential Amendments Act)	More than 500	\$1B or more	\$500m or more	NGERs reporters; Specialist Investment Vehicles, FFMA and CSC
2025-26	2	Referenced in Part 1 of Climate Change (Consequential Amendments Act)	More than 250	\$500m or more	\$200m or more	
2026-27	3	All remaining Commonwealth entities and Commonwealth companies, including Group 3 companies from Corps Act reform				

Standards architecture

Four core content areas



Governance

Governance processes, controls and procedures an entity uses to monitor, manage and oversee climate-related R&O



Strategy

Strategy for managing climate-related R&O



Risk Management

Processes an entity uses to identify, assess, prioritise and monitor climate-related R&O



Metrics and targets

Approaches to measuring performance in relation to climate-related R&O



CCD phased implementation – Pilot



Governance

- Processes, controls and procedures used to identify, prioritise, monitor, manage and oversee climate-related risks and opportunities

Risk Management

- Progress update on implementing an organisation-wide climate risk and opportunity assessment under the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program.

Metrics and targets

- Greenhouse gas emissions profiles and the APS Net Zero by 2030 target being work towards for emissions reduction.

Strategy

- Not included in pilot, this pillar will be included in the full Commonwealth Climate Disclosure requirements.



ANAO considerations



Mandate

Resources

Capability

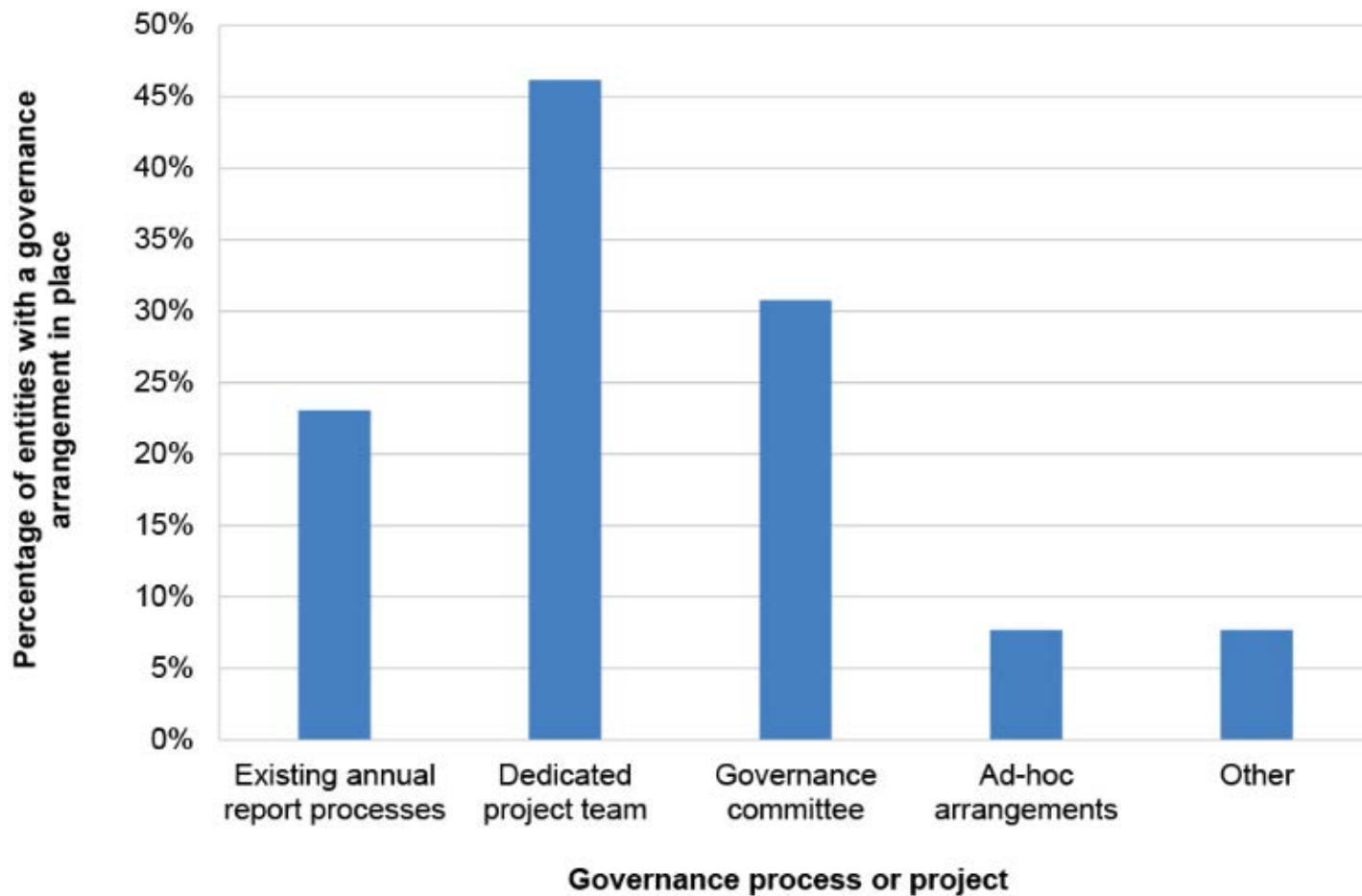
Specialists

Sector
readiness

Market
readiness

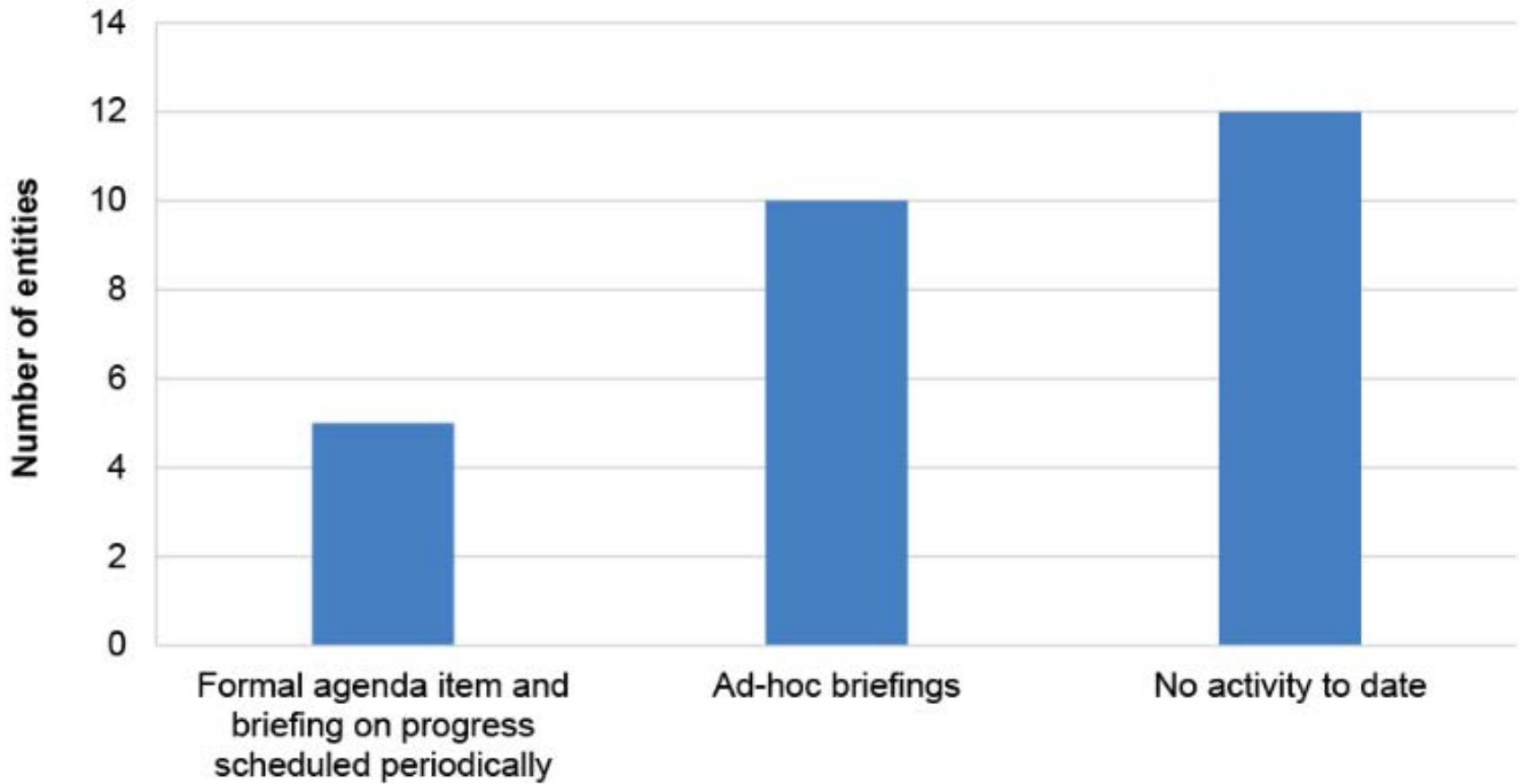


Sector readiness – process and projects established by entities





Sector readiness – audit committee oversight





ANAO audits of entity Annual Performance Statements – Risks, challenges and opportunities

George Sotiropoulos
Group Executive Director
Performance Statements Audit Services Group



Background



- Year 3 of the audit program
- Still in growth phase – 21 audits next year, a 50% increase from current year
- Methodology continues to mature



Key outcomes



- High quality performance information
- Performance statements:
 - provide meaningful information regarding an entity's performance in achieving its purposes
 - comply with the requirements of the PGPA Act
- Corporate plan and performance statements are used by entities to plan, monitor and evaluate their operations and improve performance
 - A valued part of an entity's toolkit to demonstrate they are doing a good job



The aim



- To ensure performance statements audits are:
 - fit-for-purpose;
 - conducted efficiently; and
 - impactful.



Key risks



- Capability – internal and external
- Entities seeking to comply with the minimum requirements not the spirit and intent of the PGPA Act
 - Entities minimise the number of measures they report
 - Performance statements as a ‘tick box’ exercise
- Entity audit fatigue
- Audits are inefficient and/or ineffective
 - Methodology is not fit for purpose



Challenges



- Ensuring auditing sets appropriate incentives
 - What can drive ongoing improvement in performance reporting by entities?
- Comparability of metrics
 - Measuring and assessing performance over time
 - Benchmarking
- Consistency across audits
- Driving methodology improvements



Opportunities



- Build 'right touch' into methodology
- Engagement with Finance and key stakeholders
 - For example, Australian Centre for Evaluation
- Audit Insights
 - Tools and products to support capability uplift
- End of Year Report

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2023-24 Financial Reporting

Amy Fox, First Assistant Secretary

Financial Analysis, Reporting and Management Division

Department of Finance

2023-24 Financial Reporting

2023-24 reporting timeline is consistent with previous years:

- Preliminary financial statements data due 25 July 2024.
- Audit cleared financial statements:
 - Thursday, 15 August 2024 – material entities
 - Friday, 30 August 2024 – small entities
- Supplementary reporting pack:
 - Monday, 19 August 2024 – material entities
 - Friday, 30 August 2024 – small entities

2023-24 Financial Reporting

Accounting Standard Changes:

- From 2023-24 reporting perspective, there are no significant accounting standard changes.
- Finance released updated *RMG 125 - Commonwealth entities financial statements* and updated Primary Reporting Information Management Aid (PRIMA) templates to help entities with financial statements planning.

2023-24 Financial Reporting

Looking forward – 2024

- Continued widespread shortage and capacity/capability gaps of accounting and finance staff, including at senior levels.
- Ongoing Government intention to reduce the reliance on external labour.
- Government announcement to conduct a second Audit of Employment to measure and track reduction in external labour.
 - Entities' Finance teams play a very important role.
- AASB Amendment on *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* will apply from 2024-25 reporting period.
- Sunsetting of the *PGPA (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015 (FRR)* 1 April 2025.

2023-24 Financial Reporting

Looking forward – beyond 2024

- Planning and staffing resources for:
 - 2025-26 Budget will possibly occur earlier than May 2025 (depending on the timing of an election being called)
 - Potential MoG changes from the 2025-26 Budget and the 2025 election (if any).
- Climate disclosures / sustainability reporting.



Morning tea break



Key themes from the Interim report on key financial controls of major entities (2023–24 Financial Year)

Lesa Craswell

Acting Group Executive Director
Financial Statements Audit Services Group



Discussion Topics



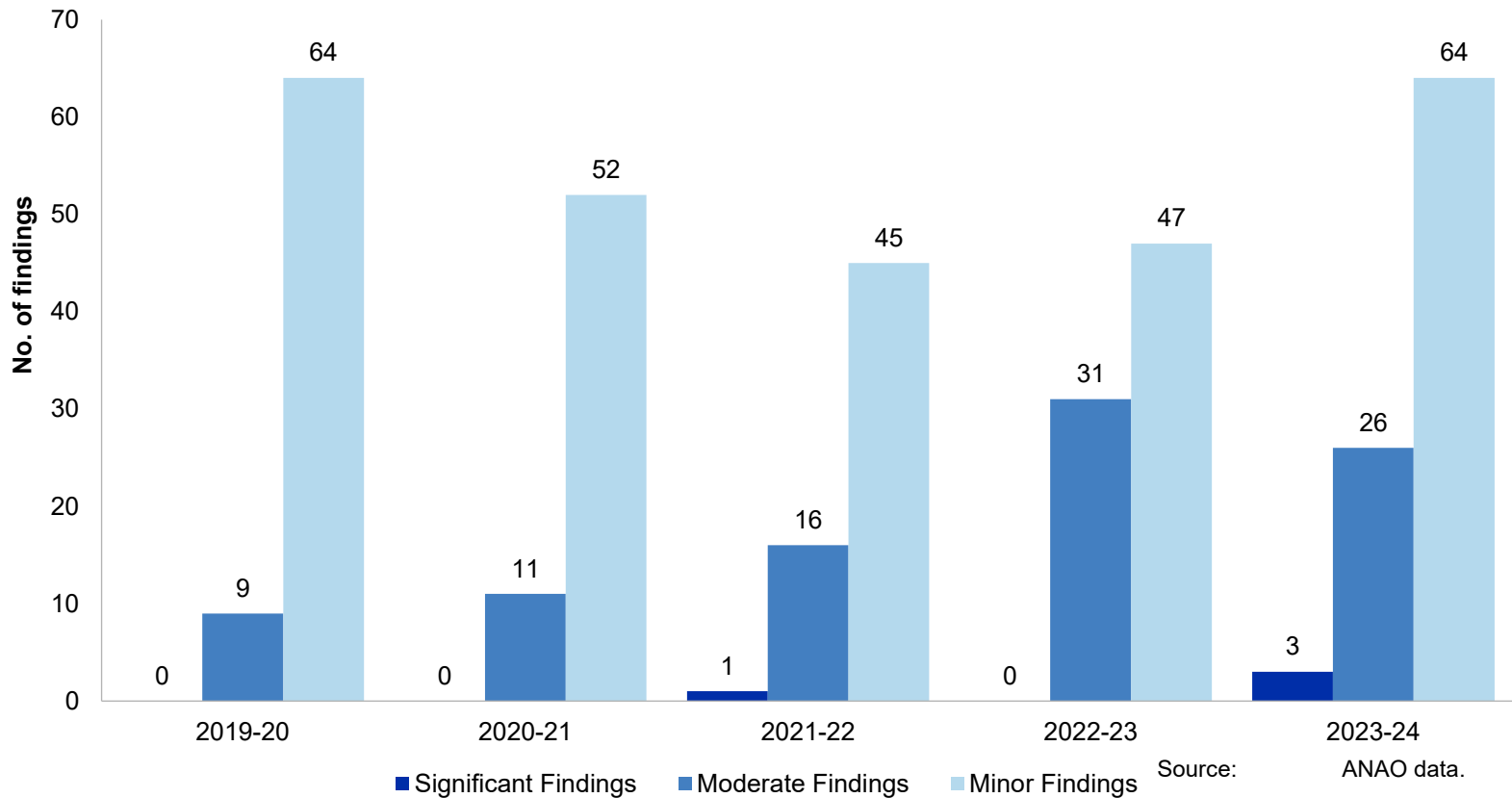
- Audit findings
- Audit committee effectiveness
- Internal audit recommendations
- Computer software
- Year end focus



Audit findings

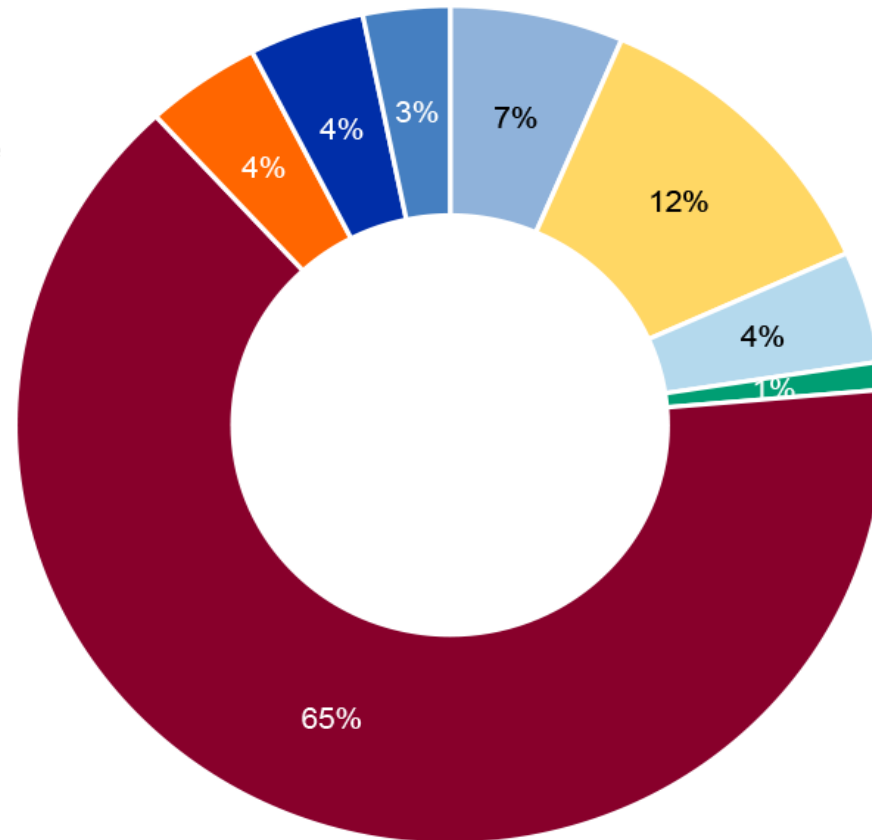


Total audit findings, interim audits 2019-20 to 2023-24



Categorisation of interim audit findings 2023-24

- Accounting and control of non-financial assets
- Compliance and quality assurance frameworks
- Financial statements preparation
- Human resource financial processes
- IT control environment
- Other audit findings
- Purchases and Payables management
- Revenue, Receivables and Cash Management





Audit committee effectiveness



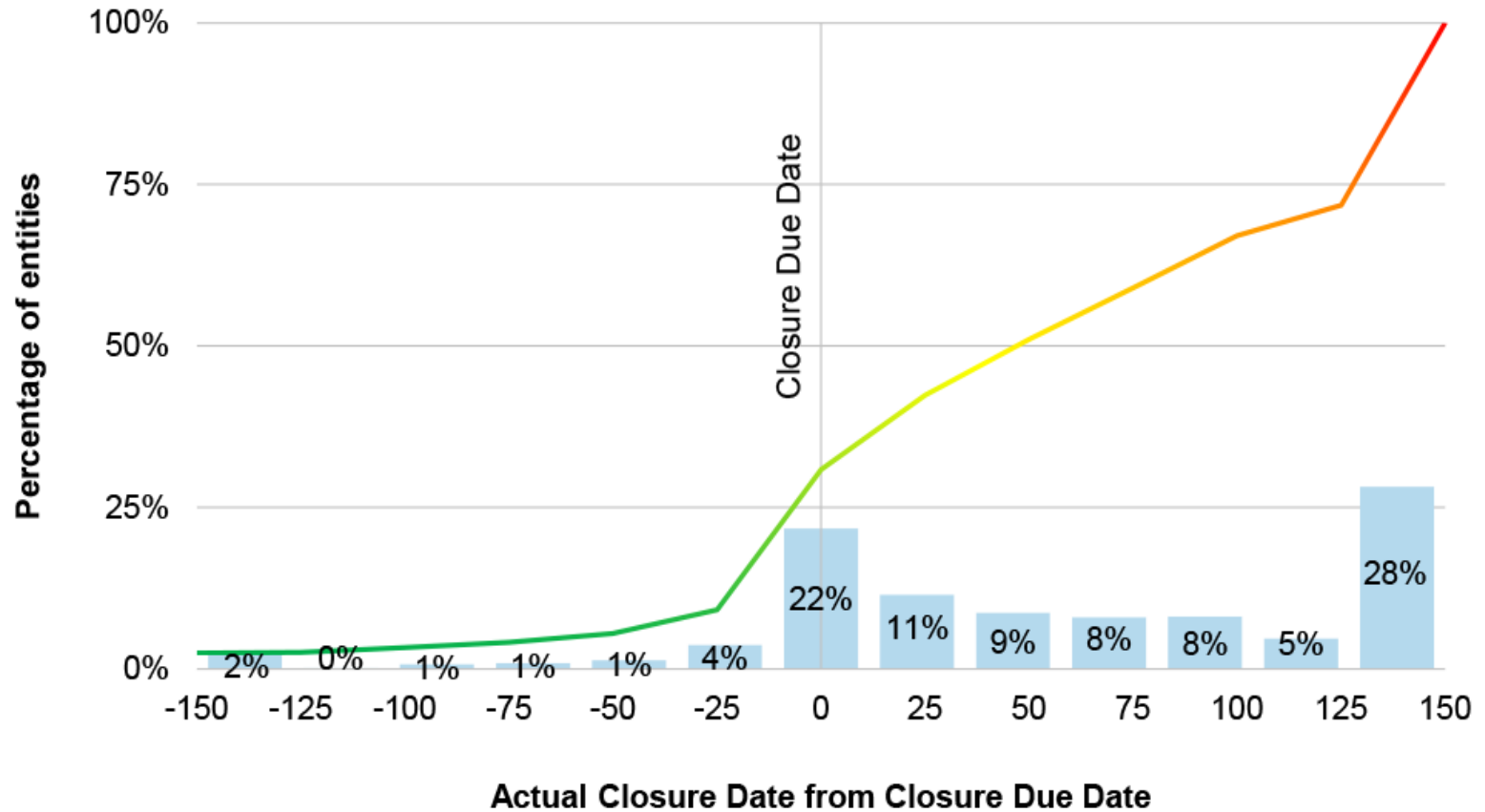
- Audit committee performance should be regularly reviewed:
 - Seventy-seven per cent of entities had undertaken a recent review of the effectiveness of their audit committee
 - Reviews mainly relied on self-assessments of committee performance
 - Majority of reviews did not address all of the considerations highlighted in guidance provided by the Department of Finance



Internal audit recommendations



Closure of internal audit recommendations July 2020- January 2024





Computer software



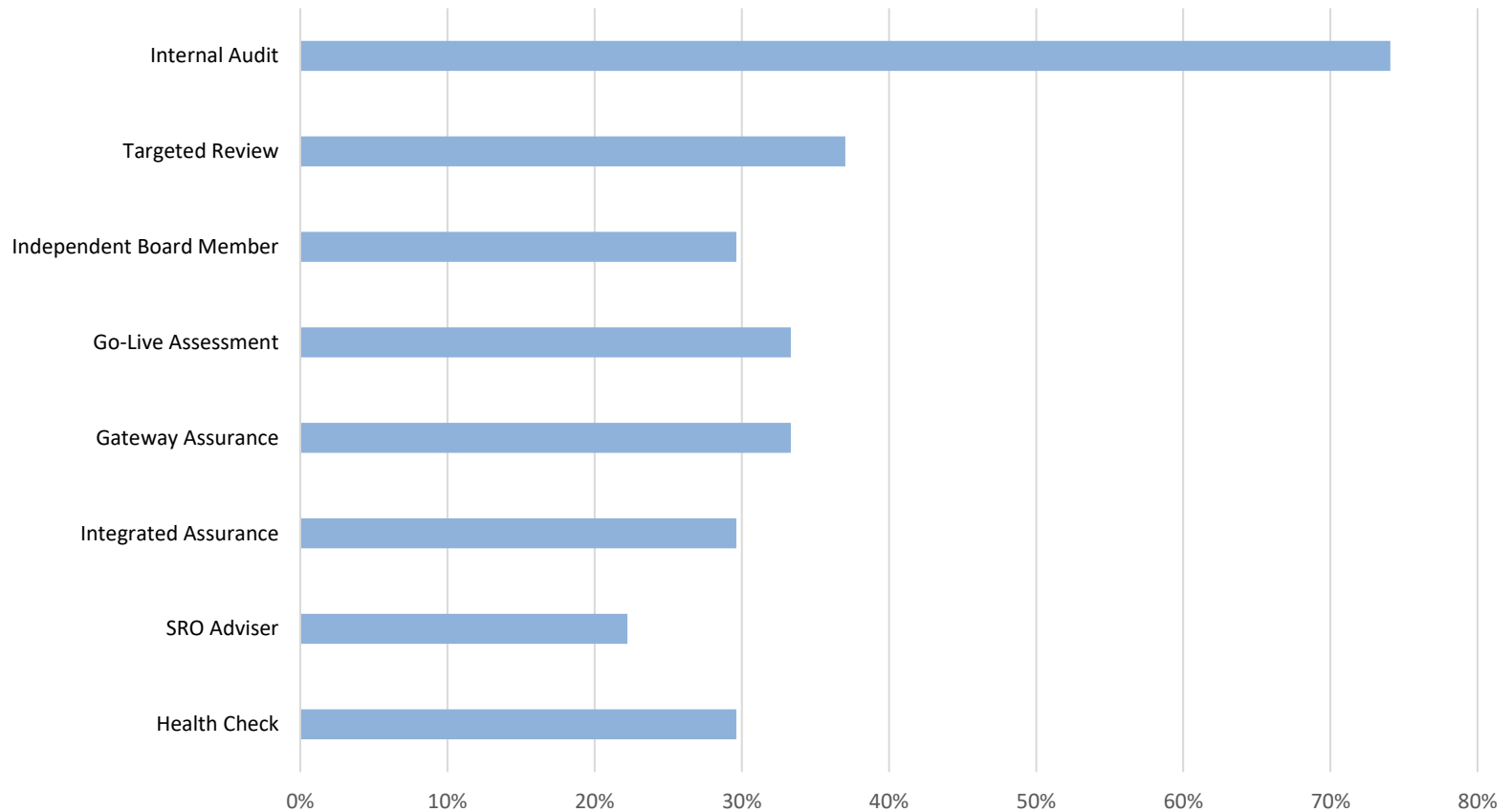
- Delivery of computer software projects:
 - Twenty-five of the 27 entities had established a project management framework or policy
 - Thirteen entities did not provide reports to their audit committees on software projects
 - All entities adopted one or more of the eight project assurance processes examples advised by the Digital Transformation Agency. One assurance process, internal audit, was adopted by the majority of entities



Computer software



Assurance activities in place at entities for software project delivery





Year end



- Key Management Personnel calculation, compliance and disclosure
- Closing audit findings
- Quality of financial statements:
 - Financial statement workplan
 - Prepare and review workpapers
 - Quality assure the financial statements before audit
 - Keep the ANAO advised of timelines, and where agreed timelines may be at risk of change



Performance Audit Update

Michelle Page

Acting Group Executive Director
Performance Audit Services Group



Themes from performance audit



Ethics

- The ANAO commenced a series of performance audits based on ethics, culture and integrity in the public sector.
 - Integrity and ethical conduct in the APS - Auditor-General Report No. 43, *Australian Public Service Commission's Administration of Integrity Functions*.
 - In 2023–24, two series of audits focused on compliance with credit card requirements and gifts, benefits and hospitality requirements.
 - The 2024–25 Annual Audit Work Program includes provision for a further series of compliance related audit topics.

Grants Administration

- 'Audit Lessons' Grants administration published on the ANAO website in late June 2024. This lesson's product is targeted at those responsible for administering or overseeing grants programs.

Key lesson – Corporate credit cards

The misuse of corporate credit cards, whether deliberate or not, has the potential for financial losses to the Commonwealth and reputation damage to individual government entities, as well as the public sector. The robustness of controls to detect and prevent misuse of credit cards and action taken on non-compliance are indicative of an entity's culture and integrity.

Entities need to establish policies and procedures which consider their operating context and risks.

A pro-integrity culture supporting credit card compliance includes awareness through appropriate training, periodic messaging and ongoing education.

Both preventative and detective controls should be implemented in managing credit cards, with these controls being tested for effectiveness regularly.

Regular reporting within the entity, on both credit card use, and misuse, is important in providing the accountable authority with visibility of the organisation's fraud and corruption risk profile and how it may be changing over time.

The APS Code of Conduct requires APS employees to declare the receipt of gifts, benefits and hospitality, and section 27 of the PGPA Act requires an official to not improperly use their position to gain or seek to gain a benefit for themselves.



The creation of policies and procedures addressing the giving or receiving gifts, benefits and hospitality is not sufficient in isolation. The risks associated with giving or receiving of gifts, benefits and hospitality cannot be considered in isolation.



The acceptance of any gift, benefit or hospitality can create a perceived or actual conflict of interest. A decision to accept a gift, benefit or hospitality needs to consider the nature of any benefit accruing to the organisation balanced against the risk of a conflict being created..

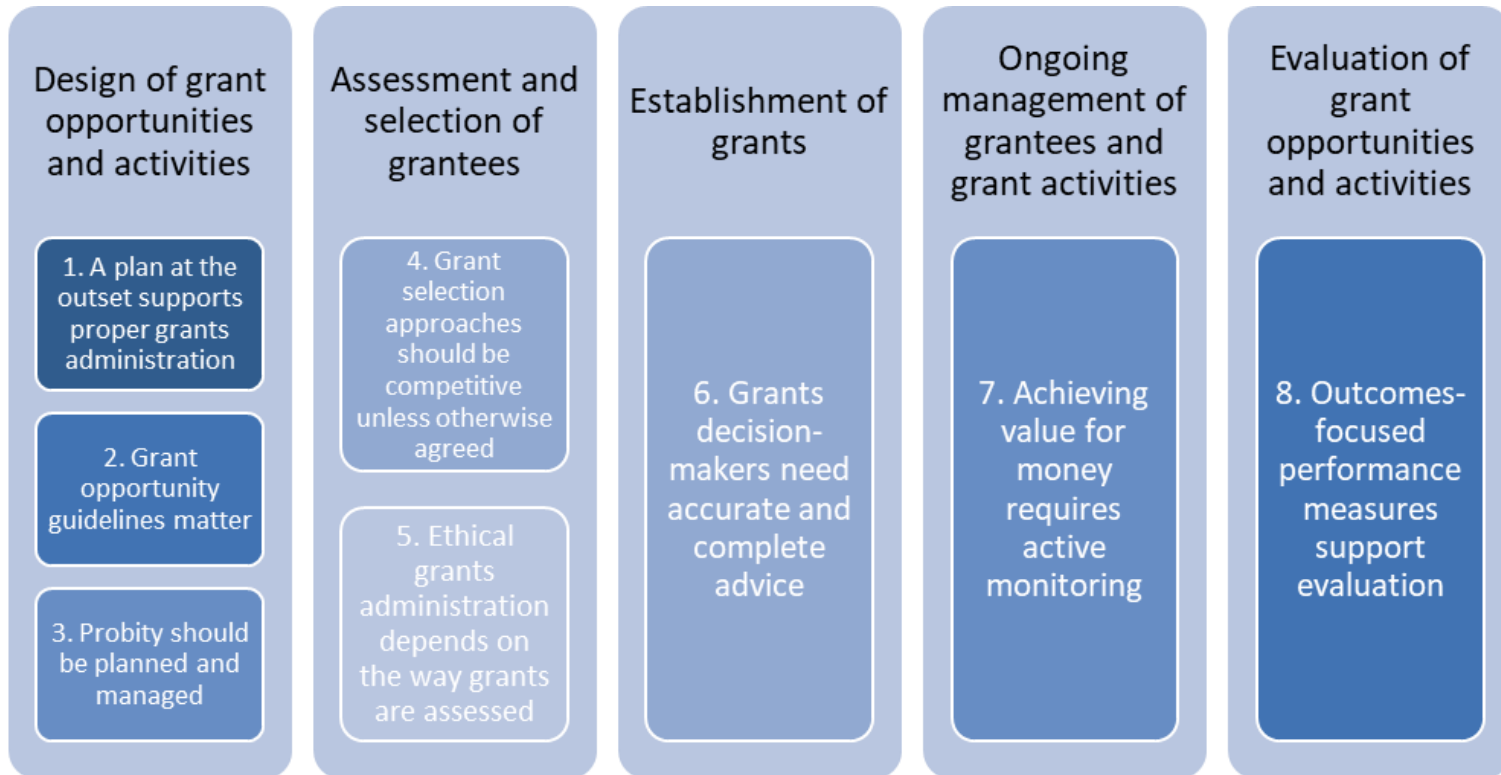


Government entities are required to publish on their website a register of accepted gifts, benefits and hospitality. Publication of accepted items should be supported by internal reporting of not just accepted gifts, benefits and hospitality, but also offers received but not accepted.



Valuation of gifts, benefits and hospitality needs to be transparent and defensible.

This edition of Audit Lessons sets out eight lessons aimed at improving grants administration across the five stages of the grants lifecycle, based on insights from ANAO performance audits over the past five years.





Insights on Cyber Security and Data Governance

Xiaoyan Lu

Acting Group Executive Director
Systems Assurance and Data Analytics Group



Topics



- Key messages from recently published cyber security performance audit report
- Key findings from interim controls report for financial statements audit
- Digital auditing and data acquisition



Cyber security incident management policy requirements



- The Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF) Policies 2, 4, 5 and 10 outline the requirements for the effective management of cyber security incidents.
- Supporting the PSPF are the relevant Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) Cyber Security Guidelines as well as ASD's Essential Eight Maturity Model.
- It is mandatory for NCEs to report the level of their security maturity each financial year.

31%

of cyber security incidents reported to ASD were by Australian Government entities in 2022–23.

71%

of NCEs self-assessed at Maturity Level Two for the Essential Eight mitigation strategy, Regular backups.

82%

of NCEs self-assessed that they had an incident response plan in place, which was an increase from 2022.



Management of cyber security incidents performance audit



PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

AUDITOR-GENERAL REPORT NO.38 OF 2023-24

Management of Cyber Security Incidents

PUBLISHED Friday 14 June 2024



Portfolio

Cross entity

Entity

Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre; Services Australia

Contact

Please direct enquiries through our contact page.

Activity Governance

Sector Attorney-General's Social Services



Audit objective and conclusion



Audit objective, criteria and scope

6. The objective of this audit was to assess the effectiveness of the selected entities' implementation of arrangements for managing cyber security incidents in accordance with the Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF) and relevant ASD Cyber Security Guidelines.

Conclusion

11. The implementation of arrangements by AUSTRAC and Services Australia to manage cyber security incidents has been partly effective. Neither entity is well placed to ensure business continuity or disaster recovery in the event of a significant or reportable cyber security incident.



Key messages from this audit for all Australian Government entities



Governance and risk management

- Public services are increasingly reliant on the availability of systems. Entities should understand and assess the need for critical business continuity and disaster recovery management and frame their security documentation and processes on the basis that cyber security incidents could disrupt or shut down the delivery of digital services to the Australian public.
- Entities should document policies and procedures — which is important for managing staff turnover — particularly for smaller organisations that are critically dependent on the qualifications and experience of key security advisors.
- Entities should leverage post-incident learning to inform a process that reviews, updates and tests all security documentation for the effective management of cyber security incidents. Post-incident learning greatly improves business continuity and recovery prospects following a significant or reportable cyber security incident.
- Entities should implement a trusted insider program which would actively assist an entity to effectively detect and mitigate internal cyberattack threats.
- As Australia's cyber security regulatory landscape evolves and reforms, it is important for an entity to consider how their legal function will support their governance committees during the external reporting process to manage increasing scrutiny and liability risks following a significant or reportable cyber security incident.

Performance and impact measurement

- Entities should implement a systematic and centralised approach to the management of Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solutions, including automated monitoring and prioritisation of security alerts.

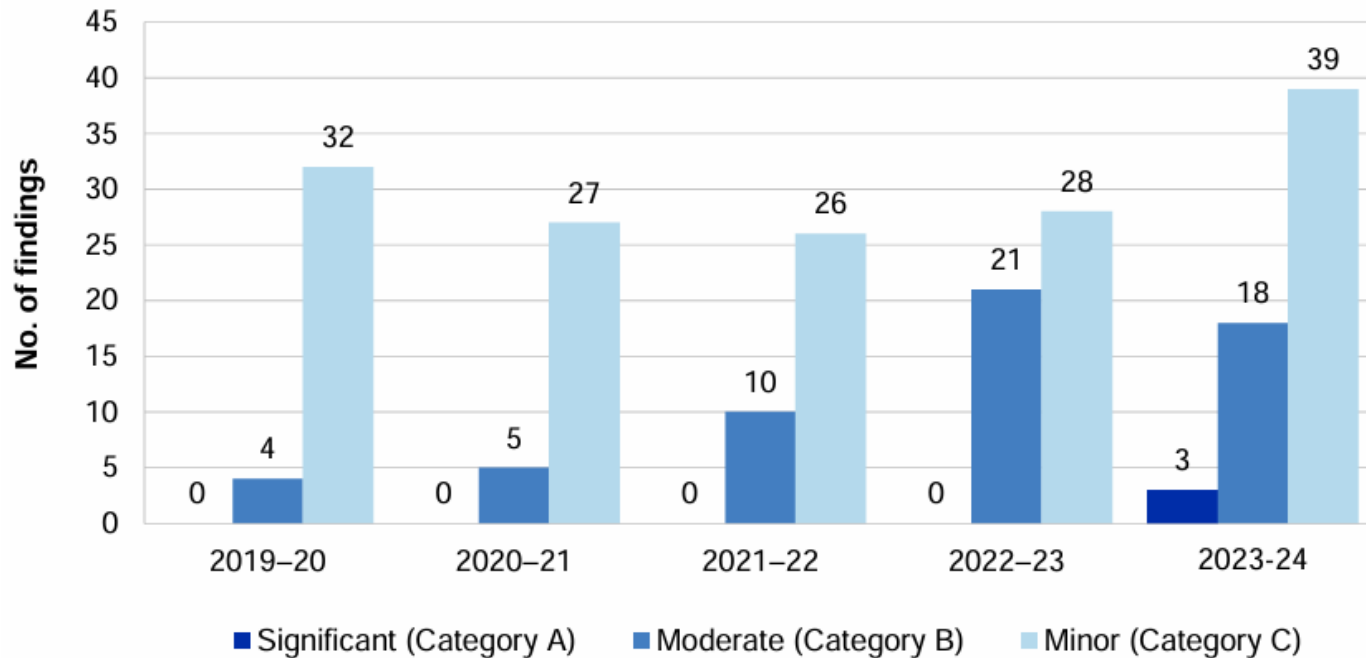
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Aggregate IT audit findings for the last four years

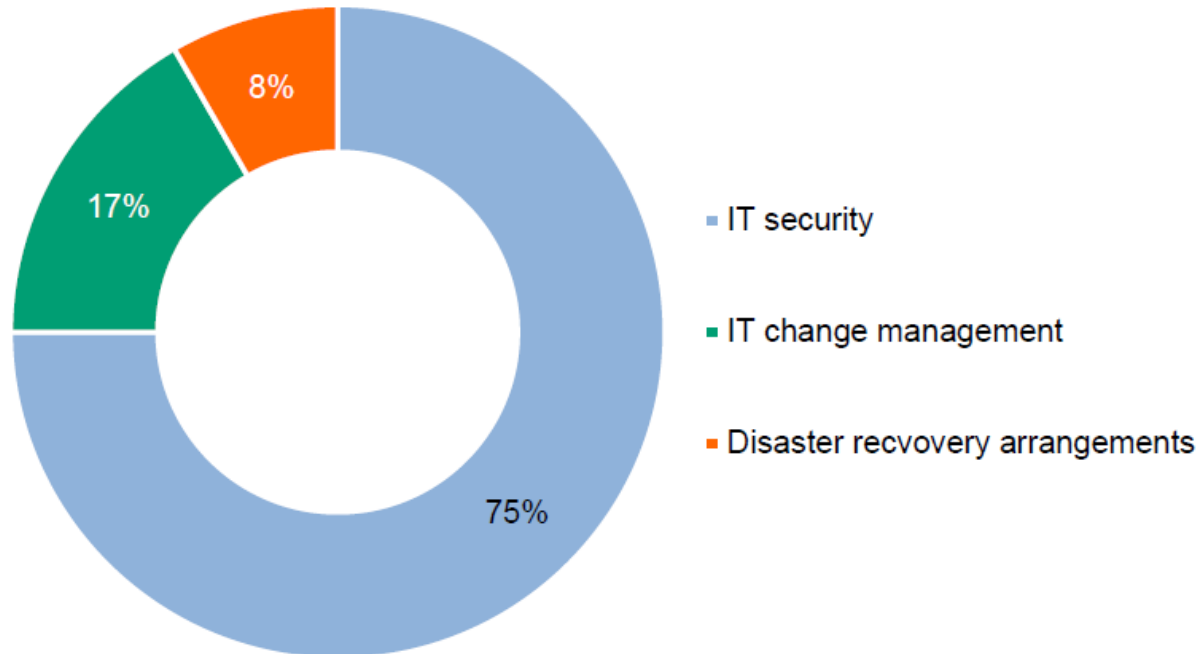


Trend in aggregate interim IT audit findings 2019-20 to 2023-24



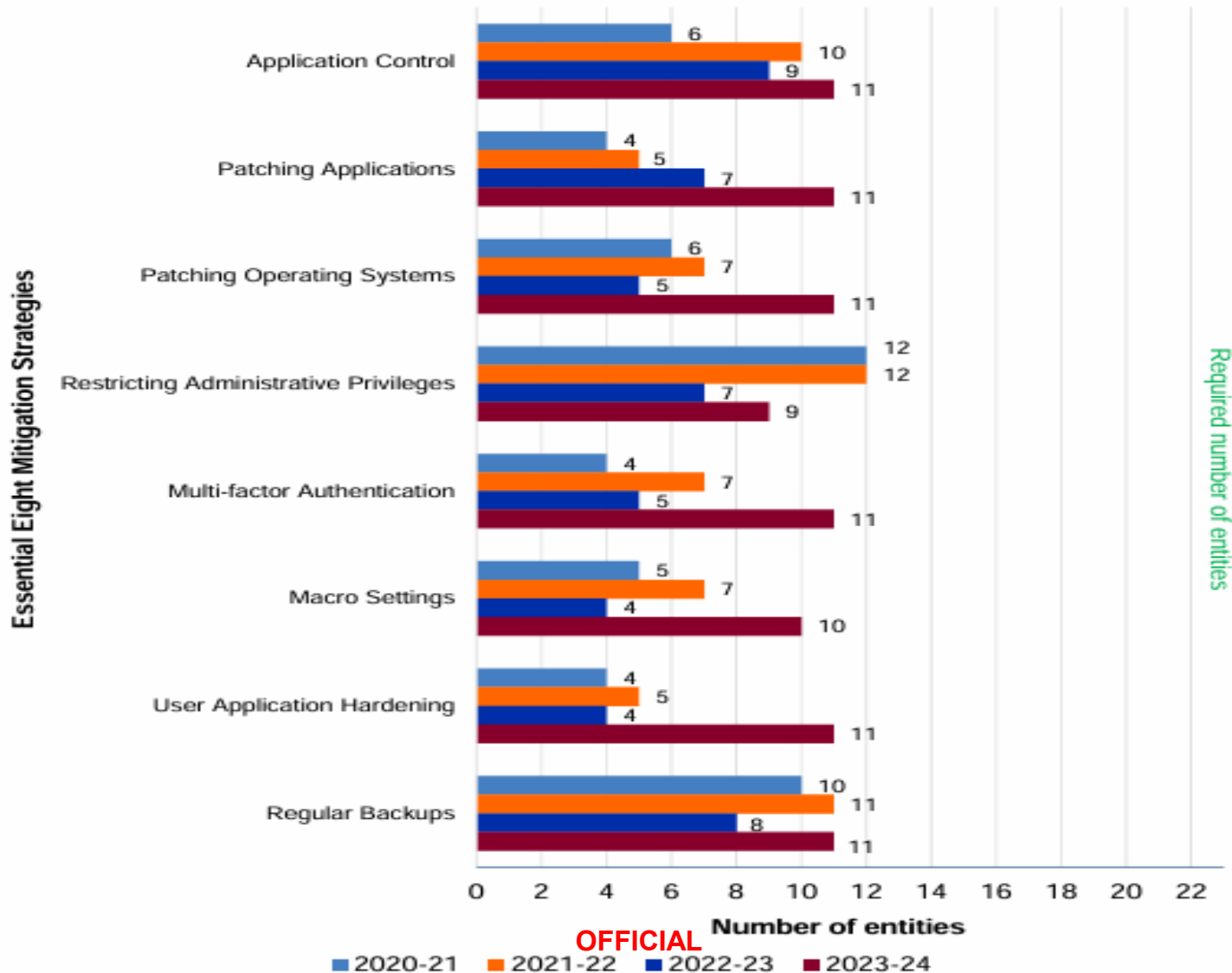


2023-24 interim IT audit findings – by category





Compliance with PSPF Policy 10 requirements





Emerging technology (including AI)



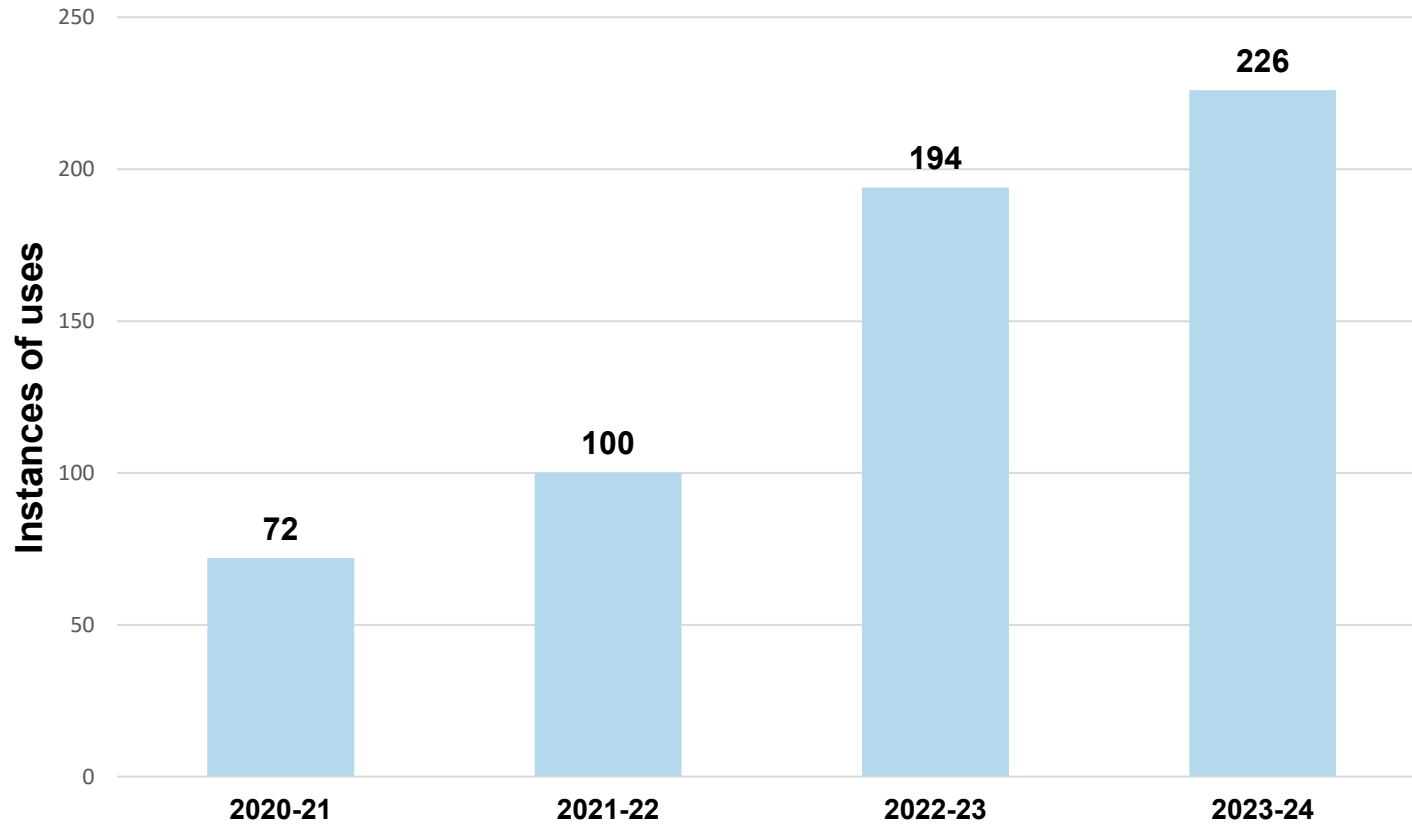
- Entities are increasingly exploring emerging technologies such as AI generally.
- 36 entities advised the ANAO that they had adopted some form of emerging technology as part of the 2023-24 FSA EOY reporting.
- 27 entities adopted AI, including commercially available products, chatbots and supporting advanced data analysis.
- Of the 27 entities that adopted AI, 15 did not create policies to support their use of AI.
- The lack of governance frameworks for managing the use of emerging technologies could increase the risk of unintended consequences.



ANAO's digital audit journey



Standardised Solution Usage Trends





Data challenges and our approach



- **Challenges**

- Lack of standardisation in data extracts.
- Challenging data quality:
 - Completeness and accuracy.
 - Gap between requested and provided data.

- **Our approach to more efficient and effective data acquisition**

- Working with SDO to establish streamlined process for entities using their service.
- Implementing data extraction scripts for some core FMIS datasets (e.g. SAP).
Currently implemented at Dept. of Health, Infrastructure, DFAT and AGD.
 - Current: General Ledger extraction focus
 - Future: Extraction of all required FMIS tables
- Working with a major FMIS vendor on implementing standard reporting (TechOne).
- Aim to improve data quality, consistency and reduce manual effort from entity and ANAO.



General questions and closing remarks