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Tēnā koe Rona

Peer review of two performance audits published by the Australian National Audit Office

From April to May 2024, the New Zealand Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) peer reviewed two performance audits that were carried out by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) in 2022/23.

This peer review forms part of a longstanding reciprocal arrangement, where the OAG and the ANAO review each other's performance audit processes and practices on an alternating basis. The peer review seeks to strengthen performance auditing by providing constructive feedback, sharing better practices, and identifying areas for improvement.

This letter makes high-level observations about areas for improvement and comments on matters of common interest. The Quality Assurance Review Program and Evidence Linkage Test results for each audit are also attached to this letter.

Scope of this year's peer review

My review team looked at two published audit reports and supporting documentation and assessed whether they:

- complied with the ANAO's Auditing Standards and other legal and regulatory requirements and quality-control policies and procedures; and
- had sufficient and appropriate audit evidence on the audit file that supported the findings and conclusions in the audit report.

The two performance audit reports reviewed were:

- *Evidence of the National Disability Insurance Agency's Management of Assistance with Daily Life Supports (2023)* (the NDIA audit); and

- *Management of Migration to Australia – Family Migration Program (2023) (the Migration audit).*

Our overall findings

The two audits are both important pieces of work. In our view, the recommendations made in each audit report should help the audited entities make positive changes.

Both audit files were assessed as achieving a “Satisfactory” rating. This means that we consider the audit conclusions were appropriate under the circumstances, and the documentation supported the conclusions. However, documentation management could be improved. This is discussed in more detail in the Appendix.

My review team was also asked to look at whether the audit reports were comprehensive, convincing, timely, balanced, and reader friendly. In our view, both reports largely met these criteria.

However, we consider that there are opportunities to make the “detailed findings” sections of the ANAO’s published reports (after the “background” section) more reader friendly to help time-poor readers quickly understand the key findings. This is discussed further in the Appendix to my letter.

Sharing practices

My review team valued gaining another perspective on performance auditing and appreciated meeting with senior staff to discuss common interests (such as value for money audits, audits of integrity and ethics, and improving impact from audits).

I understand both our offices are looking at ways to help the public sector use performance information to drive effectiveness and apply lessons from our audit work.

I look forward to our offices continuing to work together on areas of common interest.

Thank you and your staff for the help they gave my review team and the continuing useful exchange of performance audit practices. I would particularly like to acknowledge the co-operation and help that Ingrid Wilkins, Jason Millward, and Judy Lachele provided.

Nāku noa, nā



John Ryan
Controller and Auditor-General

Attached: Appendix: Areas for improvement