



REX PATRICK
Senator for South Australia

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

Grant

Dear Auditor-General,

I write regarding the recent announcements concerning appointments to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), The Australia Council board, Murray-Darling Basin related bodies and the National Disabilities Insurance Agency Board.

It has been brought to my attention that recent appointments to the AAT include people with links to the Liberal Party, including those with no legal experience and who otherwise appear to lack special knowledge or skills relevant to the duties of a senior member or member of the AAT as required by the *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975*.

I note that a recently departed NSW Minister has been appointed to the Australia Council board.

I further note the concerns of Murray-Darling Basin stakeholders in the appointment of a former Liberal National Party MP from the northern basin in reviewing the delivery and reliability of water rights across the southern basin.

Finally, a former Victorian Liberal Premier has been appointed to the National Disability Insurance Agency board.

More broadly it is far from clear whether the processes leading to a range of recent Government appointments of statutory and other offices, obviously made in a rush before the imminent Federal election, are consistent with the Government's Merit and Transparency Policy.

Accordingly, I am asking you to investigate the process in making statutory and other senior appointments across the whole government over the six months preceding the application of Caretaker Conventions prior to the 2022 Federal election.

Electorate Office


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I would recommend that such a review by your office should include advertising of roles, candidate shortlisting and due diligence in respect of the qualifications, experience, background and appropriateness of the appointments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rex Patrick', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

REX PATRICK

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