



Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit

Inquiry into Efficiency and Effectiveness: Inquiry into Auditor-General's Reports 25, 29, 38, 42, 44, 45 and 51 (2018-19)

Performance audit (Auditor-General Report No. 44 of 2018–2019) **Effectiveness of the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation**

Answers are due to the secretariat by 5pm on 2 December 2019. Answers can be sent to jcpaa@aph.gov.au. If you require additional information, please call the secretariat on 6277 4615.

The following questions were put on notice by Mr. Julian Hill MP, Deputy Chair.

1. *The ANAO concluded that EFIC is effectively undertaking its functions, except for its annual performance statement reporting, particularly relating to the enhancement of completeness of assessment information.*
 - a. *What steps have been taken to improve the annual performance statement of EFIC?*

Answer

We are pleased to advise that we have introduced qualitative reporting into our Annual Performance Statement (pages 18-25 of our 2018-19 Annual Report) that aligns to our functions.

This new reporting demonstrates and better articulates how we support Australian businesses and jobs in Australia.

2. *Your Statement of expectations says you are required to work closely with Austrade, Tourism Australia, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.*
 - a. *Could you give a brief overview on the formal and informal structures in place to sustain and maintain these relationships?*

Answer

We work closely with other agencies across government through a range of formal and informal structures, in particular:

- The Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), or her alternate, is a member of our Board.
- We have service level agreements in place with DFAT for the management and administration of the National Interest Account and the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific.

- At the working level, we engage very frequently, often daily, with DFAT both onshore and through its network of international posts, to support Australian exporters and finance overseas infrastructure. We also regularly participate in interdepartmental committees on a range of issues.
 - We collaborate closely with Austrade to provide a cohesive service to exporters. In April 2019 Export Finance Australia and Austrade forged a partnership to increase relationships and work practices to jointly educate staff, and provide joined-up, client-centred advice and support for Australian export businesses. This work includes referring existing and new customers to each agency.
 - We also work directly with Austrade Trade Commissioners and their staff across the world to brief them on our products and services and learn insights gained on the ground in international markets. For example, in August 2019 we briefed Austrade staff across Australia, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East, Africa and the Americas on our new mandate. The briefings were recorded and provided to 511 Austrade staff in these markets.
 - We work with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS), including on initiatives like Industry Growth Centres and critical minerals. We are working with DIIS on opportunities to promote our services to Industry Growth Centres, with a principal focus on the Advanced Manufacturing and Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) sectors.
 - We also work with the CSIRO to identify new and emerging sectors and companies which may face a market gap for finance.
 - We work closely with Tourism Australia on opportunities to promote our services to tourism exporters, including through our participation at industry events hosted by Tourism Australia.
 - We also work closely with the Department of Defence through the Australian Defence Export Office on opportunities to support defence exporters, including through a regular interdepartmental committee. We actively work to provide referrals, attend events and cross-promote each other's services.
 - We engage with a range of other Commonwealth agencies. We have service level agreements in place to provide shared services support to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF), the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) and the Indigenous Entrepreneurs Capital Scheme (IECS).
- b. *Have any barriers or issues been identified that would prevent these relationships working efficiently and effectively?*

Answer

No. Export Finance Australia enjoys the benefits of close working relationships with other government agencies.

2 December 2019