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Correspondence from the Auditor-General_ Response to Senate Select Committee on the Scrutiny of Government Budget Measures (third interim report)
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]



Dr Rosemary Laing
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Parliament House
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Dear Dr Laing

Inquiry into the Scrutiny of Government Budget Measures

I am writing in relation to the *Senate Select Committee on the Scrutiny of Government Budget Measures (third interim report)*, which included a recommendation directed towards the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).

The Committee recommended (Recommendation 1) that the Auditor-General investigate the use of private emails by CSIRO, as part of its processes to determine staffing reductions, in order to establish whether the CSIRO Executive has met its record keeping obligations in managing a significant restructure.

I have considered the Committee's recommendation and the matters outlined in the report, which included information provided to the Committee by the CSIRO advising that:

- an internal investigation was undertaken by the CSIRO;
- the investigation found that private email accounts were used by 17 officers to discuss proposed job cuts;
- it was determined that using private emails was contrary to internal CSIRO policy, but not illegal; and
- Dr Alex Wonhas (Executive Director, CSIRO) confirmed that the relevant documents had been subsequently transferred to the corporate systems to ensure official records were not lost.

Given these circumstances, the ANAO's current resourcing levels and other performance audit priorities, I do not intend to commence an audit at this time.

The CSIRO is the subject of regular review by the ANAO. Recent audits include [Administration of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's Gift to the Science and Industry Endowment Fund](#), tabled in February 2016. Information on our forward work program for 2016–17 is available on the [ANAO website](#).

Yours sincerely



Grant Hehir
Auditor-General of Australia

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