

ANAO performance audit — *Procurement of Strategic Water Entitlements*

Status of implementing recommendations:

Recommendation	Status
<p>1. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment review and update internal procurement guidance to ensure delegations are accurately identified in approval briefs.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The department has extensive procurement guidance and templates available to support procurement processes which are periodically updated and reviewed.</p> <p>Responsible: Grants and Procurement, Financial Operations</p>
<p>2. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment develop assurance mechanisms for procurement processes to ensure all necessary documentation is completed and documented in a timely manner prior to execution of contracts.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The department's quality assurance mechanism includes the Australian Government Solicitor and the department's Office of the General Counsel, who reviews contracts prior to their execution. The department has updated its administrative and other processes, including that all documentation is appropriately dated by all parties and their witnesses.</p> <p>Responsible: Water Division</p>
<p>3. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment review and update arrangements for managing real or perceived conflicts of interest including assurance mechanisms to ensure these are consistently implemented and communicated.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>In July 2020, the department implemented a <i>Water acquisition and divestment declaration of interests</i> policy. This requires any person or entity involved in the acquisition or divestment of water entitlements or allocations by the department to make regular declarations of real or apparent conflicts of interest, including where no known conflicts exist.</p> <p>Responsible: Water Division</p>
<p>4. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment implement a framework which requires the development of evaluation strategies early in the program design process and regular monitoring and review throughout the lifecycle.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>This recommendation was made in relation to the Restoring the Balance program which was established in 2007. The department has robust processes in place to develop program evaluation strategies. This is evidenced in the recent implementation of the Water for Fodder program which includes a MERI framework and interim report which has recently been released.</p> <p>Evaluation of the water purchasing program will commence in November 2020. The program will be evaluated against the program outcomes.</p> <p>Responsible: Water Division, and Evaluation team, Policy Analysis and Implementation Division</p>