

JCPAA Hearing on 2021–22 Annual Performance Statements Audit – 28 July 2023

Opening remarks

- Thank you for the opportunity to attend today’s hearing and for your commitment to improving the quality of performance reporting.
- The former Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) joined the audit program in 2021–22. Following the Machinery of Government changes on 1 July 2022, the Department of Education continues to participate in the yearly audits.
- I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our former Secretary, Dr Michele Bruniges AM, and the former Audit and Assurance Committee Chair, Ms Jenny Morison AM, for their leadership and commitment to accurate and appropriate performance reporting.
- The department is committed to quality and transparent performance reporting and continues to work collaboratively with the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) across its work program.
- The ANAO made four findings relevant to the department through its 2021–22 audit. We have taken these findings very seriously and are working to address them.
- The department has seen improvements to its performance reporting as a result of the audit – particularly around data quality and assurance. However, there are issues that are preventing us from realising greater benefits. These are broadly outlined in the department’s submission and relate to:
 - the significant investment required to achieve an unqualified audit opinion
 - the misalignment in timing between the audit process and the performance cycle
 - the lack of transparency on the methodology the ANAO applies to the audits
 - the absence of an exemplar organisation to benchmark maturity against.
- The department does acknowledge that the performance audit process and methodology is still maturing.
- Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the department’s Planning and Performance Teams (including the former DESE), as well as our policy and program teams, for their significant contributions to our performance reporting.