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Committee Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
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IP Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission regarding the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit review of the ANAO Report No. 50 (2013-14) Cyber Attacks: Securing Agencies' ICT Systems.

IP Australia is the Government agency that administers Australia's intellectual property (IP) rights legislation relating to inventions (patents), trademarks, designs and plant breeder's rights. This involves the examination and granting or otherwise of registered Australian IP rights.

IP Australia's information stores include information relating to IP right applications. These records are either open to public inspection or not open to public inspection. Open to public inspection records are in the public domain so IP Australia needs to assure the integrity and accessibility of those records. IP Australia is responsible for assuring confidentiality of not open to public inspection records. IP Australia's information stores also include information relating to IP policy development, advice to government, the management of the IP profession through the Professional Standards Board, and sensitive data relating to IP Australia's involvement in the international arena.

IP Australia welcomed this audit and agreed with the report and its findings. Some of IP Australia's ICT systems have recently undergone significant changes, with the expansion of online services to meet customer expectations. IP Australia takes a best practice approach to securing its systems and data from cyber threats, however we also acknowledge that the increased exposure to online threats that emanates from these changes will necessitate an increased focus of IT security controls. This audit was timely in that it assisted IP Australia to ensure it was on track in regard to achieving this goal.

IP Australia's existing plan to improve its security posture by improving compliance has continued. The audit recommendations and findings have been added to the scope of work and there is a plan in place to address these.

The working relationship with the ANAO was effective. The ANAO worked onsite at our premises for a number of weeks to ensure adequate understanding of our business and were thorough in their assessment of our security agenda. Follow up included a detailed issues paper addressing our specific findings and we believe the final report appropriately portrayed our situation. The ANAO welcomed a request from the IP Australia Audit Committee to be briefed on the report and provided a succinct and practical presentation on the findings.

As outlined in the Audit Report IP Australia acknowledges it like the other agencies has not achieved full compliance with the top four mitigation strategies as mandated by Government. IP Australia is however committed to improving its security posture within a timeframe and resource envelope that can be managed on its cost recovery model of operation.



Patricia Kelly
Director General