



Australian Government

Department of Finance

Jenny Wilkinson PSM
Secretary

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Committee Chair
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Chair and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written statement outlining the Department of Finance's (Finance) role in relation to the Independent Review of Services Australia and National Disability Insurance Agency procurement and contracting (Independent Review).

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Services Australia, Ms Rebecca Skinner PSM, wrote to me on 6 December 2022 seeking a Finance secondee to assist with the Independent Review.

Based on this request, Finance provided an Executive Level 1 secondee for approximately three months (with a replacement secondee provided when the initial secondee was on leave). The Finance secondees supported the Independent Review by participating as members of the Taskforce and providing broad procurement expertise. The secondees were located on site within the Services Australia office and were under the direction of Services Australia officials during this time.

The secondees worked with the Taskforce to develop an evaluation framework consistent with the terms of reference of the Independent Review. The evaluation framework was designed with consideration of the nature of the procurements in scope for the Independent Review and was utilised for the evaluation of the procurements.

The procurements in scope for the review were compared to comparable procurements from within the same reference period. A Comparator Framework was developed with expertise from the Finance secondees and was designed to assess for similarities in procurement process. It included consideration of how the procurement need was identified, the procurement approach, evaluation and decision, management of any contract variations or extensions, and documentation and record keeping.

The Finance secondees also assisted with quality assurance and reviewed the final reports for accuracy in line with the Commonwealth Procurement Framework.

Dr Ian Watt AC met with me and other senior officials in Finance on a number of occasions in January and February 2023 primarily in relation to the operation of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to outline Finance's role in the Independent Review.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Wilkinson
Secretary

21 April 2023