



SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MS20-000979

Ms Lucy Wicks MP
Chair Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

21 MAY 2020

Dear Ms Wicks

I refer to your letter of 24 April 2020 concerning the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit's (the Committee) *Cyber Resilience: Inquiry into Auditor-General's Reports 1 and 13 (2019-20)*. I would like to thank the Committee for inviting the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) to make a submission to the inquiry.

As noted in your letter, the Government recently tabled the *Report to Parliament on the Commonwealth's Cyber Security Posture in 2019* (the Report) in Parliament. The Report provides the latest information on the cyber security posture of Commonwealth entities. Its content balances the need for transparency with the need to carefully protect the security of Government systems. Developed by ASD, in consultation with its Australian Government partners, the Report highlights that the overall cyber security of Commonwealth entities continues to improve. It acknowledges that, in the context of a dynamic and evolving threat environment, cyber security is an ongoing task.

While ASD regularly engages with Commonwealth entities to provide cyber security advice and assistance, individual Commonwealth entities are responsible for the security of their own network and information. Cyber security maturity is a compliance and risk management issue for each accountable authority to balance in the context of their unique risk environments and the complexities of their operations.

The key points ASD would wish to make in any submission to the Committee's inquiry are well covered in this report to Parliament and there is a limit to what more ASD could provide in terms of additional comment at this time. As such, questions regarding the cyber security posture of individual Commonwealth entities are better directed to the relevant entity.

I trust this information provides additional clarity on the matter.

Yours sincerely


Linda Reynolds