



Auditor-General for Australia
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22 September 2021

Senator Paul Scarr
Chair
Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity

By Email: aclei.committee@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Scarr

Expansion of ACLEI's jurisdiction and the corruption vulnerabilities of law enforcement agencies' contracted services

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) published the following performance audit report that you may find relevant to the Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) inquiry into the expansion of ACLEI's jurisdiction and the corruption vulnerabilities of law enforcement agencies' contracted services.

- Auditor-General Report No. 4 of 2018–19, [*Operational Efficiency of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity*](#).

Information about what the audit assessed, concluded, and recommended is attached. The audit report is available online at www.anao.gov.au.

Should the Committee require further information in relation to this matter, my office would be pleased to provide you with a briefing at a time convenient to you or appear as a witness at a hearing.

To arrange a briefing, please contact our External Relations area at external.relations@anao.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Grant Hehir

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Auditor-General Report No. 4 of 2018–19, *Operational Efficiency of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity* examined the efficiency of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) in detecting, investigating and preventing corrupt conduct.

To form a conclusion against this objective, the following high-level criteria were applied:

- Has ACLEI established appropriate arrangements to assess its efficient use of resources?
- How well does ACLEI's efficiency compare with comparable entities and its own previous performance?

The audit concluded that:

- As ACLEI has not measured, benchmarked or reported on its efficiency in detecting, investigating and preventing corrupt conduct the ANAO has not been able to conclude whether ACLEI has been operating efficiently. The ANAO's analysis and work that is underway within ACLEI indicates that improving case management and prioritisation practices is key to improving ACLEI's operational efficiency as well as aligning its resource allocation with the legislative obligation to focus on serious and systemic corruption.
- ACLEI has not established appropriate arrangements to enable an assessment of its operational efficiency to support the risk-based prioritisation of resources. While ACLEI measures the timeliness of assessments completed, a wider focus on the final outputs to be produced from its operational activities would provide a more robust indicator of performance.
- ACLEI does not assess its operational efficiency against its own past performance or other organisations. The ANAO's analysis indicates that the efficiency of ACLEI's investigation activities requires particular improvement, including to address growth in the number of investigations commenced compared to the number of investigations completed.

The report included the following three recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

ACLEI develop performance measures focussed on the efficiency of its operations and collect additional data to report on its performance against those measures.

ACLEI's response: Agreed with qualifications.

Recommendation No. 2

ACLEI investigate whether it could introduce a more structured review process to support the prioritisation of available resources on a risk basis to the highest value investigations, including time or milestone based intervals to trigger decisions on the ongoing allocation of resources.

ACLEI's response: Agreed.

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Recommendation No. 3

ACLEI periodically compare and benchmark its operational efficiency against comparable organisations including other anti-corruption bodies, and with its own performance over time, to determine whether changes to its current processes are required.

ACLEI's response: Agreed.