



Auditor-General for Australia



30 January 2020

Mr Craig Kelly MP
Chair
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement
By email: le.committee@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Kelly

Public communications campaigns targeting drug and substance abuse

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) has published the following performance audit report that you may find relevant to the Inquiry into *Public communications campaigns targeting drug and substance abuse*.

- Report No. 9 of 2019–20, *National Ice Action Strategy Rollout*

Information about what this audit assessed, concluded and recommended is attached. The ANAO audit reports are available online at <http://www.anao.gov.au>.

Should the Committee require further information in relation to the tabled audits, 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

Report No. 9 of 2019–20, *National Ice Action Strategy Rollout* assessed the effectiveness of the Department of Health's implementation of the National Ice Action Strategy (NIAS). To form a conclusion against the audit objective, the ANAO adopted the following high-level audit criteria:

- planning and governance arrangements established to support implementation of the NIAS were appropriate;
- delivery of NIAS actions was effective; and
- progress is transparent.

The audit concluded:

- The Department of Health's (the department) implementation of the National Ice Action Strategy is partially effective. While Australian Government funding to the alcohol and other drug sector has been increased and actions have been progressed, there is no monitoring to assess whether progress is being made towards the Strategy's goal of reducing the prevalence of ice use and resulting harms across the Australian community.
- The department has established appropriate governance arrangements to support implementation of the National Ice Action Strategy, but did not plan for implementation effectively. Performance and accountability measures were not developed, and implementation and risk plans were not used.
- The department's delivery of actions contained in the National Ice Action Strategy is largely effective. The department has delivered, or is in the process of delivering, the 19 actions it has responsibility for and Australian Government funding for the alcohol and other drug sector has increased. Although the department monitors the activities of Primary Health Networks, it has not finalised a quality and assurance framework that would allow it to assess that Primary Health Networks are effectively commissioning, monitoring and evaluating alcohol and other drug services.
- The department does not have an evaluation approach in place for the National Ice Action Strategy, and is not monitoring progress towards the goal and objective. Public reporting by the department does not currently provide sufficient transparency about how implementation is progressing or what progress is being made towards the goal and objective.

The ANAO recommended that:

- The Department of Health ensures performance, risk and accountability measures are in place to support implementation of the National Ice Action Strategy.
- The Department of Health finalise the Primary Health Network Quality and Assurance Framework, with appropriate actions to assess whether PHNs are operating appropriately across the commissioning cycle.
- The Department of Health develop an evaluation framework for the National Ice Action Strategy, including the identification of suitable baseline performance information from which progress can be measured.
- The Department of Health monitor progress towards the goal and objective of the National Ice Action Strategy and provide this information to government.
- The Department of Health improve public reporting on how the implementation of the National Ice Action Strategy is progressing and what is being achieved.