



**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
TO RECOMMENDATIONS 2 TO 5 OF
THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC
ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT 386:
REVIEW OF THE *AUDITOR-GENERAL ACT 1997***

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Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Government amend section 19(3) of the *Auditor-General Act 1997*, to read:

- After preparing a proposed report on an audit under sections 15, 16, 17 or 18, the Auditor-General ~~may~~ *must* give a copy or an extract of the proposed report to any person who, in the Auditor-General's opinion, has a special interest in the report.

The Government will need to ensure that all consequential amendments arising from this amendment are made.

Government response

Agreed, noting the form of the amendment would be a matter for the Office of Parliamentary Counsel.

Recommendation 3

Subsection 19(4) of the *Auditor-General Act 1997* should be amended to read:

- If the recipient of the proposed report gives written comments to the Auditor-General within 28 days after receiving the proposed report, the Auditor-General must consider, *and include*, those comments, *in full*, ~~before preparing a~~ *in the* final report and any summary documents.

Government response

Agreed in part. While it is appropriate to include agency comments in full in final reports, the inclusion of those comments in full in summary documents could defeat the purpose of such documents. The Government considers that the Auditor-General should be required to include, in summary documents, the substance of agency comments and an indication of where the agency comments may be found in the final report.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Government amend section 37(4) of the *Auditor-General Act 1997*, to read:

- ~~If~~ *When* the Auditor-General ~~decides to~~ *is required* to omit particular information from a public report because the Attorney-General has issued a certificate under paragraph (1)(b) in relation to the information, the Auditor-General must state in the report:
 - (a) that information (which does not have to be identified) has been omitted from the report; and
 - (b) the reason or reasons (in terms of subsection (2)) why the Attorney-General issued the certificate.

Government response

Agreed.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Government amend section 15(2) of the *Auditor-General Act 1997*, to read:

- As soon as practicable after completing the report on the audit, the Auditor-General must:
 - ⇒ (a) cause a copy to be tabled in each House of Parliament; and
 - ⇒ (b) give a copy to the responsible Minister; *and*
 - ⇒ (c) *to any other Minister who, in the Auditor-General's opinion, has a special interest in the report.*

Government response

Agreed, noting the form of the amendment would be a matter for the Office of Parliamentary Counsel.