

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Agency: ACARA**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000909**

Senator O'Neill, Deborah asked on 21 October 2015, Proof Hansard page 102.

***ACARA - Risk register***

**Question**

Senator O'NEILL: In the report, 'Risks associated with online testing' is one of the sections, and it says:

Stakeholders see the implementation of online testing as a high risk activity for ACARA. They see this as a leading edge development which could be derailed if—  
you rush it or—

... if there is not clarity about where accountability lies between ACARA and ESA.

Can you speak to me about that?

....

Senator O'NEILL: So, from your point of view, it is a risk that is being managed currently?

Mr Randall: It is a risk that we are, on a daily basis, minding.

Senator O'NEILL: In terms of your risk audit, that information would be interesting to the committee if you could provide that.

Mr Randall: Yes. You are asking for where that is evident on our risk register?

Senator O'NEILL: Yes.

Mr Randall: I can make that available.

**Answer**

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) provided the following response:

The text below is from ACARA's corporate risk register. The relevant risk is titled planning and preparation to deliver NAPLAN online – delays in implementing NAPLAN online. The risk is rated as significant before mitigation and moderate with the mitigation strategies set out below in place.

Description of risk:

The risk that ACARA is perceived to be responsible for delays in implementation of NAPLAN online (beyond 2017). Consequences: Reputational damage to ACARA.

Management control:

Preventative:

- There are six work streams that have been accepted as the basis for planning. ACARA is directly responsible for two of the six, with other organisations having responsibility for the other four, with ACARA contributing.
- Specific roles identified and detailed project plans developed to help push the work agenda with different work areas.
- ACARA working cooperatively and consulting closely with jurisdictions through Online Assessment Working Group (OAWG), National Assessment, Data, Analysis and

Reporting Reference Group (NADAR), National Testing Working Group (NTWG), establishment of National NAPLAN Communications Working Group and other forums. All decisions are approved or endorsed by the appropriate oversight body (ACARA Board, Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee, Education Council).

- Assessment online is a standing agenda item at ACARA Board meetings.
- ACARA maintains a clear position that it is responsible for preparing NAPLAN tests for delivery online, but is not responsible under current arrangements for all streams of work required to bring NAPLAN online.
- Improved project management training and systems.
- A Project Management Office (PMO ) under OAWG has been appointed to progress each of the work streams according to agreed responsibilities. This will further the delineation of ACARA's work streams from the rest of the program.