



**ANDREW BARR** MLA  
CHIEF MINISTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Treasurer  
Minister for Economic Development  
Minister for Urban Renewal  
Minister for Tourism and Events

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Member for Molonglo

Chair  
ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Public Accounts  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Chair

Thank you for the Committee's letter of 16 June 2016 about the 2016 Strategic Review of the ACT Auditor-General, and for the Committee's invitation to provide comment for it to consider as part of its inquiry into the Review Report.

I note that the resolution of the Assembly to refer the Review Report to the Committee included specific reference to a term of appointment for the Auditor-General, as well as 'other matters the committee considers relevant'.

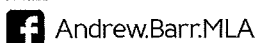
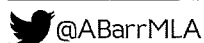
In relation to the term of appointment, the Government notes the Auditor-General's independent status as an Officer of the Assembly. The Government therefore considers it appropriate that the Assembly determine the Auditor-General's employment terms and conditions. However, a seven year non-renewable term of appointment seems reasonable, and was the government's intention at the appointment of the current Auditor-General.

In relation to other matters raised by the report, the Government notes that the specific matter of support available to assist the Speaker in her role in relation to Officers of the Assembly was referred to the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure. The Government will reserve comment on this matter pending the outcome of that Committee's consideration.

Overall, the Report highlights the value of positive engagement between the Audit Office and auditees (including Government). For its part, the Government is keen to support

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enhanced engagement, which we believe will have positive outcomes (specifically in relation to Recommendations 5, 12, 13, 19 and 20, as well as for other matters raised in the Report).

In relation to the engagement of contractors by the Audit Office, notwithstanding the Audit Office's view that auditees need not be directly involved in this matter, the Government believes there is opportunity to work together with the Audit Office to identify potential or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to audit staff or contractors (Recommendation 9).

Similarly, there may be an opportunity for the Government to assist the Audit Office in adopting a more rigorous approach to managing performance audits (Recommendation 11).

The Government will finalise a position on the issues outlined above and other recommendations of the Strategic Review, following consideration of any recommendations put forward by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration and Procedure Committee.

Thank you again for the Committee's invitation to provide comment, and I trust that the above comments are of assistance. I am happy to discuss these matters with you further. Alternatively, your staff or the Committee Secretariat may wish to contact

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Yours sincerely



Andrew Barr MLA  
Chief Minister

18 JUL 2016