



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr Ed Cocks MLA (Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

**Inquiry into Auditor-General performance Audit Reports July – December 2023**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Peter Cain MLA:

In relation to: AG Audit Report 10/2023 and Human Resources Information Management System Program

- (1) What was the discernible value-for-money derived from contracts awarded to Projects Assured, who were engaged as an 'assurance partner'.
- (2) Why were no assurance reports provided by Projects Assured to either the Program Head, or the governance bodies.

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. As part of the engagement of Projects Assured, a program assurance report was undertaken. The review involved a combination of stakeholder interviews and a desktop review of a range of program artefacts. The program assurance report prepared by Projects Assured was not tabled at the Program Board.
2. The program assurance report was prepared by Projects Assured and an overview was provided at the Program Board, however, as per (1), the report was not tabled at the Program Board. Auditor-General Report No.10/2023, Human Resources Information Management System (HRIMS) Program identified that the Projects Assured Work Order briefly described the activities to be undertaken, but no further information was developed on the nature and purpose of the 'assurance partner' role, the timing of assurance activities and the nature of deliverables. The Procurement Reform Program (commenced July 2022) is strengthening procurement practices across the ACT Public Service. Focus areas of the Procurement Reform Program include:
  - a. Transparent, evidence-based procurement decisions that are conducted with probity and can withstand scrutiny;
  - b. Support for the workforce, local industries and business through clear roles and the delivery of consistent, accurate, timely, practical and customer focused services through all phases of the procurement lifecycle; and
  - c. Streamlining the legislative framework, policies, processes and templates to ensure that they are efficient and can facilitate timely procurement outcomes.

An Enterprise Portfolio Management Office has been established, drawing from a range of better practice guides and standards. The focus of the ePMO is to ensure there is a robust, flexible, and responsive project, program, and portfolio management ecosystem, capable of delivering consistent,

dependable and high-quality outcomes. The revised frameworks reintroduce specific Stage Gates for Projects and Tranche Reviews for Programs aligned with agreed methodologies and industry good practice. These will be a set of standard approaches to assurance, they will also be tailored based on the size, scale, complexity and type of project or program being delivered. Projects and Programs of an appropriate complexity will also be subject to independent assurance.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Signature: 

Date: 13/6/24

By the Special Minister of State, Chris Steel MLA