
Government Responses to the Recommendations of

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE'S

Report on the 2021-22 Budget Estimates

Pursuant to Section 36 of the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, this paper provides a response to the recommendations contained in the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's (PAEC) Report on the 2021-22 Budget Estimates.

Guide for readers - Following is the explanation of the format of this paper.

| 1 PAEC recommendation | 2 Response | 3 Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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Column 1: Contains PAEC's recommendations as published in its Report on the 2021-22 Budget Estimates.

Column 2: Indicates the Government's response to each recommendation: 'Support', 'Support-in-Principle', 'Not Support', 'Support in Part' or 'Under Review'.

Column 3: Provides an explanation of the Government's position on the recommendation, indicates the actions that have been taken to date relevant to the implementation of the recommendation, and outlines commitment to further action relevant to the implementation of the recommendation.

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 1: The Department of Treasury and Finance publish regular updates to provide revised estimates of the Victorian Government's fiscal strategy and other fiscal aggregate.</p> | Support | <p>In accordance with the requirements of the Financial Management Act 1994 (FMA), the Treasurer must prepare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - estimated financial statements for each financial year in association with the budget for that financial year; and - a budget update and transmit it to Parliament on or before 15 December in that financial year. <p>Accordingly, the Department of Treasury and Finance produces a "Budget" and "Budget Update" each financial year which incorporates the Victorian Government's fiscal strategy and other fiscal aggregates.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 2: The Victorian Government publish the 2019–20 and 2020–21 Victorian Government Advertising Report and release the advertising plan for 2021–22.</p> | Support | <p>The Victorian Government published the 2019–20 Victorian Government Advertising Report in October 2021. The government is awaiting the finalisation of campaign advertising data by external providers for 2020–21 before being in a position to collate and publish the 2020–21 Victorian Government Advertising Report. The process has taken additional time and resources this year, due to the complexity of collecting and collating data from two suppliers. The government transitioned to a new supplier in June 2021 following a tender process for the Master Agency Media Services contract.</p> <p>The government has commenced work on the 2021–22 Victorian Advertising Plan, and it will be published as soon as it is finalised.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 3 (ALL DEPARTMENTS): Victorian Government departments publish the actual savings achieved in their annual reports.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The 2020-21 Model report for Victorian Government Departments details the minimum reporting requirements and obligation for annual report disclosures as prescribed by relevant legislation and Australian accounting standards, in line with an open, accountable and effective government. The Model Report is managed by DTF and endorsed by the Assistant Treasurer as the benchmark for Victorian Public Sector Financial Reporting.</p> <p>While the Model Report does not include reference to savings, the Government updates the status of ongoing savings in Budget Paper No.2 Chapter 1 and Chapter 4, with new savings disclosed in Budget Paper no.3, Chapter 1. Progress against savings initiatives, including any possible variations are also outlined in departmental general questionnaire responses to PAEC. Victorian Government departments will follow the Model Report guidance and acquit any requirements to publish annual savings as detailed in the Model Report.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 4: The Department of Health update the relevant Mental Health target to accurately reflect the expected impact of the investment of \$2.2 billion outlined in the 2021–22 Budget.</p> | Support-in-principle | <p>Targets will be increased for the 2022-23 Budget as finalisation of capital works and bed availability is complete and services become operational. Other targets within the total \$2.2 billion Mental Health Clinical Care Output have been adjusted in 2021-22 to reflect the further investment following outcomes of the Royal Commission Final Report.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 5: The Victorian School Building Authority publish available planning data regarding the need for new schools and school upgrades on its website and update this data regularly.</p> | Support-in-principle | <p>Department of Education and Training will consider options for publishing data regarding the need for new schools and school upgrades.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 6: The Department of Education and Training undertake an evaluation of the mental health and wellbeing supports offered to students during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure support is effective and sufficient.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) has provided a range of mental health and wellbeing supports to students during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The key elements of support have been individually evaluated as programs, including headspace counselling service, Mental Health in Primary Schools, Mental Health Practitioners, and the LOOKOUT and Navigator programs. Evaluations have informed how these supports are implemented to ensure they are effective and sufficient.</p> <p>The Mental Health in Primary Schools pilot is designed to assess what is effective mental health support in the primary school context and is expanding to 100 schools in 2022.</p> <p>In addition, DET's Attitudes to School Survey measured a range of outputs such as the number of counselling sessions for students during the pandemic.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 7: The Department of Education and Training undertake an evaluation of the tutoring program offered to students during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure support is effective and sufficient.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) supports the recommendation to undertake an evaluation of the Tutor Learning Initiative offered to students during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure support is effective and efficient.</p> <p>DET commenced an independent evaluation of the Tutor Learning Initiative in March 2021.</p> <p>The independent evaluator will provide both summative and formative findings across the domains of appropriateness, fidelity and impact of the Tutor Learning Initiative.</p> <p>The evaluation methodology includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods and draws on new and existing data as appropriate to determine the extent to which the initiative is achieving intended outcomes.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 8: The mental health reform workforce strategy directly address the demand driven by the <i>School Mental Health Fund</i>.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) will monitor workforce demand and supply as the School Mental Health Fund is rolled out from July 2022, and will collaborate with the Department of Health as they develop the Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy to ensure it addresses potential mental health workforce demand arising from the Fund.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 9: The Department of Education and Training publish information regarding the progress made towards the targets of the early childhood agreement for children in out-of-home care in its next annual report and on the website outlining the agreement.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) will publish annual outcomes against the targets that it is responsible for, which relate to kindergarten participation and transition to school for children in out-of-home care. Targets relating to data sets held by other partners are not within DET's remit to report.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 10: The Department of Education and Training develop budget paper performance measures and targets regarding the roll out of universal three-year-old kindergarten and the proportion of Victorian three-year-olds attending kindergarten in the 2022–23 Budget.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) supports the recommendation and is developing new measures relating to the roll out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. These new measures will be included in the 2022-23 Performance Statement.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 11: The Department of Education and Training develop performance measures for the 2022–23 Budget based on participation rates in kindergarten for groups targeted through the Giving vulnerable and disadvantaged kids the best start in life funding included the 2021–22 Budget.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) will undertake work with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to seek to develop a robust child count and population estimate for vulnerable children (for example those known to child protection) as the basis for reporting a participation rate for this cohort in the future.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 12: The Department of Education and Training address the shortcomings in the five new performance measures introduced in 2021–22 and identified by the Committee with further, or altered, performance measures in the 2022–23 Budget.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) will review its suite of performance measures, including those identified by the Committee, as part of the plan to acquit the recommendations of the VAGO audit - <i>Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery</i>. The implementation of the recommendations from this audit provides DET with an opportunity to comprehensively review its budget measures and target settings to better reflect DET service delivery and performance. The plan to acquit this recommendation commits the Department to complete the review by May 2023.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 13: The Department of Education develop timeliness measures where appropriate to include in its performance statement in the 2022–23 Budget.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Education and Training (DET) will consider options for including timeliness measures where appropriate to service delivery as part of its development of the upcoming 2022-23 Preliminary Performance Statement. This will be undertaken in the context of the response to recommendations of the VAGO audit - <i>Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery</i> - released in May 2021. The implementation of the recommendations from this audit provides DET with an opportunity to comprehensively review its budget measures and target settings to better reflect DET service delivery and performance. The plan to acquit this recommendation commits the Department to complete the review by May 2023.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 14: The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) publish data on the operation of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria between 2018–19 and 2020–21 in its 2020–21 Annual Report. DJCS should include the average wait time for certificate processing, customer satisfaction with online services and data on the number of customers serviced and inquiries finalised.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) will consider including comparative data on the operation of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria (BDM) between 2018-19 and 2020-21 in its 2021-22 Annual Report, noting that the 2020-21 Annual Report has already been published. Due to BDM launching a new business system and online external service model in February 2019, there may be compatibility issues with sourcing and comparing historical performance data from the prior business system. DJCS supports publishing this data but notes that inconsistencies may present that require detailed explanation.</p> <p>DJCS currently reports on the Budget Paper 3 (BP3) performance measure '<i>Average number of days to process compliant applications for birth, death and marriage certificates</i>', rather than 'the average wait time for certificate processing'. The BP3 measure is intended to separate BDM's service output performance from the applicant's timeliness in providing documents. To process certificates, almost all applications require the customer to pay and provide documents proving their identity to make the application 'compliant'. Delays in providing documents and payment will impact processing times. As such, DJCS collects data that could be used to determine average wait times for certificate processing but there are complexities in explaining this data. There may also be issues with compatibility and consistency due to changeover of business systems. DJCS will consider options to report this information but will need to explore how this can be expressed in a clear and accurate way.</p> <p>DJCS also reports against the performance measure '<i>Customer satisfaction rating – BDM service centre</i>'. However, this only captures data gathered from face-to-face interactions; with the Service Centre closed since March 2020, this has not been gathered recently. BDM is currently exploring ways that customers can provide measurable user experience and customer satisfaction with online services.</p> <p>DJCS already collects data on the number of customers serviced and inquiries finalised at BDM and there are no compatibility concerns with provision of these statistics in the Annual Report.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 15: The Department of Justice and Community Safety ensure the evaluations of funded crime prevention projects include information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how outcomes align to the objectives and priorities of Community Crime Prevention and • how the projects have reduced crime. | Support | <p>The Crime Prevention Strategy, which was released in June 2021, and the associated Outcomes Framework set out a clear path for measuring and reporting on crime prevention outcomes. All funded projects are required to complete an evaluation activity which is built into funding agreements and reporting milestones. Evaluation reports from higher-value projects are published on the Crime Prevention website within 12 months of completion, and work is underway to ensure a consistent approach to reporting evaluation results in a meaningful way that contributes to the evidence base around effective crime prevention practice and is useful to key stakeholders and practitioners. Common indicators, which reflect the focus of the Crime Prevention Strategy, will be reported on by projects, including how crime has been reduced in areas targeted by relevant crime prevention initiatives.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 16: The Victorian Government include estimated costs for COVID-19 related quarantine in the 2022–23 Budget.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>As an Administrative Office of the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), all costs incurred by COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria (CQV) for each financial year are incorporated and consolidated into the DJCS Financial Statements, Report on Operations and Annual Report as per s45(4) of the <i>Financial Management Act 1994 (FMA)</i> and disclosed on Department of Treasury and Finance's website as part of the COVID-19 response and recovery reporting. Due to uncertainty regarding the ongoing requirements for hotel quarantine in Victoria, funding to support CQV's operations is provided progressively as the operation evolves, via funding submissions outside of the normal budget cycle.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 17: The Department of Justice and Community Safety develop budget paper performance measures so that the outcomes of the investment in addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal children aged 10 to 13 under both youth justice detention and community supervision can be followed.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Aboriginal Justice Forum currently receive quarterly reporting on the numbers of Aboriginal children under supervision aged 10 to 13 years of age. Youth Justice will consider the inclusion of performance measures for 10–13-year-olds in the Budget Papers. Consideration will include reviewing the existing and planned reporting approaches to provide the most appropriate measure.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 18: The Department of Justice and Community Safety develop budget paper performance measures so that the outcomes of the investment in reducing the number of 10 to 13-year-olds under both youth justice detention and community supervision can be followed.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Youth Justice will consider the inclusion of performance measures for 10–13-year-olds in the Budget Papers. Consideration will include reviewing the existing and planned reporting approaches to provide the most appropriate measure.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 19: The Department of Justice and Community Safety address the issues raised with the three new performance measures introduced in 2021–22 and identified by the Committee.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) introduced new performance measures in the 2021–22 Budget to increase transparency and reporting on crime prevention initiatives. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Outcomes of Crime Prevention funded projects published within 12 months of project completion</i> • <i>Percentage of funded initiatives that support local communities to deliver innovative crime and community safety solutions in local areas; promote the development and delivery of collaborative, partnership approaches to crime prevention; or build community capability through knowledge sharing and strengthened relationships</i> <p>Since introducing these measures, the Crime Prevention Strategy was released on 21 June 2021, and an associated Outcomes Framework has been finalised. In addition, funding provided for crime prevention initiatives is being partially funded and measured against government's Early Intervention Investment Framework (EIIF). DJCS will continue to review its BP3 performance measures as part of the annual budget process to ensure alignment of the existing performance measures with metrics contained in the Outcomes Framework, as well as those developed for the EIIF. This will enhance transparency in reporting of crime prevention initiatives and DJCS's work in partnering with community organisations to co-ordinate and drive crime prevention activities in Victoria.</p> <p><i>Proportion of high-harm breaches resulting in regulatory action</i></p> <p>DJCS considers the performance measure, 'Proportion of high harm breaches resulting in regulatory action' provides a quantitative and qualitative measure of the effectiveness of regulatory activity in addressing high harm activities. Unlike the previous performance measure, the new measure reflects a risk-based approach to regulation and provides more information on regulatory action to address breaches that result in a high degree of harm. The measure focuses on high-harm breaches related to the supply of liquor to minors or drunken and disorderly persons under the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998. DJCS will continue to monitor and review this measure to ensure it provides a useful measure of regulatory performance and service delivery.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 20: The Department of Justice and Community Safety review the two discontinued performance measures outlined by the Committee.</p> | <p>Support-in-Principle</p> | <p><i>Multi agency joint procurements of systems or equipment:</i> Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) is reviewing all performance measure in the Emergency Management Capability output as part of the upcoming Budget Process and is considering a range of additional metrics to enhance its performance statement.</p> <p>This performance measure <i>Multi agency joint procurements of systems or equipment</i> does not accurately represent cooperation across the emergency management sector because it does not provide insight into service performance, as per the requirements of DTF's Resource Management Framework. In addition, the Victorian Auditor General's Office has identified this performance measure as not suitable for the Department's performance statement as procurements is a process, not a service being delivered by DJCS.</p> <p><i>Court and regulatory action undertaken by VCGLR:</i> The performance measure '<i>Court and regulatory action undertaken by VCGLR</i>' was replaced by '<i>Proportion of high-harm breaches resulting in regulatory action</i>' in the 2021-22 Budget as the new performance measure better reflects an intelligence led risk-based approach to regulation. The new performance measure improves the utility of the information provided compared with the previous measure, that is limited to counting activities and actions, rather than measuring the quality-of-service delivery.</p> <p>DJCS considers the performance measure, '<i>Proportion of high-harm breaches resulting in regulatory action</i>' provides a quantitative and qualitative measure of the effectiveness of regulatory activity in addressing high harm activities. Unlike the previous performance measure, the new measure reflects a risk-based approach to regulation and provides more information on regulatory action to address breaches that result in a high degree of harm. The measure focuses on high-harm breaches related to the supply of liquor to minors or drunken and disorderly persons under the <i>Liquor Control Reform Act 1998</i>. DJCS will continue to monitor and review this measure to ensure it provides a useful measure of regulatory performance and service delivery.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 21: The Department of Treasury and Finance consider publicly releasing the Office of Projects Victoria's benchmarking review of Victorian major projects against international projects</p> | <p>Support</p> | <p>This report is now publicly available and is on the OPV website. http://www.opv.vic.gov.au/Resources-and-publications</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 22: The Department of Transport review its overarching plan for the tram network with a view to reaching compliance with the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> as soon as possible.</p> | <p>Support-in-Principle</p> | <p>The Department of Transport has been developing The Tram Stop Rollout Strategy, a medium-term plan to address accessibility, safety and user experience issues with existing tram stop infrastructure and provide a pathway to the delivery of universally accessible tram stops. The development of this plan was funded in the 2019-20 State Budget.</p> |

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| RECOMMENDATION 23: The Department of Transport detail funding of COVID-19 related public transport costs in future budget papers. | Support-in-Principle | Prospective funding of COVID-19 related public transport costs will be a decision for the Government as part of 2022-23 Budget considerations and will be disclosed in Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery if supported. Total expenditure from 2021-22 will be published in the Treasurer’s Advance disclosure in the 2021-22 Annual Financial Report. |
| RECOMMENDATION 24: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing introduce performance measures to report the number of Victorian Aboriginal children in care. | Not support | The Department of Families Fairness and Housing (the Department) would not support the introduction of an additional performance measure to report the number of Victorian Aboriginal children in care. The Department already provides data relating to the Closing the Gap National Agreement. This includes the measure to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal children in Care by 45 per cent by 2031. Additionally, the Department provides data on its performance against the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-23 Goal 2 (Aboriginal children are raised by Aboriginal families) and accompanying objectives (Objective 2.1 Eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in care; Objective 2.2 Increase Aboriginal care, guardianship and management of Aboriginal children and young people in care; Objective 2.3 Increase family reunifications for Aboriginal children and young people in care). Lastly, the Department continues to provide annual data through Report on Government Services (RoGS) regarding Victoria’s performance against child protection, out-of-home care, family support services and intensive family support relating to Aboriginal children in care. The Department believes the requested performance measure is captured in existing reporting and would be a replication of what is already being provided at both a State and National level. |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 25: The Government regularly reports on the outcomes of the \$5.3 billion investment allocated to the Victoria's Big Housing Build including details regarding allocation of funds, geographic location and the number and type of dwellings to be delivered in each financial year.</p> | <p>Support</p> | <p>Action taken to date and commitment to further action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build is the largest investment in social and affordable housing this state has ever seen. Creating an average of 10 000 new jobs a year over the next four years— with 10 per cent of the work on major projects to be done by apprentices, cadets and trainees. • Homes Victoria's performance measurement system and related reporting processes regularly provide updates on the progress of the Big Housing Build, including the State Budget, annual reports and via the Homes Victoria website. The website reports on the progress of projects and initiatives with a focus on local community engagement and current opportunities to partner with landowners, developers, community housing providers and other stakeholders. • Construction has commenced on Fast Start projects in 2021 and all projects will commence within four years, with the first homes under construction to be completed in 2023. • In addition to generating tens of thousands of jobs, the investment will deliver greater housing choice and affordability, ensuring more Victorians have the modern, secure and accessible homes they need. • The Victorian Government will deliver more than 12 000 new homes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 200 new social housing properties to help Victorians in greatest need • the replacement of an additional 1 100 outdated homes • a further 2 900 new affordable and low-cost homes that will be built to help low-to-moderate income earners live closer to where they work and provide options for private rental. • The Big Housing Build provides a Minimum Investment Guarantee to regional local government areas that have a significant regional town or city or have high population growth. 18 local government areas have been identified for the Minimum Investment Guarantee with \$765 million committed across these local government areas. • To date more than 1 100 homes have been purchased or are under development. • Grant funding of \$740 million has been provided to 22 community housing agencies to build more than 2 300 homes across Victoria through the Social Housing Growth Fund • Under the In Progress and Ready to Build program, an \$80 million Regional Request for Proposal process was released to market in early October 2021 to seek well considered value for money proposals in Regional Victoria. The evaluation process is currently underway. • Further to this, a Regional Housing Round under the Social Housing Growth Fund was released on 19 October 2021 and proposals are due in by the 24 February 2022. <p>The type of dwellings to be delivered in each financial year is under development.</p> |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 26: The income bands for eligibility for affordable housing currently being constructed under Victoria's Big Housing Build be published as soon as possible.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Victorian Government is delivering 2 900 new affordable and market homes for first home buyers and renters as part of the Big Housing Build. Properties will help low-to-moderate income earners live closer to where they work and provide options for affordable home ownership and private rental.</p> <p>The Victorian Government is progressing work on policy settings for the Big Housing Build's Affordable Housing Program, including finalising eligibility income bands and further detail on the process of selective intervention within the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Eligibility for the Victorian Government's Affordable Housing properties will use the income ranges for affordable housing that is not social housing in the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (Appendix 1).</p> <p>Further information on eligibility for affordable housing will be published by Homes Victoria in 2022.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Appendix 1, in line with Recommendation 26:</i></p> <p>Appendix 1 – Affordable Housing Annual Income Ranges</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Household type</th> <th>Region</th> <th>Very low</th> <th>Low</th> <th>Moderate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Single person</td> <td>Melbourne</td> <td>Up to \$26,200</td> <td>\$26,201 to \$41,920</td> <td>\$41,921 to \$62,860</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional Victoria</td> <td>Up to \$19,090</td> <td>\$19,091 to \$30,550</td> <td>\$30,551 to \$45,820</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Couple (no dependant)</td> <td>Melbourne</td> <td>Up to \$39,290</td> <td>\$39,291 to \$62,870</td> <td>\$62,871 to \$94,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional Victoria</td> <td>Up to \$28,640</td> <td>\$28,641 to \$45,820</td> <td>\$45,821 to \$68,730</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Family (Single / Couple with dependent children)</td> <td>Melbourne</td> <td>Up to \$55,000</td> <td>\$55,001 to \$88,020</td> <td>\$88,021 to \$132,030</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional Victoria</td> <td>Up to \$40,090</td> <td>\$40,091 to \$64,150</td> <td>\$64,151 to \$96,220</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: These ranges are derived from ABS data on Population and Housing indexed to the Consumer Price Index.</p> <p>Source: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing/resources</p> | Household type | Region | Very low | Low | Moderate | Single person | Melbourne | Up to \$26,200 | \$26,201 to \$41,920 | \$41,921 to \$62,860 | Regional Victoria | Up to \$19,090 | \$19,091 to \$30,550 | \$30,551 to \$45,820 | Couple (no dependant) | Melbourne | Up to \$39,290 | \$39,291 to \$62,870 | \$62,871 to \$94,300 | Regional Victoria | Up to \$28,640 | \$28,641 to \$45,820 | \$45,821 to \$68,730 | Family (Single / Couple with dependent children) | Melbourne | Up to \$55,000 | \$55,001 to \$88,020 | \$88,021 to \$132,030 | Regional Victoria | Up to \$40,090 | \$40,091 to \$64,150 | \$64,151 to \$96,220 |
| Household type | Region | Very low | Low | Moderate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Single person | Melbourne | Up to \$26,200 | \$26,201 to \$41,920 | \$41,921 to \$62,860 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Regional Victoria | Up to \$19,090 | \$19,091 to \$30,550 | \$30,551 to \$45,820 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Couple (no dependant) | Melbourne | Up to \$39,290 | \$39,291 to \$62,870 | \$62,871 to \$94,300 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Regional Victoria | Up to \$28,640 | \$28,641 to \$45,820 | \$45,821 to \$68,730 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family (Single / Couple with dependent children) | Melbourne | Up to \$55,000 | \$55,001 to \$88,020 | \$88,021 to \$132,030 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Regional Victoria | Up to \$40,090 | \$40,091 to \$64,150 | \$64,151 to \$96,220 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 27: The targets in Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan, should be referenced in the budget papers. Further, as the plan was released in 2018 it is recommended that updating the plan be considered.</p> | Not support | <p>The Victorian Government budget papers contain homelessness programs delivery measure. Following on from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan, the Victorian Government is developing a ten-year social and affordable housing strategy to position our housing system for the long term so all Victorians can have access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 28: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing improve performance measures under the Housing output, by reviewing all measures, consolidating measures where appropriate, and clearly defining different cohorts, services provided, and outcomes achieved.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Homes Victoria has continued the development of meaningful and relevant reporting and is actively engaged with the Department of Treasury and Finance in the annual review of its BP3 measures.</p> <p>Additionally, the continued development of Homes Victoria's own annual report will give greater transparency while assisting to address the recommendation made in the Committee's report.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 29: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing address the shortcomings in two of the new performance measures introduced in the 2021–22 Budget.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p><u>LGBTIQ+ equality policy and programs:</u> The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) will continue to monitor event attendance and anticipates that the impact of COVID-19 on attendance numbers will decrease significantly as restrictions ease in Victoria. DFFH also notes that attendance at online and digital events contributes to achievement of this performance measure. If required, DFFH will develop new performance measures should COVID-19 impact this performance measure in future years.</p> <p><u>Multicultural affairs policy and programs:</u> DFFH will continue to monitor event attendance and anticipates that the impact of COVID-19 on attendance numbers will decrease significantly as restrictions ease in Victoria. DFFH also notes that attendance at online and digital events contributes to achievement of this performance measure. If required, DFFH will develop new performance measures should COVID-19 impact this performance measure in future years.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 30: The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) add a budget paper performance measure for annual Victorian electric vehicle (EV) sales and the progress DELWP is making towards its long-term target of EVs comprising 50% of Victorian light vehicle sales by 2030.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) supports-in-principle this recommendation.</p> <p>Victoria's Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Roadmap, released in May 2021, includes a target of 50 per cent of new light vehicle sales to be zero emissions by 2030 – this is distinct from 'electric vehicle sales' as it includes battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. DELWP will work with the Department of Transport and external data providers to investigate options for an appropriate metric in Budget Paper 3 on new light vehicle ZEV sales for inclusion in the 2022-23 budget. This will be supported by Solar Victoria, who administer Victoria's subsidy program for new ZEV sales.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 31: The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning revise the performance measure 'vulnerable Victorian energy consumers reached through consumer support programs' upward from 10,000 in light of the high take up of the <i>Power Saving Bonus</i> in 2021–22.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) supports-in-principle this recommendation.</p> <p>The performance measure, 'Vulnerable Victorian energy consumers reached through consumer support programs', is currently proposed for discontinuation in the 2022-23 Budget as the \$250 Power Saving Bonus is due to lapse on 30 June 2022. However, should continuing funding be provided through the 2022-23 Budget, the performance measure will be reinstated and the target revised to reflect the activities being delivered in that period.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 32: The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning add a budget paper performance measure to the Solar Homes output that reflects annual targets for installing solar technologies in rented properties.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) supports in-principle this recommendation and will consider the addition of an output performance measure relating to approved applications for Solar PV rebates for rental households for inclusion in the 2022-23 Budget, noting that rental households are not eligible for solar hot water and battery installations under the current Solar Homes program.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 33: The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning develop metrics to quantify its effects on Victoria's energy use and carbon emissions for inclusion in the Budget as performance measures.</p> | Support in-principle | <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) supports-in-principle this recommendation. DELWP's impact on installed capacity and reduced emissions is reported annually in the Victorian Renewable Energy Target – Progress Report, which also provides an overview of the Solar Homes program contribution. Furthermore, the Budget Paper 3 performance measure 'Share of Victoria's electricity generation from renewable sources' measures DELWP's impact on Victoria's energy use.</p> <p>DELWP will work to ensure that this information is reported in the most appropriate place, without duplicating information that is already public.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 34: Considering the long-term underperformance in this planning policy area, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning revisit the performance measure 'median number of days taken by the department to assess a planning scheme amendment' and reassess whether its planned reforms are sufficient to deliver 35 median days in 2021–22.</p> | Support | <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) supports the recommendation.</p> <p>DELWP will consider revising the target for 'Median number of days taken by the department to assess a planning scheme amendment' in the 2022-23 Budget.</p> <p>In revising the target, DELWP will take into account a number of factors including Ministerial Direction 15 'The Planning Scheme Amendment Process', and the fact that most amendments are determined under delegated authority.</p> <p>It is noted that a new function was introduced on 31 December 2021 in the Amendment Tracking System to not count days where an amendment is delayed because of extraneous circumstances, including legal proceedings, coordination with other statutory approvals or incomplete documentation from the Planning Authority.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 35: The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions review the financial support paid to small businesses in response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>COVID-19 business support administered by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) provided vital support to businesses under financial pressure due to necessary public health restrictions, helping them to survive and reopen in a COVIDSafe manner.</p> <p>Early analysis of the first two rounds of the Business Support Fund undertaken in late 2020 indicated that this model of emergency financial support assists Victorian businesses in retaining jobs, increases business expenditure and creates beneficial downstream effects.</p> <p>Since the outset of the pandemic, procedures and internal controls for COVID-19 grants programs have been continually reviewed and refined. DJPR remains committed to continuing to strengthen process.</p> <p>DJPR remains open to conducting further reviews of COVID-19 business support outcomes after current programs have been closed out.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action | |
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| RECOMMENDATION 36: The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions address the issues raised in the three new performance measures identified by the Committee. | Overall Support in part | See response below. | |
| | Support | <p>Output: Industry, Innovation and Small Business</p> <p>New performance measure: Locations to receive broadband infrastructure upgrades.</p> <p>Issues identified by PAEC:</p> <p>The Committee notes that 'under the Digital Future Now initiative' be added to the performance measure name so it is clear what the measure relates to in future budgets.</p> | <p>The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions accepts the recommendation to add 'under the Digital Future Now initiative' to the performance measure name.</p> <p>This will be reflected in the 2022-23 Budget papers.</p> |
| | Not Support | <p>Output: Medical Research</p> <p>New performance measure: Projects supported through building and scaling up messenger Ribonucleic Acid Vaccine (mRNA) manufacturing capability in Victoria</p> <p>Issues identified by PAEC: The performance measure as currently written does not provide information that would be useful for gauging progress made towards building and scaling up this project. The Committee suggests that a percentage figure would be more useful for capturing this information—for example the cumulative \$ figure of projects supported divided by the total project budget for stage one of the mRNA initiative.</p> | <p>The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions does not support the recommendation as mRNA Victoria's approach to capability building will be by supporting a series of projects to build a new ecosystem of capability. Support will be provided through various funding streams and collaborations.</p> <p>Number of projects funded is a standard measure, financial return on investment formulas is not appropriate for measuring medical research ecosystem development.</p> |
| | Support | <p>Output: Local Government and Suburban Development</p> <p>New performance measure: Community Leadership Program training places offered to women</p> <p>Issues identified by PAEC: The Committee notes that training places accepted by women candidates or training completed by women would be more useful information to gauge the impact of this program. Measuring training places offered does not provide an indication of acceptance or completion.</p> | <p>The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions accepts the recommendation and will update the performance measure to reflect that 40 women have 'accepted' a place in the training (rather than being 'offered' a place').</p> <p>This will be reflected in the 2022-23 Budget papers.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 37: The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) publish the methodology that will be utilised when assessing the outcomes of the initiatives under the Early Intervention Investment Framework. Additionally, DTF provide information to clarify how the targets and outcomes of these initiatives will be published once the Framework commences.</p> | Support-In-Principle | <p>The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) has published guidance for Departments on setting outcome measures and targets and the methodology for avoided costs for initiatives funded under the Early Intervention Investment Framework (EIIF). EIIF's methodology requires Departments to quantify the anticipated impact of an initiative in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improved outcomes – the quantified impacts across select outcome measures on the lives of service users and their families, the broader community, and the service system; and 2) Avoided costs – the monetised value for Government of the expected reduction in future acute service expenditure compared to the expected trajectory if the intervention did not take place (e.g. business-as-usual). <p>Initiative outcome measures and targets developed by Departments are considered by the Ministerial committee responsible for budget decision-making with advice from DTF. Departments are required to report to the committee on progress for targets and outcomes, and publication may be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 38: The Department of Treasury and Finance include the 100% renewable energy in government operations by 2025 target in the budget paper performance measures.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Greener Government Buildings (GGB) program facilitates energy efficiency improvements to existing government buildings and reports the outcomes of these projects on the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) website. While GGB projects often include renewable energy installations, these are typically rooftop solar installations that sit 'behind the meter' (i.e. generated solar power is used instantaneously on site, reducing the amount of electricity supplied from the grid). As such, the outcomes are more practically considered and reported as a reduction in the electrical demand of the building or site, rather than a contribution towards the 100% renewable energy target. The 100% renewable energy target will be measured based on the proportion of renewable energy supplied via the grid.</p> <p>Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is currently leading the roadmap towards 100% renewable energy in government operations by 2025. DELWP is engaging with key departments including DTF to develop actions in achieving this target. This includes measures that will provide the necessary transparency on how this commitment will be met. Engagement between the departments also provide a foundation on how the future electricity state purchase contracts (SPCs) will take shape, which will include outcomes of the second Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET2) auction. Commercial operations of VRET2 are expected to commence on 30 December 2024.</p> <p>DTF will develop its future requirements under the electricity state purchase contracts to support renewable energy obligations. However, given that 100% renewable energy targets span across whole of government operations, performance measures will be attributed to the work being led by DELWP rather than DTF budget paper measures. Under the future electricity SPCs, DTF will work with its supplier(s) to develop reporting requirements on renewable energy consumption captured under the SPC.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| RECOMMENDATION 39: The Department of Treasury and Finance create a performance target to account for the greenhouse gas emissions produced by VicFleet and report on the progress made in the reduction of emissions produced by government vehicles. | Support-in-Principle | <p>VicFleet currently provides vehicle emission data for all vehicles that are available on the Approved Vehicle List (AVL) which can be found on the VicFleet website: https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/vicfleet/approved-vehicle-list.</p> <p>The data is sourced from the Green Vehicle Guide, an Australian Government initiative which provides user friendly tools to search for and compare the environmental performance and fuel consumption of new light vehicles (up to 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass) sold in Australia since 2004. It uses the CO2 emissions values for each light vehicle as the key measure for ranking and comparing all light vehicles. In this context, a “light vehicle” means any four-wheeled road vehicle with a gross vehicle mass under 3.5 tonnes.</p> <p>The average grams of CO2/100km for passenger vehicles (excluding VicPol) has reduced by 19.5 per cent over the last 5 years.</p> <p>VicFleet are actively encouraging the take up of Zero Emission electric vehicles (ZEV’s) to support the replacement of 400 vehicles by 2023.</p> <p>VicFleet will investigate utilising the data from the Green Vehicle Guide and will determine the emission standard that is best for each vehicle segment when setting vehicle emission limits.</p> |
| RECOMMENDATION 40: The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) address the shortcomings identified by the Committee in the new DTF performance measures introduced in the 2021–22 Budget. | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) will review the new 2021-22 performance measures identified by the Committee as part of DTF’s annual performance measure review process prior to the publication of the 2022-23 Budget.</p> |
| RECOMMENDATION 41: The Department of Treasury and Finance reinstate the ‘new investment resulting from government facilitation services and assistance’ performance measure as there is a requirement to account for the investment made through whole of government investment. | Not Support | <p>This measure was discontinued by Invest Victoria from 2021-22 in consultation with key Victorian government agencies including Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF), Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR). It was previously a whole of government measure and has been retained only by relevant departments with a focus on securing capital-intensive investments.</p> <p>Invest Victoria has retained the quantitative jobs measure ('Jobs generated from international investment secured through Government facilitation services and assistance') and introduced two new qualitative measures: 'Wages generated from international investment secured through Government facilitation services and assistance' and 'Innovation expenditure generated from international investment secured through Government facilitation services and assistance'.</p> <p>Although this measure is not being reported for BP3 purposes, capital expenditure may be captured as a component of the innovation expenditure measures.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| <p>RECOMMENDATION 42: As wage growth affects inflation and therefore economic recovery, when the Government announces a change to public sector wage caps, the impact statement should be released as a supporting document outlining factors taken into account when reaching the decision including estimates of how wage decisions are forecast to affect Victoria's economic recovery post the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> | Support in Part | <p>The Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy has historically been set with consideration to the State's fiscal position, maintenance of the real value of employee salaries and the opportunity for higher wage outcomes when productivity enhancements are demonstrated.</p> <p>The Government's commitment to support Victoria's economic recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic has been conducted through direct support for households and businesses over the course of the pandemic. DTF will continue to publish relevant forecasts of economic indicators in Budget and Budget Update publications, including the unemployment rate, consumer price index and the wage price index.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 43: The Victorian Government introduce a budget paper performance measure alongside the new initiative Preventing Aboriginal deaths in custody.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) supports strong actions to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the Victorian justice system and prevent Aboriginal deaths in custody. Funding under the Preventing Aboriginal deaths in custody initiative was provided for culturally appropriate supports and programs in prisons, such as the Wadamba Prison to Work Program, the Torch in-prison art program, the Wayapa Healing Circle Program for men and the provision of culturally safe healthcare and Aboriginal Welfare Officers. DJCS will examine opportunities to report on the provision of such services as part of the performance measure suite included in BP3.</p> <p>DJCS also supports the public reporting of Aboriginal deaths in custody and has already taken action to publicly report all deaths. Victoria also provides this information for inclusion in the annual Report on Government Services, published by the Productivity Commission.</p> |
| <p>RECOMMENDATION 44: The Department of Premier and Cabinet review the performance measures under the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio and ensure the investment in the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission is reflected in the performance measures.</p> | Support-in-Principle | <p>Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) will propose a performance measure, to introduce in 2022–23, that measures DPC's delivery of coordinating the government's response to the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission.</p> |

| PAEC recommendation | Response | Action taken to date and commitment to further action |
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| RECOMMENDATION 45: The Department of Premier and Cabinet reviews performance measures in time for publication for the 2022–23 Budget. | Support | <p>Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is reviewing its existing performance measures to align with the Resource Management Framework and relevant performance reporting guidance material.</p> <p>Subject to approval by DPC's Accountable Officer and ministerial endorsement, any new, discontinued, and amended performance measures as a result of this review will be included in the 2022–23 Budget Paper No. 3.</p> |

Victorian Ombudsman Response

Received: 21 April 2022

14 April 2022

Lizzie Blandthorn MP
Chair
Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Parliament of Victoria
Spring St, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Email: paec@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Chair

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee recommendation regarding the Victorian Ombudsman's performance measures

I acknowledge the work of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee and write to provide a response to Recommendation 47 of the 2021-22 Budget Estimates report tabled in Parliament on 5 October 2021. My office was first alerted to this recommendation by the PAEC Secretariat on 12 April 2022.

Recommendation 47: seeks the Victorian Ombudsman to review the discontinued measure "*Jurisdictional complaints finalised*"

"*Jurisdictional complaints finalised*" reflects that a complaint may have commenced in one financial year but be finalised in the following year, potentially leading to an incorrect representation of the output in a single financial year.

The new measure, "*Jurisdictional cases opened*" is intended to enhance transparency and accountability, and to better reflect the work undertaken by the office within a financial year. It better represents the office's output to underpin our ongoing request for sustainable funding to deliver services to the community. To ensure timeliness remains a key factor, it should also be read together with the related measure of "*Complaints closed within 30 days*": that 85% of complaints need to be finalised within 30 days.

All changes to the Victorian Ombudsman's performance measures were made in close consultation with the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) and have been approved by the Assistant Treasurer under the Resource Management Framework.

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As such, while I note PAEC's recommendation, my office will continue to measure and report on "Jurisdictional cases opened". My office will however work with the DTF to ensure that PAEC's recommendation is noted in the Departmental Performance Statement and the VO's reasons, supported by DTF, for not implementing it.

I would be happy to discuss further if that would be helpful.



Yours sincerely



Deborah Glass
Ombudsman

Victorian Auditor General's Office Response

Received: 26 April 2022

26 April 2022

Ms Lizzie Blandthorn
Chair
Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Our reference: O22/49

Re: VAGO response to recommendation 46 - Report on the 2021-22 Budget Estimates

Dear Ms Blandthorn

Following the PAEC report on the 2021-22 Budget Estimates, please find attached our response to recommendation 46.

In considering the recommendation and our response to it I draw the committee's attention to its analysis on page 188 to the effect that the ANAO had 53 of around 250 audit files reviewed by ASIC for the year ended 30 June 2020.

It is my understanding that the audit inspection report referred to by the Committee in its footnote 30 relates to the ASIC inspection of 53 files of private sector audit firms that undertake audits under the Corporations Act. My understanding also is that the ANAO inspections undertaken by ASIC (per footnote 31) encompass only three of their audits each year, a rate of 1.2 per cent. The relevant ASIC reports for the ANAO are located here <https://www.anao.gov.au/about/external-audits-and-reviews>.

I note also that our rate of coverage of audit files is itself based on our review of at least one audit engagement per engagement leader within a 3-year cycle. This is industry practice and complies fully with the current guidance provided in the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board's (AUASB) standard [ASQC1](#).

Yours sincerely



ANDREW GREAVES
Auditor-General

Encl: Attachment 1

ATTACHMENT 1

Recommendation 46:

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office increase the sampling size of audits externally reviewed to ensure there is sufficient coverage of financial statements.

VAGO response:

Our post audit and assurance quality review program is one part of our monitoring program in our quality control framework. We apply a risk-based approach to the implementation of our quality review program and our engagement quality control reviews.

Our 2021 post audit and assurance quality review program examined 16 financial audit engagement files (2022 program 17 financial audit engagements) representing one third of all engagement leaders.

Our engagement quality control reviews occur during the audit engagement. We have elected to mandate the conduct of an engagement quality control review for all high-risk financial audit engagements. A peer conducts these reviews.

Notwithstanding the above we are presently reviewing our monitoring program as part of our preparations to implement the AUASB's revised quality management standards, issued in March 2021:

- ASQM1 *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance of Related Services Engagements*
- ASQM 2 *Engagement Quality Reviews*

We will include in our review consideration of the sufficiency of coverage of audit files.