

Submission
No 8

INQUIRY INTO FOLLOW UP OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S 2010 FINANCIAL AUDIT REPORTS

Organisation: Department of Primary Industries
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Position: Director General
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Theme:

Summary



Department of Primary Industries

17 OCT 2011

Office of the Director General

DGPI11/1077

Jonathon O'Dea MP
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney 2000

Dear Mr O'Dea

I refer to your letter dated 7 September 2011 concerning the audit recommendations for the Auditor-General's Financial Audit in 2010.

Recommendation 1

In response to your recommendation concerning a centralised record of all Crown land, it should be noted that the Crown Land Conversion, Valuation and Asset Data Management Program is now considered complete. As at 30 June 2011, 98% of all Crown reserves within the projects scope have been converted to title and a centralised record entered in both the Crown Lands Information Database (CLID) and the Digital Cadastral Database (DCDB).

The following categories of Crown land were out of scope of the Crown Land Conversion, Valuation and Asset Data Management Program:

- Jetties
- Western Division Reserves
- National Park and State Forests
- Enclosure Permits
- Crown Roads
- Waterways

These parcels were excluded from the project because either the value of such land is already captured in the reported land holdings of the Crown Leaseholds Entity, the National Park estate, the holdings of Forests NSW, roads and waterways or the value of land is considered insignificant.

More recently a pilot between the Department of Finance & Services (LPI) and the Department of Primary Industries (Crown lands) commenced to look at the conversion of crown land in the Western Division to title. The pilot will determine the resources required to implement a full Western Lands Conversion Project which will further assist the centralised record of crown land.

Crown lands is also progressively addressing the backlog of updates for tenures (leases, licences, enclosure permits) and roads, having reduced the backlog from 40,000 updates in 2010 to 19,500 in September 2011. Continuation of this project is subject to funding.

Recommendation 2

The number of Aboriginal land claims being determined annually has increased threefold since 2007. In spite of this, the lodgements have increased so significantly, with approximately 20,000 land claims having been lodged in the past three years, that it has not been possible to reduce the backlog. Measures are being taken to employ a computerised system that has been developed to provide a bulk approach by geographical region to assist.

In addition, the time taken to transfer the title of granted land to claimant Aboriginal Land Councils has been reduced by the employment of three surveyors and the engagement of five public works surveyors. The backlog of granted claims awaiting survey has been reduced.

Should your officers require clarification on this matter, I have asked Mr Craig Barnes, Deputy General Manager, Crown Lands to be available to assist you. You may contact Mr Barnes on (02) 4920 5055.

Yours sincerely



**RICHARD SHELDRAKE
DIRECTOR GENERAL**