

**Submission  
No 12**

**EXAMINATION OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDIT  
REPORTS MAY 2017 - DECEMBER 2017**

**Organisation:** Department of Premier and Cabinet

**Date Received:** 18 December 2018



# Premier & Cabinet

Ref: A2786759

Mr Bruce Notley-Smith  
Chair – Public Accounts Committee  
Parliament of NSW  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Notley-Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update to the Public Accounts Committee on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's (DPC) response to the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Report on *Government Advertising Campaigns for 2015-16 and 2016-17*, tabled 2 November 2017.

As you would be aware, DPC is committed to ensuring all agencies comply with the regulatory framework for government advertising. Since the audit, DPC has taken action to strengthen our leadership and guidance to agencies and confirm effective governance and implementation of advertising campaigns, peer reviews, cost-benefit analyses, branding and evaluation. Attached is a detailed implementation report of responses to the audit recommendations.

In response to your invitation to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the audit report process, I would like to acknowledge that the audits are conducted efficiently and professionally. The audits, however, primarily focus on compliance of completed campaigns and are therefore of limited benefit to DPC and provide few strategic recommendations for improving overall government advertising. Including experts in the audit process may enhance the interpretation and presentation of media and advertising issues in future audits.

Should you require any further comments or additional information in relation to this response, please contact Isobel Scouler on 02 9228 3820 or [isobel.scouler@dpc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:isobel.scouler@dpc.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely,

**Tim Reardon**  
Secretary

18 December 2018

## IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Report on Government Advertising: Campaigns for 2015-16 and 2016-17

#### Audit Report issued on 2 November 2017

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> By July 2018, the Department of Premier and Cabinet should:		<b>ACCEPTED OR REJECTED</b>	<b>ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b> Section of agency responsible for implementation
1	Clarify the meaning of 'objective presentation in a fair and accessible manner' as referenced in Section 2.1 (iii.) of the NSW Government Advertising Guidelines.	<b>Accepted</b>	DPC will develop agency guidance to explain 'objective presentation in a fair and accessible manner' as referenced in the NSW Government Advertising Guidelines.	July 2018	<b>Completed March 2018</b> DPC developed and published agency guidance to explain 'objective presentation in a fair and accessible manner' as referenced in the NSW Government Advertising Guidelines on the DPC Communications & Engagement website.	DPC Communications and Engagement Branch
2	Require the head of an agency to publicly report the reasons why he/she is satisfied there is an 'urgent circumstance' to advertise before completing the relevant compliance processes.	<b>Accepted</b>	DPC will liaise with the Audit Office further and develop guidance for appropriate agency reporting related to 'urgent campaigns'.	July 2018	<b>Completed March 2018</b> The requirement for a head of an agency to publicly report the reasons why they are satisfied there is an 'urgent circumstance' to advertise was communicated to agencies and published on the DPC website.	DPC Communications and Engagement Branch
3	Consider methods to adapt the peer review process to enable it to be conducted as close as possible to the release of advertisements where the need to commence advertising is deemed to be 'urgent.'	<b>Accepted in Principle</b>	DPC believes the current peer review process is appropriate for urgent advertising but will consult agencies about peer reviews conducted under 'urgent circumstances' and develop guidance and educate agencies about ensuring peer reviews are completed prior to campaign end.	July 2018	<b>Completed March 2018</b> DPC has established clear timeframes for urgent peer reviews and communicated this information to agencies at a whole of government agency forum. This information is published on the DPC website.	DPC Communications and Engagement Branch
4	Work with the Treasury to ensure requirements for cost benefit analysis in Section 6 of the <i>NSW Government Advertising Guidelines</i> are fully reflected	<b>Accepted</b>	DPC will liaise with Treasury to ensure guidance for cost benefit analysis of government advertising is consistent in the requirements	July 2018	<b>Completed March 2018</b> DPC has updated its CBA guidance and communicated to all Agencies that they must follow the 3 specific documents	DPC Communications and Engagement Branch

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	in the <i>Cost-Benefit Analysis Framework</i> for Government Advertising and Information Campaigns.	specified.		related to cost-benefit analyses of government advertising: the <i>Government Advertising Guidelines</i> ; <i>Cost-Benefit Analysis Framework for Government Advertising and Information Campaigns</i> ; <i>Cost Benefit Analysis of Government Advertising: A User Guide</i> .	

