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Auditor-General for Australia



4 February 2022

Ms Lucy Wicks MP
Chair
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
By email: jcpaa@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Wicks

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Report 486, *Inquiry into regulatory activities*

I am writing in relation to the recommendation directed to the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) contained in the JCPAA Report 486: *Regulatory activities - Inquiry into Auditor-General's Reports 33, 47, 48 (2019-20) and 5 and 8 (2020-21)*:

Recommendation 2: The Committee recommends that the Auditor-General consider conducting a follow-up audit of Department of Agriculture and Water and the Environment in 2023 to assess the department's progress in implementing the audit report's recommendations. The Committee intends to list this program in its future 'audit priorities of the Parliament' to advocate for a further audit and continued oversight of the department until substantial change is demonstrated.

I will consider including a follow-up audit of the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment's implementation of the recommendations of Auditor-General Report No.47 2019–20 *Referrals, Assessments and Approvals of Controlled Actions under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) as part of the development of the Australian National Audit Office's (ANAO) 2022–23 Annual Audit Work Program. The work program is designed to inform the Parliament, the public and government entities of planned audit coverage to commence in 2022–23 and will be published on the ANAO website in early July 2022.

You may be aware that another audit of the department's administration of the EPBC Act is currently in progress. This audit, [*Management of Threatened Species and Ecological Communities under the EPBC Act*](#), examines the listing of threatened species and ecological communities under the EPBC Act and the development and implementation of statutory conservation planning documents (conservation advice, recovery plans and threat abatement plans). The audit is due to table in March 2022.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Grant Hehir.

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