



Australian Government

Department of Finance

Rosemary Huxtable PSM
Acting Secretary

Our Ref: SEC0013965

Senator Dean Smith
Chair
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Smith

In response to your Committee Secretary's letter of 19 October 2016, please find attached a submission from the Department of Finance (Finance) to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit's (JCPAA) new inquiry on the Commonwealth Performance Framework – Inquiry based on Auditor-General's reports 6 (2016-17) and 31 (2015-16).

Finance looks forward to discussing the submission with the Committee at the public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, 23 November 2016.

Yours sincerely



Rosemary Huxtable
Acting Secretary

11 November 2016

Commonwealth Performance Framework – Inquiry based on Auditor-General's Reports 6 (2016-17) and 31 (2015-16)

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

Submission by the Department of Finance

November 2016

Introduction

1. The current inquiry is concerned with any items, matters or circumstances connected with the Auditor-General's Report No. 6 (2016-17) *Corporate Planning in the Australian Public Sector* and the Auditor-General's Report No. 31 (2015-16) *Administration of the Higher Education Loan Program Debt and Repayments* as they relate to the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework. The Department of Finance (Finance) has been invited to provide a submission to the inquiry, and does so only in relation to Report No. 6 (2016-17).
2. The objective of the audit into *Corporate Planning in the Australian Public Sector* was to examine the implementation of the corporate plan requirement under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and enhanced Commonwealth performance framework that sits as part of the legislative scheme.
3. The enhanced Commonwealth performance framework took effect from July 2015, with the support of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (the Committee), following an extensive public consultation process undertaken by Finance. The framework aims to improve the line of sight between what Commonwealth entities intend to deliver and what is delivered. Corporate plans (and Portfolio Budget Statements) and annual reports (including annual performance statements) are the bookends of the framework.

Implementing the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework – progress to date

4. The first full performance reporting cycle under the PGPA Act has now been completed, with the publishing of the 2015-16 annual performance statements in 2015-16 annual reports.
5. Finance is currently undertaking an analysis of the 2015-16 annual performance statements and will release a lessons learned paper in the new year. This will include examples of better practice. This is a similar process to the process followed in analysing and promulgating lessons learned from the 2015-16 corporate plans. A copy of the lessons learned paper will be provided to the Committee when complete.
6. Commonwealth entities and companies were required to release their 2016-17 corporate plans by 31 August 2016. In 2015-16, 87 per cent of eligible entities published their corporate plans by 31 August. In 2016-17, the proportion increased to 96 per cent.
7. A preliminary analysis is that there has been a general improvement in the quality of the 2016-17 corporate plans, particularly in how entities are defining their purposes and in how they are integrating the different elements required under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule) on corporate plans. Entities have refined their approaches and the plans are structurally much improved, making them more accessible to the casual reader.

8. Further work is required to improve the quality of the planned performance information outlined in the 2016-17 corporate plans. In particular, a better balance could be achieved between the use of quantitative and qualitative performance criteria, with a greater take-up of benchmarking, surveys and evaluations, all of which are encouraged under the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework. Some entities are already moving in this direction but there is room for further progress. This will be a major focus over 2016-17 in the lead up to the release of the 2017-18 corporate plans. Community of Practice events for November have already been organised and are intended to stimulate discussion on improving performance information. These Community of Practice events are being run in cooperation with the Australian and New Zealand School of Government and will be held in Canberra (2 events), Sydney and Melbourne.
9. Past attempts to improve the quality of performance information in the Commonwealth have had mixed results, in part because insufficient attention has been given to assisting and embedding change in the system. In implementing the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework, Finance has provided guidance and assistance to entities by published written guidance in the form of Resource Management Guides, held Community of Practice events in Canberra and interstate, reviewed draft corporate plans and annual performance statements on behalf of entities, and released regular PMRA newsletters and email broadcasts to keep entities informed of emerging better practice and other developments. This work was recently reviewed by the Australian National Audit Office in its report No.6, (2016-17), and found to be “effective” with “high levels of satisfaction” expressed by entities.
10. Finance has reviewed its guidance documents to support the development of better performance information. As occurred for 2015-16 corporate plans, a lessons learned paper based on analysis of 2016-17 corporate plans will also be released. In Finance’s view, a better system is emerging, albeit slowly. Consistent with previous evidence to the Committee, Finance believes it will take three to five reporting cycles for mature practice to emerge. The ANAO has also noted that it would “most likely be a number of years, before there is a demonstrable improvement in the Commonwealth’s performance framework as a result of the introduction of the PGPA Act.”¹

Response to the findings of Auditor-General Report No. 6 (2016-17)

11. In the Auditor-General Report No. 6 (2016-17) the ANAO assessed progress in implementing the corporate plan requirements under the PGPA Act. The report made a number of findings, and identified key learnings and opportunities for improvement. Finance supports the ANAO’s findings.

Clarification of requirements

12. The ANAO identified some requirements under the PGPA Rule 2014 that were open to interpretation or that would otherwise benefit from further clarification in guidance from Finance. These requirements relate to an entities statement of purpose(s) and the four year reporting period covered by corporate plans.

¹ Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Report 441: Inquiry into *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* Rules Development, page 104.

13. The ANAO found that purpose statements in a sample of corporate plans that they examined for this audit were not always expressed clearly and concisely, making it difficult for a reader to understand the objectives and outcomes an entity seeks to achieve.
14. The ANAO also found that the requirement for entities to include a statement about an entity's environment, performance, capability, and risk oversight and management for each reporting period covered by the plan, was potentially confusing. It suggests that this could be misinterpreted as requiring corporate plans to present discrete information for each of the four years.
15. Finance has addressed both these issues in updated guidance issued in July 2016, incorporating lessons learned from the 2015-16 corporate planning process. See Appendix A.
16. In the updated guidance, Finance has stressed the importance of including clearly identifiable purposes in a relevant and concise manner and distinguishing purpose statements from other strategic statements, such as mission statements, vision or strategic goals. The guidance now includes practical examples of entity purpose statements and also presents a visual example of an entity's purposes and activities structure.
17. The updated guidance also clarifies the requirement to cover a period of at least four reporting periods. In particular, the guidance indicates an expectation that issues under environment, capability and risk oversight and management are discussed for the whole period covered by the corporate plan (over four years). Performance criteria, however, are still required to be specified for each reporting period covered by the plan.

Monitoring and review of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework

18. As required by the PGPA Act, an independent statutory review of the Act and rules is scheduled to be conducted in 2017.²
19. The ANAO report suggests that this review should consider the inclusion of resourcing information and key entity risks in future corporate plans. It is proposed that this would help drive business performance and better inform stakeholders about the operations of the entity.
20. The review will be set up in consultation with the Committee and, as required by Section 112(1) of the PGPA Act, Finance will ensure that these matters are flagged for consideration in the review.

Internal project management arrangements

21. The ANAO report notes weaknesses in the early phase project management arrangements established by Finance for the implementation of the corporate plan requirements, and that this led to some slippage in some of the timeframes for the delivery of the project. The ANAO suggests Finance should strengthen its project management arrangements to support the timely release of future legislative requirements and related guidance.

² Section 112 of the PGPA Act requires an independent review of the Act and Rules to be conducted as soon as practicable after the end of three years after that section commences.

22. Finance integrated projects relating to the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework into the work of the Public Management Reform Agenda Taskforce in late 2014, and managed these projects under the broad project management framework that related to the Taskforce. A project-specific project plan and revised time-line for the corporate plan project was finalised in early 2016 and is being followed.
23. Separate project plans have been developed for other projects under the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework, including for annual reports and for the development of better performance indicators.

Key learnings for all entities

24. The ANAO audit also identified a number of key learnings for Commonwealth entities and companies in the development of future corporate plans. Finance has worked with the ANAO to incorporate these, together with the lessons learned identified by Finance in its *Corporate plans 2015–16: Lessons learned* document, into its guidance and to help focus discussion at the community of practice sessions. See [Appendix B](#).

Second ANAO Audit of Corporate Planning in the Australian Public Service

25. The Auditor-General has recently announced his intention to conduct a performance audit of 2016-17 corporate plans.
26. The objective of this audit is to assess entities' progress in implementing corporate planning under the PGPA Act. The ANAO proposes to review Finance's implementation of the findings and opportunities for improvement identified in Auditor-General's Report No.6 (2016-17). It is expected the report will be presented for tabling in the 2017 Autumn session of the Parliament.
27. Finance will continue to work with the ANAO to identify further areas for improvement.



Australian Government
Department of Finance

GUIDE

Resource Management Guide No. 132

Corporate plans for Commonwealth entities

JULY 2016

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Audience

This guide applies to officers from Commonwealth entities that have responsibility for developing their corporate plan. The guide is also intended to support officers who manage the activities (as described in the corporate plan) of an entity.

Key points

This guide:

- gives guidance on the obligations of accountable authorities under section 35 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) to prepare corporate plans for their entities
- provides information on the minimum requirements, as prescribed by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule) in section 16E, for corporate plans published by entities.

This guide applies to corporate plans that commence on or after 1 July 2015.

Resources

This guide is available on the Department of Finance website at www.finance.gov.au and relates to the following other guidance:

RMG No. 130	Overview of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
RMG No. 131	Developing good performance information	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
RMG No. 133	Corporate plans for Commonwealth companies	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
RMG No. 134	Annual performance statements for Commonwealth entities	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
RMG No. 135	Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
RMG No. 136	Annual reports for corporate Commonwealth entities	http://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/
	Guide to preparing the Portfolio Budget Statements	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/performance/pbs-paes/
	Commonwealth risk management policy	www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-risk-management-policy.pdf
RMG 126	Commonwealth GBE governance and oversight guidelines	www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/gbe/
	Regulator performance framework	www.cuttingredtape.gov.au/resources/rpf

Part 1 – Introduction

1. An objective of the PGPA Act is to establish a performance framework across Commonwealth entities that provides meaningful information to parliament and the public (section 5(b)). The PGPA Act (section 35) requires the accountable authorities of all Commonwealth entities subject to the Act to prepare and publish corporate plans every year.¹
2. Corporate plans are designed to be the primary planning documents of entities. A corporate plan clearly sets out:
 - what an entity’s purposes are
 - what it will do to achieve its purposes
 - how it will know that it has achieved its purposes.

The plan informs the reader about the significant activities the entity will undertake over the period of the plan.

3. The minimum content requirements for corporate plans are set out in section 16E of the PGPA Rule. The corporate plan must include:
 - an **introduction**
 - the **purposes** of the entity
 - the broader **environment** within which the entity works
 - the planned **performance** of the entity (and any subsidiaries that contribute to achieving its purposes), including details of the methodology, data and information that it will use to measure and assess its performance
 - the **capability** of the entity, including the plans and strategies it will implement to achieve its purposes
 - the entity’s **risk oversight and management** systems.

Entities do **not** have to structure their corporate plan in the same order as the minimum requirements of the PGPA Rule.

4. This guide provides information on the minimum requirements for corporate plans, as set out by the PGPA Act and the PGPA Rule. The guidance recognises that it is the accountable authorities of entities who are responsible for developing and tailoring their corporate plans to suit their entity’s particular circumstances.

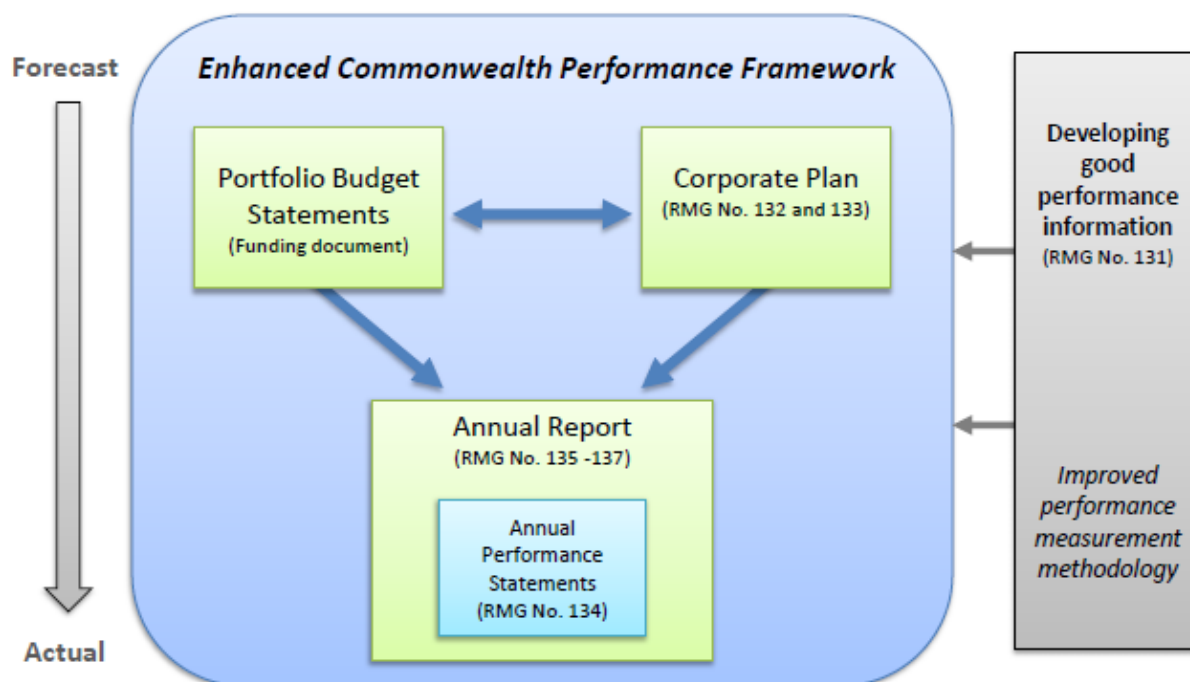
Part 2 – The role of corporate plans in the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework

5. The enhanced Commonwealth performance framework addresses performance planning, measurement and reporting through three main concepts: **entity, purposes** and **activities**. At its most basic, the framework is focused on each entity covered by the PGPA Act. Each entity is required to identify its purposes. The purposes of a Commonwealth entity are the strategic objectives that the entity will pursue over the reporting period. Lastly, the framework focuses on the activities of the entity, which are its core areas of effort and the actions that it undertakes to pursue and fulfil its purposes.

¹ An entity’s enabling legislation (or existing practices) may already address the planning documentation that addresses the minimum requirements of the PGPA Act and PGPA rule corporate planning requirements. However, these documents may be known by other names (e.g. strategic plan, etc).

- The corporate plan, Portfolio Budget Statements and the annual performance statements are the core elements of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework. The corporate plan is developed at the beginning of the reporting cycle and sets out an entity’s strategies for achieving its purposes and how success will be measured. The Portfolio Budget Statements sets out the funding for the entity and how the impact of that expenditure will be measured. Annual performance statements, which are included as part of the entity’s annual report, are produced at the end of the reporting cycle and provide an assessment of the extent to which an entity has succeeded in achieving its purposes. Figure 1 shows the main components of the framework and the annual cycle.

Figure 1: The Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework



- Many of the minimum content requirements for entities’ corporate plans are linked to the content requirements for annual performance statements (see PGPA Rule section 16F and Resource Management Guide No. 134 *Annual performance statements for Commonwealth entities*). This alignment recognises the close relationship between the main components of the framework. The annual performance statements report on the actual results achieved in the reporting period against the planned performance criteria set out in the corporate plan.
- The requirements for corporate plans are designed to allow each entity to present planning information at the level of detail it believes will best inform the reader of the results the entity intends to achieve over the term of the plan.

Part 3 – Key priorities and objectives of the Australian Government

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013

34 Key priorities and objectives of the Australian Government

The Australian Government may, from time to time, publish a statement setting out its key priorities and objectives.

9. If the Australian Government has published a statement of its priorities and objectives under section 34 of the PGPA Act, subsection 35(3) of the Act requires a corporate plan to explain how an entity's activities contribute to achieving those priorities and objectives. This requirement only applies if the purpose(s) of the entity relate to the priorities and objectives published in the statement. In addition, for entities that have enabling legislation, the requirement only applies to the extent that compliance with subsection 35(3) is not inconsistent with compliance with the enabling legislation.

Part 4 – Relationship between corporate plans and Portfolio Budget Statements

10. A Finance Secretary Direction on 'Requirements for Performance Information in Portfolio Budget Statements' is now in place, which requires, amongst other things, entities to continue to include performance criteria, and indicative current year results, in their Portfolio Budget Statements.
11. As a result, entities now have to report on performance criteria in both their corporate plans and Portfolio Budget Statements in their annual performance statements at the end of each financial year/reporting period. The Portfolio Budget Statements therefore remain an important element of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework.
12. The Direction requires entities to include at least one performance criterion in their Portfolio Budget Statements for each program. Entities are also required to map each of these performance criterion to corporate plan purposes to ensure a clear read between the documents. This will assist entities integrate the Portfolio Budget Statements performance criteria into their annual performance statements.
13. Where this includes a new material program, entities are expected to show all relevant performance criteria in their Portfolio Budget Statements. Further information on this process can be obtained from the Finance issued '[Guide to preparing the Portfolio Budget Statements](#)'.
14. Entities will therefore need to carefully manage the relationship between the corporate plan and the Portfolio Budget Statements, given the continued requirement to report on all performance criteria in the annual performance statements at the end of the financial year.

Need to Align Documents

15. Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plans are produced at different times at the start of each financial year/reporting period. Portfolio Budget Statements are produced at Budget, prior to the start of the financial year, while corporate plans are required by 31 August, after the start of the financial year (although this does not prevent earlier production if desired). However, the performance criteria in each document will need to

be reported collectively in a single annual performance statement (placed in annual reports at the end of the financial year).

16. Accordingly, it is important that the Portfolio Budget Statements and corporate plan work together and complement each other to ensure a consistent performance story is able to be presented in the annual performance statements.
17. It is expected that entities will build on the performance criteria from their Portfolio Budget Statements and provide, where justified, more detailed performance criteria in their corporate plan. This positions the corporate plan as the primary non-financial performance planning document directed at providing the reader with a comprehensive understanding of how an entity intends to measure and assess its performance. Importantly, entities need to ensure that corporate plans are updated for any new budget measures that may be presented in subsequent portfolio estimates statements (for example, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements). This includes where additional resources have been made available or where funds have been re-appropriated between outcomes.

Inclusion of Current Year Performance Results in Portfolio Budget Statements

18. The Finance Secretary’s Direction on the Portfolio Budget Statements requires entities to include forecasts of program performance against the expected targets identified in their Portfolio Budget Statements for the current financial year.
19. It is strongly suggested that entities not change the current year performance criteria when addressing this requirement. Entities must report in their annual performance statements against the performance criteria in their current year portfolio estimates statements (Portfolio Budget Statements, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements and other portfolio statements) and corporate plans².

Inclusion of Annual Performance Statements in Portfolio Budget Statements

20. The Finance Direction on Portfolio Budget Statements also requires entity annual performance statements to be included in entity Portfolio Budget Statements from 2017-18. This further reinforces the need for entities to consider and carefully manage the compatibility of performance criteria between the corporate plan and Portfolio Budget Statements.

² Any change to **existing** performance criteria should preferably be done through the corporate plan. If changes are made to **existing** performance criteria, then entities should clearly identify the change in the immediately following document for example Portfolio Budget Statements or corporate plan.

Part 5 – Subsidiaries

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013

35 Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Subsidiaries

- (5) If the Commonwealth entity has subsidiaries, the corporate plan must cover both the entity and its subsidiaries. In particular, for each subsidiary the corporate plan must include details of any matters prescribed by the rules, so far as they are applicable.

21. The PGPA Act requires a corporate plan to cover both the entity and any subsidiaries it has. Under section 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule, the corporate plan must include a summary of how any subsidiary of the entity will contribute to achieving the entity's purposes.
22. In practice, corporate plans will inherently incorporate any subsidiaries an entity may have; however, this may not require each subsidiary to be separately or specifically identified in the corporate plan. Entities may determine, on a case-by-case basis, if separate identification of a subsidiary is required. The main consideration will be the significance of the subsidiary and the effect it is expected to have on the fulfilment of the entity's purposes with subsidiaries that have a significant effect or contribution, specifically addressed in the entities corporate plan.

Part 6 – Overview of the corporate plan

What is a corporate plan?

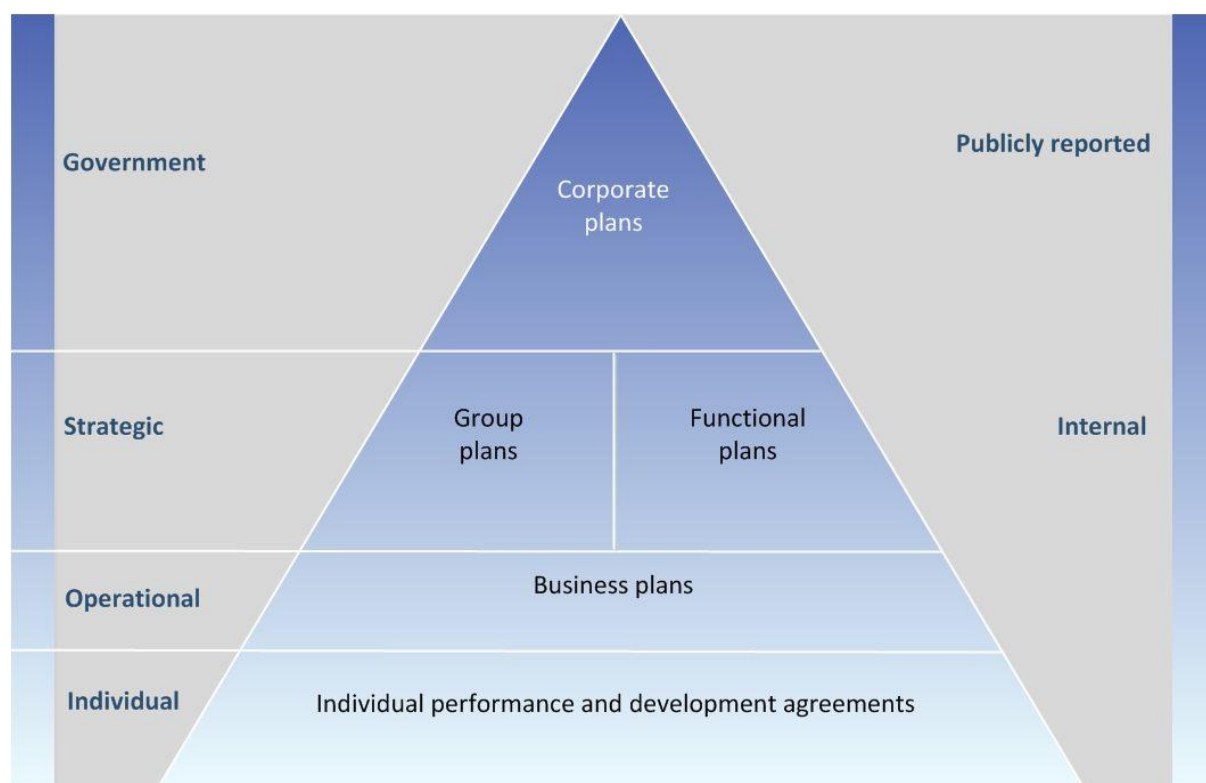
23. The corporate plan is the primary planning document of an entity, informed by the entity's internal planning processes, setting out the objectives and strategies it intends to pursue in achieving its purposes over at least four reporting periods. The size and complexity of an entity determines the scope and complexity of its internal planning processes and, by extension, the content of its corporate plan. In many cases, corporate plans will be informed by an entity's strategic, operational and even individual planning processes. The majority of corporate plans will be public documents.³

How the corporate plan fits into entity internal planning processes (the apex of entity planning)

24. Figure 2 illustrates how the internal planning processes of an entity underpin and support the publicly reported corporate plan. Planning processes at the strategic level (e.g. group and functional plans), operational level (e.g. business plans), and individual level (e.g. individual performance and development agreements) fulfil specific planning requirements within an entity. These internal plans are often too detailed and internally focused to be released publicly, and some may contain confidential or sensitive information.

³ Most corporate plans will be public documents. However, in some circumstances plans will contain commercially sensitive information or information on national security matters and may necessitate the publication of a modified corporate plan. For information on the publication of corporate plan please see Part 10 of this guide.

Figure 2: Generic organisational planning hierarchy



25. Each entity needs to decide how its internal planning processes may be best used in developing the corporate plan. This will involve determining what aspects of its internal planning give the best quality insight into its purposes, significant activities and intended results. The corporate plan is unlikely to be a simple summation of internal planning.

Integrating the minimum requirements into a corporate plan

26. Entities have the flexibility to structure their corporate plan in a way that provides the best mechanism for communicating the entity’s purposes and its proposed activities.
27. The PGPA Rule outlines the six requirements that need to be addressed in the corporate plan. These are:
- a. Introduction
 - b. Purposes
 - c. Environment
 - d. Performance
 - e. Capability
 - f. Risk oversight and management
28. Entities are not obliged to follow the structure of the PGPA Rule when they are developing their corporate plan. In fact, entities are encouraged to consider how the minimum requirements relate to each other and how the corporate plan can be structured to ensure the requirements work together to enhance the cohesion of the document.

Practical example 1: Integrating minimum requirements for a corporate plan

Reserve Bank of Australia Corporate Plan 2015/16

<http://www.rba.gov.au/about-rba/pdf/corporate-plan.pdf>

The RBA took an innovative approach to structuring its corporate plan. The plan is divided into sections based on the RBA's seven functions. Each section provides information on purposes, environment, performance and capability, which gives the context for each function. This allows strong links to be maintained between the RBA's purposes and other elements of the corporate plan, which aids the readability of the document.

Part 7 – Minimum requirements of the corporate plan

Period of corporate plan

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

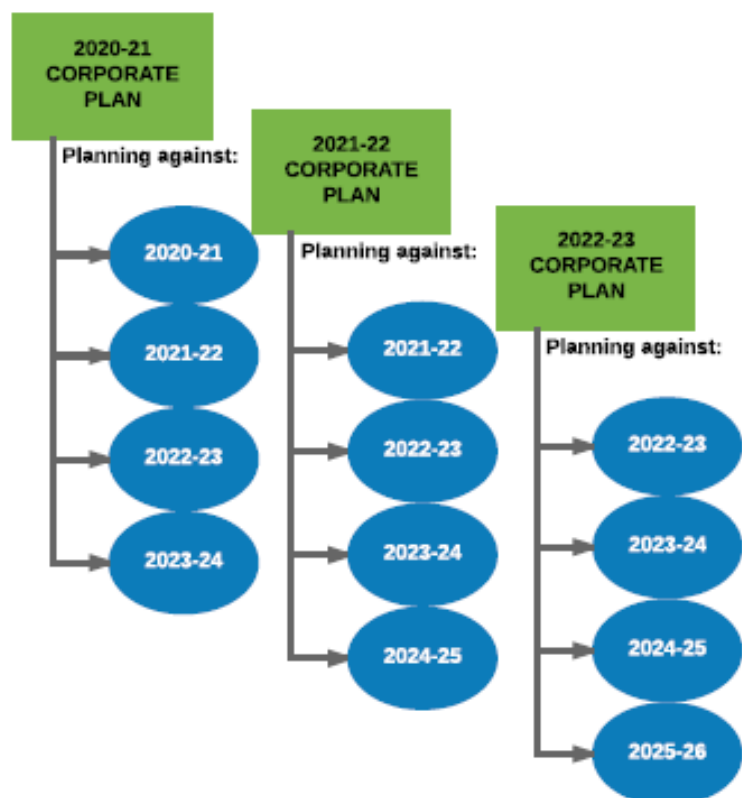
Period corporate plan must cover

- (1) The corporate plan for a Commonwealth entity must cover a period of at least 4 reporting periods for the entity, starting on the first day of the reporting period for which the plan is prepared under paragraph 35(1)(a) of the Act.

29. Every Commonwealth entity subject to the PGPA Act is required to produce a corporate plan at least once each reporting period. Each plan, unless otherwise prescribed by the entity's enabling legislation, is **required to cover at least four reporting periods** (usually four financial years). The first of these four reporting periods is known as 'the reporting period for which the plan is prepared under paragraph 35(1)(a) of the Act'.
30. For example, a corporate plan prepared by an entity for the 2020-21 financial year would be titled as that 'entity's 2020-21 corporate plan' and that plan must contain content that addresses the minimum requirements from 2020-21 to 2023-24 (minimum four reporting periods)⁴. For the following reporting period (2021-22), the entity will again prepare a corporate plan and this plan would be titled as that 'entity's 2021-22 corporate plan'. This updated corporate plan must contain content that addresses the minimum requirements from 2021-22 to 2024-25 (minimum four reporting periods). Figure 3 illustrates this example.

⁴ After the 2020-21 reporting period this entity will also produce its annual performance statements for that period that should be titled as that 'entity's 2020-21 Annual performance statements'. These statements will report the entity's actual performance in the 2020-21 reporting period against its performance criteria for that reporting period (i.e. the first period covered by the 2020-21 corporate plan) as prescribed in the entity's 2020-21 corporate plan.

Figure 3: Period of corporate plan



Four-year time horizon

31. The four-year time horizon for a corporate plan allows an entity to outline its medium-term strategic direction, including detail about its significant activities, capability and risks. It also allows an entity to identify the key challenges and decision points and any trade-offs that may be required in achieving its purposes.
32. The PGPA Rule sets a minimum of four years (or reporting periods) for corporate plans. However, it does not preclude an entity from producing a corporate plan that covers a longer period if that best addresses the entity’s specific requirements.
33. All six of the minimum requirements under subsection 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule are required to cover the four reporting periods of the corporate plan. It is expected that issues under the **Environment, Capability, and Risk Oversight and Management** requirements are discussed for the whole period covered by the corporate plan (four years). Where some change is expected to occur over this four year period, or between particular reporting periods that occur with the four year period, then this should be discussed and the timelines made explicit.
34. For the **Performance** requirement, an entity must specifically cover the four reporting periods of its corporate plan. It is expected that an entity will set out its performance criteria and indicate which of those performance criteria apply for each of the four reporting periods.

Practical example 2: Demonstrating performance criteria over a four-year time horizon

Australian Maritime Safety Authority Corporate Plan 2016-2020

<https://www.amsa.gov.au/forms-and-publications/about-amsa/publications/Corporate-Plans/AMSA-Corporate-Plan-2016-20.pdf>

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) uses a table to illustrate which of their performance criteria apply to specific reporting periods (i.e. financial years). This approach enables a reader to clearly identify when a performance criterion will be reported against over the four year period of the corporate plan.

No.	Measure	Target	Regulator Performance Framework (RPF) measure	RPF Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (see page 7)	Portfolio Budget Statement (page)	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Focus Area 3.2: Saving lives daily through search and rescue									
3.2.1	Maximise percentage of saved lives as a proportion of lives at risk (a person is defined as being at risk if the person has a chance of surviving the initial maritime or aviation incident)	100%	No	NA	93	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2.2	Provision of capability to conduct search and rescue operations					✓	✓	✓	✓
	incidents (annual)	8500	No	NA	93				
	searches (annual)	740	No	NA	93				
3.2.3	Availability of distress and safety communications services	100%	No	NA	93	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2.4	Median time (minutes) for the Rescue Coordination Centre to initiate a response	30	No	NA	93	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2.5	For incidents that AMSA has SAR coordination responsibility, the median time for an asset to be on-scene is:					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Day	150 mins	No	NA	93				
	Night	180 mins	No	NA	93				
Focus Area 3.4: Delivering an effective marine pollution response capability									
3.4.1	Maritime environmental response capability is available to respond to a pollution incident	100%	No	NA	93	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Table taken from p.33 of the *Australian Maritime Safety Authority Corporate Plan 2016-20*.

35. Paragraph 35(1)(a) of the PGPA Act states that the corporate plan for a Commonwealth entity must be prepared at least once each reporting period. As a reporting period is usually a financial year, this means that the corporate plan must be prepared each financial year. The plan must start on the first day of the first reporting period to which it relates. Subsection 16E(6) allows for a corporate plan to be varied during the reporting period (see Part 11 of this guide for more information).
36. The intention of the corporate plan is to be the primary public planning document of the organisation. This guide recognises that entities may wish to add further content that is relevant to explaining how they plan to deliver upon their specified purposes. **Entities have discretion to include any additional information that helps articulate how it intends to achieve its purposes.**

Part 7(a) – Introduction (statement of preparation and period of coverage)

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity’s corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
1	Introduction	The following: (a) a statement that the plan is prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Act; (b) the reporting period for which the plan is prepared; (c) the reporting periods covered by the plan.

37. The corporate plan must include an introductory statement that:

- states that the plan has been prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the PGPA Act. The statement may also refer to any other legislation applicable to the preparation of the plan
- specifies the reporting period for which the plan is prepared (usually the first financial year of the minimum four-year period covered by the plan; e.g. 2016–17)
- specifies the reporting periods covered by the plan (usually four financial years; e.g. 2016–17 to 2019–20).

Example statement of preparation

I/We, as the accountable authority of [entity name], present the [year for which the plan is prepared] [entity name] corporate plan, which covers the periods of [minimum four-year period], as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and [reference to sections of other applicable legislation].

Part 7(b) – Purposes

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity’s corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
2	Purposes	The purposes of the entity.

38. The corporate plan must state the entity’s purposes over the next four years. This goes to why the entity exists. In simple terms, the purposes of a Commonwealth entity are the strategic objectives that the entity intends to pursue over the reporting period. The aim of the purposes statement is to give context to the significant activities that the entity will pursue over the period covered by the plan.
39. When constructing purposes statements, entities are encouraged to consider all sources that contribute to defining their objectives, such as:
- key government priorities and objectives (statements made under section 34 of the PGPA Act)
 - Portfolio Budget Statements (outcomes and programs)
 - enabling legislation
 - administrative arrangement orders
 - other relevant legislation
 - other sources (e.g. national partnership agreements).
40. It is important to include clearly identifiable purposes in a relevant and concise manner in the corporate plan in order to allow a clear read through to the results reported at the end of the reporting period through the annual performance statements. An entity’s annual performance statements are structured using the purposes as outlined in the corporate plan for the reporting period.
41. Some entities may choose to include other strategic statements (such as mission statements, vision or strategic goals) in their corporate plans. These other strategic statements should be relevant to the entity’s purpose statement. Clearly articulated purposes should be identifiable in all corporate plans. Strategic statements should not be included as a substitute for a clear statement of purposes.

Practical example 3: Clearly identifiable and concise purposes

Department of Environment Corporate Plan 2015-16

<http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/5089338a-2b9b-4ec3-ba43-2c063aa01dc0/files/corporate-plan-2015-16.pdf>

The Department of Environment’s corporate plan provides four clear and concise purposes:

Environment and Heritage – *Conserve, protect and sustainably manage Australia’s terrestrial and marine biodiversity, threatened species, ecosystems, environment and heritage*

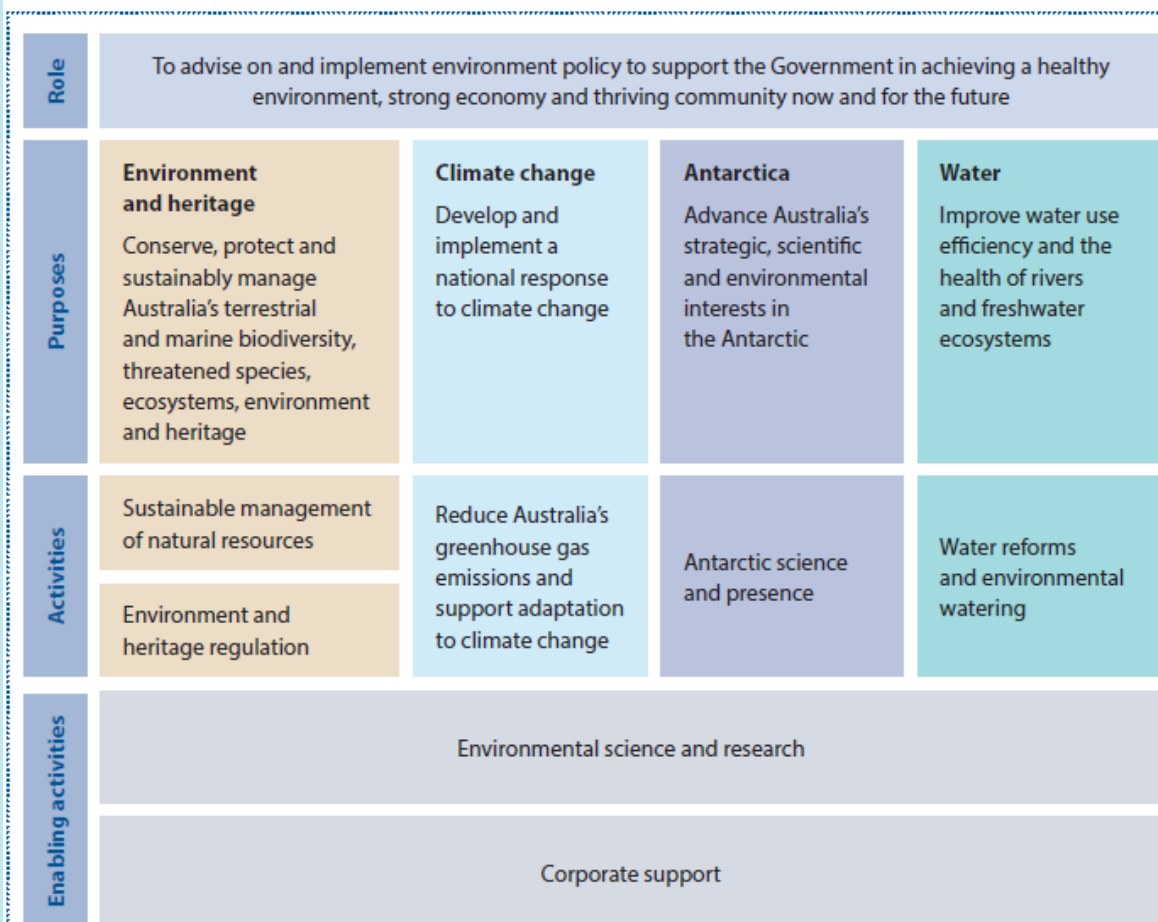
Climate change – *Develop and implement a national response to climate change*

Antarctica – *Advance Australia’s strategic, scientific and environmental interests in the Antarctic*

Water – *Improve water use efficiency and the health of rivers and freshwater ecosystems.*

These purposes have been illustrated in the corporate plan using a diagram that maps the key activities to the relevant purpose (see below).

The Department’s purposes and activities structure



This approach enables the reader to quickly understand what the department's purposes are and the corresponding activities that are intended to achieve the department's purposes. It also provides a sound platform for the department to report against its performance in achieving its purposes for the reporting period, via the annual performance statements.

42. Ideally, the purposes statement will be relevant for the medium to long term rather than simply a list of short-term goals. It may talk about the entity's significant activities during the period covered by the plan and the high-level results those activities are expected to achieve, including the wider social, economic and environmental effects.
43. If relevant, the purposes statement must include any key priorities and objectives relevant to the entity that have been published in a statement by the Australian Government under section 34 of the PGPA Act. Subsection 35(3) of the PGPA Act requires that if the Australian Government has published a statement of its key priorities and objectives under section 34 of the PGPA Act, and the purposes of an entity relate to those priorities and objectives, then the entity's corporate plan must set out how the activities of the entity will contribute to achieving those priorities and objectives. Subsection 35(4) says that if the entity has enabling legislation, then subsection 35(3) applies only to the extent that compliance with that subsection is not inconsistent with compliance with that enabling legislation.
44. Entities may also address other legislative requirements and other specified outcomes, targets or directions of government that they may be subject to. These inclusions are balanced against the interests of keeping the purposes statement concise.

Purposes statement

Entities should consider existing authoritative documents when defining their purposes, such as:

- enabling legislation as passed by the parliament
- the Council of Australian Governments or joint ministerial councils
- the outcomes statements of appropriations legislation and Portfolio Budget Statement
- descriptions published in the Administrative Arrangements Order.

A purposes statement should be concise and relevant for the medium to long term.

Part 7(c) – Environment

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity's corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
3	Environment	The environment in which the entity will operate for each reporting period covered by the plan.

45. The corporate plan must discuss the environment in which the entity will operate over the period of the plan (at least four reporting periods). In addressing the environment requirement entities may provide an explanation of the nature and intricacies of the environment in which the entity operates. This could include demographic, geographic or temporal factors that affect the entity and its work, and the regulatory or competitive environment that it operates in.
46. Consideration of the **Environment** requirement, may be achieved by weaving a discussion of the environment into the context in which the entity operates, the activities undertaken and the purposes it seeks to achieve.
47. An entity could also discuss the main external and internal factors that affect or influence its performance. For example, the entity may describe the conditions, circumstances and trends that may affect its capacity to achieve its purposes or the demand for, or supply of, its services. These may include macroeconomic and microeconomic factors (productivity, efficiency, labour supply and revenue), administrative factors (legislation, regulations and government policy), technological factors (computer software and automation) and social factors (changes in consumer preferences and trends).
48. Where environmental issues relate to the risks faced by the entity, identification in a way that allows for a clear read between this item and item 6 of subsection 16E(2) (see Part 7(f) of this guide) is encouraged.

Environment

When explaining their environmental context, and its potential effect on performance, entities could consider and address the following broad categories of environmental factors (and their ability to respond to those factors):

- **factors in full control of the entity** – factors in the environment that affect the entity’s performance, but that the entity can respond to and address
- **factors in partial control of the entity** – factors in the environment that affect the entity’s performance, but that the entity is able to respond to, and have a limited effect on, but that may be leveraged or utilised, in some way, to achieve a desired result
- **factors beyond the control of the entity** – factors in the environment that affect the entity’s performance, but that the entity cannot respond to or affect, but that have a substantial impact on its ability to deliver a desired result.

Part 7(d) – Performance

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity’s corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
4	Performance	For each reporting period covered by the plan, a summary of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) how the entity will achieve the entity’s purposes; and (b) how any subsidiary of the entity will contribute to achieving the entity’s purposes; and (c) how the entity’s performance will be measured and assessed in achieving the entity’s purposes, including any measures, targets and assessments that will be used to measure and assess the entity’s performance for the purposes of preparing the entity’s annual performance statements under section 16F.

49. The corporate plan must provide a summary of how an entity intends to fulfil its purposes over the period covered by the corporate plan (at least four reporting periods). This detail must also include the planned performance criteria, targets and assessments that the entity will use to assess its performance in achieving its purposes.

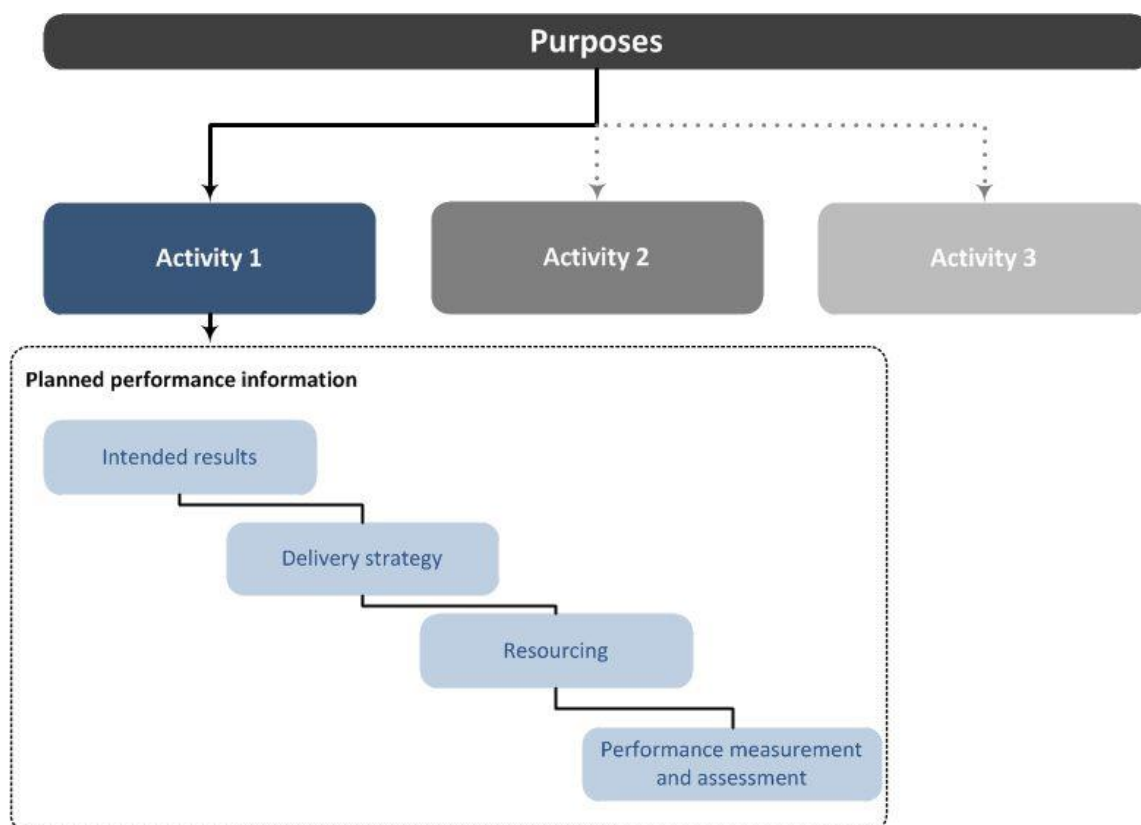
50. The performance information generated through these mechanisms provides meaningful information to parliament and the Australian public about the performance of the entity and whether it is achieving its purposes. It can also be a useful tool for line managers, senior managers and accountable authorities to understand the impact of the activities they are responsible for, and to identify opportunities for better practice.

51. The purpose of performance information that an entity commits to collecting in its corporate plan is to convey a coherent message and tell a meaningful story about what will be achieved over the periods of the plan. A good performance story answers the following questions: ***What did we do and how much? How well did we do it? Who was better off and why?***
52. Performance criteria from the corporate plan and Portfolio Budget Statements must be reported in an entity's annual performance statements at the end of the reporting period. As such, it is important that the performance criteria in both documents work together to enable a coherent set of performance results to be included in the annual performance statements.

Planned performance information

53. An entity can make its own choice about how to structure and present the planned performance information it intends to include in its corporate plan (and report on in its annual performance statements).
54. However, paragraph (c) of item 4 requires that the corporate plan include how an entity will measure and assess its performance in achieving its purposes for each of the four reporting periods. As such, planned performance information (including any performance criteria) must address each reporting period covered by the corporate plan.
55. However, entities have flexibility in how they present their planned performance information over the periods covered by the corporate plan.
56. A corporate plan must approach planned performance so that it can be acquitted (at the end of the reporting period) in the entity's annual performance statements. Beyond the first reporting period, (i.e. the forward three or more years), entities may present their planned performance information in a manner that best represents the intentions of the entity over that term.
57. Figure 4 shows a set of categories that could be used in structuring the performance information in corporate plans. **This approach is offered as a suggestion only.** It presents the required elements in items 2 and 4 of subsection 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule in a clear and structured way. This approach also allows for a clear read to the annual performance statements at the end of the reporting period (see Resource Management Guide No. 130 *Overview of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework*).

Figure 4: A structured approach to presenting performance information



Activities

58. When developing performance information for its corporate plan, an entity may identify the efforts it will undertake in pursuing the purposes of the entity as ‘activities’. Activities is a concept that is intended to act as a vehicle to be used by entities to compartmentalise what they are going to do to fulfil their purposes. As such, an activity is defined as a distinct effort of an entity undertaken to achieve a specific result (fulfilling purposes).

Activities: Identification

59. How an entity identifies its activities will determine the level at which it undertakes its performance measurement and the level at which it reports its actual performance within the annual performance statements.

60. Smaller entities that have a single purpose, and engage in a single significant activity, do not need to identify minor or supporting activities. They will still need to provide information to meet the core minimum requirements for the corporate plan, but only for their single activity. Large entities that undertake a more complex range of activities will need to identify multiple significant activities in their corporate plans. These entities will need to be careful to select only the most significant activities or key activity areas to avoid their corporate plans becoming overly detailed.

61. Each activity may have specific intended results and non-financial performance criteria, including targets. The purpose of the criteria is to give an understanding of an activity’s intended result, what it will deliver to the community or specific target group and how it proposes to measure effectiveness and efficiency.

Activities: Intended results

62. Entities are encouraged to clearly identify the intended results of each significant activity they undertake. The intended results should relate to, be consistent with and facilitate the fulfilment of the entity's purposes.
63. A concise statement explaining a significant activity's intended results may address some key questions about the activity, such as:
 - What issue, area of need, goal or intention has been identified for the activity?
 - What is known about the issue, area of need, goal or intention?
 - What is the scope of the issue, area of need, goal or intention?
 - How will the activity achieve its intended results?

Activities: Delivery strategy

64. Entities may consider outlining their strategies for achieving the intended results for each significant activity, including major projects and initiatives, and how they link to activities and assist the fulfilment of the entity's purposes.
65. Entities could indicate the timeframe for the activity and its intended results. For example, if the activity has a 10 year timeframe, the strategy may take this into account. Entities may also wish to include evidence of actual and planned progress, against their strategy to assist in explaining how it is being implemented.

Activities: Resourcing

66. Entities may also consider specifying the resources they will allocate to each significant activity to achieve their intended results.
67. What resourcing information is included in an entity's corporate plan is at the discretion of the entity. However, it is of note that demonstrating how public resources have been applied to achieve their purposes (and what outcomes and impacts have been achieved with those resources) are key to public accountability.
68. Entities may consider including resourcing information such as:
 - the level of expenditure expected to be incurred by the activity over the four-year period of the corporate plan; and
 - the level of human resources (full-time equivalents) expected to be deployed on the activity, over the four-year period of the corporate plan.

Activities: Performance measurement and assessment

69. Entities must explain how they will measure and assess their performance in achieving their purposes over the reporting periods covered by the corporate plan.
70. Performance measurement is a way of monitoring and demonstrating an activity's results. The sum of all significant activities' performance demonstrates the overall performance against the purposes statement. Well planned performance criteria will give the reader a clear understanding of what success will look like and how it will be assessed. The annual performance statements will tell the reader about actual performance in the designated reporting period (usually a single financial year).

71. There are many methods that entities may use to measure performance. For further guidance, see Resource Management Guide No. 131 *Developing good performance information*.

Proposed structure for activity performance measurement reporting

The purpose of the corporate plan is to make clear what is being measured, when it will be measured, how it will be measured, and what the intended results are for each significant activity or key area of activity. The following format is offered by way of suggestion only. However, its adoption will allow entities to clearly articulate their intentions for the current and future years and will facilitate the production of the annual performance statements at the end of a reporting period.

When presenting performance criteria in a corporate plan, entities may consider providing the following information for each criterion.

Description

a clear and concise explanation of the performance criterion (i.e. what will be measured)

When

an explanation of when, and over what term, the measurement will occur

Method

*an explanation of the method that will be used to measure performance (for further guidance on methods for measuring performance, see Resource Management Guide No. 131 *Developing good performance information*)*

Rationale

an explanation of how the measurement or approach will assess the performance achieved by the activity and why the method or methods chosen are suited to the activity

Target

details of what is expected to be achieved by the activity and how the criterion will be able to determine whether target has been achieved

Previous result

details of any previous outputs of the criterion to provide longitudinal perspective and context to current targets and goals

Related programmes

for entities that produce PBSs, details of related PBS programmes that the activity contributes to

Regulator performance framework

72. The Commonwealth Government’s Regulator Performance Framework (RPF) establishes a uniform set of performance criteria for assessing regulator performance. The framework is administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and requires all Commonwealth regulators to be assessed and report against six key performance indicators: reducing regulatory burden, communications, risk-based and proportionate approaches, efficient and coordinated monitoring, transparency, and continuous improvement.
73. Entities may use the performance reporting requirements of the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework (the corporate plan and annual performance statements) to address the reporting requirements of the RPF. If a regulatory function forms a significant activity of an entity, the entity could consider including the key performance indicators and the evidence that addresses the requirements of the RPF in its corporate plan and annual performance statements. However, entities may note that addressing the requirements of the RPF will not fulfil the minimum requirements for corporate plans under the PGPA Rule.
74. The key performance indicators in the RPF address the administrative efficiency and effectiveness of a regulatory function, which constitute just one aspect of the purposes of an entity. To address the minimum requirements of the PGPA Rule (i.e. addressing how the entity will achieve its purposes), a more comprehensive representation of the entity, its purposes and the significant activities it intends to undertake to fulfil them, is required in the corporate plan.
75. For further information and guidance on entities’ responsibilities under the RPF, see <https://www.cuttingredtape.gov.au/resources/rpf>.

Part 7(e) – Capability

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014:

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity’s corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
5	Capability	The key strategies and plans the entity will implement in each reporting period covered by the plan to achieve the purposes of the entity.

76. As a central planning document for an entity, the corporate plan will address the key strategies to be used to achieve the purposes of the entity. For this item, entities may describe their current capability and assess how their capability needs may change over the term of the corporate plan. They may also outline the strategies they will put in place to build the capability they need in areas such as (but not limited to) staffing, capital investment or ICT.

Workforce planning

Entities that wish to refer to their workforce planning activities could discuss aspects of workforce demand and supply such as:

- high-level trends and developments that are affecting or may affect their workforce;
- current workforce capability requirements and gaps;
- anticipated future workforce capability requirements and gaps;
- strategies and initiatives to address key workforce capability gaps; and
- current and anticipated future workforce supply in terms of capacity and capability.

Capital investment strategy

If they wish to discuss their plans for significant capital investments, entities might:

- refer to investments that are expected to make a significant contribution to their resources and capability; and
- explain their strategies for planning and managing their capital assets and any capital pressures they expect to experience.

ICT capability

If they wish to discuss ICT capability, entities could:

- briefly outline their technology strategy to support future business requirements. This may include key objectives and focus areas for development in ICT capability over the short, medium and long terms and consideration of the drivers for change
- explain how their technology strategy aligns with broader trends in technological development (including from a whole-of-government perspective)
- identify proposed improvements in ICT capability that are expected to be achieved through collaboration, co-investment and/or shared services between entities.

77. In addressing this requirement an entity may also identify any other significant resource and organisational capacity strategies it plans to implement during the term of the plan.

78. In addressing the **Capability** requirement, an entity may link the discussion back to the entity's purpose(s). This may be achieved by weaving a discussion of the entity's capability into the context in which the entity operates, the activities undertaken and the purposes it seeks to achieve.

Part 7(f) – Risk oversight and management

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Matters that must be included in corporate plan

(2) The following table sets out the matters that must be included in the corporate plan:

Matters to be included in a Commonwealth entity’s corporate plan		
Item	Topic	Matters to be included
6	Risk oversight and management	A summary of the risk oversight and management systems of the entity for each reporting period covered by the plan (including the measures that will be implemented to ensure compliance with the finance law).

79. Appropriate risk-taking and innovation are consistent with the proper use, and management, of public resources. As a strategic planning document, the corporate plan needs to demonstrate that effective systems of risk oversight and management have been implemented. Entities should explain how their approach to managing risk will support the achievement of their purposes.
80. Key sources of risk that may impact an entity’s ability to achieve its purposes include: fraud, regulatory, legal, political, technology, service delivery, programme delivery, procurement and contract management. An entity may wish to discuss how the key sources of risk to an entity’s purposes are being managed in the context in which the entity operates, the activities undertaken and the purposes the entity seeks to achieve.
81. The level of risk an entity is subject to is often related to the complexity of the entity’s activities, the capability of its people and supporting systems, and its environment. Given this relationship, it is appropriate that the summary of risk oversight and management acknowledge, and build on, the capability and environment components of the corporate plan, and how those components impact the risk profile of the entity.
82. As the corporate plan is required to report over a four year period, entities may also consider emerging risks that may impact the operations of the entity in future years, including key sources of emerging risks that may impact its ability to achieve its purposes in the future.
83. In addressing the **Risk oversight and management** requirement, an entity should link the discussion back to the entity’s purpose(s). This may be achieved by weaving a discussion of the risks an entity faces into the context in which the entity operates, the activities undertaken and the purposes it seeks to achieve.
84. Section 16 of the PGPA Act provides that accountable authorities of all Commonwealth entities must establish and maintain appropriate systems of risk oversight, management and internal control for the entity.

85. The Commonwealth Risk Management Policy, released by Comcover, applies to non-corporate Commonwealth entities to support compliance with section 16 of the PGPA Act. Corporate Commonwealth entities are not required to comply with the policy, although the policy says they may review and align their risk management frameworks and systems with the policy as a matter of good practice.

Practical example 4: Implementing a summary of risk oversight and management

Civil Aviation Safety Authority Corporate Plan 2015-16

<https://www.casa.gov.au/files/casacorporateplan2015-16to2017-18pdf>

The Civil Aviation and Safety Authority (CASA) provides a summary of risk oversight and management on page 22 of its corporate plan. The summary discusses the approach CASA takes to managing risk and the importance of understanding and acknowledging risk in its activities.

“The identification, analysis, treatment, monitoring and review of risk are embedded into all CASA functions and contribute directly to the effective and efficient achievement of CASA’s corporate goals. All CASA governance committees include risk management as a standing agenda item.”

“...it is a key element of CASA’s role to understand the nature and full dimensions of the risks it oversees.”

CASA identifies some of the key sources of risk that has the potential to impact its achievement of its purposes.

“...CASA faces a variety of potential risks, such as failure to detect breaches of safety and maintenance standards, incorrect application of regulatory standards, ineffective stakeholder engagement, and failure to properly carry out statutory responsibilities.”

Part 8 – Entities with enabling legislation

86. The PGPA Act does not affect the operational independence of statutory entities as set out in their enabling legislation or the requirements imposed on them by that legislation. The enabling legislation of a number of entities sets out requirements for the preparation of their corporate plans. These include disclosure, release and variation requirements.
87. If an entity’s enabling legislation contains requirements for corporate plans that are different from the requirements of the PGPA Act and associated rules, the requirements of the enabling legislation may take priority.
88. Similarly, if an entity already produces a product, under its enabling legislation or otherwise, that can be modified to meet the minimum requirements, e.g. a strategic plan, then the entity can put that product forward as its corporate plan. This product could then perform a dual purpose.

Part 9 – Government business enterprises

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

Section 5 Government business enterprise

- (1) Each of the following Commonwealth entities is a government business enterprise:
 - (b) the Australian Postal Corporation;
 - (c) Defence Housing Australia.

89. Section 5 of the PGPA Rule identifies those Commonwealth entities that are government business enterprises (GBEs) for the purposes of the PGPA Act.
90. GBEs are required to prepare corporate plans in accordance with the minimum requirements set out in section 16E of the PGPA Rule, but are also to refer to the Resource Management Guide No. 126 *Commonwealth GBE governance and oversight guidelines*. The guidelines are available at www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/gbe/
91. GBEs that fully comply with those guidelines (with specific reference to the corporate planning requirements contained therein) will meet the minimum requirements for corporate plans under the PGPA Act and associated rules.

Part 10 – Publication requirements

92. Entities must publish their corporate plans on their websites by 31 August each year (or the end of February for entities that operate on a calendar year basis), unless another date is specified for an entity in its enabling legislation.
93. Accountable authorities are required to provide a copy of the corporate plan to their responsible Minister and the Minister for Finance as soon as practicable after the plan is prepared (the requirement to provide a Finance Minister's copy has been delegated to the Department of Finance).

Sensitive information

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Corporate plan must be published

- (4) However, if the accountable authority considers that the corporate plan contains information that:
 - (a) is confidential or commercially sensitive; or
 - (b) could prejudice national security;then only so much of the corporate plan that does not contain that information must be published under subsection (3).

94. If the corporate plan includes commercially confidential or sensitive information or information on national security matters that, if published, could prejudice the national

security interests of the Commonwealth, a supplementary corporate plan may be prepared for publication on the entity's website that excludes such matters.

95. Information may be considered for omission from the publicly available corporate plan if:

- release of the information would cause competitive detriment to an entity
- the information is not and should not be in the public domain
- the information is not required to be disclosed under another law of the Commonwealth, a state or a territory
- the information is not readily discoverable
- the information relates to Australia's defence, national security or law enforcement activities.

96. The existing practice of GBEs of preparing and publishing a statement of corporate intent in place of a full corporate plan, in the interest of not disclosing commercially sensitive information, will remain a valid approach for GBEs under subsection 16E(4) of the PGPA Rule. For more information on statements of corporate intent, see www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/gbe/

97. If a corporate plan and a supplementary corporate plan, however described, are prepared, both must be provided to the responsible Minister and Minister for Finance before the supplementary corporate plan is published.

Intelligence, security and listed law enforcement agencies

98. Intelligence, security and listed law enforcement agencies covered by the PGPA Act may seek an exemption from the corporate planning requirements. Under paragraph 105D(3)(a) of the PGPA Act, the Minister for Finance may, by written instrument, modify requirements of the Act for an intelligence, security or listed law enforcement agency in relation to preparing and publishing a corporate plan under section 35 of the PGPA Act. The responsible Minister needs to write to the Minister for Finance seeking such a modification.

Part 11 – Variations to corporate plans – notification and minimum review requirements

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014

16E Corporate plan for Commonwealth entities

Variation of corporate plan

- (6) If the corporate plan is varied during the reporting period for which the plan is prepared and the accountable authority of the entity considers that the variation is significant, then:
- (a) this section applies to the plan as varied; and
 - (b) subsection (3) applies as if it requires the plan to be published as soon as practicable after the plan is prepared (instead of it requiring the plan to be published by the last day of the second month of the reporting period for which the plan is prepared).

99. Corporate plans must be reviewed at least annually; however, they may also be updated during the year if necessary. Issues that may require a plan to be updated include: any new purposes or key priorities for an entity; changes in the operating environment; new activities that warrant inclusion in the corporate plan; significant new performance criteria, targets or tools that will be used to measure or assess performance; and key changes in the capability of the entity or in its risk management approach.

100. In short, if there is any new matter or material change to any item outlined in subsection 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule, it must be reflected in the annual review for the plan. At the same time, every annual review of the plan must reflect the new time horizon for the plan.

101. At any time, accountable authorities may vary corporate plans at their own discretion, to reflect changes in the operations and activities of the entity.

102. If circumstances require a corporate plan to be varied during the reporting period, and the variation is significant, a copy of the revised plan must be provided to the responsible Minister and the Minister for Finance and published on the entity’s website.



Corporate plans 2015–16: Lessons learned

Public Management Reform Agenda

February 2016

Overview

The enhanced Commonwealth performance framework, established under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, came into effect on 1 July 2015. The framework requires Commonwealth entities and companies to publish corporate plans by the end of August each year.

The minimum requirements for corporate plans are specified in the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule). A corporate plan must set out an entity's:

- > purpose (or purposes)
- > operating environment
- > performance
- > capability
- > risk management and oversight systems.

A principles-based approach has been adopted to guide the development of corporate plans. This approach recognises the diversity in the nature and scale of Commonwealth activities. It gives entities the flexibility to determine the most appropriate way to present performance information to suit their circumstances, in a manner that is fit for purpose and is meaningful to their stakeholders.

Following publication of the first round of corporate plans, the Department of Finance (Finance) held a series of workshops with entities. The aims of the workshops were to allow entities to share experiences and insights, and for Finance to understand the issues they faced in developing corporate plans and discuss what might be considered better practice. A total of 198 people from 105 entities registered for workshops held in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

Finance also assessed 71 corporate plans from a wide range of entities. This included identifying examples of how entities approached specific aspects of the corporate plan from the perspective of fitness for purpose and meaningfulness to stakeholders (see [Attachment A](#) for a discussion of key observations). Examples of better practice are at [Attachment B](#), the criteria used to assess corporate plans are at [Attachment C](#) and the list of entities whose corporate plans were assessed is at [Attachment D](#).

Summary of observations

The key observations drawn from the workshops and assessments of corporate plans are summarised below. They will feed into Finance’s ongoing work to refine guidance, training and information. As noted earlier, further discussion of each observation is at [Attachment A](#).

- > Senior-level engagement and support are important in developing and implementing entity-level performance planning and reporting frameworks.
- > Clear, concise and unambiguous purpose statements act as an anchor for a corporate plan.
- > An entity’s corporate plan can be an effective driver of cultural change when it expresses clear purposes promoted by strong leadership.
- > Entities generally recognise the benefits of improving the quality of their performance reporting frameworks, and are committed to using corporate plans and annual performance statements as vehicles for making those improvements.
- > There is potential for entities to use a broader suite of quantitative and qualitative performance information that provides for short-, medium- and long-term performance assessment.
- > There are benefits in adopting an internally coordinated approach to developing corporate plans, including engagement with those responsible for annual reports, budgeting and financial reporting.
- > Clearance processes can take longer than expected and may make it difficult to meet publishing deadlines.

Next steps

1. Commonwealth entities and companies to start considering how they can enhance the content of corporate plans as they prepare their 2016–17 plans for publication by 31 August 2016.
2. Finance will continue to collaborate with entities to improve corporate plans, primarily through the performance community of practice.
3. Finance will revise guidance materials by the end of May 2016 to take into account lessons learned from the 2015–16 corporate planning process.
4. Finance will consider how it can streamline the publication requirements for corporate plans.

Attachments

[Attachment A](#)—Key observations from the 2015–16 corporate planning process

[Attachment B](#)—Examples of better practice

[Attachment C](#)—Criteria used for assessing corporate plans

[Attachment D](#)—List of corporate plans assessed

Key observations from the 2015–16 corporate planning process

Senior-level engagement and support

Senior-level understanding of the performance framework and involvement in the development of corporate plans is critical to unlocking the full potential of the framework. Senior leaders need to be engaged and lead change in organisational culture and business processes. Entities with strong senior-level engagement said that it resulted in planning and reporting processes being more broadly valued and understood by staff and stakeholders. These entities actively worked to identify opportunities to collect and present meaningful information about the impact of their activities.

When senior leaders were not involved in the development of corporate plans, or approached the process as a compliance exercise, the quality of the plans as forward-looking documents suffered.

Clear and concise purpose statements

Clear statements of an entity's purposes that focus on what is being achieved for the benefit of society make for good corporate plans. Other elements, such as environment, capability and performance information, convey how those purposes will be fulfilled and monitored. Purpose statements that are clear, concise and unambiguous act as an anchor for the corporate plan. They should be relevant for the medium to longer term rather than just a list of short-term goals and functions, with a clear focus on the benefit to society created through the achievement of the purpose. Purpose statements that are vague, fragmented, difficult to follow and focussed on the short term lead to a lack of understanding of what the entity is trying to achieve.

Many entities published mission statements, values and strategic goals in their corporate plans. In some cases, this created confusion about what the entity is seeking to achieve. The next planning cycle provides an opportunity for entities to refine their corporate plans to avoid this confusion.

Corporate planning as a driver of cultural change

Some entities reported that they used the corporate planning process to refresh their planning and performance management systems and, more broadly, as a driver for cultural change. Clear and concise purpose statements in corporate plans are being used to refocus attention on the high-level impacts the government expects an entity to deliver.

Relevant and reliable performance information is seen by some entities as more than just a way to meet their obligations to be accountable to the parliament and public. It can also be used as an internal tool to help entities understand how they can improve their day-to-day operations. When performance information is used in this way, corporate plans are more likely to achieve the intended goal of being high-level strategic documents that focus on an entity's efforts.

Improving the quality of performance information

Commonwealth entities generally agreed that there is a need to improve the quality of the performance information that is reported publicly. They have welcomed the opportunity that the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework provides, especially the additional flexibility to supplement input and output measures with information that has a greater focus on outcomes and impacts (for example, who benefits, to what extent and how). Although 2015–16 corporate plans tended to reproduce performance information previously published in Portfolio Budget Statements, many entities made a first step towards improving the quality of information, or signalled that future plans would show progress towards improved performance reporting.

Entities will need to maintain the momentum towards improved performance information. It is broadly recognised that such improvements will take time. Entities will need at least one full reporting cycle under the new framework to understand the process of describing information in corporate plans and reporting against them in annual performance statements. Once the first cycle is completed—with the publication of annual reports in October 2016—entities will have the opportunity to assess what worked and where improvements can be made.

A broader suite of performance criteria

There is potential for entities to use the broader set of performance information to improve the quality of performance reporting and with a view to showing achievement of purpose. Incorporating a mix of quantitative and qualitative information allows entities to build upon the key performance indicators (KPIs) traditionally reported in Portfolio Budget Statements. KPIs tend to focus on quantifying inputs (such as public resources) and outputs (such as the number of transactions completed), which may give only a partial performance picture. The framework allows entities to use benchmarking, peer reviews, surveys and comprehensive evaluations to provide information that supplements KPIs. By using a broader suite of performance criteria, entities may be able to better indicate what outcomes or impacts flow from their activities.

The PGPA Rule specifies that corporate plans must include performance information for *each and every period* over a four-year horizon. This requirement, together with a more complete narrative about an entity’s environment and strategic outlook, allows entities to identify and measure the short-, medium- and long-term impacts of their activities. It might be possible, for example, for an entity to use quantitative information to report on short-term progress during the implementation of a new program, and more sophisticated qualitative information (such as a comprehensive evaluation) to report on the long-term impacts of its activities.

Internally coordinated approach to developing the corporate plan

Some entities noted that developing and producing their corporate plans was made easier because there was close coordination with areas responsible for producing annual reports, budgeting (including reporting in Portfolio Budget Statements) and financial management. This allowed the corporate plan to better reflect the entity’s strategic outlook and increased the possibility that it would be used to set the context

for day-to-day operations. Improved coordination is likely to lead to efficiencies in producing the suite of planning and reporting documents required over the course of a year. It will also help to ensure that these documents can be read together to provide a more meaningful picture of performance.

Publication requirements

Many entities reported that clearance processes took longer than expected, making it difficult to meet the publishing deadline. This was compounded by the fact that they were developing and producing a new document with which their senior executives and responsible ministers were not familiar. Entities could consider how they might streamline internal clearance processes and build lead times into their schedule for publishing corporate plans. Finance will investigate opportunities to streamline publication arrangements to help entities meet deadlines.

Examples of better practice

Logical structure that conveys a clear strategic vision

Reserve Bank of Australia Corporate Plan 2015–16

www.rba.gov.au/about-rba/pdf/corporate-plan.pdf

The RBA took an innovative approach to structuring its corporate plan. The plan is divided into sections based on the RBA’s seven functions. Each section provides information on purposes, environment, performance and capability, which gives the context for each function. This allows strong links to be maintained between purposes and other elements of the corporate plan, which aids the readability of the document.

Australian Securities and Investments Commission Corporate Plan 2015–16 to 2018–19

<http://asic.gov.au/about-asic/what-we-do/our-role/asics-corporate-plan-2015-2016-to-2018-2019>

ASIC’s plan is structured to present information consistent with how ASIC defines its responsibilities and functions. While the plan includes the elements required under the PGPA Rule (purposes, environment, performance, capability, and risk oversight and management), it does not use them as explicit section headings. Instead, ASIC has interpreted and incorporated the requirements in a way that allows it to tell a performance story that fits its specific operational context. Purposes are framed as strategic priorities that reflect ASIC’s obligations under its enabling legislation. Activities are framed as responses to challenges in the external environment (such as digital disruption in financial markets). Performance measurement is focused on demonstrating how well ASIC meets its obligations in this challenging environment.

Central Land Council Corporate Plan 2015–19

www.clc.org.au/publications/content/clc-corporate-plan-2015-2019

The Central Land Council produced a comprehensive and well-structured document that is presented as an operational plan (or central planning document). It is easy to see how the plan can be used by the entity on a day-to-day basis to inform operational requirements and possible areas for improvements.

Logical structure that conveys a clear strategic vision (continued)

**Department of Finance
Corporate Plan 2015–16**

www.finance.gov.au/publications/corporate-plan/2015-16/

Finance adopted a structure that focuses on the out years for performance measurement.

A logical structure has been used for presenting the performance information, including listing the activities, delivery strategies, intended results, key legislation and performance measures associated with each purpose. Readers are left with an understanding of the broad and varied activities of Finance through the themes set out by its four purposes.

Clearly defined purposes

**Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade
Corporate Plan 2015–19**

<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/Documents/dfat-corporate-plan-2015-2019.pdf>

The statement of DFAT’s purpose is clear and concise.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the department) works to make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous by promoting and protecting our interests internationally, and contributing to global stability and economic growth, specifically in the Indo-Pacific region. [p. 4]

Explanatory text related to the purpose statement indicates how DFAT will join up with other entities, governments and organisations to contribute to a common purpose.

In partnership with government and non-government organisations, business and community groups in Australia and overseas, the department leads the Government’s efforts to shape the regional and international environment, progress Australia’s international security priorities and strengthen global cooperation in ways that advance Australia’s interests. [p. 4]

The plan provides a clear sense of how DFAT will operate to achieve its purpose, and the high-level impacts it will have.

The department works to open up new markets and generate conditions for increased trade and investment to strengthen Australia’s economy and create jobs. It helps lift living standards and reduce poverty in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. The department projects a positive and contemporary image of Australia as a destination for business, investment, tourism and study and provides high-quality passport and consular advice to Australian citizens. [p. 4]

Succinct, comprehensive discussion of operating environment

**Creative Partnerships Australia
Corporate Plan 2015–16**

www.creativepartnershipsaustralia.org.au/assets/cpa_24ppa5_corporateplan_spreads2.pdf

Creative Partnerships Australia’s plan identifies and describes the major trends in the entity’s operational environment. These trends are mapped to implications and opportunities and challenges to allow readers to understand how Creative Partnerships Australia’s operating strategy will adapt to reflect the evolving business environment. For example:

Sustainability within the Arts

Trends

- *Not-for-profit arts sector seeking increased support from the private sector*
- *Low barriers to entry enables new players to enter independent and small to medium arts sector*
- *High staff turnover levels in fundraising and development roles*

Implications

- *More demand placed on limited public funding*
- *More demand placed on private sector funding*
- *Unstable staffing impacts on relationship continuity with donors and business*

Opportunities and challenges

- *Emerging organisations willing to embrace flexible business models from start up*
- *Creative Partnerships to provide expertise and resources to support the sector*
- *Creative Partnerships to support new ways of thinking in relation to funding*

[p. 17]

Discussion of environmental impacts on entity’s ability to fulfil its purposes

Australian Securities and Investments Commission Corporate Plan 2015–16 to 2018–19

<http://asic.gov.au/about-asic/what-we-do/our-role/asics-corporate-plan-2015-2016-to-2018-2019>

Challenges that shape the environment in which ASIC will pursue its purposes are clearly and succinctly expressed.

We see our long-term challenges that shape our outlook and strategy for the next four years as:

- *balancing a free market-based system with investor and financial consumer protection, with a focus on ensuring the culture and conduct of financial system participants emphasises the interests of their customers first*
- *digital disruption to existing business models and channels*
- *structural change in our financial system through growth of market-based financing, which is largely driven by growth in superannuation*
- *financial innovation-driven complexity in products and markets, and*
- *the impact of globalisation on financial markets and products [p. 40]*

Challenges are expanded on and mapped to strategic priorities (or high-level activities) through which purposes will be fulfilled. The challenges that ASIC faces set the context for the corporate plan in terms of what capability it will need and how it plans to measure its performance.

In responding to the challenges we face in coming years, we will work to achieve the best risk resilience that we can with the resources we have.

This corporate plan outlines how we will respond to our long-term challenges, and how we will evaluate our performance in achieving our strategic priorities.

From 2015–16 to 2018–19, we will continue to use our ‘detect, understand and respond’ approach. This includes:

- *undertaking surveillance to detect possible wrongdoing, including proactive risk-based surveillance in high-risk areas that we believe will have the greatest impact on markets, and*
- *applying insights from behavioural economics to understand if product design or sales and advice models are taking advantage of biases and affecting trust and confidence.*

Where we detect issues, we will take action. [p. 9]

Performance measures that are impact-focused

Australian Taxation Office Corporate Plan 2015–19

www.ato.gov.au/About-ATO/About-us/In-detail/Strategic-direction/Corporate-plan-2015-19

The ATO corporate plan clearly places the emphasis on measuring and reporting of impacts (or outcomes), rather than inputs and outputs. The ATO takes the view that it is to be judged on how it improves circumstances for government and the community more broadly.

Measuring our impacts is important as everything we do is ultimately about improving outcomes for government and the community. [p. 12]

What is meant by impact is clearly defined through four broad themes that are measurable and aligned with internationally recognised standards.

We have four interconnected impacts that we are setting out to achieve which are integrity, willing participation, revenue and productivity. These impacts are based on internationally recognised categories from the OECD and provide a high-level indication of the health of our administration. Under each of these broad impacts we have developed more specific impact indicators with supporting performance measures. [p. 12]

The ATO’s performance measurement regime includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. For example, qualitative measures are used to gauge the extent to which it fulfills its purposes with integrity (see, for example, p. 12) and quantitative measures are used to determine the extent to which it contributes to ensuring that the revenue available to government is sustainable (see, for example, p. 13).

The ATO acknowledges that the presentation of performance information is about telling a performance story, and that good information can help it identify opportunities to enhance the impact of its activities.

Monitoring and evaluation of existing programs has always been a part of managing our performance. This year we will introduce program evaluations to contribute to our performance story and help shape our future tax and superannuation system through good performance information.

We will use internal and external evaluations to judge the effectiveness, efficiency and merit of a program. This includes questioning the relevance of the work in achieving its intended outcome, the impact on the community, and its cost effectiveness compared with an alternative means of delivery. [p. 13]

A focus on improving the quality of performance information

**Department of Immigration and Border Protection
Corporate Plan 2015–19**

www.border.gov.au/ReportsandPublications/Documents/corporate-plan-2015-19.pdf

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection acknowledges that improving the quality of the performance information it reports will be iterative, and indicates how it will evolve its performance framework over time.

The planning and performance framework is being refined and iteratively updated following periodic review and evaluation. This supports the Department in aligning key performance indicators and measures of organisational performance through the life of the corporate plan. [p. 22]

Although it retains the key performance indicators published in the Portfolio Budget Statements, the plan notes that additional measures are required to better demonstrate the impact of the department’s activities.

We report on our performance, using our existing performance measures as well as new measures assessing the impact we make, supplemented with qualitative performance information. A programme of evaluations and reports also contributes to our performance story and allow us to demonstrate how we go about improving outcomes for the Government and the community. Measures demonstrating our impact include indicators related to the success of our migration, citizenship, trade and customs programmes, revenue collection, service delivery, and success of our operational efforts to protect our borders. [p. 22]

Use of non-quantitative performance measures

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Corporate Plan 2015–19**

The performance measures described in DFAT’s corporate plan extend beyond quantitative key performance indicators to include case studies, surveys and comprehensive reviews. For example:

<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/Documents/dfat-corporate-plan-2015-2019.pdf>

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the impact of the department’s advice and advocacy to deliver trade and investment outcomes for Australian business > the achievement of Australian economic interests in bilateral, regional and plurilateral and international outcomes 	Annually
Surveys	Qualitative and quantitative business surveys on businesses’ satisfaction with the department’s support	Annually

[p. 7]

Recognition of the need for continued effort to improve performance measures

**Department of Health
Corporate Plan 2015–16**

[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/C849A8AF6220D3BACA257D2E001A6987/\\$File/Corporate-Plan.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/C849A8AF6220D3BACA257D2E001A6987/$File/Corporate-Plan.pdf)

The Department of Health sees the benefit of improving its performance measures and signals this as something that will require substantial effort over a number of corporate planning cycles. A particular goal is to better report on activities that cross organisational and jurisdictional boundaries.

The department’s current performance measures are published in the 2015–16 Health Portfolio Budget Statements. They include deliverables and KPIs that relate to the 31 programmes currently administered by the department, within our existing ten outcome structure. Current performance measures have enabled us to successfully track delivery related to these programmes.

The Health Capability Review has afforded the department the opportunity to re-examine our performance reporting and look for more whole-of-system focused indicators which will measure the impact of policy measures on the health system and individual health. The development of these indicators will help us to work across boundaries, understand whole of system implications and improve our service offering to all those who interact with the health system. [p. 14]

Honest assessment of capability and development required over the corporate plan period

**Australian Communications and Media
Authority
Corporate Plan 2015–19**

www.acma.gov.au/theACMA/acma-corporate-plan

The ACMA plan includes sections on workforce planning, capital investment and ICT that explain how specific aspects of capability link to the ACMA’s capacity to fulfill its purpose.

Workforce planning

The ACMA’s workforce plan sets out strategies to ensure that the ACMA workforce has the capabilities and skill sets required to deliver against the agency’s mandate, within the context of a changing environment and an expected decline in appropriation funding.

The ACMA faces a challenging operating environment. Most notably, it faces a constrained budget outlook as well as increasing stakeholder scrutiny and expectation as digital technologies drive significant shifts in the media and communications sector. [p. 17]

The discussion of capability gives a clear picture of the future operating environment and the changes and strategies in place to ensure that the entity’s capability is best aligned to meet future challenges.

We also need a strategic view of our learning and development needs. The 2015–18 Learning and Development Strategy will help ensure that the agency focuses its learning and development activities on those capabilities considered strategically important. The strategy aims to establish a learning culture to facilitate personal development and enable the agency to achieve its goals. [p. 17]

Good description of how the entity engages with and manages risk

**Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial
Research Organisation
Corporate Plan 2015–16**

[www.csiro.au/en/About/Strategy-
structure/Corporate-plan](http://www.csiro.au/en/About/Strategy-structure/Corporate-plan)

A statement from the CSIRO Chief Executive acknowledges that managing risk is critical to fulfilling CSIRO's functions. It sets the scene for effective risk management as a key part of CSIRO's strategy for achieving its purposes.

Respecting risk

Success will depend on how well we support and develop our people. But innovation is less about success, but more about learning from failure and trying again, and again. We are committed to building an innovation culture based on leadership, empowerment, collaboration and inclusion. [p. iii]

The plan provides a concise statement on how CSIRO will engage with risk and how it will capitalise on the opportunities created. It identifies the formal frameworks for tracking risk, particularly in terms of risks to reputation and brand confidence.

Monitoring our risks

CSIRO is committed to the effective identification and management of risk. Acceptance and effective management of risk is vital to successfully capturing the opportunities created through scientific research and delivering on our purpose as an organisation. The management of risk is the responsibility of all our people.

CSIRO develops and maintains an Organisational Risk Plan in alignment with our Strategic Plan that reflects CSIRO's approach and posture in managing the risks that threaten the achievement of our goals and objectives. CSIRO's brand and reputation requires careful management of the following key areas of risk:

Governance and compliance

CSIRO's reputation hinges upon the integrity and quality of our science and ability to deliver positive impact for Australia. This risk is managed across all levels of the organisation in ways that include establishing rigour in our scientific processes, effective governance processes to ensure transparency of decision making, financial management practices to ensure efficient use of resources and values based engagement and commercial dealings with customers and stakeholders.

CSIRO recognises its obligations as a government entity conducting a broad range of activities across multiple highly regulated environments. Compliance risk is managed systematically across our Lines of Business, enabled and supported by Enterprise Support functions ... [p. 18]

Criteria used for assessing corporate plans and identifying areas of better practice

1. Structure

- Presentation of minimum requirements well suited to the content.

2. Purposes

- Clearly and succinctly defined purposes, which are then used consistently to align the other elements of the plan.
- Clear statement of expected impact.

3. Environment

- Comprehensive but still succinct discussion of the entity’s operating environment.
- High-level explanation of how the entity’s environment influences its ability to achieve its purposes.
- Analysis that is contemporary—particularly with respect to a four-year outlook (including the need to be mindful that the next plan will drop the current year and add an additional out year).

4. Performance

- Performance criteria that are relevant, reliable and complete.
- Evidence that the entity is moving towards a balance of quantitative and qualitative performance information.
- Use of a broad suite of performance criteria.
- Application of a four-year outlook—including evidence that this has influenced thinking on the types of performance criteria developed.
- Statement of an intention to improve performance information over time.

5. Capability

- Clear link to purposes and discussion of how the capability will assist the entity to increase the impact of its activities.
- Some recognition that capabilities need to be developed or adjusted.
- Discussion of capability over a complete four-year horizon.

6. Risk

- Evidence that the entity is aware of and complies with current risk policy.
- Evidence that risk assessment has been influential in how the entity intends to achieve its purposes.

7. Four-year outlook

- Application of a four-year period to all elements.

Corporate plans assessed

Administrative Appeals Tribunal	Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation
Attorney-General’s Department	Creative Partnerships Australia (Australia Business Arts Foundation Ltd)
Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (Quality Agency)	CrimTrac Agency
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Australian Communications and Media Authority	Department of Communications and the Arts
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority	Department of Defence
Australian Electoral Commission	Department of Education and Training
Australian Federal Police	Department of Employment
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Department of the Environment
Australian Institute of Marine Science	Department of Finance
Australian Maritime Safety Authority	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Australian National Audit Office	Department of Health
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation	Department of the House of Representatives
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	Department of Human Services
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
Australian Postal Corporation	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
Australian Public Service Commission	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
Australian Securities and Investments Commission	Department of Parliamentary Services
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority	Department of the Senate
Australian Sports Foundation Limited	Department of Social Services
Australian Taxation Office	Department of the Treasury
Australian Trade Commission (Austrade)	Department of Veterans’ Affairs
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)	Director of National Parks
Australian War Memorial	Export Finance and Insurance Corporation
Bureau of Meteorology	Fair Work Commission
Central Land Council	Future Fund Management Agency
Civil Aviation Safety Authority	Geoscience Australia
Comcare	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Commonwealth Grants Commission	Independent Hospital Pricing Authority
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	Infrastructure Australia
	Murray–Darling Basin Authority
	National Capital Authority

National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition
Agency (National Disability Insurance Agency)

National Gallery of Australia

Northern Land Council

Reserve Bank of Australia

Royal Australian Navy Central Canteens Board

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Tourism Australia