

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

Cybersecurity Follow-up Audit Hearing – 2 June 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: Submission 3.1 from Macquarie Telecom

Question reference number: 6

Senator: The Committee

Type of question: provided in writing

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 6 July 2017

Question:

Regarding Submission 3.1 from Macquarie Telecom:

- a. Why aren't all government agencies required to comply with the Lead Agency Gateway program?
- b. How can this be fixed quickly?
- c. Should Finance set a deadline, and what should that deadline be?
- d. Why was the Australian Bureau of Statistics given an exemption from the program?
- e. What are your thoughts on the recommendation that the Australian Bureau of Statistics be compelled to comply with the program?
- f. What are your thoughts on the recommendation that government agencies accelerate their transition to cloud computing?

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will respond to parts a. – d.

e. There is extant Government policy in relation to participation in the Gateway Reduction Policy. Any arrangement for an exemption from the Program must be made between the individual agency and the administrators of the Gateway Reduction Program – previously the Department of Finance and now the Digital Transformation Agency.

It is important that the Committee note that the Australian Bureau of Statistics participation in the Gateway Reduction Program would not have prevented the 2016 eCensus outage. As part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' arrangements with IBM, the 2016 eCensus hosting was out-sourced to IBM, who used their own data centre. The denial-of-service incident was focused on this data centre rather than the Australian Bureau of Statistics corporate infrastructure.

f. The Australian Government has an extant Cloud First policy which sets out the details of the Government's position.