

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

Attorney-General's Department

Hearing date: 08 April 2024

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David Pocock asked the following question:

Senator DAVID POCOCK: Thank you. Finally, that 2020 ANAO performance audit found that there was no framework to measure and report outcomes from the operation of the code to inform a view on whether the policy objectives of the regime are met. Firstly, is there now a framework? If there is, would you be willing to table it?

Ms Brayshaw: In terms of the consideration of the report, which predated me, my understanding is that this then led to the performance measures that we've put in place, and I'm just trying to find—Mr Still, did you want to go?

Mr Still: The key performance indicators that we report against essentially go to the timeliness of registration. We aim to ensure that more than 85 per cent of new registrations are published within three weeks and more than 85 per cent of updates are published within five working days. In a sense, that's a proxy for transparency as it goes to how quickly information becomes available to individuals to look at. In the 2022-23 financial year, we published new registrations within three weeks 100 per cent of the time and we published updates within five working days 98 per cent of the time, so those KPIs were well met.

Senator DAVID POCOCK: It's great to hear about that timeliness, but, in terms of actually delivering the policy objective, which, again, is to 'ensure that contact between lobbyists and government representatives is conducted in accordance with public expectations of transparency, integrity and honesty,' the ANAO said: 'Hang on; these guys don't even have a framework to monitor if this policy, this code, is achieving that. We suggest you set up a framework.' Has there been a framework set up, or are you just reporting how long it takes you to deal with breach notices?

Ms Brayshaw: I think what arose—but we might take it on notice just to make sure I'm correct—is that we set up standard operating procedures that established what the role was underneath the framework of administering the code. But we might take it on notice just to make sure—

Senator DAVID POCOCK: If you could take it on notice and if you do you have it, I'd love to see it if you're happy to table it. Thank you.

The response to the question is as follows:

The Attorney-General's Department has implemented the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) recommendations to establish an evaluation framework and develop a set of performance measures to inform stakeholders about the extent to which outcomes and broader policy objectives are being achieved. The evaluation framework was established in May 2021 and can be found at **Attachment A**.

The evaluation framework outlines the performance measures used to assess the currency of

the information contained on the Register of Lobbyists (Register). Maintaining the currency of the Register ensures that Government representatives can make informed decisions about interaction with lobbyists. Further, making the Register publicly available and ensuring it is kept up to date allows for public confidence in the transparency of government and political processes.

The department has consistently exceeded the performance measures set out in the evaluation framework. The departments performance targets are:

- greater than 85% of new registrations being published within three weeks, and
- greater than 85% of updates being published within five working days.

In 2022-23, 100% of new registrations were published within three weeks and 98% of updates were published within five working days.