Senator BIRMINGHAM—I will not ask you to necessarily comment on the risk. I understand that you are also auditing the infrastructure priority list?

Mr McPhee—We are doing some work in Infrastructure.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Will that include the reverse consideration of why some infrastructure projects are not considered under Infrastructure Australia guidelines?

Mr McPhee—I would like to take that question on notice. I am aware we are doing work in that area, and I do not have with me the actual audit objectives for the audit that we are actually doing. But I do know we are doing some work in Infrastructure Australia; I just did not come prepared for the question.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Could you come back to us and let us know if that audit will include why this significant infrastructure project was not subject to the same priority listing and the same assessments as others.

CHAIR—Earlier on you referred to the fact that the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy are doing a risk management plan. Would anyone—for example, you—audit the risk management plan?

ANSWER

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is undertaking a performance audit of the Conduct by Infrastructure Australia of the First National Infrastructure Audit and Development of the Infrastructure Priority List.

The first infrastructure priority list was published in May 2009. It was preceded by a December 2008 report to the Council of Australian Governments. In the December 2008 report, Infrastructure Australia identified a national broadband network as one of the seven themes intended to 'steer a course for solutions to meet the gaps, deficiencies and bottlenecks' in infrastructure.

Subsequently, Infrastructure Australia's May 2009 'National Infrastructure Priorities' report identified a National Broadband Network as a priority project that was ready to proceed. In its report, Infrastructure Australia further stated that it supported an investment from the Building Australia Fund to develop the National Broadband Network.

Against this background, the inclusion of projects (including the National Broadband Network) on the infrastructure priority list is being examined in the audit, with particular emphasis on:

- the submissions process, including information requests from Infrastructure Australia;
- the methodology used by Infrastructure Australia to assess submissions;
- the formulation of the priority list; and
- the provision of advice and recommendations to the Government.