



PGPA Act Review
Attention: Review Secretary
Department of Finance
1 Canberra Avenue
FORREST ACT 2603

Email: PGPAActReview@finance.gov.au

Dear Review Secretary

PGPA Act and Rule Independent Review – draft report

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on behalf of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Authority) in response to the draft report of the independent review of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule).

The Authority is generally supportive of the review recommendations. In particular, the recommendations that acknowledge the significant reporting burden on small agencies and suggest a review of duplicative reporting arrangements and standardised corporate planning are welcome. The development of optional templates and proforma structures for corporate plans and annual reports would be useful and may reduce duplication and over-reporting. They would also assist a transition to an increased use of digital reporting.

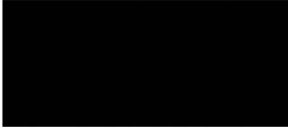
The Authority is highly supportive of the recommended move to a digital platform for annual reporting and generally supportive of the recommendation to present Annual Reports to Parliament by 30 September. The earlier date would only be possible if the process was digitised. We also note, however, that the Authority relies on the provision of audited financial statements from partner agencies to complete the annual report. These are usually not provided to the Authority until September.

We welcome the additional directions outlined in the recommendations regarding audit committee structure, responsibilities, as well as inter-agency cooperation. In relation to recommendation 16, we note that there may be instances where having an official represented on the audit committee would be advantageous. As the Marine Park Authority Board (MPA) has a legislative remit for the strategic direction of the Authority, it may be beneficial for an MPA member to be a member of the audit committee, particularly with respect to the committee's role in providing assurance around the performance of the organisation; that is, to ensure the resources of the agency are properly directed to supporting the strategic direction as set by the MPA.

The Authority also agrees with most aspects of recommendation 22, but notes that the remuneration of audit committee members is sensitive to individual members and publishing these details may have the impact of driving up remuneration costs, which would represent a further pressure for small agencies. We are unsure how increased transparency in this aspect would contribute to better governance.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft report, and I confirm we are comfortable with this submission being published.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Johnson
Acting Chairperson

22 June 2018