



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Employment

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Department of Employment for the year ended 30 June 2017:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Department of Employment as at 30 June 2017 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Department of Employment, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2017 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to and forming part of the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Department of Employment in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997* (the Code). I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of my audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Key audit matter**Accuracy and completeness of administered expenses**

Refer to Notes 2.1A, 2.1B and 2.1C 'Labour market assistance to jobseekers and industry'

A significant portion of the Department of Employment's administered expenses is represented by \$1.39 billion labour market assistance to jobseekers and industry in 2016-17 through the employment services program known as jobactive.

The accuracy and completeness of the department's administered expenses is dependent on the effectiveness of the jobactive compliance program, including the integrity of the screening processes designed to reduce invalid jobactive claims, random sample checks for the validity of payments, and recovery action in respect of invalid payments. I focussed on the effectiveness of the jobactive compliance program designed to manage the risks associated with payments for large volumes of jobactive claims by external service providers based on outsourced arrangements for data collection over many locations.

How the audit addressed the matter

The audit procedures I applied to address the matter included:

- I evaluated the design of the Department of Employment's jobactive compliance program and tested controls over the IT environment in respect of the Employment Services System used to manage the jobactive claims.
- I assessed the job seeker screening process and tested a sample of the job seeker data and supporting documentation.
- I assessed the Department of Employment's process for analysing the results and error rates generated from the random sample checks which support the recognition of valid payments and re-performed a sample of the department's random checks.
- I also tested, on a sample basis, the recovery of invalid payments made to service providers and the Department of Employment's actions designed to prevent the payment of invalid claims in the future.

Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Department of Employment, the Secretary of the Department of Employment is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the rules made under that Act. The Secretary is also responsible for such internal control as the Secretary determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Secretary of the Department of Employment is responsible for assessing the Department of Employment's ability to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Secretary is also responsible for disclosing matters related to going concern as applicable and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

From the matters communicated with those charged with governance, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Australian National Audit Office



Peter Kerr

Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

5 September 2017