
Appendix one – Response from agencies

Response from NSW Treasury



Treasury

Our Reference: TA21/1213
Your Reference:
D2108940/PA6676

Ms Margaret Crawford
NSW Auditor-General
GPO Box 12
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Crawford

Performance Audit – Grants administration for disaster relief

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2021 inviting a response from NSW Treasury to the final NSW Auditor-General's Report, *Performance Audit – Grants administration for disaster Relief* (the Report).

I welcome the Report and agree with the findings and recommendations relevant to NSW Treasury.

I note the recommendation that NSW Treasury should, by December 2021, finalise and implement an evaluation of the \$10,000 Support Grant and \$3,000 Recovery Grant. This evaluation will commence shortly. The evaluation findings will measure the economic outcomes and capture lessons learnt to help inform the design of future stimulus measures.

I would like to thank the Audit Office's review team for working collaboratively with officers from NSW Treasury and Service NSW to make this audit a constructive and valuable report.

Should the Audit Office require additional information from NSW Treasury, please contact Mr Joshua Greenwood on 9228 3561 or via email at Joshua.Greenwood@treasury.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Pratt'.

Michael Pratt AM
Secretary

7 June 2021

Handwritten initials 'CC Emma Hogan' and 'Simon Reas' in black ink.

GPO Box 5469, Sydney NSW 2001 ■ Telephone: (02) 9228 4567 ■ www.treasury.nsw.gov.au

Response from Department of Customer Service



Customer
Service

McKell Building – 2-24 Rawson Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Tel 02 9372 8877 | TTY 1300 301 181
www.nsw.gov.au

Office of the Secretary

Our reference: COR-03415-2021

Ms Margaret Crawford
Auditor-General
NSW
By email: mail@audit.nsw.gov.au

Margaret

Dear Auditor-General

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the *Performance Audit Grants Administration for Disaster Relief* report, which assessed whether two different one-off grants to small business impacted by the shutdown of the NSW economy were effectively administered.

We are pleased that the report concludes that both grants were administered effectively and largely fulfilled their objectives and complied with regulatory requirements. We accept the recommendations in full.

The Department of Customer Service (DCS) and Service NSW are proud to be supporting our customers experiencing hardship throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Service NSW was tasked by the NSW Government to administer grants to assist customers impacted by hardship events, including the COVID-19 pandemic. In carrying out this work, Service NSW's priority has been to ensure that it administers these programs efficiently to allow financial support to be available quickly to communities in need following a hardship event, whilst ensuring that risks are identified and mitigated.

Since January 2020 when Service NSW first began administering these grants, Service NSW has worked to significantly improve its grant administration systems, including incorporating stronger eligibility assessments and compliance checks, fraud controls and funds recovery processes into new grants and outward payments programs, implementing stronger fraud detection and mitigation systems and bolstering its internal capability in this area. Service NSW has also implemented stronger risk management into the administration of grants and outward payments programs, guided by our low appetite for fraud and compliance risk. This work is ongoing.

Everything that Service NSW does is in partnership with other agencies, to deliver services on their behalf, and Service NSW is committed to working with our partner agencies to continue to embed the learnings outlined in this report into our business operations.

All staff across the Customer Service Cluster must abide by various ethical policies including the Code of Ethics and Conduct, Gift Benefits and Bribes and Fraud and Corruption Awareness Policies. As part of this every staff member must complete a conflict of interest declaration annually or when conflicts change or arise, which must be approved by their manager. While a register of all conflicts can be accessed at any time by authorised officers, DCS will work to ensure the register can show both current and past declarations made by staff. DCS will also work to ensure conflict of interest declarations or similar mechanisms are made by staff involved in higher risk grant programs.

Thank you to you and your team for your work on this audit and the insights it has provided.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Hogan', with a large, sweeping initial 'E'.

Emma Hogan
Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damon Rees', with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Damon Rees
CEO, Service NSW

Date: 15/06/21