



Auditor-General for Australia



15 September 2015

Ms Michele Rowland MP
Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism
Shadow Assistant Minister for Communications
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Rowland

Administration of the Mobile Black Spot Programme

Thank you for your letter of 1 September 2015 requesting the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) to inquire into the administration of the Mobile Black Spot Programme and outlining your concerns regarding the transparency around the program and how funding was allocated.

I can advise that the ANAO commenced a performance audit of the Award of Funding under the Mobile Black Spot Programme in July this year. The topic had been identified for audit coverage and included in the ANAO's 2014 and 2015 *Audit Work Program*.

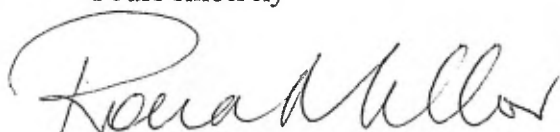
The objective of the audit is to assess the effectiveness of the Department of Communications' assessment and selection of base stations for funding under the first round of the programme. As part of the audit, the ANAO will be examining whether:

- sound governance arrangements for the programme were established (including planning, risk management, and performance monitoring and reporting);
- appropriate programme guidelines were developed (including whether the guidelines reflected the policy intent of the programme, the programme was accessible to potential applicants, and compliance with Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines); and
- applicants were assessed in a consistent, transparent, accountable and equitable manner (including assessing, merit-listing and selecting base station proposals).

The audit will examine the Department of Communications' administration of the first completed assessments of grant funding (Round 1). As such, it will address a number of the aspects of program administration that you have raised in your letter. The audit will not, however, examine the design of the programme, negotiation of funding agreements, the ongoing management of the agreements, and activities associated with Round 2 of the programme.

The audit report is scheduled to table in the Winter 2016 Parliamentary Sitings.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rona Mellor', with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General