



**SENATOR SARAH HANSON-YOUNG**  
Australian Greens' Senator for South Australia

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10 May 2021

Mr Grant Hehir  
Auditor-General  
Australian National Audit Office  
GPO Box 707  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Hehir

**Western Sydney Airport offsets**

I write to request an audit of the federal government's spending on offsets for the Western Sydney Airport, after revelations consortiums including advisors to the NSW government made millions from the development. An investigation by The Guardian revealed that over a quarter of all offsets sold in the scheme were collected by the consortiums.

On Friday, The Guardian reported that the NSW Transport Department has referred the matter to the NSW ICAC. About \$100m of the relevant offsets were purchased by the state and federal governments for major projects, including \$37.5m by the federal government for the new Sydney airport.

I refer you to the reporting of this matter for extensive detail:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/16/enormous-sum-of-money-40m-windfall-from-nsw-environmental-offsets-sparks-calls-for-inquiry>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/28/deeply-concerning-government-consultant-made-millions-from-nsw-environmental-offsets>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/may/07/nsw-transport-department-refers-its-own-western-sydney-environmental-offset-purchases-to-icac>

I note your investigation last year into another deal relating to the Western Sydney Airport where the Department of Infrastructure's 2018–19 financial statements valued the Leppington Triangle land at a tenth of the price it had paid eleven months earlier. I also note your report into Controlled Actions under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, wherein you detail numerous failings including conflict of interest, improper process, decisions made against Department advice and political interference.

I hope you will agree this matter is worthy of examination by your office. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Senator Sarah Hanson-Young**  
Australian Greens Spokesperson for the Environment