A. Entity responses

As mandated in Section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, the Queensland Audit Office gave a copy of this report with a request for comments to:

- Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation
- Director-General, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

We also provided a copy of the report to the following entities and gave them the option of providing a response:

- Premier and Minister for Veterans
- Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership
- Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations
- Under Treasurer, Queensland Treasury
- Director-General, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning.

This appendix contains the responses we received.

The heads of these entities are responsible for the accuracy, fairness, and balance of their comments.

Comments received from Director-General, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND | Queensland Government

Department of the
Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Your reference: PRJ05671
Our reference: CTS 21059/26

23 NOV 2026

Ms Rachel Vagg
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
53 Albert Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Ms Vagg

Thank you for your email of 30 October 2026 regarding the recent work of the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) reviewing the Advance Queensland initiative following a request from the Honourable Andrew Powell MP, Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation.

I am pleased to receive the QAO report titled *Oversight of the Advance Queensland initiative* (the report) and being able to consider your office's findings and recommendations.

I note the report provides detail of the extensive review conducted by QAO, in collaboration with the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (the department) and other Queensland Government departments involved in the Advance Queensland initiative. In conducting the review your office considered the management of the Advance Queensland initiative from 2015 to 2026 with a particular focus on how the overall impact of the initiative was monitored and evaluated.

The recommendations provided in the report provide a comprehensive summary of the considerations and best practice actions required to be taken by Queensland Government departments when designing, governing and evaluating large government initiatives.

Since its launch in August 2026, the department is tasked with delivering the new Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery*. This 15-year Strategy creates the conditions for success by accelerating ideas, unlocking investment and activating partnerships and places, so more Queensland ideas become products, services, businesses, jobs and long-term benefits for Queenslanders.

The recommendations contained in the report provide a timely basis on which to model the department's work to establish and implement a good governance model for this new initiative including:

- clear objectives for the initiative and programs under the initiative;
- robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to monitor and evaluate progress and impact; and
- transparent and accountable reporting processes for the life of the initiative.

I have enclosed feedback in relation to the five individual recommendations made in the report.

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The department will adopt these recommendations in our activation of the Strategy and the associated programs and activities including monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities. The recommendations will also be considered and where appropriate, adopted for any other large-scale initiatives managed and delivered by the department.

Finally, I would like to advise that the department has continued to review its governance measures and implemented recent improvements including establishment of a Science and Innovation Program Management Office (PMO) and Program Management Board to provide consistency in the planning, approval and execution of projects. The PMO also provides a mechanism for better and more consistent management of resources, benefits realisation, budget and risk management across projects.

Should your officers require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, they may contact Mr Tony King, Executive Director - Innovation Strategy, Innovation Division of the department by

Yours sincerely

Patricia O'Callaghan
Director-General

Encl. (1)

Responses to recommendations

Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Oversight of the Advance Queensland initiative

Response to recommendations provided by Patricia O'Callaghan, Director-General, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Time frame for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
1. We recommend that, when establishing future initiatives, all departments: • establish key metrics, performance indicators, and targets that measure the success of the overall initiative against its objectives and expected outcomes • ensure programs released under the initiative have well-defined objectives, metrics and expected outcomes that align with the overall initiative's objectives.	Agree	Immediately as applies to the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and, as appropriate, for other large government initiatives managed by DETSI	The recently launched Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* has been deliberately developed to contain three key high-level targets and built in success measures to enable measurement of success in the DETSI's achievement of those objectives and expected outcomes. In the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* DETSI is establishing a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and Plan to ensure there are defined metrics, performance indicators and targets at program level and supporting mechanisms to identify expected outcomes and systems to collect and report these outcomes against initiative objectives.

1

Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

	Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Time frame for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
2.	We recommend that, when establishing future initiatives, all departments establish and maintain a whole-of-initiative approach to governance, budgeting, expenditure, performance monitoring, and reporting for the life of the initiative. This should include monitoring and reporting on the long-term outcomes of the initiative and supporting programs after the allocated funds are spent.	Agree	Immediately as applies to the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and, as appropriate, for other large government initiatives managed by DETSI	Planning and implementation of the initiatives under the recently launched Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* is being developed with a focus on whole of initiative governance for financial management and monitoring, evaluation and reporting functions across the 15-year term of the Strategy. The recent establishment of a Program Management Office and Program Management provides the strong governance required to manage future programs at a whole-of-initiative. Whilst only recently implemented the maturing of this function will further enhance management across all aspects of programs.

2

Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Time frame for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
3. We recommend that, when establishing future initiatives, all departments: • develop whole-of-initiative frameworks, policies and procedures for data capture requirements and expectations that support performance monitoring and reporting • ensure that whole-of-initiative policies are applied consistently by all agencies delivering programs under the initiative • compare performance data against established indicators and objectives • ensure that each agency responsible for delivering programs under the initiative tracks budgeting and spending for each program • ensure performance and financial data are centrally coordinated and regularly reported to the governance committee.	Agree	Immediately as applies to the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and, as appropriate, for other large government initiatives managed by DETSI	In the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* DETSI is establishing a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and Plan to ensure there are defined metrics, performance indicators and targets at program level and supporting mechanisms to identify expected outcomes and systems to collect and report these outcomes against initiative objectives. The establishment of a Program Management Office (PMO) allows for better coordination of projects across science and innovation including budget management, resourcing, benefits realisation and reporting. Recent enhancements mean that all future reporting major initiatives will occur through the PMO using the Integrated reporting tool (IRT). The IRT contact information on the initiative, milestone dates, accountable officers, priority ratings and is being enhanced to accommodate budget. This will allow better reporting at the program level across all characteristics of projects.

3

Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Time frame for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
4. We recommend that, when establishing future initiatives, all departments: • ensure evaluations are conducted at regular intervals or when there is significant new program funding • ensure evaluations consider whether the intended outcomes are achieved rather than reporting on inputs or outputs alone (e.g. reporting only how much was spent) • consider the results of previous evaluations in designing and implementing future initiatives and programs • report evaluation results publicly and regularly.	Agree	Immediately as applies to the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and, as appropriate, for other large government initiatives managed by DETSI	In the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* DETSI is establishing a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and Plan which will set out a plan for the evaluation of individual activities (micro), groupings of similar targeted activities (meso) and whole of initiative (macro), all focused on reviewing the impact of the Strategy at appropriate intervals throughout the 15-year term of the Strategy.
5. We recommend that, when establishing future initiatives, all departments: • publicly release the approved budget for the initiative and supporting programs • report on funding provided and spent to date against the total funding approved for the initiative and supporting programs • identify the status of all projects under the initiative, including any action required to complete them.	Agree	Immediately as applies to the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and, as appropriate, for other large government initiatives managed by DETSI	The Honourable Andrew Powell MP, Minister for Science and Innovation released a media release on 17 August 2026 announcing the launch of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery*. The media release confirmed the current whole of initiative financial commitment of $22 million. As part of the implementation of the Science and Innovation Strategy, *Ideas into Impact: From discovery to delivery* and supporting activities, DETSI is establishing whole of initiative financial management and reporting systems to enable reporting on total funding and program level funding level approval, expenditure and status for the whole for initiative and individual programs and activities.

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