

# acara

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM,  
ASSESSMENT AND  
REPORTING AUTHORITY



## Annual Report 2009–2010

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ACARA Copyright Administration, ACARA  
Level 10, 255 Pitt Street  
Sydney  
NSW 2000

Email: [info@acara.edu.au](mailto:info@acara.edu.au)

# Contents

<b>1. Overview</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Chair's foreword	2
1.2 CEO's report	3
1.3 History and profile	5
1.4 ACARA's Board and committees	7
<b>2. Performance</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Provision of a national curriculum	10
2.2 Provision of a national assessment program	15
2.3 Provision of a national data collection and reporting program	19
<b>3. Management and Accountability</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1 Governance and management framework	24
3.2 Risk management	25
3.3 Financial management	26
3.4 Stakeholder management	27
3.5 Workforce management	29

# Contents

## 4. Financial Performance 33

4.1	Statement by Directors	34
4.2	Independent auditor's report	35
4.3	Financial statements	37
4.4	Notes to financial statements	43

## 5. Additional Information 69

5.1	Board and committee membership	70
5.2	Board and committee meetings	74
5.3	Advisory groups and membership	76
5.4	Evidence to parliamentary committees	83
5.5	Freedom of information	84
5.6	Occupational health and safety	86
5.7	Legislative reporting requirements	87
5.8	Privacy complaints	88
5.9	Providing access for people with disabilities	89
5.10	Sustainable practices	90
5.11	Acronyms and glossary	91
5.12	Compliance index	93

## Establishment and Functions

ACARA is charged with developing a national curriculum for all primary and secondary students; developing and managing a nationwide assessment program, including the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy; and collecting, analysing and reporting data on school performance.

ACARA was established on 8 December 2008 under the Commonwealth *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008* (the ACARA Act) and commenced operations with the appointment of the Board in May 2009. It is a cooperative enterprise between state and federal jurisdictions, receiving funding for its activities jointly from the Australian Government and state and territory governments.

## Mission

ACARA's mission is to develop a world-class national curriculum and national assessment and reporting programs so that all young Australians can become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. ACARA's work is underpinned by the conviction that:

- each student can achieve high standards given sufficient time, effort and support;
- Australian teachers perform to high standards given appropriate training, opportunities and support for their professional practice; and
- excellence in schooling in Australia is supported by a national commitment to transparency, best practice, collaboration and evidence-based approaches to improvement.

## Future Directions

On 9 May 2010 the Board endorsed the ACARA Strategic Plan 2010-2013 to inform ACARA's future work program and reporting framework. Over the coming year ACARA will work towards:

- the continued development of a rigorous and world-class national curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 12 called the Australian Curriculum, that caters for and engages all Australian students;
- consolidating a robust national assessment program that measures students' progress;
- aligning the national assessment program with the Australian Curriculum;
- enhancing national data collection and reporting programs that support accountability and improvement;
- building productive partnerships that foster a national approach and support improvement across the sector; and
- aligning governance and operations within ACARA and creating a high-performance organisation that can fully meet the expectations of the Australian public.

## Annual Report Requirements

This Annual Report has been prepared in compliance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2008*.

# Letter of transmittal

**acara**

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM,  
ASSESSMENT AND  
REPORTING AUTHORITY

Level 10, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
Phone 1300 895 563 Fax 1800 982 118  
Email [info@acara.edu.au](mailto:info@acara.edu.au) [www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au)

The Hon. Peter Garrett AM, MP  
Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

15 October 2010

Dear Minister

In accordance with Section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act* (1997), I am pleased to submit the annual report on the operations of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) for the financial year ended 30 June 2010.

The 2009-2010 financial year was a challenging period for ACARA as it delivered on a number of key responsibilities set by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). This included the launch of the *My School* website, assuming responsibility for the National Assessment Program and releasing the draft Australian Curriculum material for the Phase One subjects from Kindergarten to Year 12 for community consultation.

ACARA's progress towards developing a world-class national curriculum and national assessment and reporting programs has been made possible by the collaborative working arrangements in education across the states and territories. By leveraging this expertise and support from across the country, ACARA has developed a truly national approach to delivering on its charter. ACARA is proud to be part of a cohesive, national platform that will continue to be pivotal to establishing the best possible education framework for young Australians.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the directions set by the Ministerial Council and the dedication of the ACARA Board and Executive to achieving the Authority's objectives.

I also wish to acknowledge the significant and enthusiastic input of the Australian community and its role in informing and ensuring the success of ACARA's work.

Yours faithfully



Professor Barry McGaw AO, PhD  
Chair

ABN 54 735 928 084

# Annual Report 2009–2010



## Overview



## 1.1 Chair's foreword

The 2009-2010 year has been a year of great challenges, important achievements and momentous progress towards improving education for all young Australians. This first full year of operations has seen ACARA firmly establish its position in the Australian education landscape and develop a strategic framework to guide the successful achievement of its objectives.

Through this work ACARA has worked to adopt the highest national standards and, by addressing the diverse range of perspectives and opinions in the broader community, to forge a national position and vision.

ACARA made significant progress towards achieving its objectives in 2009-2010. Highlights included the release of the NAPLAN 2009 Summary Report and National Report, the development and release of the *My School* website, and the release for consultation of the draft Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history.

The *My School* website generated immense national interest, with approximately 1,211,000 visits to the site recorded in the first three days. Consultation on the draft Kindergarten to Year 10 (K-10) and senior secondary curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history was comprehensive, bringing together teachers, principals and curriculum and content experts. In order to actively canvass the views of the Australian public on the curriculum ACARA operated an online forum, ran a series of consultation forums and information sessions in every Australian capital city and Alice Springs, and held national forums in Sydney.

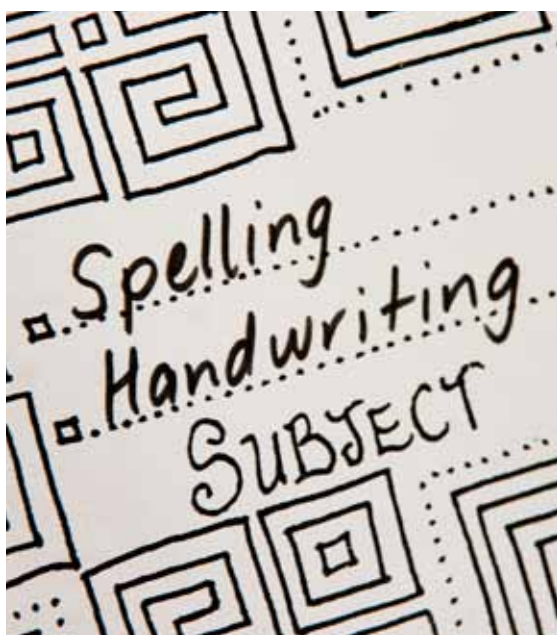
More recently, ACARA released an online consultation survey for the geography shape paper and held a national geography forum in Sydney as the first part of the development of Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum. It also successfully coordinated the delivery and marking of NAPLAN 2010.

The next year for ACARA promises to be even more energising. Among other important milestones, ACARA will release the Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history for K-10 and the senior secondary years. With a strong and motivated workforce, a dedicated Board, and an ambitious Charter set by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), ACARA will continue to build upon its achievements to enhance learning experiences for all Australian children.



Professor Barry McGaw AO, PhD

Chair





## 1.2 CEO's report

Over the past year, ACARA demonstrated its ability to respond to stakeholders, deliver on key goals and to accomplish significant projects within tight deadlines. This consolidation as a mature, fully operational organisation was assisted by a substantial increase in staff numbers, a shift from Melbourne to Sydney and a strategic re-organisation of ACARA's assessment and reporting areas.

The *My School* website was launched in January, and the draft English, mathematics, science and history curricula for Kindergarten to Year 12 were released in March and May for consultation. These complex projects involved numerous stakeholders and extensive consultation and confirmed ACARA's capacity to respond effectively and efficiently to national challenges.

As an organisation, ACARA was able to articulate its values and underpinning tenets including its intention of becoming a trusted partner and authoritative source of data, advice and information for the Australian community.

### ACARA's Achievements

ACARA released for consultation the draft English, mathematics, science and history curricula and the geography shape paper, and worked on developing the arts and languages shape papers. A number of national and state and territory consultation forums were held and processes established for online consultation and feedback through the Australian Curriculum website.

This work profited immensely from the strong interest and feedback of stakeholders and the broader community, as measured by the number of comments, written submissions to the online Australian Curriculum Consultation

Portal, as well as by the ongoing dialogue in the media and other forums.

ACARA successfully oversaw the development of the NAPLAN 2010 tests and coordinated national testing and marking after taking over responsibility for this work from a number of other bodies in 2010. Despite some controversy in the lead-up to the NAPLAN 2010 tests, tests went ahead as planned. Further post-test consultation has enabled ACARA to strengthen its relationships within the education sector.

ACARA worked with a range of other organisations to improve the consistency of data collected on Australian schools, including data on vocational education and training in schools. ACARA was also involved in developing a common definition of disability.

ACARA prepared a submission to the 2010 Commonwealth Senate Inquiry into the Administration and Reporting of NAPLAN, and anticipates further involvement in this inquiry over the coming year.

ACARA also undertook major awareness-raising campaigns and public consultation around both the launch of the *My School* website and progress in the development of the Australian Curriculum to ensure the Australian community is informed about and engaged with these initiatives.

### ACARA's People

The people who work with and for ACARA are its most valuable asset and the Authority is committed to continuing to build on its already strong pool of talent and networks.

Much of ACARA's work is done in collaboration and consultation with partners and other stakeholders, with many working and advisory groups established over the

## 1.2 CEO's report

course of 2009-2010 to provide expert and community input.

To these partners and stakeholders I extend my thanks and an acknowledgement that without the contributions and engagement of teachers, principals, students, education departments and authorities, and the broader community, ACARA would not be able to achieve its objectives.

Given that ACARA undertook a major relocation from Melbourne to Sydney in 2010, and was still building a full complement of staff through 2009-2010 to meet ministerial requirements, I appreciate the dedication and commitment staff have shown under difficult circumstances to the important work we are doing.

### Future Directions

Many significant milestones face ACARA in the year ahead.

ACARA expects to publish the K-10 Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science

and history, and subsequently the senior years curriculum, and will release the second version of the *My School* website. ACARA will also publish shape papers for geography, the arts and languages, and will work to further develop the remaining learning areas. There is already a great deal of anticipation and excitement in the community about these developments.

As the Australian Curriculum is being finalised, ACARA will begin to align national assessments to it, to ensure consistency between these fundamental education elements.

ACARA will also, for the first time, publish the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* (for the 2009 year).



Dr Peter Hill  
Chief Executive Officer



## 1.3 History and profile

### History

ACARA was established in December 2008 and became operational at the end of May 2009.

On 28 May 2009, then Minister for Education, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, appointed ACARA Board members.

ACARA quickly consolidated the work begun by the Interim National Curriculum Board (INCB), and developed and launched a school reporting website [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) to provide meaningful information about school performance to the Australian community.

The INCB was wound down in May–June 2009, and all responsibilities were transferred to ACARA.

### Purpose, Enabling Legislation and Functions

ACARA is responsible for delivering a national curriculum, a national assessment program, and national data collection and performance reporting programs.

ACARA was established under the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008* (ACARA Act) by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia on 8 December 2008.

ACARA is a cooperative enterprise between state and federal jurisdictions and its activities are jointly funded by Commonwealth, state and territory governments.

ACARA's work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of school education in Australia through a national curriculum, national assessment, data collection, and performance reporting.

The ACARA Act outlines ACARA's functions, which are to:

- develop and administer a national school curriculum, including curriculum content and achievement standards, for school subjects specified by the Ministerial Council's Charter for ACARA;
- develop and administer national assessments;
- collect, manage and analyse student assessment data and other data relating to schools and comparative school performance;
- facilitate information-sharing arrangements between Australian government bodies in relation to the collection, management and analysis of school data;
- publish information relating to school education, including information relating to comparative school performance;
- provide school curriculum resource services, educational research services and other related services;
- provide information, resources, support and guidance to the teaching profession;
- perform other related functions.

## 1.3 History and profile

### Directions of the Ministerial Council

Section 7 (3) of the ACARA Act requires ACARA to perform its functions and exercise its powers in accordance with the Charter set by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. This has since become the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (the Ministerial Council).

ACARA reports to the Ministerial Council and to the Commonwealth Minister for Education, including in relation to requirements under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (CAC Act). The Ministerial Council provided ACARA with a Charter for the period 1 April 2009 to 30 June 2010, which formed the basis of ACARA's activities for the 2009-2010 reporting year.

ACARA's new Charter was approved at the Ministerial Council meeting held on 15 April 2010, to take effect from 1 July 2010. At this meeting Ministers also agreed that curriculum development will cover all eight learning areas listed in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (Melbourne Declaration) and that the curriculum will define the core knowledge, skills and understanding that all students should learn in particular years of schooling.

### Responsible Minister

From 1 July 2009 to 28 June 2010, the Minister responsible for ACARA was the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, then Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, and Minister for Social Inclusion.

The Minister responsible for ACARA at the end of the 2009-2010 financial year was the Hon. Simon Crean, MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for Education, and Minister for Social Inclusion.

### Location

In January 2010 ACARA relocated its principal office from the former INCB premises in Melbourne to Sydney. Since then ACARA's headquarters have been at Level 10, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Over the course of the 2009-2010 year ACARA also seconded and employed staff from the former Benchmarking of Educational Measurements Unit (BEMU) in Perth, and maintained a dedicated office in Perth.





## 1.4 ACARA's Board and committees

### The ACARA Board

The ACARA Board was announced in May 2009 by then Education Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP. A pre-establishment meeting was held by Board members on 21-22 May 2009, and the Board subsequently came together eight times in the 2009-2010 financial year.

The Board is chaired by Professor Barry McGaw AO, with Mr Tony Mackay serving as the Deputy Chair. The Board's thirteen members were nominated by federal, state and territory education ministers as well as by the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) and the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA).

The Board is supported by three committees as well as a number of advisory panels and working groups. All members of the Board and the committees are non-executive.

### Assessment and Reporting Committee

The Assessment and Reporting Committee, comprising nine members, is chaired by Professor Barry McGaw. The Committee is responsible for providing advice, assurance and assistance on ACARA's national framework for assessment and reporting.

Additionally, the Committee is supported by a number of working groups and advisory panels, which provide advice on ACARA's national assessment and reporting work.

### Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee is chaired by Mr Tony Mackay and has nine members. It advises on ACARA's curriculum development program. It also provides advice to the ACARA Board on key structural and organisational matters in relation to curriculum development and implementation. The Curriculum Committee is also supported by a number of working groups and advisory panels.

### Audit and Risk Committee

The ACARA Board established an Audit and Risk Committee at its second meeting on 29 June 2009 in compliance with Section 32 of the CAC Act. The Committee is chaired by Ms Dianne Kerr and comprises four members, including one member who is independent of the Board. The Audit & Risk Committee provides assurance and assistance on ACARA's risk, control and compliance framework and its external accountability responsibilities.







# Annual Report 2009–2010



## Performance

## 2.1 Provision of a national curriculum

### Overview

ACARA is responsible for the development of a world-class national curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 12 that will enable all young Australians to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

Work on the Australian Curriculum is guided by the 2008 Ministerial Council's Melbourne Declaration, which sets the direction for Australian schooling for the next decade. According to the Melbourne Declaration, the national curriculum will 'equip all young Australians with the essential skills, knowledge and capabilities to thrive and compete in a globalised world and information rich workplaces of the current century'. The national curriculum will be accessible to all young Australians, regardless of their social or economic background or the school they attend.

The first phase of this work began in 2008 under the direction of the INCB, with the development of the curriculum for the learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history for implementation from 2011 in Years K-10.

A second phase of work involves the development of a national curriculum in languages, geography and the arts.

The third phase, noted by the Ministerial Council in early 2010, will address other learning areas identified in the Melbourne Declaration, including design and technology, health and physical education, ICT, economics, business, and civics and citizenship.

Along with the development, publication and online dissemination of the Australian Curriculum K-12 (comprising content, elaborations, and achievement standards) and annotated work samples for all learning

areas set out in the Melbourne Declaration, ACARA has a responsibility for online resource discovery and access, as well as coordination of implementation support across curriculum planning and delivery, assessment and reporting.

The process for developing the national curriculum is outlined in ACARA's *Curriculum Development Process*, available on the ACARA website at [www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au). This process has four stages: Shaping, Writing, Implementation, and Evaluation and Review. During 2009-2010, ACARA progressed from the Shaping stage for Phase 1 learning areas through to consultation at the latter end of the Writing stage. ACARA also commenced the Shaping stage for Phase 2 learning areas.

Three cross-curriculum priorities have been embedded in each of the learning areas. These priorities were identified following consideration of the Melbourne Declaration and the feedback on it, and have been endorsed by the Ministerial Council. The priorities are:

- ***Indigenous perspectives***, which are being written into the national curriculum to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to learn about, acknowledge and respect the history and culture of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
- a commitment to ***sustainable patterns of living***
- skills, knowledge and understandings relating to ***Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia***.

Consideration has also been given to embedding the general capabilities outlined in the Melbourne Declaration: ***literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, thinking skills, ethical behaviour, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding and social competence***.

## 2.1 Provision of a national curriculum

### Achievements

Over the 2009-2010 financial year ACARA made significant progress in developing the Australian Curriculum, and achieved a number of milestones including the finalisation and publication of the *Curriculum Design Paper* (version 2) and the *Curriculum Development Process* (version 4), and the finalisation of the design and development processes for the curriculum, assessment and reporting framework for K-10.

ACARA also designed and launched online consultation mechanisms to coincide with the first release of the draft Phase 1 curriculum for consultation.

The publication of and public consultation on draft K-10 and senior secondary curricula for English, mathematics, science and history, and the trialling of these in 150 schools was a significant achievement. Writing and publication of the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography* for consultation, and the writing of the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts* were also significant achievements.

### Phase 1 curriculum development

ACARA developed draft continua for the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities embedded in preparation for the release of the Phase 1 curriculum.

Draft curriculum content for senior secondary English, mathematics, science and history was published for national consultation, which included the convening of state, territory and national consultation forums, advisory panels, working groups, and national learning area panel meetings.

A curriculum mapping exercise identified similarities and differences between the draft K-10 Australian Curriculum in English, mathematics, science and history and the corresponding curricula in the states and territories. This considered both the 'official' curriculum documentation and the curriculum as it is actually taught or 'enacted' in the classroom. Reports on outcomes and related consultations were delivered to the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee (AEEYSOC).

As part of ACARA's engagement with its stakeholders, it arranged to trial parts of the proposed Australian Curriculum at a number of schools representing all sectors in states and territories across the country.

In total, 448 school teachers participating in the trial provided feedback on the draft K-10 curriculum via the online survey, and representatives of ACARA visited a number of schools to obtain more in-depth feedback.

Comments received from participants in the trial indicated that the draft curriculum met or exceeded their expectations.

*"I've got to be honest with you; there were a couple of teachers ...who weren't really motivated to take it on. But as they started to go through it, they went, 'I can see that. Okay I can see that.' And so it actually did pull them in. I think it will work for every teacher like that."*

Teacher comment in response to trialling the draft curriculum

## 2.1 Provision of a national curriculum

The Australian community demonstrated strong interest in the shape of Australia's new national curriculum.

Following the launch of the K-10 draft English, mathematics, science and history curricula in March, ACARA hosted forums across Australia with teachers, principals, academics and the public to gather feedback that will help shape the final national curriculum. These forums were one of a number of streams of consultation being undertaken by ACARA.

An online survey and consultation portal generated over 26,000 data items, while national learning area forums held in Sydney in April brought together 325 representatives of Catholic, independent and government schools to seek advice on proposed improvements to the English, mathematics, science and history curricula. ACARA also received several hundred written submissions from peak bodies as well as members of the general public.

At the end of the 2009-2010 financial year, ACARA was in the process of analysing the feedback and making adjustments to the curriculum as necessary.

### Phase 2 curriculum development

ACARA made progress in 2009-2010 in the development and release of Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum. The draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography* was completed and published for consultation, and national consultation commenced. The draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts* paper was completed, and work commenced on the *Initial Advice Paper for Languages*.

### Phase 1 K-10 curriculum consultation at a glance:

26 039	unique consultation portal responses
3650	survey responses
935	state and territory forum participants
485	submissions from individuals in the community
448	trial school teachers providing feedback
325	national learning area forum participants
209	submissions from 186 organisations

## 2.1 Provision of a national curriculum

**Australian Curriculum**  
CONSULTATION PORTAL

Home Learn Explore K-10 Explore 11-12 Consult Survey Guide Glossary

Overview English History Mathematics Science

### Overview

The development of the Australian Curriculum in the first phase includes English, mathematics, science and history. The second phase will see the development of geography, arts and languages, followed by a third phase involving the rest of the curriculum.

In developing the Australian Curriculum for particular learning areas, the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians is a key reference point. The second goal is that 'All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens' and the declaration states that curriculum will be designed to develop such learners. The Declaration also proposes that national curriculum (and state or territory and local curriculum) will develop the following:

- A solid foundation in knowledge, understanding, skills and values on which further learning and adult life can be built.
- Deep knowledge, understanding, skills and values that will enable advanced learning and an ability to create new ideas and translate them into practical applications
- General capabilities that underpin flexible and analytical thinking, a capacity to work with others and an ability to move across subject disciplines to develop new expertise.

The curriculum for each of the first four learning areas (English, mathematics, science and history) contain a statement of rationale, aims and an overview of the organisation of the learning area.

Each learning area includes content descriptions and achievement standards. The content descriptions specify what teachers are expected to teach. They include the knowledge, skills and understanding for each learning area at each year level. The content descriptions provide a well-researched scope and sequence of teaching, within which teachers determine how best to cater for individual student's learning needs and interests.

Examples that illustrate each content description can be found in content elaborations. These are available for those teachers and others who may require assistance to better understand the content description.


An achievement standard describes the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students at each year level. Students who achieve the standard are well able to progress to the next level.

Annotated student work samples will illustrate the achievement standard at each year level. Some samples are available to view during consultation and a more complete set will become available over time.

The Australian Curriculum also pays attention to how 10 general capabilities and three cross-curriculum dimensions contribute to, and can be developed through, teaching in each learning area.

The 10 general capabilities are: literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, thinking skills, ethical behavior, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding and social competence. The three cross-curriculum dimensions are: Indigenous history and culture, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia and Sustainability.

The Australian Curriculum is an online curriculum that provides maximum flexibility in how the curriculum can be accessed and organised. For example, users can view, download and print the curriculum for a particular learning area at one year level or across multiple year levels.



The diagram illustrates the structure of the Australian Curriculum. It features a central circle labeled 'Content descriptions and Achievement standards'. Surrounding this central circle are four colored segments representing learning areas: English (purple), Mathematics (red), Science (green), and History (blue). The entire structure is enclosed within a larger blue circle labeled 'Cross-curriculum dimensions'. Below the central circle, the text 'General capabilities' is visible, indicating their foundational role across all learning areas.

**THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM**

Australian Curriculum Consultation Portal: Consulting not just on the Australian Curriculum but also on the online delivery platform for Phase 1 curriculum publication, which will take place according to Ministerial Council timelines in the second half of 2010.



## 2.1 Provision of a national curriculum

### Implementation support

The responsibility for implementing the Australian Curriculum lies with the states and territories. However, recognising that the implementation process is a significant challenge for school communities across the nation, ACARA is working to support schools and jurisdictions alike. In 2009-2010 ACARA established processes for identifying implementation support needs across curriculum planning and delivery, assessment and reporting.

### Future Directions

In the second half of 2010, in line with Ministerial Council timeframes, ACARA was due to release Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum, comprising the learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history, as well as full reports on consultation, mapping, and the experience of trial schools.

Implementation for K-10 is scheduled from 2011 at the discretion of states and territories. Senior year courses will be made available sometime thereafter, with implementation expected to commence from 2013.

With the release of the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography*, ACARA began consultation for Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum. Draft shape papers for the arts and languages are also expected to be released in late 2010, to initiate the consultation process.

Curriculum development in the three Phase 2 areas will follow those of Phase 1 by approximately 12 months. Individual timelines were under consideration at the end of June 2010.

The Ministerial Council requested that ACARA provide advice about curriculum development for other learning areas identified in the Melbourne Declaration, including design and technology, health and physical education, ICT, economics, business, and civics and citizenship.

ACARA subsequently advised the Ministerial Council on the development of the whole curriculum, covering all of the learning areas indicated above. The Ministerial Council has noted the possible composition and timeline for Phase 3 curriculum development.





## 2.2 Provision of a national assessment program

### Overview

In 2009-2010, ACARA took over management of the National Assessment Program (NAP). The NAP is used to monitor progress towards the outcomes and targets of the Melbourne Declaration as well as those of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Nationally comparable data from these tests enables the achievements of students to be measured and reported against national standards. This standardised reporting facilitates objective decision-making about policies, practices and resourcing. The NAP currently includes the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and national sample assessments.

### History and purpose

In 2003, a rolling three-year cycle of national sample assessments began. In 2003, literacy in science (Year 6) was tested. In 2004, civics

and citizenship (Years 6 and 10) was tested, and in 2005 literacy in ICT (again, Years 6 and 10) was tested. At the time, the sample chosen represented only about five per cent of the total student population at each year level, however the student mix included all states and territories, school sectors, and socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

ACARA became responsible for the development and nationally consistent administration of the NAPLAN tests from its establishment and took over the management of NAPLAN from the beginning of 2010.

Run for the first time in 2008, the NAPLAN tests are ACARA's key assessment responsibility. These tests are undertaken by all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy.

**24** Lucy made 4 tree designs using sticks. There is a pattern in the way the trees grow.

Tree 1  
1 stick

Tree 2  
3 sticks

Tree 3  
7 sticks

Tree 4  
15 sticks

Lucy continues the pattern in the same way.

How many sticks will Tree 5 have?

23      31      35      45

☐      ☐      ☐      ☐

Test item from NAPLAN 2010 Year 5 Numeracy.

## 2.2 Provision of a national assessment program

### Test development process

NAPLAN tests are developed through a collaborative process that brings together representatives of the federal, state and territory governments as well as the Catholic and independent school sectors. To date, NAPLAN tests have been informed by the curricula of the states and territories, but future development of the tests will be driven by the progressive implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

Currently the appropriateness of the material tested is ensured by referencing the *National Statements of Learning for English* and *National Statements of Learning for Mathematics*, as well as state and territory curriculum and learning frameworks.

The subject matter in the NAPLAN tests is carefully selected so as to be inclusive of

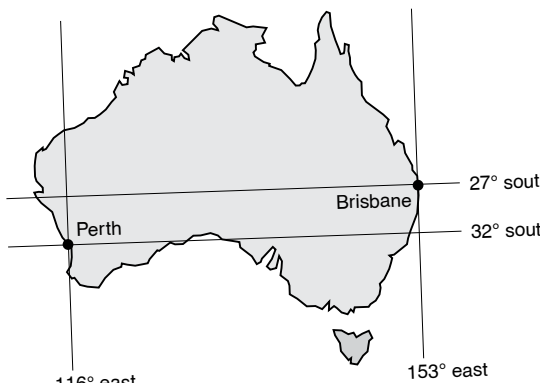
all students. In the states and territories, Indigenous education experts provide culturally-specific feedback to assessment authorities as to the suitability of the test items and the appropriateness of the stimulus materials for Indigenous students.

Jurisdictions that have school students in remote and very remote areas provide feedback on the suitability of test materials for those students.

The ongoing development of innovative assessment items that permit students to demonstrate the variety of skills, understanding and knowledge described in the National Statements of Learning is essential. Test items must show a relevance to classroom teaching practices and school assessment of the outcomes, as well as fulfilling diagnostic and measurement requirements.

**23** Brisbane has the latitude and longitude of  $27^{\circ}$  south,  $153^{\circ}$  east.

Shade one bubble.



A ship has a latitude and longitude that is  $10^{\circ}$  north and  $5^{\circ}$  west of Brisbane.

What is the position of the ship?

- ☐  $17^{\circ}$  south,  $148^{\circ}$  east
- ☐  $17^{\circ}$  south,  $158^{\circ}$  east
- ☐  $37^{\circ}$  south,  $148^{\circ}$  east
- ☐  $37^{\circ}$  south,  $158^{\circ}$  east

Test item from NAPLAN 2010 Year 9 Numeracy (Non-Calculator).

## 2.2 Provision of a national assessment program

The test development process for NAPLAN is comprehensive, rigorous and draws on both the best available expertise within Australia and on national and international best practice. ACARA is responsible for centralised management of the project, and is supported by contracted expert organisations, expert review and recommendations from officials from all states and territories.

During 2009, the 2010 NAPLAN tests were developed under contract by the Australian Council for Educational Research.

The development cycle for the NAPLAN tests is approximately 18 months. This process involves the creation of a large pool of items that are extensively reviewed by expert panels from states and territories. After this, selected items are sent to be trialled with sample student populations.

The trialling of test items ensures ACARA has the necessary data to confirm an item's suitability. Selected items with positive trial data are then included in the construction of the final tests. The final tests are subsequently reviewed by panels, which include experts who advise on the suitability of the test items for particular groups such as Indigenous students and students with English as a second language.

### Equating and analysis

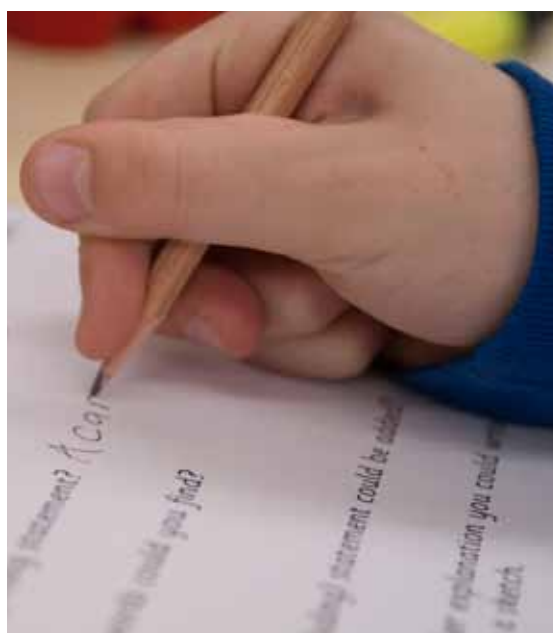
An equating study comprising an equivalent set of tests is developed and completed by a sample of students who also sat the NAPLAN tests. The process of equating enables tests in subsequent years to be placed on a similar base line of difficulty to ensure valid comparisons can be made between student performances across different years.

The data from this analysis form the basis of reports to parents and schools and to state, territory and federal governments, including the national reporting of results in September and December each year.

Relevant information is reported to parents and schools, and can be used for diagnostic purposes and to assist in catering to each student's individual needs, supporting teaching and learning in the classroom.

### Test administration

Tests are administered at a local level in states and territories by Test Administration Authorities, within the agreed framework of the *National Protocols for Test Administration*. These protocols establish standards and quality controls in relation to aspects of testing such as test materials security, uniform testing conditions, common directions and information for students, teachers and principals, and guidelines for providing special arrangements in test sessions for students with special needs.



## 2.2 Provision of a national assessment program

### Achievements

ACARA successfully assumed responsibility in 2010 for the national assessment program, previously managed by the Performance Monitoring and Reporting Taskforce of the Ministerial Council.

In 2009-2010 ACARA oversaw the security and uniform administration of the NAPLAN tests within the agreed National Protocols for the first time. A significant highlight of ACARA's assessment work during the year was the successful delivery of error-free NAPLAN tests to more than one million students across Australia from 11-13 May 2010 as planned.

In 2010, ACARA was responsible for the management of the quality of marking; data collection and the analysis of test data; and the reporting of student, school, state and territory and national results.

Another important progression for ACARA was the decision to change the NAPLAN writing prompt for 2011 from 'narrative' to 'persuasive', to broaden the set of student skills tested.

### Future Directions

A continuing project within NAPLAN is the ability to place all students on a common scale for each test domain. These common

scales provide significant information about the performance of, and growth in, individual student achievement over time, and add a longitudinal dimension to the data. With these common scales, it is possible to gauge the achievement of both highly performing students and those who have yet to reach the agreed national minimum standard.

In future years, NAPLAN will be referenced against an Assessment Framework based on the new Australian Curriculum to ensure a coordinated approach to teaching and learning.

NAPLAN tests are one item in a suite of tools that educators can use to develop their teaching and learning programs and to identify the additional help each student needs. Although Australian students consistently perform well in a global context there is room for improvement, particularly at the lower achievement levels. By identifying where help is needed, resources can be allocated more equitably, and inequality reduced. NAPLAN will continue to provide an accurate assessment tool for Australia's parents and educators, and will become more powerful over time as the Australian Curriculum is implemented.

### NAPLAN 2010 at a glance

5,000,000	NAPLAN test books printed (approximately)
1,102,000	students in years 3, 5, 7, 9 sitting the tests (approximately)
11,568	special test provisions granted
1820	people engaged as test markers
15	marking centres

## 2.3 Provision of a national data collection and reporting program

### Overview

In 2010, ACARA assumed many of the responsibilities of the former Ministerial Council group, the Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT). These include responsibility for managing the revision and update of the *Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures* (the measurement framework), which supports nationally comparable reporting of student progress, and for publication of the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

ACARA is committed to working with all school sectors to enhance and expand public reporting on school education in Australia. The aim is to publish information that is relevant locally and nationally, that is timely, consistent and comparable, and that can be used to improve school performance and student outcomes. This will be achieved by providing information through the *My School* website, the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*, NAPLAN summary and national reports, and by developing frameworks to support the delivery of these and other reports.

### Achievements

#### *My School*

The major highlight in the provision of a national data collection and reporting program in 2009-2010 was the development and launch of the *My School* website by then Minister for Education, the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, on 28 January 2010 - to considerable public interest. *My School* was a significant milestone for ACARA, and was achieved with a limited number of staff, supported by the ICSEA Expert Panel and informed by focus groups.

The success of *My School* can be broadly measured by the 3,397,162 visits to the website between 28 January and 30 June 2010. Furthermore, in August 2010 it received the annual Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) award for best eGovernment website.

In mid 2009 ACARA established a project team to work on a national schools data collection store and to develop a public interface web-based portal to support school-level performance reporting. This project evolved over the second half of 2009, to become the *My School* website. During the development of the website a number of groups were established to provide expert advice, and focus groups were also convened to collect feedback from the public on the proposed website.

The *My School* website provides detailed information on over 9,000 schools in Australia. It presents a new index of student and school characteristics - the Index of Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) - developed specifically for the purpose of identifying schools serving similar student populations. This enables schools' results on national tests to be understood in a fair and meaningful way, and enables schools seeking to improve their performance to learn from other schools with statistically similar populations. By providing extensive information on Australian schools, the *My School* website introduces a new level of transparency and accountability to the Australian school system.

Information on the *My School* website was sourced from school profiles, school census data, NAPLAN performance data, and secondary school outcomes - from jurisdictions, systems and individual schools themselves.

## 2.3 Provision of a national data collection and reporting program

To collect national data, and then to assemble it into a form that enables users to learn about schools and their performance on NAPLAN tests, was a major task for ACARA - and was achieved within extremely tight timeframes.

ACARA has conducted a multi-dimensional review of the *My School* website since it went live, and at the end of June 2010 was considering enhancements proposed for the next iteration.

### Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures

ACARA has been charged with providing advice around the Measurement Framework. In June 2010, a sub-group of the Assessment and Reporting Policy Advisory Panel was formed to clarify the purpose of the Framework and to ensure that it reflects performance against the goals and objectives of the Melbourne Declaration and the National Education Agreements. The revised framework for 2010-2012 was expected to be finalised in late 2010.

### National Report on Schooling in Australia 2009

Following ACARA's assumption of responsibility for the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* in early 2010, it developed a new concept for the 2009 report which aims to enhance its usability and accessibility and meet the reporting

requirements specified in the Measurement Framework.

### Future Directions

The next annual update to the *My School* website was expected to go live late in 2010. This will reflect enhancements considered by the *My School* working group and the ACARA Board, based on consultation and feedback from the education sector. Some enhancements had already been approved by Ministers and others were expected to be recommended to the Ministerial Council later in 2010.

A working group established in August 2010 to reconceptualise the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* is further considering the proposed concept for enhancing the usability and accessibility of the report. Further modifications to the collection and presentation of data will occur for the 2010 report, to be published in 2011.

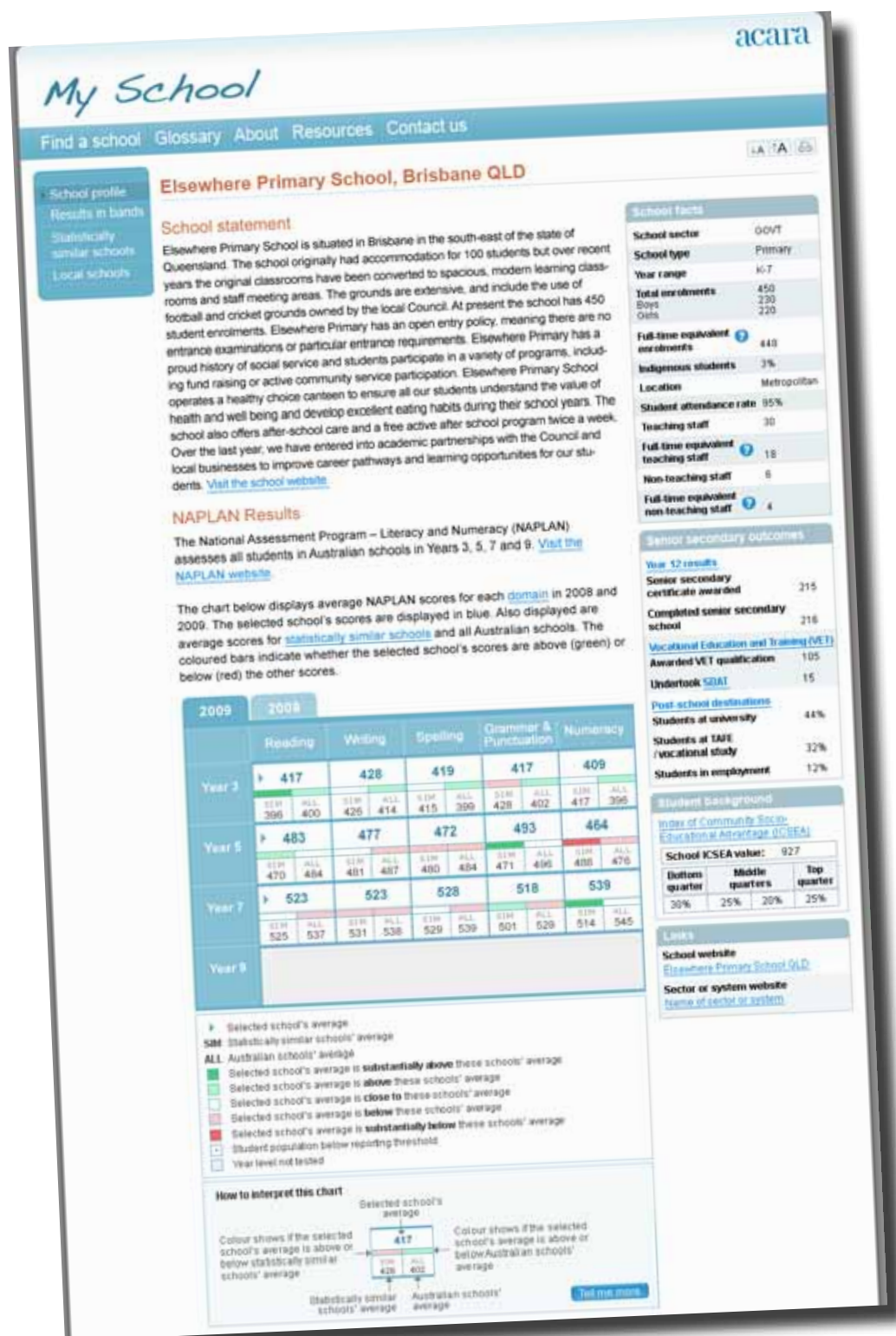
The responsibility for the delivery of the *NAPLAN Summary Report* and *NAPLAN National Report* for 2010 rests with ACARA. Better ways to represent the third year of NAPLAN data collected are also being considered for the *My School* website, as are ways to publish the reports in a more dynamic, flexible, online format in 2011.

### *My School* at a glance:

3,397,162	visits to website from launch to end of financial year
1,731,426	visits to website in first week
649,582	visits to website on first day
9870	schools and sub-campus listed



## 2.3 Provision of a national data collection and reporting program



An example school profile page from the *My School* website: Providing a rich array of information about Australian schools and student achievement.



# Annual Report 2009–2010



## Management and Accountability

## 3.1 Governance and management framework

### Overview

ACARA maintains a strong commitment to transparent and ethical corporate governance.

Board members underwent a formal induction in 2008-2009 to establish their rights and responsibilities as directors of an agency operating under the CAC Act.

One of these responsibilities is that Board members are required to disclose to their fellow directors any material personal interest they may have in a matter relating to the affairs of the Authority. So that Board members can disclose potential or actual conflicts they might otherwise be unaware of, a list is provided at each Board meeting of any major procurements undertaken since the previous meeting. A formal record of all disclosures is maintained by ACARA.

ACARA's Code of Conduct, developed in 2009-2010, articulates the standards of behaviour expected from staff. These standards reflect ACARA's values, which staff must demonstrate in the performance of their duties.

### Insurance and Indemnities

During 2009-2010, ACARA held insurance protecting directors and officers from liability for the consequences of managerial misconduct or negligence, to the extent that the provision of the indemnity is not prevented by applicable legislation.

### Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee was established at ACARA's second Board meeting on 29 June 2009 in compliance with Section 31 of the CAC Act. The Committee met four times in the 2009-2010 financial year. The Committee's purpose is to provide independent assurance and assistance to the Board on ACARA's risk, control and compliance framework, and on its external accountability responsibilities.

Mr Paul Crombie was appointed to the Committee as an independent member by resolution of the Board at its 6-7 October 2009 meeting.

The main activities of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2009-2010 were:

- developing an Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2009-2010 to 2010-2011;
- reviewing compliance with the CAC Act;
- developing a risk management framework;
- maintaining oversight of ACARA's financial health, and recommending for Board approval ACARA's annual Financial Statements and Compliance Report; and
- commissioning a range of internal audits, including:
  - fraud
  - financial controls
  - staff, stakeholder and contractor travel
  - procurement, tendering and delegations
  - risk management.

## 3.2 Risk management

### Overview

During 2009-2010, ACARA developed a Risk Management Policy and a Risk Management Framework. The framework provides the foundations for and arrangements that embed risk management at all levels of the organisation. The policy assists in managing risks effectively through the application of the framework at different levels and within specific contexts of the organisation. The objectives of the policy and framework documents are to:

- enable ACARA to proactively identify and manage its risks in a systematic and structured way;
- integrate the risk management process into strategic and business planning; and
- promote risk awareness and attention to the ongoing review, treatment, monitoring and reporting of risks throughout the organisation.

The ACARA Board endorsed the Risk Management Policy on 27 April 2010.

The structure of these documents and the corresponding implementation process, including terminology, assessment and evaluation criteria, are based on the *Australian Standard for Risk Management* (AS/NZ 31000:2009) and on the June 2008 *Risk Management Better Practice Guide* published by the Australian Government.

### Fraud Control

In March 2010, the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the ACARA Fraud Control Plan and Policy. This was developed in accordance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines 2002, issued by the Attorney General's Department, and the AS/NZS/ISO31000:2009 Risk Management Standard. Under Australian government policy there is a requirement for all agencies to have in place a fraud control plan.

The core objectives of the Fraud Control Plan and policy are to identify potential fraud risk categories that ACARA is exposed to in achieving its core functions.





## 3.3 Financial management

### Financial Management

ACARA's financial accountability and reporting responsibilities are set out in the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and are based on the efficient, effective and ethical use of allocated resources. ACARA works within a financial control framework which ensures its responsibilities in respect of financial activities are appropriately and effectively administered.

### Financial Performance and Future Operations

#### Analysis of financial performance

ACARA operated well within its budget for 2009-2010. This was partly due to a less than full staffing contingent as it built its workforce in Melbourne, then re-built it in Sydney, and partly due to the deferral of major costs to 2010-2011.

ACARA's full departmental results are shown in the audited financial statements at Section 4 of this report.

Some of ACARA's main costs in 2009-2010 can be accounted for by its relocation from Melbourne and the fit-out of its new Sydney offices, including major purchases of office equipment. As noted previously, ACARA's staffing levels were relatively low in the first half of the financial year and expanded through recruitment activities in the second half of the year. ACARA's staff are made up of both seconded personnel from state and territory education agencies, and contracted employees. Due to the number of key personnel seconded from other agencies the associated costs make up some of the larger financial transactions with third parties.

ACARA is a collaborative initiative funded 50 percent by the Australian Government and 50 percent by the states and territories of Australia, with each state and territory contributing an

amount based on the relative student numbers within its jurisdiction.

Achievements during 2009-2010 included the launch of the *My School* and the Australian Curriculum websites. Development costs associated with these websites was \$1.024 million and \$0.714 million respectively. The ongoing development of the Australian Curriculum has and will continue to require extensive consultation with teachers and industry experts from around Australia and comprehensive school trialling across all school sectors. Expenditure for 2009-2010 was distributed across the three output areas of curriculum (49.96%), assessment (26.93%) and reporting (23.11%). It is expected that as the organisation matures the distribution of this expenditure will be weighted more towards assessment and reporting.

#### Factors that have affected or may affect operations

No major financial factors have impacted ACARA's operations to date. ACARA's operations are dependent upon funding from state, territory and Commonwealth governments.

#### Reportable events

Under Section 15 of the CAC Act, ACARA must notify the minister for education of 'Significant Events' as defined in the Act.

ACARA experienced no events reportable under these provisions in 2009-2010.



## 3.4 Stakeholder management

### Overview

ACARA has a large and diverse group of stakeholders. These include national and state-based associations, teacher professional associations and unions, parents and citizens groups, academics, important special interest groups representing, among others, students with disabilities, remote and isolated students and defence force families, and myriad industry groups for whom the outcomes of education in Australia are critical.

ACARA engaged and consulted with many of these stakeholders between July 2009 and June 2010, demonstrating the collaborative approach that is vital to ACARA's success.

ACARA also has a strong working relationship with jurisdictional partners and school sectors and systems. This is essential for meeting its objectives in education reform.

ACARA is developing effective lines of communication to the individual principals, teachers, students and parents who make up the approximately 10,000 school communities across Australia. Online initiatives such as the *My School* website are aimed at building these direct lines of communication into the future.

To keep the education sector well informed about its work, ACARA participates in regular education sector events such as professional association conferences. ACARA also has a regular two-page contribution in the bimonthly publication *Education Review*, which is distributed to every school in the country. This is an important mechanism for directly updating principals and teachers about ACARA's work.

ACARA was responsible for four significant websites over 2009-2010, providing key information and avenues for public engagement:

- ACARA's principle site ([www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au))
- *My School* ([www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au))
- Australian Curriculum Consultation Portal ([www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au))
- National Assessment Program ([www.naplan.edu.au](http://www.naplan.edu.au))

### Achievements

#### Public awareness campaigns and information

To raise awareness amongst the Australian public of the launch of the *My School* website in January 2010, ACARA ran a television, radio and print media campaign, and developed a series of information sheets and other support materials to help school communities and the media understand the website.

To provide all Australians with an opportunity to engage directly with the draft Australian Curriculum, ACARA established an online curriculum consultation portal. A national TV advertising campaign 'teach our kids' was run from June 2010 to build awareness of the opportunities available to the teaching profession and the Australian community more broadly to visit the curriculum consultation portal and have a say in the development of the first Australian Curriculum.

The reporting of NAPLAN results to students and schools was supported by online resources including vodcasts and factsheets.

#### Targeted stakeholder engagement

ACARA hosted a national communication forum in late 2009 to which state jurisdiction representatives were invited. This was an

## 3.4 Stakeholder management

important avenue for building ties with school systems and sectors and for providing advanced notice of new developments.

More than 930 participants, representing numerous stakeholder bodies and interest groups, attended targeted forums held in March and April in every state and territory to discuss the development of the English, mathematics, science and history curricula. In addition, four national learning area forums were attended by 325 participants from important stakeholder groups.

### Public engagement

The *My School* website attracted extensive media interest when it was launched by the then federal education minister. It received over 1.8 million visits within the first week, and 3.5 million visits to the end of June 2010.

To address public interest in the draft Australian Curriculum, ACARA held a series of public information sessions around the country for community members to learn more about curriculum development and how they could become involved.

### Future Directions

In the year ahead, ACARA expects to further strengthen its stakeholder engagement by continuing to consult widely with the education profession and wider community in the interest of providing quality schooling for all Australian children.

Extensive consultation will take place around the next phase of the Australian Curriculum's development and the geography, languages and arts shape papers. Regular face-to-face meetings will be held with key stakeholder groups including principal associations and teacher associations and unions. Increased communication at a grass-roots level will build community knowledge of ACARA's role and work.

ACARA will also enhance its websites to make them more dynamic and interactive avenues of public and stakeholder engagement.



## 3.5 Workforce management

### Overview

The 2009-2010 financial year was a period of intense growth for ACARA's workforce, with staff numbers increasing from 22 to 93 over the period.

Close attention was and will continue to be paid to building ACARA's reputation as a leading workplace where experts in the field of education, and others who share a commitment to education and excellence, can pursue and advance their careers.

ACARA's workforce draws on a range of people from diverse Australian and international backgrounds. Many staff are considered leaders in their fields, and have been recruited or seconded from positions within state and territory education departments, curriculum, assessment and certification authorities and the non-government school sector. They bring a valuable range of skills and expertise to ACARA, and help foster stronger ties within the education community.

draft Australian Curriculum, a series of staged relocations were organised, with staff working in both Sydney and Melbourne offices through the transition. By March 2010, the majority of staff had relocated from the Melbourne office. ACARA continues to maintain a small office space in Melbourne for Victorian-based employees and for others to use when required, and an office in Perth to support its assessment functions.

A focus of the 2009-2010 period was the establishment of a supportive, convivial and productive workplace environment offering a healthy work-life balance, while at the same time recognising the challenges of delivering core projects within short timeframes.

In addition, ACARA developed a suite of policies and procedures to support an equitable industrial relations and employee relations framework, as well as an Occupational Health and Safety program including the formation of a Safety Consultation Committee.

### Highlights

On 28 September 2009, then Minister for Education, the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, announced the appointment of Dr Peter Hill as ACARA's inaugural Chief Executive Officer. The 2009-2010 year also saw the appointment of General Managers for Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting, and Corporate Strategy and Governance, and a fourfold increase in staff numbers.

In January 2010, ACARA relocated almost all of its employees from its temporary office in Melbourne to a new office in the Sydney CBD. To minimise the impact of the move on the organisation's capacity to deliver the first version of *My School* and the first phase of the

## 3.5 Workforce management

### Organisational Structure

At the beginning of the financial year ACARA was made up of three business areas: Curriculum; Assessment and Reporting; and Corporate Strategy and Governance.

However, in recognition of the complexities, scale and emerging priorities in Assessment and Reporting, it was restructured into two separate business groups in April 2010, each with its own General Manager. The two business groups operate separately, yet cooperatively, to develop strategies and policies that enhance both the assessment and the reporting fields in national education.

Within Reporting, there are two teams: data and policy. The data team collects, uses and analyses school outcomes data and is responsible for reporting on a range of national performance indicators, while the policy team provides advice and briefings.

During 2009-2010 the Assessment area had staff in Perth, who were responsible for developing test items and for analysis.

Within the Curriculum business group, staff members have been assigned responsibility for each of the learning areas being developed. These staff work in mixed groups which also have responsibility for other key elements of the curriculum, such as the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

Corporate Strategy and Governance is divided into six teams with responsibilities broadly grouped into policy and statutory reporting, governance and information management, communications, digital strategy and web development, human resources, and business services.

Finance and IT services were outsourced throughout the 2009-2010 year.

### Staff Profile

As of 30 of June 2010, ACARA's workforce comprised 93 staff members. Forty-two staff were on long-term contracts, 31 were temporary, and 20 were on secondment from state and territory education agencies. As is often the case with organisations that move interstate, many of ACARA's staff were unable to transfer from Melbourne to Sydney. Consequently turnover was 27 percent for seconded and long-term contract employees. This high level of staff attrition is expected to decline as ACARA has largely completed this transition period. In line with its national approach, ACARA actively seeks and employs staff from across the country.



## 3.5 Workforce management

### Executive Team

The executive team is responsible for ACARA's day-to-day operations. The team has evolved with ACARA, and comprised the following staff over the course of the financial year:

- Chief Executive Officer: Dr Peter Hill
- General Manager, Curriculum, and Deputy CEO: Mr Robert Randall
- General Manager, Corporate Strategy and Governance: Ms Rosemary Naughton
- General Manager, Assessment and Reporting: Ms Sharyn Lidster (September 2009- March 2010)
- Acting General Manager, Assessment: Mr Peter Adams (May 2010- June 2010)
- Acting General Manager, Reporting: Mr David Wasson (April 2010- June 2010)

### Chief Executive Officer: Dr Peter Hill

The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, announced on 6 September 2009 that Dr Peter Hill would assume the role of ACARA's inaugural Chief Executive Officer on 28 September 2009.

Peter's previous experience includes posts as Secretary General to the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, Board Member of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the Australian Research Council (ARC), a Trustee of the National Centre on Education and the Economy, USA, and Chair of the Board of Directors, Australian Principals Centre.

### General Manager, Curriculum and Deputy CEO: Mr Robert Randall

Robert Randall was appointed General Manager, Curriculum in late 2009, and has since taken up the additional responsibilities of Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

Prior to taking up work on the new national curriculum, Robert was Director of Curriculum K-12 with the NSW Department of Education and Training.





## 3.5 Workforce management

Acting General Manager, Reporting: Mr David Wasson

David Wasson was seconded from the NSW Department of Education and Training in early 2010 where he was Director, Educational Measurement and School Accountability (EMSAD).

General Manager, Corporate Strategy and Governance: Ms Rosemary Naughton

Rosemary Naughton was involved in the establishment of the INCB and ACARA from April 2008, and was appointed General Manager in late 2009.

Rosemary has a background in teaching and school leadership and in public administration roles in Western Australia.



Acting General Manager, Assessment: Mr Peter Adams

Peter Adams came to ACARA from the position of General Manager, School Programs, in the Assessment Services Division at ACER in Victoria.

Peter was responsible for the introduction in 2008 of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

### Future Directions

In early 2010, the ACARA Board indicated it wanted a fifth general manager to take responsibility for ACARA's financial and in-house services. An executive recruitment process began late in 2009-2010 to find a suitable candidate. The position was expected to be filled later in 2010.

Staff in Perth were due to relocate from premises in the WA Department of Education and Training to the University of Western Australia in the second half of 2010. There, they will become a dedicated research and development unit, drawing on the strengths of UWA academics and resources.

It is anticipated that ACARA will continue with its active recruitment campaign, and the organisation is likely to grow to over 100 staff.

# Annual Report 2009–2010



## Financial Performance

## 4.1 Statement by Directors



### Statement by the Directors, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2010 are based on properly maintained financial records and give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there were reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This Statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the directors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B McGaw'.

Professor B McGaw, AO  
Chair

Dated this 20 day of September 2010

Mr A Mackay  
Deputy chair

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

Dated this 20 day of September 2010

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P Hill'.

Dr P Hill  
Chief Executive Officer

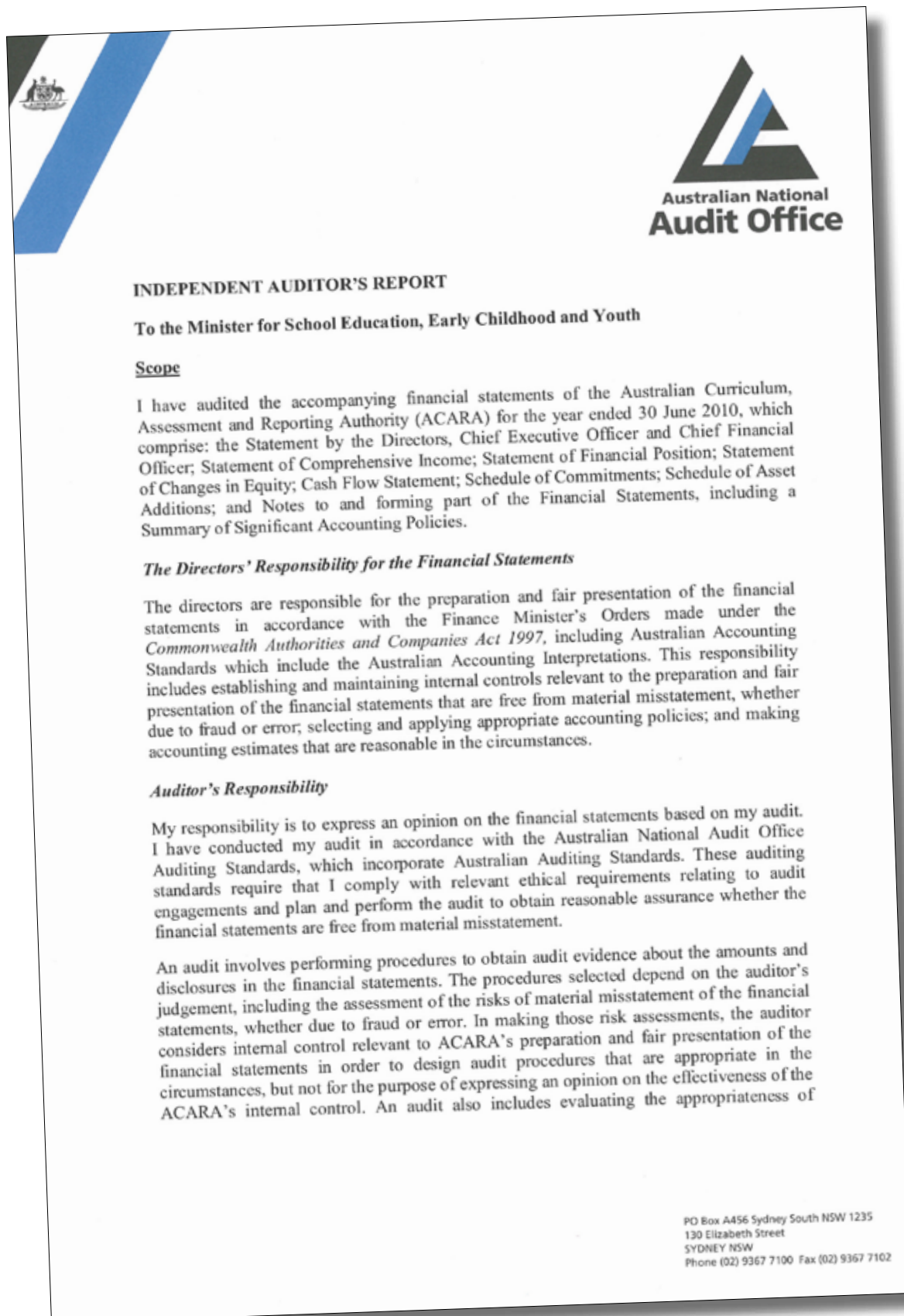
Dated this 20 day of September 2010

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Gray'.

Mr P Gray  
Acting Chief Financial Officer

Dated this 20 day of September 2010

## 4.2 Independent auditor's report



## 4.2 Independent auditor's report

accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

### ***Independence***

In conducting the audit, I have followed the independence requirements of the Australian National Audit Office, which incorporate the requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

### **Auditor's Opinion**

In my opinion, the financial statements of Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority:

- (a) have been prepared in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, including the Australian Accounting Standards; and
- (b) give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders including Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's financial position as at 30 June 2010 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



Graham Johnson

Senior Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Sydney

23 September 2010



## 4.3 Financial statement

### Statement of Comprehensive Income for the Period Ended 30 June 2010

	Note	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee benefits	3(a)	2,894	282
Supplier expenses	3(b)	23,253	394
Depreciation and amortisation		419	-
<b>Total expenses</b>		26,566	676
<b>Less:</b>			
<b>Own Source Income</b>			
<b>Revenue</b>			
Revenue from Jurisdictions	4(b)	16,237	-
Interest	4(c)	216	-
Other revenue	4(d)	59	64
<b>Total revenue</b>		16,512	64
<b>Net cost of (contribution by) services</b>		10,054	612
Revenue from Government	4(a)	19,351	3,493
<b>Total Comprehensive Income attributable to the Australian Government</b>		9,297	2,881

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## 4.3 Financial statement

### Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2010

	Note	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5(a)	10,858	-
Trade and other receivables	5(b)	5,020	3,550
<b>Total financial assets</b>		15,878	3,550
<b>Non-financial assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	6	3,406	-
Intangibles	7	309	-
Other non-financial assets	8	89	-
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		3,804	-
<b>Total Assets</b>		19,682	3,550
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Payables</b>			
Suppliers	9(a)	2,314	450
Grants In Advance	9(b)	2,588	-
Other payables	9(c)	2,435	178
<b>Total payables</b>		7,337	628
<b>Provisions</b>			
Employee provisions	10	167	41
<b>Total provisions</b>		167	41
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		7,504	669
<b>Net Assets</b>		12,178	2,881
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained surplus (accumulated deficit)		12,178	2,881
<b>Total Equity</b>		12,178	2,881

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## 4.3 Financial statement

### Statement of Changes in Equity as at 30 June 2010

	Retained Earnings 2010 \$'000	Total Equity 2010 \$'000
<b>Opening Balance</b>		
Balance carried forward from previous period	2,881	2,881
Adjustment for errors	-	-
Adjustment for changes in accounting policies	-	-
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	2,881	2,881
Surplus / (deficit) for the period	9,297	9,297
<b>Total Income and Expenses</b>	9,297	9,297
<b>Transactions with owners</b>	-	-
<b>Transfer between equity components</b>	-	-
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	12,178	12,178

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## 4.3 Financial statement

### Cash Flow Statement for the Period Ended 30 June 2010

	Note	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Operating Activities</b>			
<b>Cash Received</b>			
Receipts from Jurisdictions		37,789	-
Interest		216	-
Other cash received		59	-
<b>Total cash received</b>		38,064	-
<b>Cash Used</b>			
Employees		(2,416)	-
Suppliers		(22,368)	-
Net GST paid		(1,007)	-
<b>Total cash used</b>		(25,791)	-
<b>Net cash from / (used by) operating activities</b>	11(b)	12,273	-
<b>Investing Activities</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Investments		-	-
<b>Total cash received</b>		-	-
<b>Cash used</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(1,415)	-
Investments		-	-
<b>Total cash used</b>		(1,415)	-
<b>Net cash flows / (used by) investing activities</b>		(1,415)	-
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in cash held</b>		10,858	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		-	-
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	11(a)	10,858	-

Note: ACARA officially commenced operations on 28 May 2009 however funding was not received until July 2009. As a result no cash transactions were recorded in the 2008-2009 financial year.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## 4.3 Financial statement

### Schedule of Commitments as at 30 June 2010

	2010 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>By Type</b>		
<b>Commitments</b>		
Operating leases	8,006	-
Project commitments	7,170	1,102
<i>Total commitments</i>	15,176	1,102
<b>Commitments receivable</b>	(1,380)	(101)
<i>Net commitments by type</i>	13,796	1,001
<b>By Maturity</b>		
<b>Operating lease commitments</b>		
One year or less	1,094	-
From one year to five years	6,912	-
<i>Total project commitments</i>	8,006	-
<b>Project commitments</b>		
One year or less	7,060	1,102
From one year to five years	110	-
<i>Total project commitments</i>	7,170	1,102
<b>Commitments receivable</b>		
One year or less	751	101
From one year to five years	629	1
<i>Total commitments receivable</i>	1,380	101
<i>Net Commitments by maturity</i>	13,796	1,001

Project commitments represent ACARA contracts for the provision of services from curriculum writers and advisors, experts in assessment and reporting from various agencies, organisations and individuals throughout Australia, as well as corporate service providers.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



## 4.3 Financial statement

### Schedule of Asset Additions For the year ended 30 June 2010

	Leasehold improvements \$	Plant and equipment \$	Intangibles \$	Total \$
<b>The following non-financial non-current assets were added in 2009-2010</b>				
By purchase - Government funding	902	343	350	1,595
By purchase - other	2,539	-	-	2,539
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>3,441</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>4,134</b>
<b>The following non-financial non-current assets were added in 2008-2009</b>				
By purchase - Government funding	-	-	-	-
By purchase - other	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### Index to the Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2010

#### Note Contents

- 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
- 2 Events After the Balance Sheet Date
- 3 Expenses
- 4 Income
- 5 Financial Assets
- 6 Property, Plant and Equipment
- 7 Intangibles
- 8 Other Non-financial Assets
- 9 Payables
- 10 Provisions
- 11 Cash Flow Reconciliation
- 12 Directors Remuneration
- 13 Related Party Disclosures
- 14 Executive Remuneration
- 15 Remuneration of Auditors
- 16 Financial Instruments
- 17 Compensation and Debt Relief
- 18 Reporting by Outcomes

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

#### 1.1 Basis of preparation of the financial report

The financial statements and notes are required by clause 1(b) of the Schedule 1 to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and are a general purpose financial report.

The continued existence of ACARA in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on government policy and on continuing contributions by the Commonwealth and states and territories for ACARA's administration and programs. ACARA's outcome is improved quality and consistency of school education in Australia through a national curriculum, national assessment, data collection, and performance reporting system.

The financial statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with:

- Finance Minister's Orders (FMO) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2009; and
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results of the financial position.

The financial report is presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Unless an alternative treatment is specially required by an accounting standard or the

FMO, assets and liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the entity and the amount of assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. However, assets and liabilities arising under agreements equally proportionately unperformed are not recognised unless required by an accounting standard.

Unless alternative treatment is specially required by an accounting standard, income and expenses are recognised in the income statement when, and only when, the flow consumption or loss of economic benefits has occurred and can be reliably measured.

#### 1.2 Significant accounting judgements and estimates

No significant accounting judgements and estimates have been made that would have a significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements.

#### 1.3 New accounting standards

##### *Adoption of New Australian accounting standard requirements*

No accounting standard has been adopted earlier than the application date as stated in the standard.

##### *Future Australian accounting standard requirements*

The following new standards, amendments to standards or interpretations have been issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board but are effective for future reporting periods. It is estimated that the impact of these pronouncements when effective will have no material impact on future reporting periods.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

Standard / Interpretation	Summary	Applicable periods	Impact on ACARA's financial statements
AASB 2009-5 Further amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the annual improvements project [AASB 5, 8, 101, 107, 117, 118, 136 and 139]	Some amendments will result in accounting changes for presentation, recognition or measurement purposes, while other amendments will relate to terminology and editorial changes.	Beginning 1 Jan 2010	Terminology and editorial changes. Impact minor.
AASB 2009-8 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – group cash-settled share-based payment transactions [AASB 2]	The amendments clarify the scope of AASB 2.	Beginning 1 Jan 2010 No impact.	AASB 2 does not apply as ACARA do not enter into share-based transactions.
AASB 2009-9 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – additional exemptions for first-time adopters [AASB 1]	Applies to entities adopting Australian Accounting Standards for the first time, to ensure entities will not face undue cost or effort in the transition process in particular situations.	Beginning 1 Jan 2010	No impact. Relates only to first time adopters of Australian Accounting Standards.
Erratum General Terminology changes	Editorial amendments to a range of Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations	Beginning 1 Jan 2010	Terminology and editorial changes. Impact minor.
AASB 2009-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – classification of rights issues [AASB 132]	The Standard makes amendments to AASB 132, stating that rights issues must now be classed as equity rather than derivative liabilities.	Beginning 1 Feb 2010	No impact. ACARA does not issue rights, warrants and options; consequently the amendment does not impact on the statements.
AASB 2009-13 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from interpretation 19 [AASB 1]	Consequential amendment to AASB 1 arising from publication of Interpretation 19.	Beginning 1 Jul 2010	ACARA does not extinguish financial liabilities with equity instruments, therefore requirements of Interpretation 19 and related amendments have no impact.
AASB 2010-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Limited Exemption from Comparative AASB 7 Disclosures for First-time Adopters [AASB 1 & AASB 7]	These amendments principally give effect to extending the transition provisions of AASB 2009-2.	Beginning 1 Jul 2010	Expected to have no significant impact
AASB 2010-3 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 3, AASB 7, AASB 121, AASB 128, AASB 131, AASB 132 & AASB 139]	These amendments result from proposals that were included in Exposure Draft ED 188 Improvements IFRSs.	Beginning 1 Jul 2010	Expected to have no significant impact

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

Standard / Interpretation	Summary	Applicable periods	Impact on ACARA's financial statements
AASB 124 Related party disclosures (Dec 2009)	Government related entities have been granted partial exemption with certain disclosure requirements.	Beginning 1 Jan 2011	Preliminary assessment suggests that impact is insignificant. However, ACARA is still assessing the detailed impact and whether to early adopt.
AASB 2009-12 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [AASB 5, 8, 108, 110, 112, 119, 133, 137, 139, 1023 and 1031 and Interpretations 2, 4, 16, 1039 and 1052]	This standard amends AASB 8 to require an entity to exercise judgement in assessing whether a government and entities known to be under the control of that government are considered a single customer for purposes of certain operating segment disclosures. This standard also makes numerous editorial amendments to other AASs.	Beginning 1 Jan 2011	AASB 8 does not apply to ACARA therefore no impact expected. Otherwise, only editorial changes arising from amendments to other standards, no major impact. Impacts of editorial amendments are not expected to be significant.
AASB 2009-14 Amendments to Australian Interpretation – Prepayments of a minimum funding requirement [AASB Interpretation 14]	Amendment to Interpretation 14 arising from the issuance of Prepayments of a minimum funding requirement	Beginning 1 Jan 2011	Expected to have no significant impact
AASB 2010-4 Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 1, AASB 7, AASB 101 & AASB 134 and Interpretation 13]	These amendments result from proposals that were included in Exposure Draft ED 188 Improvements IFRSs.	Beginning 1 Jan 2011	Expected to have no significant impact
AASB 9 Financial instruments	This standard simplifies requirements for the classification and measurement of financial assets resulting from Phase 1 of the IASB's project to replace IAS 39 Financial instruments: recognition and measurement (AASB 139 financial Instruments: recognition and measurement).	Beginning 1 Jan 2013	Detail of impact is still being assessed.
AASB 2009-11 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 [AASB 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 101, 102, 108, 112, 118, 121, 127, 128, 131, 132, 136, 139, 1023 and 1038 and Interpretations 10 and 12]	This gives effect to consequential changes arising from the issuance of AASB 9.	Beginning 1 Jan 2013	Detail of impact is still being assessed.



## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 1.4 Revenue

The revenues described in this note are revenues relating to the core activities of ACARA.

#### *Revenue from jurisdictions*

Revenue from jurisdictions is recognised when:

- ACARA has obtained control of the revenue or the right to receive the revenue;
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity;
- the revenue can be reliably measured; and
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

The distribution of government grant income for the initial four years of ACARA was determined by the Ministers for Education following the April 2009 meeting of the then Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

#### *Grants received in advance*

Where ACARA receives grants in advance of the period to which the funds will be applied the grant is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a liability, Grants In Advance. At 30 June 2010 the amount recognised was \$2,588,239 (2009: nil) this consisted of a 2010/11 annual contribution from a jurisdiction.

#### *Resources received free of charge*

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when,

a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of the resources is recognised as an expense.

### 1.5 Infrastructure, plant and equipment

#### *Asset recognition threshold*

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Balance Sheet, except for purchases costing less than \$1,000 which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

### 1.6 Intangibles

ACARA's intangibles comprise of software. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software is amortised on a straight line method over the anticipated useful life. The useful lives of ACARA's software are 5 years.

All assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2010.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 1.7 Employee benefits

Liabilities for services rendered by employees are recognised at the reporting date to the extent that they have not been settled.

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits (as defined in AASB 119) and termination benefits due within twelve months of the balance date are measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

All other employee benefit liabilities are measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

#### *Leave*

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave entitlements are non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of ACARA is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of the employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that applied at the time the leave is taken, including ACARA's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during the service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the Australian Government shorthand method. In applying this method, the accrued long service leave for each employee as at reporting date is probability weighted, based on the Australian Government probability profile. The amount obtained for

each employee is then discounted using the ten year Treasury Bond rate. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

#### *Separation and redundancy*

ACARA recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out terminations. There are no separations or redundancies planned.

#### *Superannuation*

Upon commencing employment with ACARA, employees nominate an approved superannuation scheme of their choice.

No employees are members of a defined benefits scheme. ACARA contributes a minimum of 9% of superannuable salaries on behalf of its employees. The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions for the final month of the year.

### 1.8 Cash

Cash and cash equivalents includes notes and coins held and any deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value. Cash is recognised at its nominal amount.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 1.9 Financial assets

ACARA classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- at fair value through profit or loss
- held-to-maturity investments
- available-for-sale financial assets
- loans and receivables

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition.

Financial assets are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

#### *Effective interest rate method*

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset, or, where appropriate, a shorter period. Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis except for financial assets at fair value through profit or loss.

#### *Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss*

Financial assets are classified as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss where the financial asset:

- has been acquired principally for the purpose of selling in the near future;
- is part of an identified portfolio of financial instruments that the Authority manages together and has a recent actual pattern of short-term profit-taking; or

- has been designated as such upon initial recognition.

Assets in this category are classified as current assets.

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss are stated at fair value, with any resultant gain or loss recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest earned on the financial asset.

#### *Available-for-sale financial assets*

Available-for-sale financial assets are non-derivatives that are either designated in this category or not classified in any of the other categories. They are included in non-current assets unless management intends to dispose of the asset within 12 months of the balance sheet date.

Available-for-sale financial assets are recorded at fair value. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognised directly in equity in the reserves with the exception of impairment losses. Interest is calculated using the effective interest method. Where the asset is disposed of or is determined to be impaired, part or all of the cumulative gain or loss previously recognised in the reserve is included in the Income Statement for the period.

Where a reliable fair value cannot be established for unlisted investments in equity instruments, cost is used. ACARA has no such instruments.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### *Held-to-maturity assets*

Non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturity dates that ACARA has the positive intent and ability to hold to maturity are classified as held-to-maturity investments. Held-to-maturity investments are recorded at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment, with revenue recognised on an effective yield basis.

### *Loans and receivables*

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as loans and receivables. They are included in current assets, except for maturities greater than 12 months after the balance date. These are classified as non-current assets. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment. Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate.

### *Impairment of financial assets*

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at each balance date.

- Financial assets held at amortised cost—if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has been incurred for loans and receivables or held-to-maturity investments held at amortised cost, the amount of the loss is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The carrying amount is reduced by way of an allowance account. The loss is recognised in the Income Statement.
- Available-for-sale financial assets—if there is

objective evidence that an impairment loss on an available-for-sale financial asset has been incurred, the amount of the difference between its cost, less principal repayments and amortisation, and its current fair value, less any impairment loss previously recognised in expenses, is transferred from equity to the Income Statement.

- Available-for-sale financial assets (held at cost)—if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has been incurred, the amount of the impairment loss is the difference between the carrying amount of the asset and its estimated value.

### *1.10 Financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss or other financial liabilities.

Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

### *Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss*

Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss are initially measured at fair value. Subsequent fair value adjustments are recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest paid on the financial liability.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### *Other financial liabilities*

Other financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. Other financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial liability and of allocating interest expense over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments through the expected life of the financial liability, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

### *Supplier and other payables*

Supplier and other payables are recognised at their nominal amounts, being the amounts at which the liabilities will be settled. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

### **1.11 Contingent liabilities and contingent assets**

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but are reported in the relevant schedules and notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset, or represent an existing liability or asset in respect of which settlement is not probable or the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are reported when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are recognised when settlement is greater than remote.

In 2008-2009 ACARA had no quantifiable, unquantifiable or remote contingent liabilities or contingent assets. ACARA has

no quantifiable, unquantifiable or remote contingent liabilities or contingent assets in 2009-2010.

### **1.12 Taxation**

ACARA is exempt from income tax. All other forms of taxation are applicable.

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST except:

- where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- for receivables and payables.

### **1.13 Insurance**

ACARA has insured for risks through the Government's insurable risk managed fund, Comcover. In addition ACARA holds a Workers Compensation policy with the Government's insurer Comcare.

### **1.14 Comparatives**

Where required by Accounting Standards comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes to presentation for the current financial year. ACARA officially commenced operations on 28 May 2009. Comparative figures represent financial transactions for the period 28 May 2009 to 30 June 2009.

## **2. Events After The Balance Sheet Date**

ACARA is not aware of any events occurring after the reporting date that warrants disclosure or recording in the financial statements.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 3. Expenses

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>a. Employee Benefits</b>		
Salaries and wages	2,432	235
Superannuation	196	6
Leave and other entitlements	251	41
Separations and redundancies	15	-
	2,894	282
<b>b. Suppliers</b>		
<b>Goods and Services</b>		
Secondments and casual staff	4,725	-
Item development and testing	4,285	-
Advertising	3,408	-
Website development and maintenance	2,321	-
Curriculum Trial – Grants to schools	1,152	-
Travel and accommodation – Consultants and Stakeholders	1,049	54
Consultants – Curriculum Development	1,025	30
Other operational expenditure	5,159	309
	23,124	393
<b>Goods and services are made up of</b>		
Provision of goods - related entities	-	-
Provision of goods - external parties	429	3
Rendering of services – related entities	-	-
Rendering of services – external parties	22,695	390
	23,124	393
<b>Other Supplier Expenses</b>		
Operating lease payments - external parties		
Minimum lease payments	105	-
Workers compensation expense	24	1
	129	1
<b>Total Supplier expenses</b>	23,253	394
<b>c. Depreciation and amortization</b>		
Leasehold improvements	328	-
Provision of services from external parties	90	-
	419	-



## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 4. Income

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Government</b>		
<b>a. Revenues from Government</b>		
Australian Government - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	19,351	3,493
	19,351	3,493
<b>Own Source</b>		
<b>b. Revenue from Jurisdictions</b>		
State and Territory Governments	16,237	-
	16,237	-
<b>c. Interest</b>		
Deposits	216	-
	216	-
<b>d. Other</b>		
National Curriculum Project transfer of funds	48	-
Services supplied to other organisations	11	-
Resources received free of charge – Curriculum Corporation (now Education Services Australia) – National Curriculum Project	-	64
	59	64

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 5. Financial Assets

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>a. Cash and cash equivalents</b>		
Cash on hand or on deposit	10,858	-
	10,858	-
<b>b. Trade and other receivables</b>		
Goods and Services – related entities	3,937	3,493
GST Receivable	1,083	57
	5,020	3,550
<b>Receivables are represented by</b>		
Current	5,020	3,550
Non-current	-	-
<b>Total trade and other receivables</b>	5,020	3,550
<b>Receivables are aged as follows</b>		
Not overdue	1,965	3,550
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	-	-
30 to 60 days	3,055	-
60 to 90 days	-	-
More than 90 days	-	-
<b>Total Receivables</b>	5,020	3,550
<b>The impairment allowance account is aged as follows</b>		
Not overdue	-	-
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	-	-
30 to 60 days	-	-
60 to 90 days	-	-
More than 90 days	-	-
<b>Total impairment account allowance</b>	-	-

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 6. Property, Plant and Equipment

		2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Leasehold improvements at cost</b>	1	3,441	-
Accumulated depreciation & amortisation		(329)	-
		3,112	-
<b>Plant and equipment at cost</b>		343	-
Accumulated depreciation		(49)	-
		294	-
<b>Total Property, Plant and Equipment</b>		3,406	-

No indications of impairment were found for infrastructure, plant and equipment.

1 - Leasehold improvements include \$2,550,295 as lease incentive over the lease period of 6 years and 9 months.

#### Reconciliation of opening and closing balances property, plant and equipment

	Leasehold improvements \$	Plant and equipment \$	Total \$
Balance at beginning of year	-	-	-
Additions	3,441	343	3,784
Disposals	-	-	-
Impairment recognised in operating result	-	-	-
Depreciation write back on disposal	-	-	-
Depreciation / amortisation expense	(329)	(49)	(378)
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>3,112</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>3,406</b>

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 7. Intangibles

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Software at cost</b>	350	-
Accumulated depreciation	(41)	-
<b>Total Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangibles</b>	309	-

No indications of impairment were found for intangibles.

#### Reconciliation of opening and closing balances intangibles

	Intangibles (Software) \$	Total \$
Balance at beginning of year	-	-
Additions	350	350
Disposals	-	-
Impairment recognised in operating result	-	-
Depreciation write back on disposal	-	-
Depreciation / amortisation expense	(41)	(41)
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	309	309

### 8. Other Non-Financial Assets

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
Prepayments	89	-
	89	-

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 9. Payables

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>a. Suppliers</b>		
Trade creditors	2,314	450
Operating lease rentals	-	-
<b>Total supplier payments</b>	2,314	450
<b>Supplier payables – external parties are represented by</b>		
Current	2,314	450
Non-current	-	-
<b>Total supplier payments</b>	2,314	450
Settlement is usually made net 30 days		
<b>b. Grants In Advance</b>		
State Grant 2010/11 Contribution	2,588	-
<b>Total Grants In Advance</b>	2,588	-
<b>c. Other Payables</b>		
Salaries and Wages	61	177
Superannuation	6	1
Bonus payments	69	-
Rent Subsidy – 255 Pitt St Sydney	2,299	-
<b>Total other payables</b>	2,435	178

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 10. Provisions

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Employee provisions</b>		
Leave	167	41
<b>Total employee provisions</b>	167	41
<b>Employee provisions are represented by</b>		
Current	138	36
Non-current	29	5
<b>Total employee provisions</b>	167	41

The classification of current employee provisions includes amounts for which there is not an unconditional right to defer settlement by one year, hence in the case of employee provisions the above classification does not represent the amount expected to be settled within one year of the reporting date. Employee provisions expected to be settled in 12 months from the reporting date are \$107,683 (2009: \$21,827) and in excess of one year \$49,357 (2009: \$19,043).



## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 11. Cash Flow Reconciliation

Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents as  
per Statement of Financial Position to Cash  
Flow Statement

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>a. Report cash and cash equivalents as per:</b>		
Cash Flow Statement	10,858	-
Balance Sheet	10,858	-
<b>Difference</b>	-	-
<b>b. Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash from operating activities:</b>		
Net cost of services	(10,054)	(612)
Add revenue from Government	19,351	3,493
Operating result	9,297	2,881
<b>Adjustments for non-cash items</b>		
Depreciation / amortisation	419	-
Leasehold incentive	(2,539)	-
<b>Changes in net assets and liabilities</b>		
<b>(Increase)/decrease in assets</b>		
Trade and other receivables	(1,470)	(3,550)
Other non-financial assets	(89)	-
<b>Increase/(decrease) in liabilities</b>		
Suppliers	1,684	450
Grants In Advance	2,588	-
Other payables	2,257	178
Employee provisions	126	41
<b>Net cash from / (used by) operating activities</b>	12,273	-

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 12. Directors Remuneration

The number of directors of ACARA included in these figures is shown below in the relevant remuneration bands.

	2010	2009
\$ Nil - \$149,999	13	13
Total number of directors of ACARA	13	13
<i><b>Total remuneration received or due and receivable by directors of ACARA</b></i>	\$309,808	\$39,509

The directors of ACARA are appointed by the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 13. Related Party Disclosures

The following persons were directors of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority during the year:

Professor Barry McGaw, Mr Anthony Mackay, Mr Tom Alegounarias, Dr Brian Croke, Ms Lesley Englert, Ms Deborah Ethymiades, Mr John Firth, Mr David Hanlon, Mr Angus James, Ms Dianne Kerr, Mr Garry Le Duff Professor William Loudon and Ms Helen Wildash.

Several directors of ACARA hold directorships or senior roles with other companies or government agencies. All transactions between ACARA and companies with a director or key management personnel common to ACARA are conducted using commercial and arm-length principles.

	2010 \$	2009 \$
<i>Transactions with directors or director related entities</i>	5,307,144	73,871

Details of companies and government agencies which ACARA has engaged for services and in which ACARA directors are associated

	2010 \$	2009 \$
Australian Council for Educational Research	2,794,933	-
Education Services Australia	1,496,095	73,871
Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority	411,832	-
NSW Board of Studies	276,390	-
SA Dept. of Education and Children's Services	127,411	-
Queensland Dept. of Education and Training	121,461	-
Northern Territory Dept. of Education and Training	79,022	-
	5,307,144	73,871

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 14. Executive Remuneration

Three senior executives of ACARA received or were due to receive total remuneration of \$145,000 or more in 2009-2010. No separation or redundancy payments were made to senior executives in 2009-2010.

	2010	2009
\$235,000 - \$249,999	1	-
\$295,000 - \$309,999	1	-
\$310,000 - \$324,999	1	-
	3	-

Total expense recognised in the relation to the senior executive employment

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Salary	723,999	-
Changes in annual leave provisions	50,892	-
Performance bonus	63,862	-
Total Short-term employee benefits	838,753	-
Superannuation (post employment benefits)	66,733	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>905,486</b>	<b>-</b>

Salary Packages for senior executives

Average annualised remuneration packages for substantive senior executives

	As At June 2010			As At June 2009		
	No SES	Base Salary	* Total Remuneration	No SES	Base Salary	* Total Remuneration
\$250,000 - \$264,999	3	201,835	264,000	-	-	-
\$310,000 - \$324,999	1	247,706	324,000	-	-	-
\$430,000 - \$444,999	1	396,880	432,600	-	-	-
	5			-		

\* Notes

Non-salary elements available to Senior Executives includes:

- Performance Bonus
- Superannuation

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 15. Remuneration of Auditors

The cost of financial statement audit services provided by the Auditor- General was:

	2010 \$	2009 \$
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority	34,000	16,000

No other services were provided by the Auditor-General.

### 16. Financial Instruments

#### Categories of financial instruments

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Cash on hand or on deposit	10,858	-
<b>Loans and receivables</b>		
Trade and other receivables	3,937	3,493
<i>Carrying amount of financial assets</i>	14,795	3,493
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
<b>Other financial liabilities at amortised cost</b>		
Trade creditors	2,314	450
<i>Carrying amount of financial liabilities</i>	2,314	450

There have been no net gains or losses recorded for financial asset or liabilities in the financial year 2009-2010.

#### Fair value of financial instruments

The net fair value of each class of ACARA's financial assets and liabilities equal the carrying amount for the current reporting period.

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### Net income from financial assets

	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Held to maturity</b>		
Interest revenue	217	-
<i>Net gain from held-to-maturity</i>	217	-
<i>Net gain from financial assets</i>	217	-

### Credit risk

ACARA is exposed to minimal credit risk as financial assets consist of cash and trade receivables. The maximum exposure to credit risk is the risk that arises from potential default of a debtor. This amount is equal to the total amount of trade receivables \$3,937,275 (2009: \$3,493,127).

For debtors other than government, it is ACARA's policy to only deal with entities with high credit ratings.



## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

There are no financial assets that have had their terms renegotiated so as to prevent them from being past due or impaired, and they are stated at the carrying amounts as indicated. The following tables disclose the ageing of financial assets that are past due:

### Financial assets that are either past due or impaired

#### Ageing analysis of financial assets

		Past due but not impaired				Impaired financial assets \$'000
	Not past due and not impaired	0 to 30 days \$'000	31 to 60 days \$'000	61 to 90 days \$'000	90+ days \$'000	
<b>2010</b>						
Trade and other receivables:						
Debtors	882	-	3,055	-	-	-
	882	-	3,055	-	-	-

		Past due but not impaired				Impaired financial assets \$'000
	Not past due and not impaired	0 to 30 days \$'000	31 to 60 days \$'000	61 to 90 days \$'000	90+ days \$'000	
<b>2009</b>						
Trade and other receivables:						
Debtors	3,493	-	-	-	-	-
	3,493	-	-	-	-	-

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### Liquidity risk

The ACARA financial liabilities are payables. Exposure to liquidity risk is based on the notion that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with its financial liabilities. For ACARA, this is highly unlikely as the Authority manages its budgeted funds to ensure it has adequate funds to meet payments as they fall due.

The table below illustrates the maturities for financial liabilities:

	Within 1 year \$'000	1-2 years \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>2010</b>			
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
Trade creditors	2,314	-	2,314
	2,314	-	2,314

	Within 1 year \$'000	1-2 years \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>2009</b>			
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
Trade creditors	450	-	450
	450	-	450

### Market risk

ACARA holds basic financial instruments that do not expose ACARA to certain market risks. ACARA is not exposed to 'currency risk' or other 'price risk'.

### Interest rate risk

ACARA exposure to interest rate risk is limited to interest bearing deposits held with banks. ACARA does not hold any interest-bearing liabilities.

## 17. Compensation and Debt Relief

There were no Act of Grace payments, ex-gratia payments or payments made under s73 of the *Public Service Act 1999* or waivers during 2009-2010 (2008-2009: nil).

## 4.4 Notes to financial statements

### 18. Reporting by Outcomes

ACARA's work contributes towards the outcome of improved quality and consistency of school education in Australia through a national curriculum, national assesment, data collection and performance reporting system.

ACARA uses an activity based costing system to determine the attribution of its shared items.

#### Net cost of outcome delivery

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
Expenses	26,566	676	26,566	676
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>26,566</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>26,566</b>	<b>676</b>
<b>Total costs recovered</b>	-	-	-	-
Other external income	16,512	-	16,512	-
Resources received free of charge	-	-	-	-
<b>Total other external income</b>	<b>16,512</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,512</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net cost / (contribution of outcome)</b>	<b>10,054</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>10,054</b>	<b>676</b>

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1.

#### Major classes of assets and liabilities by outcome

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000	2010 \$'000	2009 \$'000
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	10,858	-	10,858	-
Trade and other receivables	5,020	3,550	5,020	3,550
Other non-financial assets	89	-	89	-
Property, plant and equipment	3,406	-	3,406	-
Intangibles	309	-	309	-
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>19,682</b>	<b>3,550</b>	<b>19,682</b>	<b>3,550</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Suppliers	2,314	450	2,314	450
Grants In Advance	2,588	-	2,588	-
Other payables	2,435	178	2,435	178
Employee provisions	167	41	167	41
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>7,504</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>7,504</b>	<b>669</b>

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1.



# Annual Report 2009–2010



## Additional Information

## 5.1 Board and committee membership

### Board Membership

Membership of the ACARA Board is established under section 13 of the ACARA Act, and comprises nominees of education ministers and key stakeholders in the Australian education environment, agreed to by the Ministerial Council.

#### *Chair – Professor Barry McGaw AO, PhD*



Professor Barry McGaw is a Professorial Fellow (half-time) at the University of Melbourne. He holds BSc, DipEd and BEd (Hons) degrees from the University of Queensland and EdM and PhD from the University of Illinois, and began his career as a science teacher in Queensland secondary schools.

Professor McGaw is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the Australian Psychological Society, the Australian College of Educators and the International Academy of Education. He received an Australian Centenary Medal in 2000 and was appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia in 2004. He was the 2005–2006 recipient of University of Illinois Alumni Award for Exceptional Achievement.

Barry McGaw chairs the Assessment and Reporting Committee, and is a member of the Curriculum Committee.

#### *Deputy Chair – Mr Tony Mackay*



Tony Mackay is Executive Director of the Centre for Strategic Education in Melbourne. He holds BEc and BEd degrees from Monash University, and MA in the Economics of Education from the University of London.

Mr Mackay is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators (ACE), a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL), and a Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA).

Tony Mackay is Chair of the Board of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

His work focuses on strategic thinking, policy advice and facilitation for government bodies and education agencies.

Tony Mackay chairs the Curriculum Committee, and is a member of the Assessment and Reporting Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee.



## 5.1 Board and committee membership

*Mr Tom Alegounarias*



Tom Alegounarias is President of the New South Wales Board of Studies, and nominee of the NSW Education Minister.

*Dr Brian Croke*



Brian Croke is Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission, New South Wales, and nominee of the National Catholic Education Commission.

*Mr Angus James*



Angus James is Principal Partner of Aquasia P/L and consultant, and nominee of the federal Education Minister.

*Ms Deborah Efthymiades*



Deborah Efthymiades is General Manager, Strategic Executive Services, at the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, and nominee of the NT Education Minister.

*Mr John Firth*



John Firth is Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, and nominee of the Victorian Education Minister.

*Mr David Hanlon*



David Hanlon is the former Deputy Secretary of the Tasmanian Department of Education, and nominee of the Tasmanian Education Minister.

## 5.1 Board and committee membership

*Ms Dianne Kerr*



Dianne Kerr is a curriculum advisor to Education Services Australia Ltd, and nominee of the ACT Education Minister.

*Ms Lesley Englert*



Lesley Englert is the former Assistant Director General, Curriculum, Queensland Department of Education and Training, former Principal of Upper Coomera State College, and nominee of the Queensland Education Minister.

*Mr Garry Le Duff*



Garry Le Duff is Executive Director of the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, and nominee of the Independent Schools Council of Australia.

*Ms Helen Wildash*



Helen Wildash is Executive Director, Curriculum in the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services, and nominee of the SA Education Minister.

*Professor Bill Loudon*



Bill Loudon is Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Western Australia, and nominee of the WA Education Minister

## 5.1 Board and committee membership

### Committee Membership

Committees comprise members of the board, with the exception of the Audit and Risk Committee, which also includes an independent member.

#### Curriculum Committee

*Mr Tony Mackay (Chair)*  
*Professor Barry McGaw*  
*Mr Tom Alegounarias*  
*Ms Lesley Englert*  
*Mr John Firth*  
*Mr David Hanlon*  
*Ms Dianne Kerr*  
*Professor Bill Loudén*  
*Ms Helen Wildash*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*General Manager Curriculum*

#### Assessment and Reporting Committee

*Professor Barry McGaw (Chair)*  
*Mr Tony Mackay*  
*Mr Tom Alegounarias*  
*Dr Brian Croke*  
*Ms Debbie Efthymiades*  
*Mr John Firth*  
*Mr Garry Le Duff*  
*Professor Bill Loudén*  
*Ms Helen Wildash*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*General Manager Assessment*  
*General Manager Reporting*

#### Audit and Risk Committee

*Ms Dianne Kerr (Chair)*  
*Mr Angus James*  
*Mr Tony Mackay*  
*Mr Paul Crombie*

## 5.2 Board and committee meetings

### Board

Date	Meeting	Apologies	Location
05 & 06 August 2009	Meeting 3	None	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
20 August 2009	Meeting 4	Bill Loudon	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
06 & 07 October 2009	Meeting 5	Garry Le Duff	488 George Street, Sydney
16 & 17 December 2009	Meeting 6	Helen Wildash	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
12 February 2010	Meeting 7	None	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
19 March 2010	Meeting 8	Angus James	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
06 May 2010	Meeting 9	Brian Croke	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
09 June 2010	Meeting 10	Di Kerr, Brian Croke, Tom Alegounarias	255 Pitt Street, Sydney

### Committees of the Board

#### Assessment and Reporting

Date	Meeting	Apologies	Location
24 July 2009	Meeting 1	None	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
01 September 2009	Meeting 2	Tony Mackay, Deborah Efthymiades, Garry Le Duff, Bill Loudon, Helen Wildash	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
27 October 2009	Meeting 3	Tom Alegounarias	488 George Street, Sydney
27 November 2009	Meeting 4	Tony Mackay	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
21 January 2010	Meeting 5	John Firth, Bill Loudon	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
03 March 2010	Meeting 6	Tom Alegounarias	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
05 May 2010	Meeting 7	Bill Loudon, Brian Croke, Tony Mackay	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
08 June 2010	Meeting 8	Bill Loudon, Brian Croke, Tony Mackay, Tom Alegounarias, Helen Wildash	255 Pitt Street, Sydney

## 5.2 Board and committee meetings

### Curriculum

Date	Meeting	Apologies	Location
08 July 2009	Meeting 1	Rob Randall	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
20 July 2009	Meeting 2	Barry McGaw, Bill Loudon	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
01 September 2009	Meeting 3	Bill Loudon, Dianne Kerr	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
25 September 2009	Meeting 4	David Hanlon	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
27 October 2009	Meeting 5	Tom Alegounarias, Peter Hill	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
02 December 2009	Meeting 6	Bill Loudon, Peter Hill	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
20 January 2010	Meeting 7	John Firth	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
02 March 2010	Meeting 8	None	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
06 April 2010	Meeting 9	Tom Alegounarias, Bill Loudon, Peter Hill	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
21 April 2010	Meeting 10	Barry McGaw, Peter Hill, Bill Loudon	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
24 May 2010	Meeting 11	Bill Loudon	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
03 June 2010	Meeting 12	Barry McGaw, Bill Loudon	Rydges Capital Hill Hotel, Canberra

### Audit and Risk

Date	Meeting	Apologies	Location
05 August 2009	Meeting 1	None	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
01 October 2009	Meeting 2	None	440 Collins Street, Melbourne
01 December 2010	Meeting 3	None	45 Clarence Street, Sydney
27 April 2010	Meeting 4	Tony Mackay	255 Pitt Street, Sydney
04 June 2010	Extraordinary	None	255 Pitt Street, Sydney

## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

ACARA's work is supported by a number of advisory panels and expert groups comprising both ACARA staff and external experts and representatives. Individuals who contributed to these groups in 2009-2010 are listed below.

### Assessment and Reporting Policy Advisory Panel

ACARA established the Assessment and Reporting Policy Advisory Panel (A&RPAP) in March 2010 to continue with the work previously led by the Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT). The policy advisory panel comprises representatives from all jurisdictions, Catholic and independent sectors, and the COAG Productivity Commission. The panel provides expert advice on educational measurement matters.

Panel members are:

*Mr David Wasson (Chair)*  
*Mr Peter Adams*  
*Ms Colette Colman*  
*Ms Susan Dennett*  
*Mr Alan Dodson*  
*Mr Barry Dolman*  
*Dr Jenny Donovan*  
*Ms Jenny Gale*  
*Mr Alan Green*  
*Mr Matthew Harper*  
*Mr Jeff Hunt*  
*Mr Lawrence McDonald*  
*Ms Rosalie Nott*  
*Ms Tracy Stewart*  
*Mr Tony Zanderigo*

### Finance Data Working Group

The Finance Data Working Group was established in response to a Ministerial Council request to collect and report on school financial information on the *My School* website. The

working group developed and recommended an agreed methodology as to what information should be collected.

Working group members are:

*Dr Peter Hill (Chair)*  
*Ms Katrina Harding*  
*Mr Matthew Harper*  
*Ms Moya Martin*  
*Ms Gaile Pearce*  
*Mr Allan Pickering*  
*Mr Chris Taggart*  
*Mr Carmine Vetere*  
*Mr David Wasson*  
*Mr Ray Whitfield*  
*Mr Mark Whybrow*  
*Mr David Wilkes*  
*Mr Andrew Wright*  
*Ms Jenny Zahara*  
*Mr Tony Zanderigo*

### Growth Expert Working Group

The Growth Expert Working Group was established to provide expert advice and to develop recommendations and proposals on how best to report student progress (growth). The working group has developed a number of business rules as to which students will be measured, across which years and against which test items. The working group has also developed recommendations as to how student progress could best be depicted on *My School*.

Working group members are:

*Mr Peter Starkey (Chair)*  
*Dr Geoff Barnes*  
*Ms Sue Blackall*  
*Mr Narin Chhun*  
*Ms Susan Daniel*  
*Dr John DeCourcy*  
*Dr Jenny Donovan*  
*Mr Andrew Hay*  
*Mr Jeremy Howell*  
*Dr Siek Toon Khoo*  
*Ms Magdalena Les*  
*Mr Peter Lind*



## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

*Dr Jonathan Moritz*  
*Mr Gavin Morris*  
*Mr Gary O'Neill*  
*Mr Bob Peck*  
*Mr Andrew Smith*  
*Mr Simon Tiller*  
*Mr David Wasson*

### ICSEA Expert Panel

The ICSEA Expert Panel was established to provide expert advice on how ICSEA should be calculated in respect of the formulae used to originally calculate an ICSEA score for every school in Australia. The expert panel also reviewed any applications from schools to have their ICSEA score recalculated based on new information. More recently, the expert panel met to develop proposals on recalculating ICSEA scores using student measures such as parent occupation and education levels. The expert panel has collected data from jurisdictions and systems and is modelling this data and will develop recommendations for the Assessment and Reporting Committee and Board.

Panel members are:

*Dr Peter Hill (Chair)*  
*Dr John Ainley*  
*Dr Geoff Barnes*  
*Prof Sid Bourke*  
*Mr Narin Chhun*  
*Mr John Firth*  
*Ms Sharyn Lidster*  
*Mr Michael Long*  
*Mr Peter Starkey*  
*Mr David Wasson*

### ACARA My School Working Party

In May 2010, the then Deputy Prime Minister requested that ACARA establish the *My School* Working Party. The working party comprises

representatives from organisations including schools, unions and parent groups, together with numeracy and literacy experts.

The working party considered the strengths and weaknesses of the current website, and discussed enhancements already approved by ministers. It also recommended further enhancements to improve the website. The working party was due to finalise its report to ACARA in early September 2010 and the report was to be provided to ministers together with a separate set of recommendations from the ACARA Board.

Working party members are:

*Prof Barry McGaw (Chair)*  
*Prof Max Coltheart*  
*Mr Ian Dalton*  
*Mr Neville Feeney*  
*Ms Fiona Forbes*  
*Mr Angelo Gavrielatos*  
*Dr Peter Hill*  
*Mr Rupert Macgregor*  
*Prof Geoff Masters*  
*Dr Thelma Perso*  
*Ms Leonie Trimper*  
*Ms Sheree Vertigan*  
*Mr Chris Watt*

### National Testing Working Group

The National Testing Working Group has been established to provide advice to ACARA on matters related to the development, administration and reporting of the National Assessment Program. It comprises representatives from all state and territory testing authorities and representatives from the non-government sector.

Working group members are:

*Mr Peter Adams (Chair)*  
*Mr Paul Becker*  
*Ms Suzanne Blackall*

## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

*Ms Karen Ferrante*  
*Mr Tim Grace*  
*Ms Ellen Herden*  
*Ms Rhondda Kretschmann*  
*Ms Marilyn McKee*  
*Ms Kate O'Donnell*  
*Mr Gary O'Neill*  
*Mr Andrew Smith*  
*Mr Simon Tiller*  
*Mr David Wasson*  
*Ms Janelle Wills*

### Equity and Diversity Advisory Panel

An Equity and Diversity Panel, with expertise in cross-curriculum matters including remote education, ESL, multiculturalism and students with special needs, provides valuable advice to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all students.

Advisory panel members are:

*Mr Anthony Kitchen (Chair)*  
*Ms Misty Adoniou*  
*Ms Melodie Batt*  
*Mr David Callow*  
*Ms Susan Cameron*  
*Dr Helen Farrell*  
*Mrs Lisa Fenton*  
*Ms Fiona Forbes*  
*Ms Aileen Hawkes*  
*Ms Catherine Hudson*  
*Dr Ron Ikin*  
*Dr Heather Kerr*  
*Mr Ken Lountain*  
*Dr Pam Matters*  
*Mrs Diane Peacock-Smith*  
*Ms Georgina Reynhout*  
*Mrs Sophia Sabatier*  
*Ms Jeane Schocroft*  
*Mrs Kim Smith*  
*Ms Hanya Stefaniuk*  
*Mrs Pamela Templeton*

### Stages of Schooling Advisory Panel

A Stages of Schooling Advisory Panel provides feedback on the age-appropriateness of content for students at each year level.

Advisory panel members are:

*Mr Anthony Kitchen (Chair)*  
*Mr Andrew Barr*  
*Ms Francesca Bearman*  
*Mr Wayne Chapman*  
*Mr Geoff Clayton*  
*Ms Kate Cooper*  
*Ms Frances Coventry*  
*Dr Marie Dauguet*  
*Mr David Edwards*  
*Ms Susan Emmet*  
*Mr Neville Feeney*  
*Ms Susan Hearfield*  
*Dr Kathryn Holzheimer*  
*Mrs Kerry Long*  
*Ms Margaret Mackenzie*  
*Dr Katherine Main*  
*Mrs Margaret Malone*  
*Mr Glenn Mancer*  
*Mrs Nichii Mardon*  
*Ms Cathryn Moore*  
*Mr Chris Presland*  
*Ms Michelle Sullivan*  
*Ms Christine Taylor*  
*Mr Peter Williams*

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel was established to advise on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and to assist in the identification of key issues. The advisory panel is comprised of people with demonstrated expertise in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Advisory panel members are:

*Mrs Dianne Kerr (Chair)*  
*Dr Kaye Price (Co-Chair)*  
*Ms Dyonne Anderson*  
*Prof Peter Buckskin*  
*Mr David Callow*  
*Mr Will Davis*  
*Ms Michele Hall*  
*Prof Paul Hughes*  
*Mrs Judy Ketchell*  
*Mr John Page*  
*Prof Mark Rose*

## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

*Dr Grace Sarra*  
*Ms Myra Singh*

### Vocational Education and Training in Schools Working Group

The Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) Working Group represents all jurisdictions and sectors. Its key responsibility is to identify ways in which information relating to VETiS can be reported on the *My School* website in a nationally comparable format. It also examines ways to ensure that definitions relating to VETiS are understood and can be applied consistently around the country.

Working group members are:

*Ms Susan Dennett (Chair)*  
*Dr Reg Allen*  
*Mr Ian Balcomb*  
*Ms Josie Barac*  
*Mr Chris Bayer*  
*Ms Michaela Bensley*  
*Ms Robyn Bergin*  
*Ms Davinia Blomberg*  
*Ms Moira Breda*  
*Ms Toni Cavallaro*  
*Mr Tony Considine*  
*Ms Liz Dowd*  
*Ms Rebecca Frantz*  
*Mr Ian Fyfe*  
*Ms Judith Gates*  
*Mr John Harris*  
*Mr Andrew Howie*  
*Dr Paul Kilvert*

*Mrs Helen Lambert*  
*Ms Rachael Martin*  
*Ms Katherine McGregor*  
*Dr Phil Pettit*  
*Ms Adrienna Ross*  
*Mr Peter Starkey*  
*Mr Darryl Sutton*  
*Ms Sarah Turner*  
*Mr David Wasson*  
*Mr Glen Whitaker*  
*Mr Wayne Williams*  
*Ms Gill Yates*

### English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) Advisory Panel

To ensure that the Australian Curriculum can meet the needs of all young Australians, ACARA created a working group to provide advice on how to best meet the needs of students for whom English is an additional language or dialect. The panel comprises education professionals and education authority representatives with expertise and an interest in EALD students.

Advisory panel members are:

*Ms Lynn Redley (Chair)*  
*Ms Misty Adoniou*  
*Ms Anna Brazier*  
*Ms Mary-Anne Fleming*  
*Dr Robert Jackson*  
*Ms Jennifer Mayers*  
*A/Prof Helen Moore*



## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

*Dr Thelma Perso*  
*Mrs Sophia Sabatier*  
*Ms Carmel Sandiford*  
*Ms Juanita Sellwood*  
*Ms Hanya Stefaniuk*

### Special Education Working Group

The Special Education Working Group was established by ACARA to gather advice from experienced participants in developing appropriate curricula for students with special education needs.

Working group members are:

*Ms Helen Barrett (Chair)*  
*Mr Anthony Kitchen (Chair)*  
*Ms Jacqueline Burns*  
*Mr Ian Copland*  
*Ms Fiona Forbes*  
*Ms Geraldine Gray*  
*Ms Lynne James*  
*Mr Brian Smyth King*  
*Ms Catherine Pinnington*  
*Ms Karen Underwood*

### Technical Advisory Panel

The Technical Advisory Panel provides technical advice in relation to measurement issues on an occasional basis.

Advisory panel members are:

*Prof Ray Adams (Chair)*  
*Prof David Andrich*  
*Prof George Cooney*  
*A/Prof Shelley Gillis*  
*Prof Patrick Griffin*

## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

### Learning Area Advisory Panels

K-12 Learning Area Advisory Panels assist curriculum writers by providing advice on draft materials at key stages in the development process.

#### Phase 1 learning areas:

English	Mathematics	Science	History
<i>Ms Lynn Redley (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Anthony Kitchen (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Anthony Kitchen (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Mark Askew (Chair)</i>
<i>Prof Peter Freebody</i>	<i>Prof Peter Sullivan</i>	<i>Prof Denis Goodrum</i>	<i>Ms Julie Roberts (Chair)</i>
<i>Prof Catherine Beavis</i>	<i>Mr David Andrew</i>	<i>Dr Hans Bachor</i>	<i>Prof Stuart MacIntyre</i>
<i>Mrs Tamara Bromley</i>	<i>Ms Evie Apfelbaum</i>	<i>Ms Claudette Bateup</i>	<i>Mr David Arnold</i>
<i>Ms Margaret Brophy</i>	<i>Mrs Dawn Bartlett</i>	<i>Ms Soula Bennett</i>	<i>Mr Scott Baker</i>
<i>Mrs Helena Card</i>	<i>Mr Romolo Cirillo</i>	<i>Ms Jan Brooks</i>	<i>Dr Mark Briggs</i>
<i>Ms Keryl Caird</i>	<i>Mr Michael Clapper</i>	<i>Dr Mark Butler</i>	<i>Mr Gregor Dingwall</i>
<i>Prof Geraldine Castleton</i>	<i>Dr Michael Evans</i>	<i>A/Prof Jim Davies</i>	<i>Mrs Elizabeth Disney</i>
<i>Dr Brooke Collins-Gearing</i>	<i>Dr Peter Gould</i>	<i>Ms Anna Davis</i>	<i>Mr Nick Ewbank</i>
<i>Ms Jenni Connor</i>	<i>Mr Reuben Johnson</i>	<i>Dr Denise Devitt</i>	<i>Mr Roger Filz</i>
<i>Mr Jonathan Cook</i>	<i>Mr Barry Kissane</i>	<i>Prof Peter Fensham</i>	<i>Mr Terry Gallagher</i>
<i>Dr Ruth Fielding-Barnsley</i>	<i>Dr David Leigh-Lancaster</i>	<i>Mr Dennis Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Mrs Marian Gard</i>
<i>Mr Warren Grellier</i>	<i>Dr Chris Mathews</i>	<i>Dr Wendy Giles</i>	<i>Ms Kathleen Gordon</i>
<i>Mrs Kerrie Grundy</i>	<i>Ms Catherine Matthews</i>	<i>Mrs Maria James</i>	<i>Mr Michael Hayes</i>
<i>Ms Susan Hanson</i>	<i>Ms Marion McIntosh</i>	<i>A/Prof Kieran Lim</i>	<i>Dr John Hirst</i>
<i>Mr Mark Howie</i>	<i>Mr Will Morony</i>	<i>Ms Bronwyn Mart</i>	<i>Dr Brian Hoepper</i>
<i>A/Prof Mary Macken-Horarik</i>	<i>Ms Denise Neal</i>	<i>Ms Sue Martin</i>	<i>Dr Dale Kerwin</i>
<i>Emeritus Prof John McLaren</i>	<i>Dr Steven Nisbet</i>	<i>Ms Cara Leah Moore</i>	<i>Mr Paul Kiem</i>
<i>Ms. Rosemary McLoughlin</i>	<i>Mr Peter Osland</i>	<i>Dr Cara Leah Moore</i>	<i>Ms Jenny Lawless</i>
<i>Ms Marion Meiers</i>	<i>Dr Anne Paterson</i>	<i>Mr Peter Moulds</i>	<i>Mrs Heather Lewis</i>
<i>Dr Jean Mulder</i>	<i>Mr Peter Posetti</i>	<i>Dr Sandra Nissen</i>	<i>Mr Anthony Lynch</i>
<i>Ms Frances Murray</i>	<i>Ms Margaret Rowlands</i>	<i>Ms Cheryl Peers</i>	<i>Ms Liz McGinnis</i>
<i>Dr Kerry-Ann O'Sullivan</i>	<i>Mrs Julie Sampson</i>	<i>Mr Gregory Pitt</i>	<i>Dr Glenda McGregor</i>
<i>Mrs Giovanna Padas</i>	<i>Prof Dianne Siemon</i>	<i>Dr Kaye Price</i>	<i>Mrs Beryl McLachlan</i>
<i>Ms Lorraine Rowles</i>	<i>Dr Peter Stacey</i>	<i>Prof Leonie Rennie</i>	<i>Ms Julie O'Keeffe</i>
<i>Dr Alyson Simpson</i>	<i>Ms Helen Stearman</i>	<i>Prof John Rice</i>	<i>A/Prof Melanie Oppenheimer</i>
<i>Dr Jan Turbill</i>	<i>Mr Bernard Tola</i>	<i>Dr Wilhelmina Van Rooy</i>	<i>Mr Stuart Piggins</i>
<i>Ms Patricia Wilcox</i>	<i>Mrs Eva de Vries</i>	<i>Mr Gregory Smith</i>	<i>Mrs Laurel Smith</i>
	<i>Prof Jane Watson</i>	<i>Mr Peter Turnbull</i>	<i>Ms Kate Smythe</i>
			<i>A/Prof Tony Taylor</i>
			<i>Dr Rosalie Triolo</i>
			<i>Mr John Whitehouse</i>

## 5.3 Advisory groups and membership

Phase 2 learning areas:

Geography	The Arts	Languages	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages Expert Group
<i>Mr Mark Askew (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Robert Randall (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Robert Randall (Chair)</i>	<i>Mr Robert Randall (Chair)</i>
<i>A/Prof Alaric Maude</i>	<i>Prof John O'Toole</i>	<i>A/Prof Angela Scarino</i>	<i>Ms Leonora Adidi</i>
<i>Mr Will Davis</i>	<i>Prof Margaret Barrett</i>	<i>Mr Michael Boyle</i>	<i>Dr Rob Amery</i>
<i>A/Prof Deirdre Dragovich</i>	<i>Dr Michael Dezuanni</i>	<i>Dr Jo Carr</i>	<i>Ms Aretha Briggs</i>
<i>Ms Trish Harris</i>	<i>Mrs Julie Dyson AM</i>	<i>Ms Vicki Fischmann</i>	<i>Dr Patrick McConvell</i>
<i>Prof Iain Hay</i>	<i>Dr Richard Gill OAM</i>	<i>Ms Julie Flynn</i>	<i>A/Prof Angela Scarino</i>
<i>Prof Lesley Head</i>	<i>Prof Elizabeth Grierson</i>	<i>Ms Melissa Gould- Drakeley</i>	<i>Dr Jakelyn Troy</i>
<i>Mr Nick Hutchinson</i>	<i>Ms Cindy Hales</i>	<i>Prof Joseph Lo Bianco</i>	<i>Dr Michael Walsh</i>
<i>Ms Jeana Kriewaldt</i>	<i>Ms Valarie Harold</i>	<i>Dr Antonio Mercurio</i>	
<i>Mr Malcolm McInerney</i>	<i>Ms Kristi Johansen</i>	<i>Dr Jane Orton</i>	
<i>Ms Rebecca Nicholas</i>	<i>Ms Laetitia Kilpatrick</i>	<i>Ms Sherryl Saunders</i>	
<i>Prof Margaret Robertson</i>	<i>Ms Alma Loreaux</i>	<i>Ms Lia Tedesco</i>	
<i>Prof Matthew Tonts</i>	<i>Mr Jeffrey Meiners</i>	<i>Dr Jakelyn Troy</i>	
<i>Ms Jenni Webber</i>	<i>Dr Robin Pascoe</i>	<i>Dr Michael Walsh</i>	
	<i>Ms Deirdre Wauchop</i>		



## 5.4 Evidence to parliamentary committees

### Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee

On 13 May 2010 the Senate announced the *Inquiry into the administration and reporting of NAPLAN testing*. The inquiry was referred to the Senate Education, Employment & Workplace Relations Committee.

ACARA made a submission to the inquiry on 30 June 2010. This is available on the website of the Australian Parliament.

The Committee received a total of 272 submissions. The reporting date for the inquiry was originally scheduled for the 13 August 2010, but was postponed pending the meeting of the new parliament.



### Senate Budget Estimates and Additional Estimates

ACARA attended Budget Estimates and Additional Estimates hearings of the Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee on 11 February and 3 June 2010; ACARA gave evidence as requested. Full transcripts of these hearings are available in Hansard.



## 5.5 Freedom of information

### Overview

Under Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), ACARA is required to report annually on:

- the organisation, functions and decision-making powers of the agency
- arrangements for public involvement in the work of the agency
- types of documents held by the agency
- where and how the public can gain access to these documents.

### Decision-making Powers that Affect Members of the Public and Public Involvement

ACARA makes decisions under the ACARA Act in relation to national curriculum, assessment and reporting. Information on the work being undertaken by ACARA is disseminated via its website, including to members of the public who have registered for e-alerts.

ACARA uses a number of forums, including national events, to consult widely with the school sector, learning area advisory groups, cross-curriculum advisory groups, and the broader Australian community on the direction of curriculum development. During 2009-2010, ACARA consulted widely with stakeholders in relation to decisions about national curriculum development, assessment, data collection and reporting.

### Types of Documents

ACARA holds documents on a range of topics, which can be broadly categorised as:

- reference material used by staff and contract providers, including guidelines, manuals and operational advice
- documents relating to internal administration and management – financial, staffing, office procedures, governance, and so on
- electronic records maintained on ACARA's databases
- records of correspondence to the Minister and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- draft curriculum and draft position papers
- minutes and papers of the ACARA Board
- submissions made to ACARA
- research papers
- documents relating to audits, investigations and ombudsman inquiries
- documents relating to policy advice and portfolio administration, including reports, briefings, secretariat papers, correspondence, minutes and submissions
- submissions to and reports on public inquiries.

## 5.5 Freedom of information

### Inquiries and Gaining access

The ACARA Chief Executive Officer holds the power to grant or refuse access to ACARA documents, and to delegate this power. The Chief Executive Officer has authorised specific ACARA managers to exercise this decision-making power.

Detailed information regarding the FOI process is available on ACARA's website at [www.acara.edu.au](http://www.acara.edu.au). Inquiries regarding FOI, including the nature and scope of an intended request, can be directed to the FOI Coordinator by:

Telephone: 1300 895 563

Mail: Level 10, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Email: [info@acara.edu.au](mailto:info@acara.edu.au)

Formal FOI requests must be made in writing. There is no mandatory form, but the request should include telephone contact numbers and a return address in Australia. A \$30 application fee or a remission request must accompany each FOI request. Further processing charges may apply. Applicants may seek to have fees and charges remitted, but are required to provide supporting evidence with their application.

ACARA provides appropriate facilities for the inspection of documents accessed under the FOI Act.

### Applications Received

During 2009–2010, ACARA received four applications under the FOI Act.



## 5.6 Occupational health and safety

### Overview

In 2009-2010, ACARA developed an OH&S system. This system was designed and implemented after consultation with ACARA employees and the formation of a Safety Consultation Committee in the second half of the year. The committee met in May and June. A supporting series of documents and processes was developed to make it easier for all ACARA staff to understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a safe workplace. A major outcome of this work was the release of an OH&S Policy to staff. ACARA also maintains a risk register and an incident register.

ACARA's Safety Consultation Committee meets every two months. It comprises ten staff members, including a manager and representatives of all areas of ACARA. The purpose of the committee is to facilitate coordination between management and staff to work through OH&S issues in the workplace and to resolve any issues. The committee also helps promote awareness of OH&S, identifies hazards and assesses associated risk, and ensures continued improvement with the help of a program of regular OH&S audits.

Training was provided for the ten committee members.

Throughout the year several measures were undertaken to enhance the occupational health and safety of ACARA's staff. These included making available to staff an employee assistance program, conducting an information session on dealing with stress, and manual-handling training.

### OH&S Performance

During 2009-2010, there were no notifiable accidents or dangerous occurrences reported to Comcare as prescribed by section 68 of the OH&S Act. There were also no provisional improvement notices (section 29), prohibition notices (section 46) or improvement notices (section 47) issued or investigations undertaken by Comcare arising out of ACARA's undertakings as an employer in accordance with the Act.

ACARA recorded one OH&S incident and no associated lost days.

ACARA's Audit and Risk Committee recommended, and the Board agreed, that OH&S would become a regular item at Board and Audit and Risk Committee meetings.



## 5.7 Legislative reporting requirements

### Ministerial Directions

ACARA is required, under paragraph 12 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2008*, to provide particulars of any Directions issued by the responsible Minister, or other Minister, under ACARA's enabling legislation or other legislation.

During 2009-2010 ACARA was not subject to any Ministerial Directions.



### Certificate of Compliance

Section 16(1)(c) of the CAC Act requires ACARA to give the Finance Minister such reports, documents and information in relation to its operations as requested by the Finance Minister.

The Department of Finance and Administration issued *Finance Circular No. 2008/05 Compliance Reporting — CAC Act Bodies* during the 2007–08 financial year. The circular requires ACARA's CEO to issue a compliance report in respect of the preceding financial year to both the Finance Minister and the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations by 15 October each year. This requirement is a Ministerial Direction for the purposes of paragraph 12(1)(a) of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2008*.

## 5.8 Privacy complaints

### Overview

ACARA must collect personal and often sensitive information about people in order to perform its functions effectively. ACARA takes seriously its privacy obligations, as set out in the *Privacy Act 1988*, and is committed to meeting the highest standards when collecting, storing, using and disclosing personal information.

ACARA participates in forums run by the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner and is kept abreast of impacts on the privacy environment.

ACARA's Privacy Officer is contactable as follows:

Telephone: 1300 895 563

Mail: Level 10, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Email: [info@acara.edu.au](mailto:info@acara.edu.au)

### Privacy Complaints

ACARA received no privacy complaints during the 2009-2010 reporting period.





## 5.9 Providing access for people with disabilities

### Access to Premises and Facilities

ACARA has endeavoured, in fitting out its Sydney office, to enable access for people with disabilities, and has implemented features to assist them. Entrance doors open automatically via a security swipe card, eliminating the need for any pushing or pulling. Changes in floor levels are ramped, to make wheelchair access easy. A toilet and shower room has been specially equipped with wide doors, large turning space, rails, low level sink and taps and no shower screen, to accommodate a wheelchair. Signs to this bathroom have braille and large definition symbols, for visually impaired staff and visitors. The polished concrete floor in the ACARA office has had an anti-slip surface applied so that visitors' and staff members' wheelchairs and crutches can gain grip.



### Consideration of Special Needs in Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Outputs

ACARA has established an Equity and Diversity Advisory Panel to advise on issues affecting the curriculum, assessment, and reporting areas. This panel provides valuable advice to ensure that the Australian Curriculum is accessible to all students, and that students with special needs are considered appropriately in the national assessment program and when reporting on school performance.

Working with states and territories, ACARA has developed agreed *National Protocols for Test Administration*. These protocols establish guidelines for providing special arrangements in test sessions for students with special needs. In 2010, thousands of students across Australia were provided with special arrangements designed to ensure that they could participate fully in the tests. These included braille tests, large print, technology assisted conditions, scribes, additional time, and so forth. These arrangements are provided to students consistent with ACARA's objectives to maximise student participation in the test and to make the tests as accessible to as many students as possible.

ACARA has also worked with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training to enhance opportunities for participation in NAPLAN 2011 for students with disabilities who require testing to be conducted in an electronic (not paper-based) format.

## 5.10 Sustainable practices

ACARA is committed to creating and maintaining a sustainable workplace. ACARA has a sustainability policy and encourages all staff to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve water and reduce waste. Guidelines for staff include:

- printing and photocopying on both sides of the paper
- using email whenever possible, and only printing if absolutely necessary
- reviewing drafts and making comments electronically
- printing drafts on a smaller scale (e.g. more than one page per side)
- using overhead projectors and white boards in meetings instead of paper handouts
- using internet publishing and electronic forms to reduce paper copies
- ordering supplies in bulk to minimise packaging waste

The office is committed to recycling printer cartridges, to prevent potentially hazardous materials from polluting the environment. On average ACARA recycled 10kg of printer cartridges per month.

ACARA's Sydney office covers 1872 square metres and has an average energy use per month of 11,838.91 kWh (January to July 2010). This translates to total greenhouse gas emissions per year of 0.13kt.





## 5.11 Acronyms and glossary

Acronym	Title
A&R	Assessment and Reporting
A&RPAP	Assessment and Reporting Policy Advisory Panel
ACACA	Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AAEYSOC	Australian Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee
AEU	Australian Education Union
ANR WG	Australian National Report Working Group
BEMU	Benchmarking and Educational Measurement Unit
BoS	Board of Studies
CAC Act	Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEECD	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DET	Department of Education and Training
Domain	Relating predominantly to NAP tests, this refers to particular learning skill sets (eg reading, writing, language conventions, numeracy)
EAG	Education Advisory Group
EALD	English as an Additional Language / Dialect
ESA	Education Services Australia (formerly Curriculum Corporation and Education.au)
FDWG	Finance Data Working Group
ICSEA	Index of Community and Socio Educational Advantage
IEU	Independent Education Union
INCB	Interim National Curriculum Board
ISCA	Independent Schools Council of Australia

## 5.11 Acronyms and glossary

Acronym	Title
K, Kindergarten	Kindergarten. This term is used across ACARA's work to denote the year prior to year one, which is known variously as Kindergarten, Preparatory (Prep), Reception, Transition, or Pre-Primary in different states and territories
K-10	The school years from Kindergarten (see note for this entry) to Year 10
K-12	The school years from Kindergarten (see note for this entry) to Year 12
LBOTE	Language Background Other than English (see EALD)
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (defunct, see MCEECDYA)
Ministerial Council	MCEECDYA or MCEETYA, depending on historical context
NAP	National Assessment Program
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program - Numeracy and Literacy
NCEC	National Catholic Education Commission
NCVER	National Centre For Vocational Education Research
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PMRT	Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce
Senior Secondary	The final two years of secondary schooling - generally Years 11 & 12
TAA	Test Administration Authority
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
VETiS	Vocational Education and Training in Schools
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

## 5.12 Compliance index

Requirement	Reference	Annual Report Section
Exemptions to requirements for financial statements	CAC Financials 2008, clause 1D	N/A – none
Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals that have had, or may have, a significant impact on operations	CAC Orders 2008, clause 11 (a)	N/A – none
Reports on the operations of the authority by the Auditor-General, a parliamentary committee or the Commonwealth Ombudsman	CAC Orders 2008, clause 11 (b)	N/A – none
Effects of ministerial or MCEECDYA directions and notification of general policies of the Australian governments	CAC Orders 2008, clause 12	Sections 1.3, 5.7
Directors	CAC Orders 2008, clause 14	Sections 1.4, 5.1, 5.2
Indemnities and insurance premiums for officers	CAC Orders 2008, clause 16	Section 3.1
Commonwealth Disability Strategy	CAC Orders 2008, clause 18	Section 5.9
Certification	CAC Orders 2008, clause 4	Letter of Transmittal
Enabling legislation, functions and objectives	CAC Orders 2008, clause 8 (a)	Section 1.3
Location of major activities and facilities	CAC Orders 2008, clause 9	Section 1.3
Organisational structure	CAC Orders 2008 clause 9	Section 3.5
Review of performance	CAC Orders 2008, clause 10 (1) (b)	Section 2 (all)
Factors, events or trends influencing performance	CAC Orders 2008, clause 10 (1) (b)	Section 3 (all)
Significant events as per S. 15 CAC Act	CAC Orders 2008, clause 10 (1) (c)	Section 3.3
Operational and financial results during the year, including principle outputs, major investing activities, key financial and non-financial activities	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 10 (1) (d)	Section 2 (all), Section 4 (all)
Significant changes in state of affairs or principle activities during the financial year	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 10 (1) (e)	Section 3.5
Significant developments since end of the financial year	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 10 (1) (f)	There were no significant developments to report since the end of the financial year.

## 5.12 Compliance index

Requirement	Reference	Annual Report Section
Efficiency and effectiveness of the operations in producing its principal outputs	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 10 (2) (a)	Section 2
Clear links between outcomes, strategies for achieving those outcomes and the principal outputs	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 10 (2) (a)	Sections 2, 3.1
Audit Committee	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 15 (2)	Sections 1.4, 3.1, 5.1
Advertising, market research, legal & consultancy costs	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 17 (2), ref Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, section 311A	Not required – not a statutory Agency as defined by Public Service Act
Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 17 (2), ref Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, section 516A	Section 5.10
Freedom of Information	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 17 (2), ref Freedom of Information Act 1982, subsection 516A	Section 5.5
Occupational health and safety	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 17 (2), ref Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991, section 74	Section 5.6
Responsible minister(s)	CAC Orders 2008, subclause 8 (b)	Section 1.3
Fraud risk assessment and control	Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines 2002	Section 3.2
Financial statements	Subclause 1 (b) and subclause 2 (1) of Schedule 1 to the CAC Act	Section 4
Financial statements certification: a statement, signed by the directors	Subclause 2 (3) of Schedule 1 to the CAC Act	Section 4
Financial statements certification: Auditor General's Report	Subclause 1 (c) of Schedule 1 to the CAC Act	Section 4