

Slipstream Number:  
B14/1325



Australian Government  
Department of Finance

## MINISTERIAL BRIEF

Copies to:  
Secretary  
Ms Mason  
Mr Sheridan

Minister for Finance

17 October 2014

### Open Government Partnership – Development of a National Action Plan for Australia

**Timing:** Urgent. Your Office requested a brief by 17 October 2014.

**Recommendation:**

That you **note** that Finance is drafting an Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan, which will be used to inform the Prime Minister's decision as to whether Australia will join. The National Action Plan is scheduled for completion by 30 November 2014.

NOTED / PLEASE DISCUSS

**Key Issues:**

On 31 August 2014, the Prime Minister wrote to you asking that you provide a draft OGP National Action Plan for Australia to inform his decision as to whether the Government should agree to join the OGP (copy at Attachment A). In his letter, the Prime Minister asked that the National Action Plan take into account the work of s34 - Cabinet which is still in the process of finalising its recommendations.

2. Finance has commenced drafting a National Action Plan in accordance with the Prime Minister's request. It will take into consideration the recommendations of the s34 - Cabinet s34 Cabinet which are due for consideration at the next s34 - Cabinet s34 - Cabinet to be held during the week commencing 24 November 2014 followed by s47E(d) - adverse to agency's operation The draft National Action Plan is scheduled for completion by 30 November 2014. You will be provided with a draft for consideration in early December, together with a draft letter to the Prime Minister advising whether or not Australia should join. The draft National Action Plan will include a communications strategy.

3. Subject to the Prime Minister's agreement to join the OGP, Finance will consult publicly on the draft National Action Plan to comply with OGP membership requirements. Finance estimates that should Australia decide to join OGP, a finalised National Action Plan would take approximately 6 months to complete in order to allow for and take into account public and stakeholder consultations, consolidation and analysis of any new actions raised in the process, and time for Government to decide on the final set of actions included in the plan.

4. The OGP has established an Open Government Guide which contains 162 specific recommendations covering 19 different topics, such as open data and open contracting. Australia is already either partially or substantially compliant with more than 75% of the OGP recommendations.

**Financial Implications:**

5. N/A.

## Background:

6. The Open Government Partnership was launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for governments to being more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. According to the OGP website, the following countries have either joined or are in the process of joining:

(a) Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovak Republic, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay.

7. To finalise membership for the OGP, Australia needs to:

- (a) Endorse the Declaration of Open Government;
- (b) Develop a publicly consulted National Action Plan; and
- (c) Agree to independent reporting of progress.

8. The National Action Plan needs to be developed with public consultation and contain three core elements:

- (a) An introduction about what open government means for Australia;
- (b) The Australian history and progress of open government; and
- (c) A list of commitments to progress open government in Australia.

## Consultation:

9. Your Senior Adviser, Mr Mathew Fox; your Assistant Adviser, Mr Robert Graziani; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet have been consulted in relation to the development of a National Action Plan.



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Mathias Cormann



PRIME MINISTER



Reference: C14/58478

29 AUG 2014

Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann  
Minister for Finance  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter dated 19 July 2014 regarding the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

I remain of the view that it is important to consider the detail of the proposed action plan before the Government gives a commitment to progress Australia's participation in the OGP.

I ask that you do not announce the Government's position on the OGP until a draft action plan has been submitted for my consideration. The action plan must give effect to practical measures that align with the Government's overall policy objectives in this area and that take into account the work of the ~~s34(3) - Cabinet~~ and the timeframes for Government decisions on that work.

I have copied this letter to the Ministers for Communication, Foreign Affairs, Industry, Small Business, Human Services and the Attorney-General.

Yours sincerely

TONY ABBOTT

~~s47C - Deliberative~~