



Guidance Note

Illustrative Auditor's Report under section 257 of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*

Prepared and issued by the Registered Organisations Commission

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this guidance note is to provide Registered Organisations with guidance on the revised Australian Auditing Standard ASA 700 *Forming an Opinion and Reporting on a Financial Report* (ASA 700), as issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board ('AUASB').

An 'Illustrative Auditor's Report' is included to assist Registered Organisations to understand the new auditing requirements.

2. Background to the revised Auditing Standard

From 15 December 2016, the structure of the Auditor's Report changed as a result of revisions made to the Australian Auditing Standards (ASAs). The changes impact all auditors' reports prepared in accordance with the ASAs.

The purpose of the change is to:

- enhance the communicative value of the Auditor's Report;
- give prominence to the most important matters by re-ordering the content;
- enhance reporting on going concern matters (if applicable), and provide enhanced descriptions of the respective responsibilities of management and the auditor, in relation to going concern;
- provide an affirmative statement on auditor's independence and fulfilment of relevant ethical responsibilities;
- provide more information to users on the auditor's responsibilities, and the key features of an audit and;
- provide details of other information the auditor has received at the date of the Auditor's Report, and is expected to receive after the date of the Auditor's Report¹.

3. Key changes included in the illustrative Auditor's Report

Description	Auditing standard ref.	Comments
Structure of the auditor's report	ASA 700.21-52	The form and structure of the audit report have been reorganised due to changes in the Australian Auditing Standards.
Basis for opinion	ASA 700.28c	Requires references in the audit report to the applicable ethical standards e.g. APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> .
Other information	ASA 700.32 ASA 720	ASA 720 now requires that the auditor 'read and consider' if the Other Information (including but not limited to the Operating Report) is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or the auditor's knowledge obtained in the audit.
Committee of Management's responsibilities for the	ASA 700.33-36	ASA 700.34b has been added to reflect changes made in ASA 570. The changes emphasise that it is management's responsibility for assessing whether the use of the going concern assumption is

¹ Adapted from 'Auditor Reporting FAQs' – Auditing and Assurance Standards Board - <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Publications/Auditor-Reporting-FAQs.aspx>

Description	Auditing standard ref.	Comments
preparation of the financial report		appropriate. The auditors' roles and responsibilities related to going concern have not changed.
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	ASA 700.37-40	These paragraphs have been expanded to clarify the detailed nature and scope of the auditor's existing responsibilities and procedures, and to make an explicit relationship of material misstatements to fraud or error.
Report on other legal and regulatory requirements	ASA 700.43-45	<p>This section is only applicable if there are other matters to report as required by other legislation. Under sections 257(6) and (7) of the <i>Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009</i> ('RO Act'), the auditor is required to report on any instances of non-compliance or deficiency or shortcoming with respect to financial record-keeping, and section 257(2) of the RO Act requires auditors to report on access restrictions to the financial records of the organisation.</p> <p>This section is not required if there are no matters to report.</p>

4. Key changes not reflected in the illustrative Auditor's Report

Description	Auditing standard ref.	Comments
Key Audit Matters	ASA 700.30-31, A41 ASA 701	<p>ASA 701 provides additional disclosures for entities listed on a securities exchange to communicate key audit matters ('KAMs') in the auditor's report. KAMs are those matters that, in the auditor's judgement, are of most significance to the audit of the financial statements of the current financial period.</p> <p>At this point in time, the ROC does not require the inclusion of KAMs.</p>

The numbered references in the Illustrative Auditor's Report refer to the explanatory paragraphs in section 5 of this Guidance Note 'Illustrative Auditor's Notes'. The Illustrative Auditor's Report is also included in the 'Model Financial Statements' published on the Registered Organisations Commission's website.

<To be printed on Auditor letterhead>

Independent Audit Report to the Members of <name of Reporting Unit>

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

I have audited the financial report of <name of Reporting Unit> (the Reporting Unit), which comprises the statement of financial position² as at <balance date>, the statement of comprehensive income³, statement of changes in equity⁴ and statement of cash flows⁵ for the year ended <date>, notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies; and the Committee of Management⁶ Statement.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of <name of Reporting Unit> as at <balance date>, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year ended on that date in accordance with:

- a) the Australian Accounting Standards; and
- b) any other requirements imposed by the Reporting Guidelines or Part 3 of Chapter 8 of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* (the RO Act).

I declare that management's use of the going concern basis in the preparation of the financial statements of the Reporting Unit is appropriate.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. I am independent of the Reporting Unit in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

² Refer to paragraph 9 in Section 5 Illustrative Auditor's Report Notes in this Guidance Note

³ Ibid paragraph 9

⁴ Ibid paragraph 9

⁵ Ibid paragraph 9

⁶ Ibid paragraph 10; note if this is changed to another descriptor all other references in the Report should be changed to the other descriptor

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon⁷

The Committee of Management is responsible for the other information. The other information obtained at the date of this auditor's report is in the Operating Report accompanying the financial report.

My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Committee of Management for the Financial Report

The Committee of Management of the Reporting Unit is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the RO Act, and for such internal control as the Committee of Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Committee of Management is responsible for assessing the Reporting Unit's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Committee of Management either intend to liquidate the Reporting Unit or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from

⁷ Ibid paragraph 7

error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Reporting Unit's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Committee of Management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Committee of Management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Reporting Unit's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Reporting Unit to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Reporting Unit to express an opinion on the financial report. I am responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the Reporting Unit audit. I remain solely responsible for my audit opinion.

I communicate with the Committee of Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

I declare that I am an approved auditor, a member of [name of appropriate professional accounting body] and hold a current Public Practice Certificate.

[Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements]⁸

[In accordance with the requirements of section 257(7) of the RO Act, I am required to describe any deficiency, failure or shortcoming in respect of the matters referred to in section 252 and 257(2) of the RO Act.

My opinion on the financial report is not modified in respect of the following matter(s) because, in my opinion, it has been appropriately addressed by [Reporting Unit] and is not considered material in the context of the audit of the financial report as a whole:

⁸ Ibid paragraph 11

[Example:

a) [Reporting Unit] failed to keep [name of other record] as required by section 252 of the RO Act for the period 1 July 20XX to 4 July 20XX inclusive.]]

[Report on the Recovery of Wages Activity financial report]⁹

Opinion on the recovery of wages activity financial report

The scope of my work extended to the recovery of wages activity and I have audited the recovery of wages activity financial report for the year ended <date>.

In my opinion, the financial statements and notes and recovery of wages activity financial report properly and fairly report all information required by the reporting guidelines of the General Manager, including:

- (a) any fees charged to, or reimbursements of expenses claimed from, members and others for recovery of wages activity; and
- (b) any donations or other contributions deducted from recovered money.

Responsibilities

The Committee of Management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the recovery of wages activity financial report in accordance with the reporting guidelines of the General Manager. My responsibility is to express an opinion on the recovery of wages activity financial report, based on my audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards.

<Audit Firm Name>

<Name>

Partner

<City>

<Date>

Registration number (as registered by the RO Commissioner under the RO Act)¹⁰: <insert number>

⁹ Ibid paragraph 11

¹⁰ Ibid paragraph 12

5. Illustrative Auditor's Report Notes

For the purpose of this illustrative Auditor's Report, the following circumstances are assumed:

1. The financial report is prepared by management of the Reporting Unit in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the RO Act.
2. The terms of the audit engagement reflect the description of management's responsibility for the financial report in *ASA 210 Agreeing the Terms of Audit Engagements*.
3. The auditor has concluded an unmodified opinion is appropriate based on the audit evidence obtained.
4. The relevant ethical requirements that apply to the audit are the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's *APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.
5. Based on the audit evidence obtained, the auditor has concluded that a material uncertainty does not exist related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern in accordance with *ASA 570 Going Concern*.
6. The auditor is not required, and has otherwise not decided, to communicate key audit matters in accordance with *ASA 701 Communicating Key Audit Matters in the Independent Auditor's Report*.
7. The section on 'Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon' is customised depending on the nature of the Other Information received and when this information was received. The template provided assumes that the nature of the Other Information is the Operating Report and that it was received on or before the date of the audit report. If there is Other Information that accompanies the financial report in addition to the Operating Report, or if the Operating Report or any additional Other Information was not received on or before the date of the audit report, please refer to the requirements stated in *ASA 720 The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Other Information* for example wording.
8. The subheading 'Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements' is only applicable where the auditor includes 'Other reporting responsibilities' in accordance with *ASA 700 Forming an Opinion and Reporting on a Financial Report*. Please delete the 'Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements' section if there is no deficiency, failure or shortcoming to report.
9. Please ensure that the financial statement descriptions used in the Auditor's Report agree with those used in the financial report, for example, 'balance sheet' or 'statement of financial position'.
10. Use of 'Committee of Management' in the model auditor's report represents those

charged with governance for the registered organisation, and can be replaced with other descriptors as appropriate for the organisation, for example, 'Council of Management', 'Executive Committee', etc.

11. If the Registered Organisation has not undertaken any recovery of wages activity during the reporting period the auditor's report should state that fact with reference to the Committee of Management Statement, and no opinion can be provided in relation to recovery of wages activity.
12. Auditors must be registered by the Registered Organisations Commissioner. Your registration number under the RO Act will commence with the letters 'AA'.

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This guidance note is not intended to be comprehensive. It is designed to assist with making an application to the Registered Organisations Commission and its work. The Registered Organisations Commission does not provide legal advice.