



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Finance**

# EVALUATORS AND THE ENHANCED COMMONWEALTH PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

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*How can evaluators help influence and shape what emerges from the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework*



# The Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2014 (the PGPA Act)

Paragraph 5(b) requires the Commonwealth to:

- establish a **performance framework** across Commonwealth entities

Paragraph 5(c) requires Commonwealth entities to:

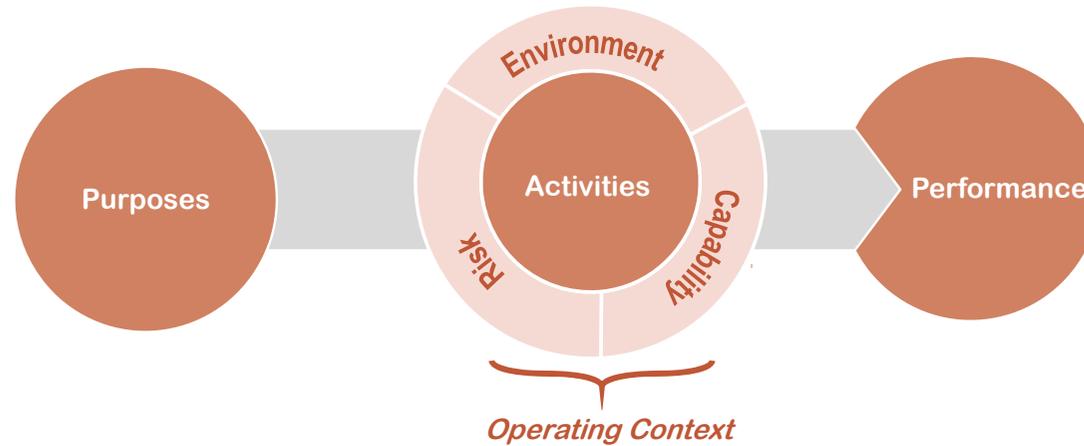
- meet high standards of governance, **performance** and accountability
- provide **meaningful information** to the Parliament and public

Subsection 15(1) requires:

- accountable authorities to promote the proper use of public resources to **achieve purposes**



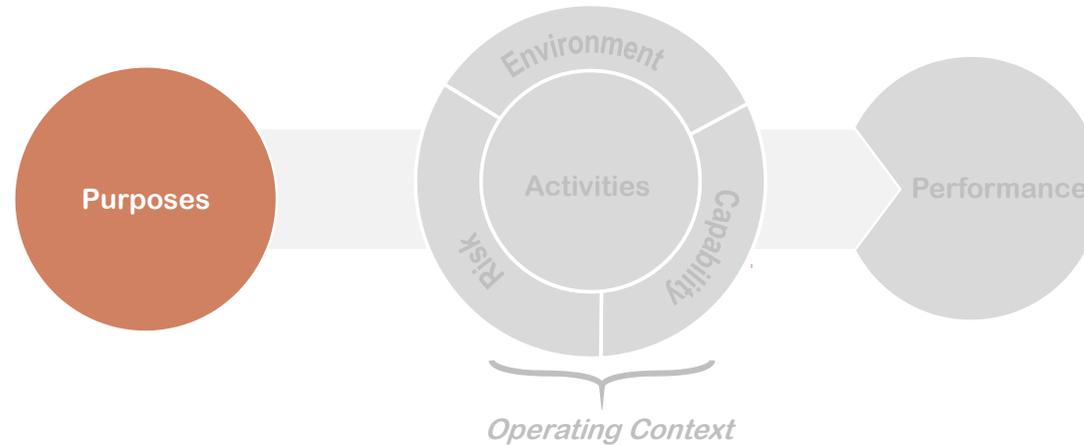
# The enhanced Commonwealth performance framework



- The framework is built around three **key elements**:
  - purposes
  - operating context
  - performance
- A simple concept that can lead to **sophisticated** performance information
- The sophistication results from the **'fleshing out'** of each element



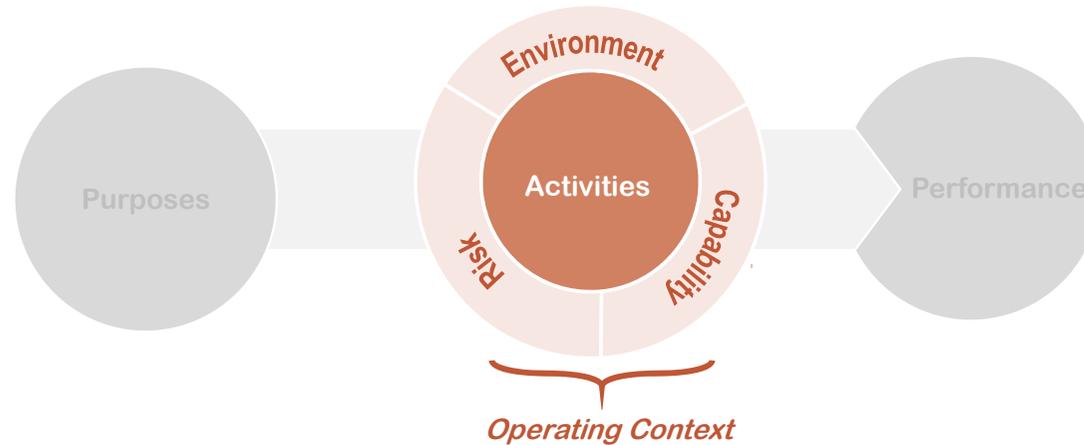
# Purposes



- **Objectives, functions and roles** of an entity or company
- Purposes express what **needs** are being met for what **target groups**
- **Informed by:**
  - enabling legislation
  - administrative orders
  - national partnership agreements



# Operating Context



- **Activities**, environment, capability and risk interact in a complex way
- One element **cannot be understood in isolation** from the others.
- Activities are **shaped** by environment, capability and risk
- And the **reverse is true**



# Performance



- Activities make a **contributions** to achieving purposes.
- These contributions are demonstrated using **performance information**
- Performance information will need to demonstrate **outcomes** over **appropriate timeframes** (e.g. the short, medium and long term)



# Appropriate performance information

Appropriate performance information is:

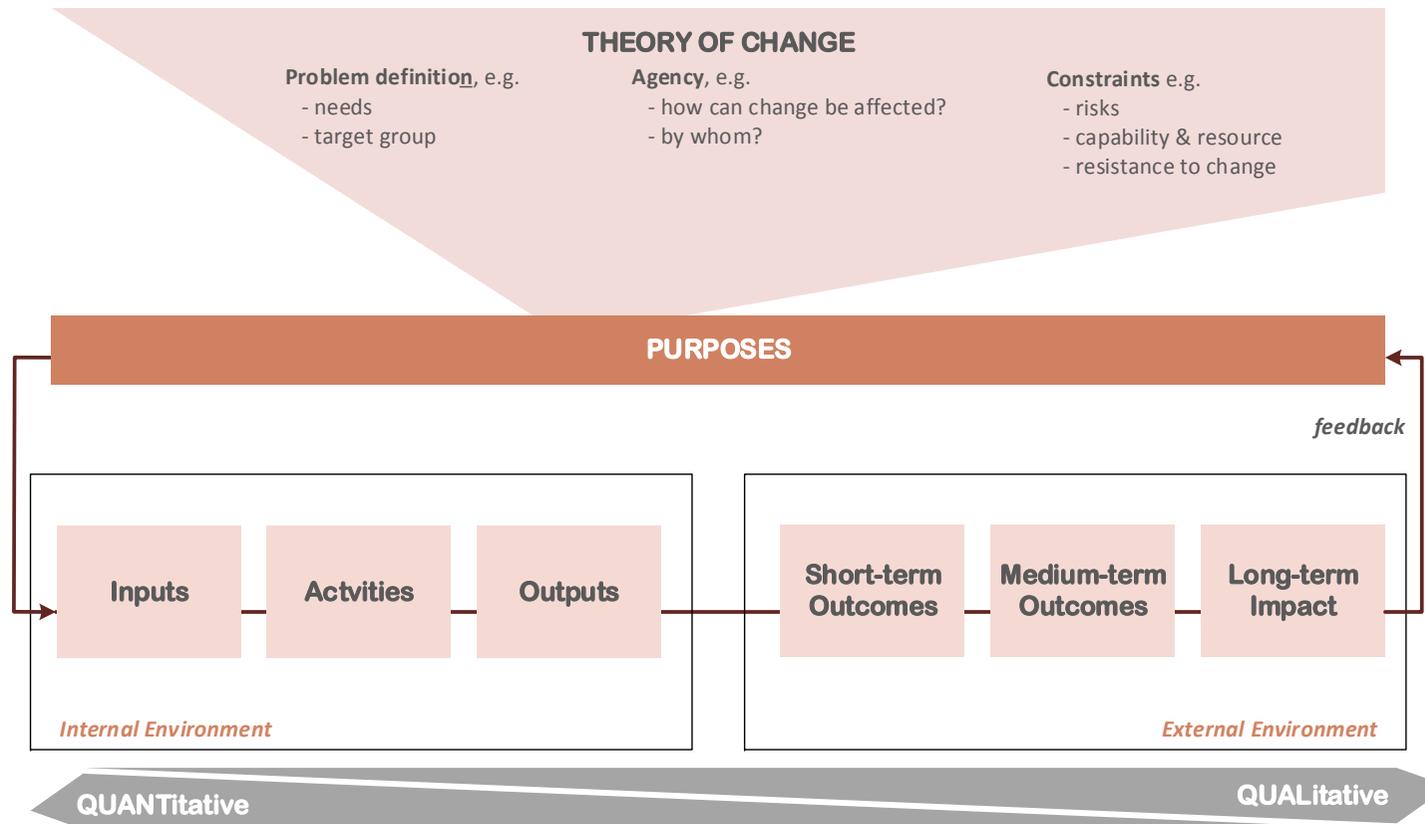
- **Relevant** – demonstrates who benefits and how they benefit from the entity's activities.
- **Reliable** – based on fit for purpose data sources and methodologies that are verifiable.
- **Complete** – help stakeholders judge whether the purposes of an entity are being achieved



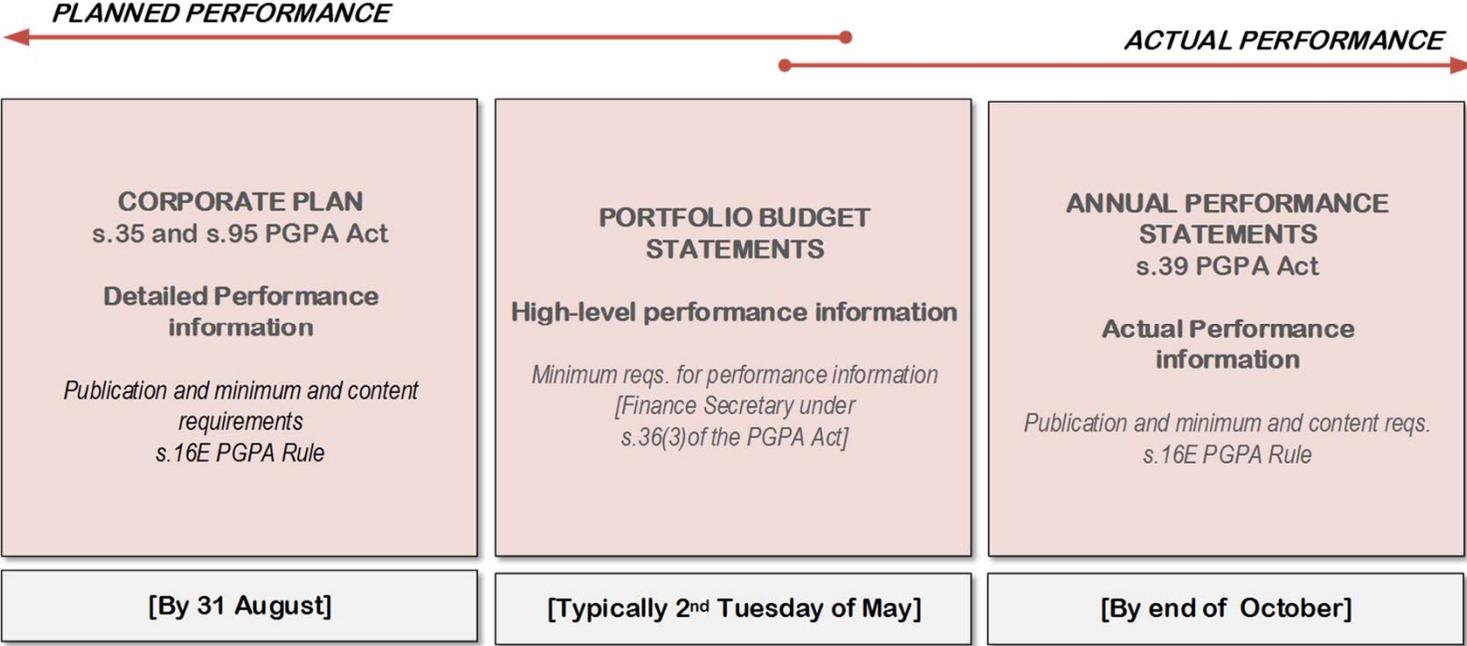
Agree with the ANAO and are being used to assess performance information in audits



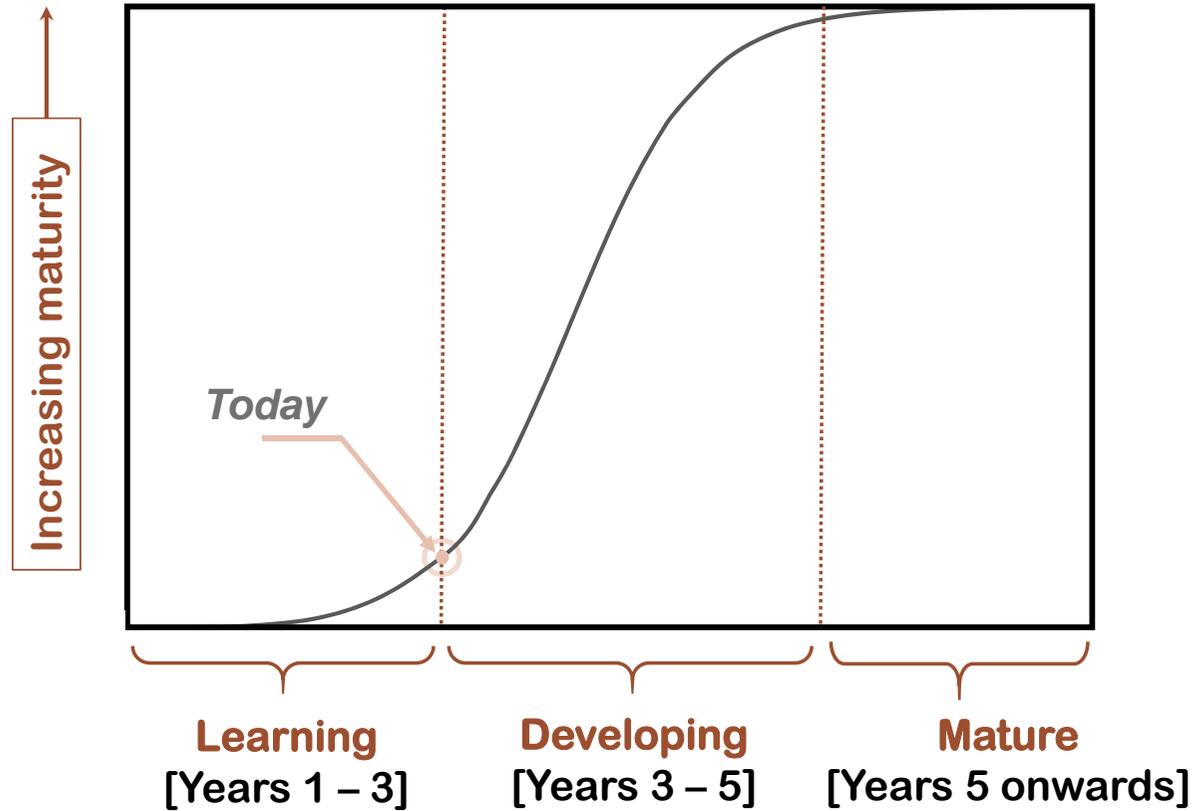
# A conceptual tool



# Performance reporting mechanism



# Trajectory to maturity





*We return to the question:*

*How can evaluators help influence and shape what emerges from the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework*



## Discussion point 1

The evaluation community's contribution to the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework is likely to be through:

**Appropriately adapting its skills and way of thinking to help entities demonstrate achievement against purposes**

This does not necessarily mean more evaluations, larger evaluation or more sophisticated evaluations.



## Discussion point 2

Making a contribution is about demonstrating value – helping others learn what counts as achieving purposes.

It is not as simple as making the right ‘sales pitch’.

What might a demonstration of value look like? How evaluators help other learn?



## Discussion point 3

Evaluations tend to be about particular programs, delivered in specific contexts over specific time frames.

An entity's purposes likely imply a larger scale, have diverse contexts and apply over a much longer timeframe.

Is scale a problem?

