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Lead topic: E.g. Minute of the Minister for PER Response to PAC Reports	Sub-topic: PAC Reports	Contact: Breda Rafter Ext: 5862
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The PAC may raise the issue of the Minute of the Minister for PER response to two PAC reports that were published by the PAC in July 2015. The reports were received by DPER on the 12th November 2015.

The reports are as follows:

1. Report on the Bytel Project
2. Report on the Wards of Court

Response

A formal response to a PAC Report in the form of a Minute of the Minister for PER is prepared by my Department in consultation with the Department(s) and Office(s) concerned.

The 2 reports in question the PAC Report on (1) the Bytel Project and (2) Wards of Court have been received by my Department for response on the 12th November 2015.

The timeliness of responses and the delays in issuing a formal Ministerial response to PAC reports was raised by the Committee in 2011.

At the time Officials from my Department met with the Secretariat of the PAC and agreed a protocol to deliver a quicker responses to Reports from the Committee.

As the Committee is aware my Department has succeeded in speeding up the process of the Minute of the Minister for PER responses to PAC reports.

Since 2011 every Minute of the Minister for PER has been completed and published within 12 to 16 weeks of publication. I expect this to be the case in relation to both of these reports.

I can assure the Committee that every effort will be made by my Department to provide a timely response to PAC reports within current response times.

Wards of Court Report (if required)

The key issue, insofar as it relates to D/PER, is that the PAC has recommended that while the funds are not public money, the Wards of Court funds should nonetheless be audited by the Comptroller & Auditor General.

Suggested Speaking Points

- The legislation governing the role of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) does not permit its audit of such funds. Therefore the matter would require legislative change which can only be addressed by the Oireachtas.
- As the Chair will be aware, the legislative provisions in the Comptroller and Auditor General Act, 1993 involve both the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- Any proposal to amend the Act will have to be considered in the context of consultation with both Ministers, the respective departments, as well as the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and the Department of Justice.