

HTA Board meeting, 18 September 2025

Agenda item	2.2 Audit and Risk Committee (ARAC) Chair's Report to Board
For information or decision?	Information
Decision making to date?	N/A
Recommendation	The HTA Board is asked to note and comment by exception on the update provided
Which strategic risks are relevant?	Risk 1: Operational Risk 2: Reputational Risk 3: Financial Risk 4: Strategy Risk 5: People Risk 6: Security
Strategic objective	Efficient and Effective
Core operations / Change activity	Core operations
Business Plan item	Private Office – facilitating Board, Committee, and Senior Management functions, providing good governance support and compliance with Government requirements
Committee oversight?	ARAC
Finance and resource implications	N/A
Timescales	Routine quarterly reports presented at each Board meeting
Communication(s) (internal/ external stakeholders)	N/A
Identified legislative implications	N/A

Audit and Risk Committee (ARAC) Chair's Report to Board

Introduction

1. This report summarises the handover of the ARAC Chair role from Gary Crowe to myself, and provides a look ahead to the next ARAC meeting, scheduled for 14 October 2025.

Handover of ARAC Chair role

2. At our last Board meeting, the Board thanked departing member Professor Gary Crowe for his service, not least as Chair of ARAC. As the incoming ARAC Chair, I am pleased to be able to work with an established and well-serviced committee with a clear remit, and a good working relationship with staff and auditors.
3. I have met with Gary to take his feedback on potential challenges and opportunities for the Committee and have also discussed my role with the Chair, CEO and Director of Finance and Resources. I will be meeting with GIAA (internal auditors) and KPMG (external auditors) on 10 October, and will be meeting with each in advance of future ARAC meetings. I will also be meeting regularly with the Director of Finance and Resources.
4. I am very pleased to be joined on ARAC by new member Steve Stanbury, whose wide experience in this field and fresh perspective will be most welcome. Jess Watts and Dave Lewis provide good continuity. The Chair, Committee Chairs and Board members may, going forward, wish to consider the membership of Committees in the round.

Look-ahead to ARAC meeting of 14 October 2025

5. I have discussed the meeting with the Director of Finance and Resources, and I am content that the proposed agenda continues to reflect ARAC's forward work plan. At this stage, I do not anticipate major changes to the established format and timing of meetings, but will be mindful of ongoing feedback from members, and (in due course) feedback from the next Board and Committee effectiveness Reviews.
6. The meeting will include the usual Committee 'housekeeping', including minutes and tracking actions from previous meetings.

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7. We will discuss the regular Audit and Reporting items, including tracking progress against actions, with reports from our internal auditor (Government internal Audit Agency) and our external auditors (the National Audit office)
8. We will also receive topical updates from the executive on cyber security; on the cyber assessment framework; and on Health and Safety.
9. The Committee's standing review of the Strategic Risk register will look across all risks, and I anticipate particular discussion around the Strategy risk ("We fail to keep pace and adapt to innovation, growth and reform") at this time.
10. We will conclude with standing reporting items on gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interests; and (should they be required) reports on grievances, disputes, fraud, counter fraud, bribery, corruption and other information.
11. I will report on proceedings at the December Board meeting.

David Stanton, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee