



Public Accounts Committee

Review of Auditor General Reports

Selected Reports of 2011 and 2012

**Report No. 1
September 2013**

Legislative Assembly
Parliament of Western Australia

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Report No. 1

Presented by

Mr D.C. Nalder, MLA

Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on 19 September 2013

Chairman's Foreword

The Public Accounts Committee of the 39th Parliament is committed to ensuring that government agencies respond appropriately to recommendations made by the Auditor General in his performance audit reports.

The Committee will dedicate a substantial part of its work to this task and intends to report periodically to the Legislative Assembly on the level of agency compliance. This first report provides a summary of the actions taken by a variety of agencies in response to the following audits:

1. Report 9 of 2011 – *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*
2. Report 11 of 2011 – *The Management of Offenders on Parole*
3. Report 1 of 2012 – *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*
4. Report 4 of 2012 – *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*
5. Report 6 of 2012 – *Victim Support Service: Providing Assistance to Victims of Crime*

The Committee dedicates a separate chapter to its follow-up of each audit. These chapters provide an overview of the Auditor General's report, including its key findings and recommendations; a summary of the responses provided by audited agencies to the Committee; and a concluding comment on the adequacy of these responses.

This structure is intended to enable individuals with an interest in a particular audit to obtain all the information they require from reading the relevant chapter, rather than the entire report.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank all the agencies referred to in this report for their cooperation during the follow-up process.

MR D.C. NALDER, MLA
CHAIRMAN

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The expected benefits of an integrated CCTV network are yet to be realised. Funding has been committed to develop a detailed business case and implementation plan however, further funding commitments will be required to fully implement once scope and costs are finalised.

Chapter 1

PAC's Role in Following up the Auditor General's Reports

- 1.1 The Public Accounts Committee of the 39th Parliament (PAC or “the new Committee”) has adopted much of the revised format established by its immediate predecessor for pursuing and reporting on agency responses to recommendations made in the Auditor General's performance audit reports. The aim of this process is:
- ... to increase agency accountability and thus improve the effectiveness of [Auditor General] reports while, at the same time allowing PAC to follow-up on selected reports in more detail, making for more efficient and effective use of Committee resources.¹*
- 1.2 The revised follow-up procedure is outlined in detail on pages 2-4 of the previous Committee's 12th Report and is included at Appendix One for the reader's reference. The new Committee has only departed from the revised process in minor areas. For example, agency responses will continue to be forwarded to the Auditor General, but comment on the adequacy of the response may be sought if considered necessary. In addition, the Committee will endeavour to consider responses and prepare reports on concluded follow-ups on an ongoing basis rather than at six-monthly intervals.
- 1.3 This report marks the first in a series of follow-ups that were commenced by the previous Committee, but were not concluded before the 38th Parliament was dissolved. The new Committee has sought an update from some agencies, as many of the implementation dates offered in their initial responses to the previous Committee have now passed. In some instances, the Committee asked some additional questions relating to issues raised in these initial responses that it thought required further clarification.
- 1.4 To undertake this task, the new Committee has considered a range of correspondence generated by, and received from, the previous PAC. While such correspondence is usually the exclusive property of the Committee from which it originated, the new Committee has operated under Standing Order 269 of the Legislative Assembly, which provides:

¹ Public Accounts Committee (38th Parliament), Revised Follow-Up Process to Auditor General Reports, Report No. 12, 26 May 2011.

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Where a committee ceases to exist before it can report on a matter it has been investigating, the evidence will be available to any like committee appointed in the same or the next Parliament.

- 1.5 Over the next few months, the new Committee will continue this follow-up work and will look to conclude its examination of agency responses to other reports that remain outstanding from 2011 and 2012. The Committee has also commenced its follow-up process for some of the performance audits that have been tabled by the Auditor General in 2013. A full list of the audit reports that remain outstanding is included immediately below:

Table 1 - Outstanding PAC Follow-Ups²

| Report No and Year | Performance Audit Report Title |
|--------------------|---|
| No. 6 of 2011 | Right Teacher, Right Place, Right Time: Teacher Placement in Public Schools |
| No. 3 of 2012 | Beyond Compliance: Reporting and managing KPIs in the Public Sector |
| No. 7 of 2012 | Pharmaceuticals: Purchase and Management of Pharmaceuticals in the Public Sector |
| No. 8 of 2012 | New Recruits in the Western Australia Police |
| No. 9 of 2012 | Public Sector Performance Report 2012 |
| No. 11 of 2012 | Second Public Sector Performance Report 2012 |
| No. 12 of 2012 | Major Capital Projects |
| No. 13 of 2012 | Implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness in Western Australia |
| No. 15 of 2012 | Managing the Road Trauma Trust Account |
| No. 1 of 2013 | Management of the Rail Freight Network Lease: Twelve Years Down the Track |
| No. 2 of 2013 | Follow-on Performance Audit to 'Room to Move: Improving the Cost Efficiency of Government Office Space' |
| No. 3 of 2013 | Management of Injured Workers in the Public Sector |
| No. 5 of 2013 | Delivering WA's Ambulance Services |
| No. 6 of 2013 | Records Management in the Public Sector |
| No. 7 of 2013 | Fraud Prevention and Detection in the Public Sector |
| No. 8 of 2013 | Follow-up Performance Audit of Behind the Evidence: Forensic Services |
| No. 9 of 2013 | Administration of the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme |
| No. 10 of 2013 | Supply and Sale of Western Australia's Native Forest Products |
| No. 11 of 2013 | Information Systems Audit Report |
| No. 12 of 2013 | The Banksia Hill Detention Centre Redevelopment Project |

² Gaps in the report numbering sequence denote either completed follow-ups or publications from the Auditor General other than the performance audits followed up by the Committee.

Chapter 2

Report 9 of 2011: Use of CCTV Equipment and Information

Background

- 2.1 The number of CCTV systems installed throughout Western Australia has risen sharply in recent years. Government agencies, local governments, and private residents all make use of these systems.³
- 2.2 In 2009, Cabinet approved a \$6 million Community Crime Prevention Program, from which \$2.84 million was allocated to selected local governments to rollout CCTV systems.⁴
- 2.3 In 2011, the Auditor General examined the use of these assets within the public sector 'to assess whether decisions to install or access CCTV or to fund local government installations were adequately based and whether the facilities are properly managed and anticipated benefits realised.'⁵
- 2.4 The Auditor General pursued five lines of inquiry:
- 1) Were agency and local government decisions to install CCTV part of a planned and coordinated security strategy?
 - 2) Are agencies' and local governments' CCTV facilities managed and monitored to ensure CCTV information is used effectively?
 - 3) Are appropriate controls in place to properly store CCTV information and to protect the privacy of people whose images are captured on CCTV?
 - 4) Are [the] anticipated benefits of installing or accessing CCTV being realised?
 - 5) Does WA Police have a coordinated approach to the use of CCTV including access to footage from, or links to, CCTV equipment owned by government agencies and others?⁶

³ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, p. 9.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 11.

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- 2.5 One state government agency and three local governments were examined in the audit. Key details of these entities, taken from the Auditor General's report are included in the table below:

Table 2 - Details of Agencies and Local Governments Audited⁷

| Entity | Reported CCTV Expenditure | No. of CCTV | Monitoring Methods |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| City of Bunbury | \$300,000 between 2006 and 2011 upgrading and expanding installations. | 21 in total | A state government grant of \$120,000 has enabled a two-year trial of active monitoring of open street CCTV 3 nights a week in close collaboration with local police. |
| City of Perth | \$2 million spent annually to operate and maintain the system with a further \$400,000 per year for system expansion and equipment replacement. | 183 open space CCTV | Open space CCTV cameras are actively monitored 24 hours a day. Several emergency poles with two-way audio communication are located throughout the city. A Monitoring and Control Centre has direct communication with police and one police officer is stationed in the centre at all times. |
| City of Stirling | \$257,000 state government grant in 2009 used to extend coverage along Scarborough Beach foreshore. Previous installations mainly funded by Commonwealth grants. System is valued at over \$700,000 and \$33,000 per year is spent supporting it. | 114 open space CCTV | System records continuously but cameras are not actively monitored around the clock. However, City works with police to actively monitor crowds on the Scarborough Beach foreshore during major events. |

⁷ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, pp. 11-16.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Public Transport Authority (PTA) | <p>Over \$37 million spent in the last decade to enhance rail commuter safety.</p> <p>A significant portion was spent expanding the CCTV system under the Urban Securities Initiatives Project (USIP).</p> <p>More recently, the PTA's Central Monitoring Room was upgraded at a cost of over \$7.4 million.</p> | <p>1400 open space CCTV</p> <p>800 CCTV in rail cars</p> | <p>'[A]lmost' 1400 open space CCTV cameras at stations and sub-stations are monitored 24 hours a day. PTA system is also linked to the Police Major Incident Room under an MOU. Twenty staff are involved in monitoring and downloading imagery. These staff can intervene during an incident via a public address system or by dispatching security staff.</p> <p>800 cameras in rail cars not currently monitored although PTA is experimenting with wireless technology to enable active monitoring.</p> |
|---|--|--|---|

- 2.6 The Auditor General also examined how WA Police uses CCTV information with a particular focus on the Blue Iris Register of CCTV installations. This online register was a key feature of the Blue Iris project, which was developed by WA Police and the Office of Crime Prevention⁸ and launched on 3 April 2009 in an attempt to improve police access to CCTV.
- 2.7 Owners were encouraged to register information (including contact details and GPS coordinates of camera locations). It was anticipated that WA Police could use this information to negotiate communications links with owners. These links might lead to the establishment of live feeds from many CCTVs into the Police's Major Incident Room, which 'could significantly improve their ability to track offenders and respond to major incidents or emergencies.'⁹

⁸ The Office of Crime Prevention was discontinued on 1 July 2011 and its functions were reallocated to the Community Engagement Division and a new Strategic Crime Prevention Division within WA Police. Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, p. 11.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 26.

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- 2.8 While government agencies were directed to register their CCTV installations with Blue Iris from October 2009, registration for other owners remains voluntary.¹⁰

Auditor General's Findings and Recommendations

- 2.9 In terms of the decision-making process used by agencies and local governments for CCTV installation, the Auditor General found that:
- '...more recent expansions to their CCTV systems have been integrated into broader security strategies. This increases the likelihood that their CCTV will assist crime prevention.'¹¹
- 2.10 Regarding the operation of CCTV systems:
- '...good controls' were in place to protect the privacy of individuals and no evidence emerged that indicated inappropriate use of CCTV.
 - Most facilities examined were 'well managed' with courses and manuals available to ensure that system operators are appropriately trained in the use of CCTV. Policies and procedures for staff relating to the access and privacy provisions for CCTV were also evident.¹²
- 2.11 In terms of formal arrangements with WA Police for access to CCTV material:
- Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) between WA Police and public bodies around access to CCTV material 'assist in establishing roles, responsibilities, expected response time, and authority for remote and joint operations.'¹³
 - Both the Public Transport Authority (PTA) and the City of Bunbury had MOUs in place with WA Police. Information gathered through CCTV was guiding policing strategies and had 'demonstrate[d] positive impacts from Police responses to CCTV intelligence.'¹⁴
 - The City of Perth and City of Stirling did not have MOUs in place and CCTV intelligence 'was not being used to guide or assess the impact of policing strategies.'¹⁵ However, later in the report, the Auditor General did note that these local governments are working with WA Police under 'informal

¹⁰ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011. The Blue Iris CCTV Register Logon page is available at:

<https://blueiris.police.wa.gov.au/Account/LogOn>. Accessed on 25 February 2013.

¹¹ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 11 – November 2011, p. 6.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 6.

arrangements' and WA Police reported that these arrangements were delivering positive outcomes.¹⁶

2.12 Regarding WA Police's use of CCTV images:

- Improvements could be achieved through 'a functional coordinated and integrated approach' [with CCTV owners].¹⁷
- The Blue Iris project tries to try to fill this gap, but the system is 'not functional' due to a variety of issues including:
 - '...the completeness, accuracy and utility of data are not reliable. For instance the Police are yet to register 7 000 cameras because they lack the GPS coordinates'¹⁸ [these include almost 1 400 open space CCTV operated by the PTA];¹⁹
 - 'the data is not readily accessible to front-line Police; there has been no training in use of the Register offered and investigating staff continue door-knocking for possible CCTV imagery; [and]
 - it cannot be used for management reporting due to very limited reporting capabilities.'²⁰

2.13 Of the Blue Iris project, the Auditor General added later in the report that 'considerable further development and a commitment to adequate administration is needed before the system can reach its full potential.'²¹

2.14 The Auditor General made five recommendations, three targeting agencies and local governments more generally and two directed at WA Police. These are listed in Table 3 on the following page.

Initial Response from Agencies

2.15 The Auditor General reported that WA Police accepted the findings relating to what was required to 'better support the management, administration and coordination of the CCTV Blue Iris project.'²² WA Police advised that a recent update of the system now supported the inclusion of GPS coordinates by those registering their camera's details. However, any further development of the

¹⁶ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, pp. 15-16,22-23,25.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 14,27.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 7.

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 28.

²² *ibid.*, p. 8.

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project would 'be considered in conjunction with the means to address the issues raised in the report.'²³

- 2.16 The Auditor General also noted that the City of Perth concurred with the conclusion and key findings of the report.²⁴

Table 3 - Recommendations from Auditor General²⁵

| Target Agency | Auditor General's Recommendations |
|--|---|
| Agencies and local governments generally: | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Need to ensure decisions to install and maintain CCTV are carefully planned, costed and considered as part of a broader security strategy.2. Should use information gathered from CCTV to monitor effectiveness and enhance crime prevention strategies. This includes closer cooperation with Police through sharing information.3. Should have appropriate policies, procedures and practice[s] for CCTV equipment and information to ensure the protection of individual privacy. |
| WA Police should: | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Establish formal agreements with agencies and local governments that define:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ appropriate access and use of CCTV equipment and information○ feedback on policing outcomes5. Consider and clarify their ongoing commitment to the Blue Iris project. |

Committee Follow-up

- 2.17 The previous Committee concentrated on obtaining responses from the PTA and WA Police. The PTA advised that it was already compliant with the recommendations of the report with the exception of its failure to register its CCTV sites with the Blue Iris database. The PTA added that the registration of all fixed cameras would be completed by June 2012.²⁶
- 2.18 In its response to the Committee regarding Recommendation 4, WA Police stated that it 'continues to support local government, commercial and retail

²³ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, p. 8.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Mr Mark Burgess, Managing Director, Public Transit Authority, Letter, 3 April 2012.

businesses and the community in establishing CCTV infrastructure'.²⁷ However, no further detail was provided demonstrating the nature of this support and there was no reference to specific steps being taken towards establishing further formal agreements with agencies and local governments around access to CCTV footage.

- 2.19 Regarding its commitment to Blue Iris (Recommendation 5), WA Police said that at present it was 'not sufficiently resourced to maintain or expand the project to a position originally anticipated'.²⁸ While competing demands would not allow Police to divert resources from other priorities for Blue Iris, WA Police would continue to use various means 'to identify and access CCTV footage for investigative purposes'.²⁹
- 2.20 The previous Committee was unable to report on its work before the prorogation of the 38th Parliament. The current Committee reconsidered these original responses and sought an update from the respective agencies.
- 2.21 The PTA was asked whether it had completed the registration of its cameras on the Blue Iris database as anticipated by June 2012. The PTA advised that it had attempted to register its cameras, but was unsuccessful 'due to technical issues with the Blue Iris software'.³⁰ Despite this, the PTA remained 'very willing to register its cameras'³¹ and has provided the locations of its camera network to WA Police.
- 2.22 The Committee asked WA Police a series of specific follow-up questions, including whether all of the PTA's cameras were now registered. WA Police confirmed that this process had not been completed and that the system had 'suffered a variety of faults relating to a range of networking and programming glitches'.³² In response, technical work was now being undertaken to improve the reliability of the system for both Police and external users.
- 2.23 In addition, the previous administrator of the Blue Iris project had been recently re-engaged and was 'moving to develop a re-launch strategy'.³³ Part of this strategy involved liaising with Geographic Information System (GIS) officers from Police and the PTA with a view to compiling the relevant information in preparation for a bulk upload onto the Blue Iris database. WA Police added that it may 'take some time to source and collate the

²⁷ Dr Karl O'Callaghan, APM, Commissioner of Police, Letter 3 July 2012.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ Mr Mark Burgess, Managing Director, Public Transport Authority, 24 June 2013.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 2.

³³ *ibid.*

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information’,³⁴ although the bulk upload feature—a newly introduced function—would eventually expedite the process. Previously, ‘it would have been a mammoth task to register the PTA system by way of manual entry and would have required a substantial human resource commitment from both agencies’.³⁵

- 2.24 WA Police reported that the current registration numbers across the entirety of Blue Iris ‘are low and remain without significant change, since 2011.’³⁶ Currently, there are 493 registered CCTV sites with 3,132 internal cameras and 2,547 external cameras. On a positive note, each registered site includes GPS coordinates and these have been linked to an annexed internal mapping system that provides a ‘one-click access path’ to relevant database details.³⁷
- 2.25 Notwithstanding this development, it appears that many cameras remain unregistered. When Blue Iris was first announced in 2009, it was expected to provide WA Police with access to between 4,000 and 6,000 cameras within the project’s first year.³⁸ In his 2011 report, the Auditor General confirmed that Blue Iris had collected the location details of over 5,000 cameras from 370 registered sites, but noted that a further 7,000 cameras were awaiting registration.³⁹
- 2.26 WA Police indicated that it ‘had not been well positioned to apply concerted resources to this function for several years’,⁴⁰ but this situation had now changed with the re-engagement of the project’s former administrator (see 2.23 above). The Committee asked why greater priority had not been given to the program. In its response, WA Police indicated that ‘Blue Iris was one of the projects that suffered a reduction in attention’⁴¹ while its officers prepared and discharged their responsibilities as part of Operation Demille (CHOGM) throughout 2011.
- 2.27 While Operation Demille ‘represented an unprecedented draw on the agency’s human resources’⁴², WA Police said the operation left a positive legacy in the form of the extensive CCTV management and storage capability that is now located at the Police site in Maylands. This facility now has functionality for the

³⁴ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 2.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁷ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 2.

³⁸ Hon. Rob Johnson, MLA, Minister for Police, ‘Police given access to CCTV across WA’, Media Statement, 3 April 2009.

³⁹ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, p. 27.

⁴⁰ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 2.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴² *ibid.*

collection of data from mobile, remotely deployed and external sources including those belonging to Main Roads WA and City of Perth.⁴³

- 2.28 WA Police was confident that it could expand its current system to 'incorporate a range of significant 3rd party CCTV infrastructure within Western Australia.'⁴⁴ However, this confidence was based on the anticipated delivery of a pre-election funding commitment (\$13.5 million) to develop a state-wide CCTV strategy, and to resource a dedicated CCTV project team.⁴⁵
- 2.29 The Committee also asked how many MOUs had been established with local governments and state agencies regarding access to CCTV imagery (Recommendation 4). WA Police reported that no such existing agreements were in place. This contradicts the findings of the Auditor General (see 2.11 above), who had reported that there was an MOU in place with PTA 'which enables Police to access the PTA cameras by arrangement.'⁴⁶ The Auditor General had also reported an MOU in place with City of Bunbury 'which formalises the City's close relationship with local police.'⁴⁷
- 2.30 Notwithstanding this, WA Police confirmed that 'informal arrangements are active and have been so since 2009.'⁴⁸ Moreover, discussions have commenced with the WA Local Government Association (WALGA) regarding an expansion of the membership of Blue Iris through MOUs with local government. WA Police again referred to the pre-election funding commitment to develop a CCTV strategy as the principal stimulus for the discussions it was having with WALGA.⁴⁹

Committee Conclusion

- 2.31 The Committee has resolved to conclude its follow-up and is pleased to note that WA Police has re-assigned a full-time coordinator to its CCTV development strategy. However, it is clear that other actions planned by WA Police are predicated on the anticipated receipt of a \$13.5 million pre-election funding commitment specifically earmarked for the CCTV network.

⁴³ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 3.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.* For details of the election commitment referred to by WA Police in its response, see Liberal Party of Western Australia, *Building a Better CCTV Network*, no date. Accessed on 15 August 2013.

⁴⁶ Auditor General Western Australia, *Use of CCTV Equipment and Information*, Report 9 - October 2011, p. 14.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁸ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

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- 2.32 The recently released Budget Papers show that \$200,000 has been made available in 2013-14 for WA Police 'to develop a detailed business case and implementation plan' around the CCTV network.⁵⁰
- 2.33 The contrast in funds expected versus funds received will likely limit the ability of WA Police to expand the data-gathering capacity of the network to its full potential (see 2.28 through 2.30 above).
- 2.34 Despite this, the Committee notes WA Police's undertaking that 'Blue Iris will continue to be supported despite the present limitations concerning the ongoing funding of this project.'⁵¹ In this respect, the Committee encourages WA Police to give priority to correcting the technical errors that prevent external parties from entering their CCTV camera details on the register (including the PTA).

Finding 1

The expected benefits of an integrated CCTV network are yet to be realised. Funding has been committed to develop a detailed business case and implementation plan however, further funding commitments will be required to fully implement once scope and costs are finalised.

⁵⁰ Government of Western Australia, *2013-14 Budget – Economic and Fiscal Outlook: Budget Paper No. 3*, 8 August 2013, p. 145.

⁵¹ Mr Chris Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 3.

Chapter 3

Report 11 of 2011: The Management of Offenders on Parole

Background

- 3.1 Parole programs allow offenders to serve out the final part of their prison sentence in the community subject to strict adherence to conditions around their behaviour. Such programs can help offenders successfully re-integrate into society and can significantly reduce the expenses involved in keeping prisoners incarcerated for the entirety of their sentence. However, the community does face the risk that individuals may re-offend while on parole. Therefore, the process of parolee management needs to be based on robust policies that are actively monitored to balance these competing risks and benefits effectively.⁵²
- 3.2 In Western Australia, the Department of Corrective Services (DCS) is responsible for managing all offenders, including those on parole programs. The Prisoners Review Board (PRB) determines whether an eligible prisoner is granted parole and the accompanying conditions of the release. Once released, parolees meet regularly with a supervising Community Corrections Officer (CCO) employed by DCS.⁵³ CCOs are responsible for monitoring compliance with parole conditions that are designed to support the chances of parolees 'return[ing] to a law abiding lifestyle'.⁵⁴ Examples of parole conditions include attendance at training and rehabilitation programs, undertaking not to consume alcohol or illicit substances, nor to change residence without prior authorisation.⁵⁵
- 3.3 DCS introduced a new Enforcement Policy in 2009, under which CCOs are required to immediately report any breach of parole conditions to the PRB which has authority to cancel a parole order. Prior to the introduction of the Enforcement Policy, CCOs had considerably greater discretion when dealing with breaches of parole conditions.⁵⁶

⁵² Auditor General Western Australia, *The Management of Offenders on Parole*, Report 11 – November 2011, p. 4.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

Chapter 3

- 3.4 DCS has conducted seven reviews of its operations since 2007 including a state-wide review of parolee management in 2010.⁵⁷
- 3.5 In 2011, the Auditor General used the outcomes of that 2010 review to form the basis of an examination into 'whether DCS effectively manages parolees in the community.'⁵⁸ The Auditor General focused on two questions:
- 1) Does DCS have a suitable legislative and policy framework in place for managing offenders on parole?
 - 2) Do DCS' day to day practices ensure that offenders on parole are effectively managed in the community?⁵⁹

Auditor General's Findings and Recommendations

- 3.6 It was concluded that DCS had updated and clarified relevant policies to address what had been a 'high level' of inconsistency among its staff in the approach to offender supervision. While these policy updates had demonstrated some degree of success, 'inconsistent supervision is still evident'.⁶⁰ The Auditor General made a series of other key findings including the following:
- 'DCS has improved its management of parolees but more improvements could be made. Issues identified in DCS internal professional standards reviews – such as a lack of senior staff oversight, not adequately using assessment tools that help determine a parolee's supervision level and reporting frequency and not always explaining to a parolee their obligations – were still evident despite DCS taking a proactive approach to identify them.
 - Because DCS is not monitoring all parole conditions, and for some conditions relies on parolees to 'self-report' non-compliance, some parolees may be breaching their orders without DCS knowing....
 - Better monitoring of some parole conditions is needed. The use of drug tests and the monitoring of program attendance are inconsistent, reducing the effectiveness of both conditions....
 - The introduction of the Enforcement Policy by DCS has not yet led to consistent supervision of offenders. Despite efforts by DCS to communicate policy changes, understanding and application of the policy is variable....

⁵⁷ Auditor General Western Australia, *The Management of Offenders on Parole*, Report 11 – November 2011, p. 21.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 9. See also, p. 21.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

- Changes by DCS to its Enforcement Policy have reduced the discretion of CCOs to deal with breaches of parole conditions and require all breaches to be reported to the PRB. It is not yet clear if this change will reduce the frequency that offenders breach parole or if the increased cancellation of parole will have a negative impact on long term reoffending rates....
- [Following the introduction of the Enforcement Policy in 2009] There has been a significant increase in the average number of monthly parole cancellations. From March 2006 to November 2008 the average monthly cancellation of orders was 2.09 per 100 parolees. Since December 2008 this has nearly doubled to 3.96 per 100 parolees.....⁶¹

3.7 Five recommendations were put to DCS with the view to improving the effectiveness of parole.

Table 4 - Recommendations from Auditor General⁶²

| Objective | Recommendations to Department of Corrective Services |
|---|---|
| <i>To improve the effectiveness of parole, DCS should:</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that relevant staff have a consistent understanding of its parole policies. 2. Conduct regular reviews of staff compliance with parole policies and the ongoing suitability of methods for monitoring parole conditions. This should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parolee accommodation b. Drug testing c. Parolee attendance at rehabilitation programs. 3. Establish the impact and effectiveness of the Enforcement Policy and other parole initiatives, and track and report progress against these on a regular basis. 4. Put systems in place to gather the data required to report against parole initiatives. 5. Improve the integration of offender information so that CCOs have up-to-date and comprehensive documentation in one location |

Committee Follow-up

3.8 DCS informed the previous Committee that it planned to complete its response to all the recommendations by June 2013. To improve staff understanding of parole policies (Recommendation 1), DCS appointed a Manager - Operational Practice to work with Community Corrections Centre staff 'to embed policy

⁶¹ Auditor General Western Australia, *The Management of Offenders on Parole*, Report 11 – November 2011, p. 7.

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 8.

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and practice changes and improve the overall quality of practice.⁶³ An Adult Community Corrections Handbook was also launched in June 2011, which provides clear and consistent direction on policies.⁶⁴ The Auditor General had noted that this handbook now operates as a live document available to staff across the Department's intranet.⁶⁵

- 3.9 In an update to the current Committee, DCS advised that some training of new and senior staff remained outstanding due mainly to 'human resource recruitment and selection processes.'⁶⁶ However, these processes were being finalised and the outstanding training was expected to be completed by December 2013.
- 3.10 In response to Recommendation 2, performance indicators have been developed to measure the rate of offender compliance with parole orders and the extent to which staff are discharging their responsibilities under the Enforcement Policy. In addition, DCS has created an audit tool to ensure that CCO's case management processes are consistent with departmental policies and practice.⁶⁷
- 3.11 The Department is also reviewing the effectiveness of some of its parole conditions. The policy on urinalysis testing has been clarified to address issues raised by the Auditor General, including incidences of collaborative case management between CCOs and parolees that undermined the randomness, frequency, and effectiveness of drug testing.⁶⁸
- 3.12 In other areas, DCS acknowledged its need to review its enforcement of accommodation conditions attached to parolees. This review included establishing minimum standards around the rate at which CCOs conduct house visits to ensure that parolees are not living or mixing with people they have agreed not to associate with under their parole orders.
- 3.13 In response to Recommendation 3, DCS has enhanced the case management database used by its staff (C-Bis) by developing an upgrade that will assist in monitoring compliance with the Enforcement Policy. This tool, along with the performance indicators and audit tool (see 3.10 above) will be used to monitor the effectiveness of this, and other, parole initiatives.

⁶³ Mr Ian Johnson, Commissioner, Department of Corrective Services, Letter, 8 March 2012, p. 2

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Auditor General Western Australia, *The Management of Offenders on Parole*, Report 11 – November 2011, p. 22.

⁶⁶ Ms Heather Harker, Commissioner, Department of Corrective Services, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Mr Ian Johnson, Commissioner, Department of Corrective Services, Letter, 8 March 2012, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* For issues raised by the Auditor General, see Auditor General Western Australia, *The Management of Offenders on Parole*, Report 11 – November 2011, pp. 26-27.

- 3.14 In its original response, DCS said the extent of its actions in regard to other recommendations would be subject to further funding. These actions included plans to continue developing the quantitative data-gathering capacity of C-Bis to help monitor compliance with parole initiatives (Recommendation 4). The additional funding would also assist a further upgrade of C-Bis to streamline the manner in which offender information can be stored and retrieved by CCOs (Recommendation 5).⁶⁹
- 3.15 The current Committee wrote to DCS, asking specifically whether the relevant funding was sought in order to complete the responses to the Auditor General's final two recommendations. The Commissioner confirmed that 'the relevant funding was provided and all actions associated with these recommendations have been successfully completed.'⁷⁰

Committee Conclusion

- 3.16 Having considered the initial response and current update provided by DCS, the Committee resolved to conclude its follow-up.

⁶⁹ Mr Ian Johnson, Commissioner, Department of Corrective Services, Letter, 8 March 2012, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁰ Ms Heather Harker, Commissioner, Department of Corrective Services, Letter, 16 July 2013, p. 1.

Chapter 4

Report 1 of 2012: Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers

Background

- 4.1 In 2011, Western Australians volunteered around 288 million hours of their time, valued at \$9.4 billion. The public sector is one of the many beneficiaries of this generosity, with one estimate suggesting that approximately 130,000 volunteers help the WA public sector deliver its services.⁷¹
- 4.2 It is important for public sector agencies to adopt a structured approach to volunteer management, as '[v]olunteers are more likely to stay with a soundly established and well run program which ensures the time and skills they contribute are used effectively.'⁷² Moreover, '[i]f agencies do not develop a good partnership with their volunteers, they risk losing the partnership forever.'⁷³
- 4.3 For more than 20 years, the State Government has published guidelines for public sector agencies 'to value, promote and support volunteer partnerships.'⁷⁴ The Department for Communities (Communities) has published the most recent version—*Guidelines for Successful Partnerships between Public Sector Agencies and Volunteers* (the Guidelines)—in 2011.⁷⁵
- 4.4 The Guidelines are designed to help agencies apply best practice when working in partnership with volunteers. While Communities compiles the Guidelines, it is not responsible for enforcing them. Each agency is responsible for its own volunteer programs.⁷⁶
- 4.5 The Auditor General's first performance audit of 2012 considered whether agencies are managing their volunteers in line with the Guidelines. Six

⁷¹ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, pp. 5-9.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷⁵ Department for Communities, *Guidelines for Successful Partnerships between Public Sector Agencies and Volunteers*, August 2011 – Fourth Edition. Available at: <http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/serviceareas/volunteering/Documents/VO17%20Guidelines%20for%20Successful%20Partnerships.pdf>. Accessed on 5 March 2013.

⁷⁶ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, pp. 5-10.

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volunteer programs were audited across four agencies: Communities; the Disability Services Commission (the Commission); the Drug and Alcohol Office (DAO); and the Western Australian Museum (WA Museum).

4.6 The audit asked three key questions:

1. Do agencies establish and manage their partnerships in line with good practice?
2. Do agencies manage the risks associated with their volunteer partnerships?
3. Do agencies review the effectiveness of their volunteer partnerships?⁷⁷

Auditor General's Findings and Recommendations

4.7 The Auditor General identified elements of good practice in the programs that were examined. For example, DAO and Communities supervised volunteers and developed rosters, and their volunteers were formally recognised and reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. Similarly positive were the screening process undertaken by Communities and the reviews that the Commission regularly conducts to ensure that its policies and procedures 'align with the evolving culture of caring for the disabled.'⁷⁸

4.8 However, the Auditor General found that:

*... [o]verall agencies were not consistently meeting government's good practice principles. As a result there is a risk that the important relationships between agencies, volunteers and the broader community, as well as the services delivered, could be compromised.'*⁷⁹

4.9 Examples of shortcomings included:

- 'No agency had fully planned volunteer programs before implementation. No agency assessed the costs and benefits of the program including the level of resourcing required to run the program effectively....
- No agency had systematically assessed the risks from using volunteers and put strategies in place to manage them....
- The policies and procedures of three agencies relating to the implementation and management of the volunteer programs are not comprehensive and there was a heavy reliance on past practice....

⁷⁷ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, p. 10.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

- Two of the four agencies had ad hoc processes to select, screen, orient and train volunteers....
- Two agencies did not provide consistent oversight and management of volunteers [and] Three agencies had not monitored or evaluated their volunteer programs.’⁸⁰

4.10 The Auditor General made four broad recommendations around how effective volunteer partnerships can be planned, established, managed, and evaluated. In three of these areas, a series of practices consistent with the Guidelines was included in the recommendation:

Table 5 - Recommendations from Auditor General⁸¹

| Recommendation | Elements of best practice consistent with public sector guidelines on managing volunteers |
|--|--|
| 1. Agencies should plan for their volunteer partnerships by establishing: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volunteers’ roles, activities and responsibilities • the accountabilities volunteers must observe, including codes of conduct and ethics • contributions volunteers might make and the costs and benefits of engaging volunteers • the risks associated with the use of volunteers and the strategies needed to manage the risks • the resources required to supervise, coordinate and manage volunteers • regular policy reviews to ensure programs remain current |
| 2. Agencies should establish an effective volunteer partnership through: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures to guide core activities • induction and orientation • consistent screening and selection process • training • informing key stakeholders about the partnership |
| 3. Agencies should manage their volunteer partnership through: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective supervision and coordination • fostering a good relationship between staff and volunteers • listening to volunteers’ feedback • reimbursing expenses in line with agency policy • recognition and celebration of volunteers’ contributions |
| 4. Agencies should routinely monitor, evaluate and report on the volunteer partnership to ensure it is operating well and is sustainable. | |

⁸⁰ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, pp. 6-7.

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 7.

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Committee Follow-up

Department for Communities

- 4.11 Communities accepted each recommendation 'in full'⁸² and indicated that it was taking action in each area where its practices were seen as not aligning with the Guidelines.⁸³ In the area of planning for volunteer partnerships, Communities had commenced an evaluation of its Women's and Seniors' information and referral services programs. These reviews were to include a consideration of program costs against the outcomes generated in the community and were due to be completed by June 2013. Further program reviews are planned under the Department's Evaluation Framework, with the Parenting WA program scheduled for evaluation in 2013-2014.⁸⁴
- 4.12 In its follow-up response, Communities advised that the evaluations due for June 2013 had been completed. The results were in the process of being analysed in preparation for presentation to the Corporate Executive.⁸⁵
- 4.13 In other planning areas, Communities has committed to introducing a Standardised Volunteer Agreement that will outline all behavioural accountabilities of volunteers. This initiative was due for completion in September 2012. Finally, the risks of using volunteers, and the ongoing alignment of individual programs with strategic objectives, will be considered in separate reviews being undertaken as part of the Department's broader risk management and annual operational planning requirements. The estimated completion dates for these reviews were May 2013 and August 2012 respectively.⁸⁶
- 4.14 In its follow-up response, Communities advised that the Standardised Volunteer Agreement had been developed and incorporated into a Volunteering Policies and Procedures Manual. This manual has also been updated to include a commitment to regularly review programs to ensure that they align with the Department's objectives and government priorities. This revised manual, and a completed review of risk identification and management processes relating to volunteer programs, were soon to be presented to the Corporate Executive for final approval.⁸⁷

⁸² Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 21 June 2012, p. 1

⁸³ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, pp. 12-19.

⁸⁴ Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 21 June 2012, p. 2.

⁸⁵ Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 20 June 2013, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁶ Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 21 June 2012, p. 3.

⁸⁷ Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 20 June 2013, pp. 2-3.

- 4.15 In terms of establishing effective volunteer partnerships, Communities has developed a procedures manual for the Women's Information Services, and has committed to reviewing this, and the Department's other program manuals, every November.⁸⁸ Communications with internal stakeholders have been enhanced via the inclusion of volunteers in broader departmental events and invitations to volunteers to attend relevant professional development courses. External stakeholders are now able to read more about the efforts of volunteers after a summary document outlining the roles they play in Communities' programs is published on the Department's website.⁸⁹

Drug and Alcohol Office

- 4.16 DAO also accepted the recommendations of the Auditor General in full and has taken steps to develop the areas of its practice that were highlighted as deficient.⁹⁰ Shortcomings in the screening processes have been addressed with the development and implementation of standardised confidentiality and volunteer agreements. A small number of these agreements remained outstanding, but these volunteers would be suspended from serving with DAO from 30 June 2012 until they were compliant. DAO later confirmed that all volunteer and confidentiality agreements were in place as at 9 July 2013.⁹¹
- 4.17 Volunteers will have greater awareness of their responsibilities with enhanced training modules outlining the ethical requirements for the Parent Drug Information Service (PDIS) and the development of a *Procedures and Information for Parent Volunteers* document that has been approved and endorsed by DAO's Corporate Executive. DAO has also created a performance development tool that will encourage a line of two way feedback between program coordinators and PDIS volunteers.⁹²
- 4.18 In the area of program reviews, DAO has also approved a policy document for 'engaging and working with parent volunteers'.⁹³ This document, along with the *Procedures and Information for Parent Volunteers*, will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis. Meanwhile a broader review of the PDIS, likely to be undertaken by an external consultant, is scheduled for 2013.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Ms Jenni Perkins, Director General, Department for Communities, Letter, 20 June 2013, p. 3.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁹⁰ Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, pp. 12-19.

⁹¹ Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 June 2012, p. 2; Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 July 2013, Attachment 1, p. 2.

⁹² Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 June 2012, pp. 2-3; Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 July 2013, p. 1.

⁹³ Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 July 2013. Attachment 1.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*; Mr Neil Guard, Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Letter, 9 June 2012, p.2.

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Disability Services Commission

- 4.19 The Commission accepted the findings of the Auditor General's report, but argued that its audited program—*Linking with the Community*—fell outside the scope of volunteering as presented in the Guidelines.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the Commission conducted a review of *Linking with the Community* and found that the program was not meeting its core objective, had a low uptake by residents of its accommodation services, and generated 'very few genuine contacts from the public.'⁹⁶
- 4.20 Accordingly, the Commission decided to cease the program from 31 May 2012. Existing relationships between the residents who had taken up the program and the "friends" with whom they were regularly engaged were not disrupted, as the administration and management of these arrangements were moved to another area of the Commission under its Engaging Private Personal Support Policy and Procedures (Policy and Procedures). Friends are being supplied with copies of the Policies and Procedures to inform them of their responsibilities and the Commission has taken steps to ensure the safety of its residents and friends through the development of improved screening processes.
- 4.21 The Policies and Procedures initiative was to oversee the relationships between residents and friends while the Commission developed an arrangement that would allow relationships to evolve naturally in an environment that was less formal and manufactured. This process was to manifest in a transition to a new 'Lifestyle Plan' and 'Social Inclusion Framework for the Accommodation Services Directorate.'⁹⁷ The Plan and the Framework were being developed with the input of Commission staff and an external reference group including family members of residents and another disability sector organisation. These parties were to develop new tools and documents that would be used when planning around the needs of residents.⁹⁸
- 4.22 The Commission has provided an update confirming that its *Lifestyle Planning for Individuals of the Disability Services Commission's Accommodation Services Directorate – User Guide* has now been completed and was introduced in

⁹⁵ Dr Ron Chalmers, Director General, Disability Services Commission, Letter, 13 June 2012. See also, Auditor General Western Australia, *Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers*, Report 1 - February 2012, p. 8.

⁹⁶ Dr Ron Chalmers, Director General, Disability Services Commission, Letter, 13 June 2012.

⁹⁷ The Accommodation Services Directorate is the branch within the Disability Services Commission that provides accommodation support to eligible people with a disability. *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Dr Ron Chalmers, Director General, Disability Services Commission, Letter, 13 June 2012.

August 2012. Training sessions have been conducted to acquaint accommodation services staff with the content of the new Guide.⁹⁹

WA Museum

- 4.23 WA Museum provided a comprehensive response to the previous Committee, which demonstrated full acceptance of the Auditor General's recommendations and a clear program for implementation of corrective measures to take effect between July 2012 and January 2013.
- 4.24 In respect to planning, a draft *Guidelines for Engagement of Volunteers in the WA Museum* has been developed and was due for approval by the Museum's Board of Trustees in July 2012. In addition, role descriptions for front and back office volunteers had been drafted and a new Volunteer Welcome Pack was being compiled for distribution at organised volunteer induction sessions. A Volunteer Code of Conduct, to be included in the Welcome Pack, was due to be completed in August 2012. Site managers were also to ensure that volunteers receive relevant OH & S and emergency procedures information.
- 4.25 WA Museum conducted a cost analysis of its volunteer program that assessed the dollar value of the volunteer contributions at \$646,431.05 to the end of the June 2012 reporting year. This assessment will be conducted annually thereafter with the Museum committed to evaluating the public value of its volunteer programs.
- 4.26 Finally, five strategic risks had been identified and mitigation strategies for each created as part of an internal review of the volunteer program that will now be undertaken each year through a dedicated risk workshop.
- 4.27 The Museum was in the process of reviewing its recruitment practices to ensure that volunteer positions requiring Police and Working with Children Checks were consistently identified. The policy emanating from this review was due to be completed by September 2012 and volunteers would be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in the future when obtaining the required clearances.
- 4.28 For the ongoing management of volunteer partnerships, a Volunteer Manager post was established for the management of volunteer policy and practice across all of the Museum's sites. This post would work in conjunction with one or more Volunteer Coordinators who were to have carriage of the recruitment, management and supervision of volunteers at the Museum's Perth and Fremantle sites.

⁹⁹ Mr Ron Chalmers, Director General, Disability Services Commission, Letter, 26 June 2013, pp. 1-2.

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- 4.29 A greater onus on two-way feedback would be facilitated through a range of volunteer input forms due to be completed by August 2012 and introduced at 'key and agreed intervals throughout a volunteers' period of service'.¹⁰⁰
- 4.30 In response to a request from the current Committee for an update, WA Museum advised that the only action that had been delayed was the final Board approval of its *Guidelines for Engagement of Volunteers in the WA Museum*. Originally scheduled for approval in July 2012, the document was again revised after further consultation was undertaken with volunteers and volunteer coordinators. The policy will now be tabled for approval by the Board at its next meeting in August 2013.
- 4.31 The Museum advised that it has appointed a second Volunteer Coordinator for its Fremantle site and added that a summary of all the work it has done in response to the Auditor General's recommendations will be included in its next Annual Report to Parliament.¹⁰¹

Committee Conclusion

- 4.32 While the responses of all agencies to this performance audit were encouraging, the efforts undertaken by WA Museum were particularly thorough.

¹⁰⁰ Mr Alec Coles OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Western Australian Museum, Letter, 21 June 2012.

¹⁰¹ Mr Alec Coles OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Western Australian Museum, Letter, 15 July 2013.

Chapter 5

Report 4 of 2012: Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training

Background

- 5.1 Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays an important role in facilitating job opportunities for Western Australia's (WA's) Aboriginal population. In 2010, 7,043 Aboriginal students undertook VET studies, with 69 per cent of these students attending one of the state's 11 State Training Providers (STP).¹⁰² The majority of VET that is funded by the State Government is delivered by these STPs and is governed and coordinated by the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD).
- 5.2 While many Aboriginal people enrol and complete their training with no more difficulty than other students, some do confront significant barriers attributable to long term issues such as 'disengagement from education and training, unemployment, poor health and housing, and literacy and numeracy problems.'¹⁰³ STPs provide a range of support services to help Aboriginal students overcome these barriers. Support services include direct mentoring and tutoring through to administrative, transport, and accommodation assistance.¹⁰⁴
- 5.3 The Department uses Delivery and Performance Agreements (DPA) with STPs to purchase training and support services. It also uses DPAs as part of its governance regime, requiring that each STP establishes an Aboriginal Education Employment and Training Committee (AEETC)¹⁰⁵ and an Aboriginal Training Plan.¹⁰⁶
- 5.4 This audit examined the effectiveness of support services provided by STPs to Aboriginal students. The audit focused on three key questions:
1. Are support services appropriate and utilised by the target group?

¹⁰² Formally known as TAFEs.

¹⁰³ Auditor General Western Australia, *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*, Report 4 - May 2012, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 6,17-21.

¹⁰⁵ AEETCs advise STPs on the training and support needs of local Aboriginal people and communities. For more information, see *ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 15.

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2. Do the support services achieve intended outcomes for Aboriginal students, STPs, the Department, and local Aboriginal communities?
 3. Do the Department and STPs collaborate to promote best practice in delivering support services for Aboriginal students?¹⁰⁷
- 5.5 The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) measured performance against the best practice principles developed by the National Centre for Vocational Educational Research, which were designed 'to achieve positive outcomes for Aboriginal People in training.'¹⁰⁸
- 5.6 The audit examined DTWD and four mainstream STPs based on the number of Aboriginal students enrolled and their spread across metropolitan and regional areas:

Table 6 - State Training Providers (STPs) included in audit¹⁰⁹

| State Training Provider | Regions Serviced | Aboriginal Enrolments 2010 |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Challenger Institute of Technology (Challenger) | Metropolitan Perth and Peel | 369 (total enrolment 16,622) |
| Durack Institute of Technology (Durack) | Geraldton and Mid West | 538 (total enrolment 4,870) |
| Kimberley Training Institute (Kimberley) | Broome and Kimberley | 1,185 (total enrolment 3,243) |
| Polytechnic West | Metropolitan Perth | 610 (total enrolment 27,513) |

Auditor General's Findings and Recommendations

- 5.7 The results of the audit were generally positive. The Auditor General observed that STPs support services were 'appropriate and effective' and often went beyond their normal training roles. However, the complexity of the problems facing some students means that there are some needs that STPs could not meet.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Auditor General Western Australia, *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*, Report 4 - May 2012, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸ For the full list of the seven principles, see *ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 11,32.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 4.

- 5.8 The support services STPs provided did meet key elements of national best practice. For example, STPs:
- ‘...employed Aboriginal support staff who are critical to supporting students
 - provided courses and programs that remove barriers to training
 - worked with employers to support Aboriginal students and trainees
 - delivered training on and off campus, in Aboriginal communities and at other locations where Aboriginal people feel comfortable
 - provided mainstream support services.’¹¹¹
- 5.9 Other key findings included:
- Funding for Aboriginal support services across the 11 mainstream STPs was stable between 2007 and 2011 at about \$4.1 million per year. These funds were ‘spent appropriately’ with the majority going towards salaries of the staff who provide the support.¹¹²
 - There were some small improvements in Aboriginal training outcomes between 2006 and 2010 (course completion rates and participation in employment-based training), but figures varied across the state.¹¹³
 - Other overall outcome indicators showed no improvement (participation in higher level courses) or marginal decreases (total enrolments), but again the trends varied across each institution.¹¹⁴
 - Outcome indicators such as course completions and enrolment numbers ‘did not provide a comprehensive picture of how well STPs and the Department support Aboriginal students.’¹¹⁵ There is currently no measure of the broader social and community outcomes from training, although the Department is looking at ways to address this.
 - The Department and STPs had not comprehensively analysed their performance data and information and thereby missed opportunities to further identify best practice measures and unmet needs. In addition, a lack of formal sharing of results and experiences with each other has made it harder to identify gaps in service and opportunities for improvement.
 - The governance of support services ‘was sound but could be improved DPAs had no formal completion or retention targets against which to

¹¹¹ Auditor General Western Australia, *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*, Report 4 - May 2012, p. 7.

¹¹² *ibid.*

¹¹³ *ibid.*, pp. 8,26-30.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 8.

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assess the performance, and not all STPs had targets in their Aboriginal Training Plans.¹¹⁶

- 5.10 Six recommendations were made, four directed to the Department and two to the STPs:

Table 7 - Recommendations from the Auditor General¹¹⁷

| Target Agency | Recommendation |
|--|---|
| <i>The Department should:</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lead the development of new performance measures to better assess the difference that support makes for individuals and communities. These measures should include social indicators, at individual and community levels, and add to the existing measures of course enrolments and completions.2. Increase the analysis and sharing of data and information with STPs on the performance of support services.3. Improve opportunities for STPs and AEETCs to share knowledge and best practice about supporting Aboriginal students in training.4. Review the funding framework for the delivery of Aboriginal support services by STPs as part of its overall review of DPAs. This should include providing funding over a longer period of time (more than the current practice of year-by-year) to allow better service continuity at STPs. |
| <i>State Training Providers should:</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Establish clear targets and timelines for Aboriginal Training Plans and include these in their annual performance review processes.6. Work with the Department to develop a better evaluation framework for the community and social outcomes of their student support services. |

Committee Follow-up

Department of Training and Workforce Development

- 5.11 In its initial response to the previous Committee, DTWD indicated it was taking action in response to the first four recommendations of the Auditor General's report. Regarding the first recommendation, the Department emphasised that

¹¹⁶ Auditor General Western Australia, *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*, Report 4 - May 2012, p. 8.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

there was ‘currently no accepted mechanism for validating and measuring links between social change and the support services for Aboriginal students.’¹¹⁸ Even so, on 26 April 2012,¹¹⁹ it hosted a working group including STPs and the Departments for Communities and Indigenous Affairs that looked to address all recommendations of the report. The first stage was to involve the working group investigating the viability of KPIs that link support services to social outcomes at an individual and community level. DTWD would use the findings from this process to develop an evaluation framework incorporating such indicators.¹²⁰

- 5.12 In response to a request for an update from the current Committee, DTWD confirmed that the working group had completed its work and that a final report on the consultation process was provided. The consultation process was conducted in two stages between September and November 2012 and received input from nine STPs. Based on the feedback received the Department concluded that, ‘a social outcomes model would not be fit for the purpose of centralised performance monitoring.’¹²¹ Consequently, DTWD decided against incorporating performance measures based on social outcomes in its Delivery and Performance Agreements with STPs. Instead, the current measures of student retention, progression and completion rates would remain the primary criteria for ongoing funding.

- 5.13 The feedback had indicated that:

*While it would be interesting to know about social outcomes from support services, in practice, the cost of determining this may outweigh the benefits. Aboriginal students would be subjected to an inequitable survey burden [relative to other students such as those from English as Second Language backgrounds], STPs would struggle to undertake the evaluation within their current budgets, and the data gained would be of questionable validity and usefulness.*¹²²

- 5.14 The Department nonetheless indicated that it would be supportive of any initiative undertaken by an STP to ‘investigate the broader social outcomes of

¹¹⁸ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 25 September 2012, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ Date confirmed by Ms Liz Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Challenger Institute of Technology, Letter, 6 September 2012.

¹²⁰ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 25 September 2012, Attachment A, pp. 1-2.

¹²¹ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 31 July 2013, Attachment B, p. 13.

¹²² *ibid.*, p. 14.

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their support services¹²³, and would encourage any findings to be shared with other providers.

- 5.15 To improve the process of sharing information on best practice and current performance of support services (Recommendation 3) the Department organised a forum for 27 September 2012 that brought together STPs and their respective Aboriginal Education Employment and Training Committees (AEETCs). This Training Provider's Forum will now be staged annually with information gathered at the event to be shared with an Internal Stakeholders Group within the Department. The theme for the 2013 forum was sharing knowledge and best practice about Aboriginal support services.¹²⁴
- 5.16 The Department advised the current Committee that three workshops were held during the 2013 forum around sharing good practice in Aboriginal training and employment.
- 5.17 Other information sharing initiatives include the completion and publication of a guide entitled "*What works in Aboriginal pre-employment programs?*" on the Department's Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre website.¹²⁵
- 5.18 In response to the Auditor General's call for increased analysis and data sharing with STPs on the performance of support services (Recommendation 2), the Department confirmed it had critiqued the Aboriginal Training Plans that been compiled by the STPs and provided feedback in open format at the 2012 Training Provider's Forum. Among its other initiatives in this area, DTWD has developed a template that is designed for STPs to report on the outcomes of their individual training plans, including achievement of targets relating to student enrolments, course completions and student satisfaction levels.¹²⁶
- 5.19 In response to Recommendation 4, DTWD originally said it would consider how it allocated support funds at its next scheduled review of DPAs in 2015. Until that time, funding would remain ongoing from year to year and be subject to the adjustment based on the Aboriginal student enrolments at each STP.¹²⁷

¹²³ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 31 July 2013, Attachment B, p. 14.

¹²⁴ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 25 September 2012, Attachment A, p. 2.

¹²⁵ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 31 July 2013, Attachment A, p. 3.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 2-3; Ms Sue Lapham, Executive Director, Service Delivery, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Email, 7 August 2013.

¹²⁷ Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 25 September 2012, Attachment A, p. 2.

- 5.20 In its latest correspondence with the current Committee, the Department has confirmed that the review has been completed and that the current funding model will be retained. Clear targets have been established in the Delivery and Performance Agreements to which STP funding will be linked. The Department is satisfied with the current model and believes it provides an ‘appropriate level of funding certainty and continuity’¹²⁸ for STPs.

Challenger Institute of Technology

- 5.21 Challenger accepted the recommendations of the Auditor General in full and provided the previous Committee with its revised Aboriginal Training Plan that established clear targets and timelines for a range of practical performance indicators. This plan had been re-submitted to DTWD and the achievement of the targets will continue to form part of Challenger’s DPA acquittal process.
- 5.22 Challenger also confirmed that it had participated in the DTWD working group process and that it had accepted DTWD’s final conclusion that an evaluation framework based on social outcomes was not supported and would not be pursued.¹²⁹

Kimberley Training Institute

- 5.23 Kimberley Training Institute accepted both recommendations from the Auditor General and provided its 2012 Aboriginal Training Plan, which included a set of measureable performance targets across the areas of enrolments, retention, performance, community preparedness and responsiveness, and workforce development. It was monitoring the effectiveness of this plan with a view to submitting enhanced indicators to the Department in 2013.
- 5.24 Like Challenger, Kimberley Training Institute also participated in the working group from which the revised evaluation framework was drafted by DTWD.¹³⁰

Polytechnic West

- 5.25 Polytechnic West confirmed that it had addressed Recommendation 5 with an Aboriginal Training Plan now embedded as part of its annual planning and reporting process. Polytechnic West also participated in the working group and

¹²⁸ Ms Sue Lapham, Executive Director, Service Delivery, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Email, 7 August 2013. See also, Dr Ruth Shean, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Letter, 31 July 2013, Attachment A, pp. 1-4.

¹²⁹ Ms Liz Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Challenger Institute of Technology, Letter, 6 September 2012 and Letter, 16 July 2013.

¹³⁰ Ms Karen Dickinson, Managing Director, Kimberley Training Institute, Letter, 23 September 2012.

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supports the final conclusions drawn by DTWD regarding the evaluation framework.¹³¹

Durack Institute of Technology

- 5.26 As at 2013, Durack had developed an Aboriginal Training Plan with clear timelines and targets, which had been submitted to DTWD and would be incorporated into Durack's future Annual Business Plans. Regarding Recommendation 6, Durack noted the working group processes and advised that it was still working with DTWD to establish targets around social outcomes.¹³²

Committee Conclusion

- 5.27 The Committee was satisfied with the efforts that the audited agencies made to address the recommendations and concluded its follow-up accordingly.
- 5.28 While DTWD has not agreed to commit in full to Recommendation 1, it appears to have undertaken a robust consultation process and provided a detailed explanation of its findings in support of its decision. The Committee is not in a position to make an informed assessment of the veracity of this response. Rather than take further time to investigate the merit of the arguments offered by the Department in support of its decision, the Committee felt it prudent instead to include the response at Appendix Two of this report to inform Parliament, the Auditor General, and other interested readers.
- 5.29 Similarly, given its lack of familiarity with the respective merits of annual versus multi-year funding models for the STPs, the Committee has opted against making a finding on DTWD's response to Recommendation 4 (see 5.19 above).

¹³¹ Ms Jill Jamieson, Managing Director, Polytechnic West, Letter, 22 July 2013.

¹³² Mr Bert Beevers, Managing Director, Durack Institute of Technology, Letter, 22 July 2013, Attachment 2.

Chapter 6

Report 6 of 2012: Victim Support Services: Providing Assistance to Victims of Crime

Background

- 6.1 In Western Australia, a victim is defined as ‘a person who has suffered injury, loss or damage as a direct result of an offence, whether or not that injury, loss or damage was reasonably foreseeable by the offender.’¹³³ Where an offence results in a death, ‘any member of the immediate family of the deceased’ is also considered a victim.¹³⁴
- 6.2 Victims of crime can suffer in ways that adversely impact their physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and financial wellbeing. How a person recovers from the experience of being a victim is very much dependent upon the quality of support they receive after the event. Good practice indicates that ‘responding with compassion and respect; validating and normalising a victim’s feelings; and informing them about available services can be highly reassuring.’¹³⁵
- 6.3 In Western Australia, the Department of the Attorney General (DotAG) has established a Victim Support Service (VSS) to provide assistance to victims of crime. The *Victims of Crime Act 1994* allows the VSS to work closely with WA Police and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) to identify victims of crime in order to deliver its services. These services include ‘assessment, counselling, information, and support.’¹³⁶
- 6.4 VSS offers its services to victims of crimes “against the person”, which include homicide, sexual assault, deprivation of liberty, assault, robbery and threatening behaviour. VSS services can also extend to witnesses to crimes.¹³⁷
- 6.5 The VSS has 14 staff and 88 volunteers (excluding administrative staff) and operates under a budget allocation (2011-2012) of \$2.8 million. This budget is shared with DotAG’s Child Witness Service.¹³⁸

¹³³ Section 2 *Victims of Crime Act 1994*, (WA).

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

¹³⁵ Auditor General Western Australia, *Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime*, Report 8 - May 2012, p. 8. See also, p. 15.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 8. The Act also contains guidelines describing how victims should be treated. See, Schedule 1 *Victims of Crime Act 1994*, (WA).

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 8. See also Section 2 *Victims of Crime Act 1994*, (WA).

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- 6.6 In 2010-11, WA reported 26,063 individual victims of crime against the person. Of these victims, 11,431 were referred to VSS and 5,700 used the service.¹³⁹
- 6.7 In this audit, the Auditor General assessed the VSS, focusing on the extent to which:
1. Victims of crime used the service.
 2. The service complies with legislation and adheres to accepted good practice principles.
 3. The service leads to improved outcomes.
 4. The service collaborates with other agencies and shares information to ensure victims' needs are met.¹⁴⁰

Auditor General's Findings and Recommendations

- 6.8 The Auditor General delivered a generally positive assessment of the VSS unit, commending its work and confirming that it aligned with legislation and good practice.¹⁴¹ Moreover, VSS 'is proactive in liaising with and seeking information from agencies to ensure victims' needs are met [and] is effective in supporting other agencies' interactions with victims.'¹⁴² However, balanced against these positive assessments were a series of findings that identified areas for improvement.
- 6.9 For example, not all victims of serious offences were informed about or referred to the VSS: in 2010-2011 only 40 per cent of sexual assault victims were referred to or assisted by the unit.¹⁴³ The Auditor General identified several 'weaknesses that increase the risk of [victims of] serious offences not being referred.'¹⁴⁴ These include VSS:
- Not documenting a clear definition of victims of 'serious offences' or ensuring that WA Police—which was the source of 79 per cent of referrals in 2010-2011—uses the same definition.¹⁴⁵
 - Not ensuring that all key agencies and organisations likely to interact with victims are aware of the unit's services.

¹³⁸ Auditor General Western Australia, *Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime*, Report 8 - May 2012, p. 8.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁴² *ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, pp. 5,10.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 5,13.

- Not including in its formal arrangements with other agencies processes that ensure that victims of serious offences, other than homicide, 'are consistently informed about, or referred to, its service.'¹⁴⁶
- 6.10 While victims who are referred to the VSS are treated with courtesy, compassion and respect—and staff and volunteers are dedicated to meeting the needs of victims—there were areas where this aspect of the service could also be improved:
- VSS meets its target timeframes for making initial contact with metropolitan victims, but there can be delays in offering subsequent services (e.g. the waitlist for counselling services can fluctuate up to six weeks for some victims in certain circumstances).¹⁴⁷
 - Methods used for making initial contact may not be appropriate for all victims.
 - While VSS collects data on referrals and service delivery, it does not 'strategically evaluate' this information (e.g. the timeliness of its service provision) to ensure that the unit is efficient and effective in improving outcomes for victims.¹⁴⁸
- 6.11 The Auditor General made one finding regarding WA Police: that it did not have 'robust internal processes for ensuring that victims are consistently referred to VSS.'¹⁴⁹ This was particularly problematic outside the metropolitan area. As WA Police did not have operational guidelines or a coordinated approach to referrals, victims in regional areas were informed about or referred to VSS 'on an ad-hoc basis'.¹⁵⁰
- 6.12 The Auditor General called on DotAG, WA Police and other agencies to 'establish formal agreements to ensure that victims of crime are consistently referred to the Victim Support Service.'¹⁵¹ Eleven other recommendations were made, nine directed towards DotAG and two to WA Police. These are included in Table 8 on the following page.

¹⁴⁶ Auditor General Western Australia, *Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime*, Report 8 - May 2012, p. 5.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 6,17.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 6.

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Table 8 - Recommendations from the Auditor General¹⁵²

| Target Agency | Recommendation |
|--|---|
| <i>The Department of the Attorney General should:</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify, document and communicate to referring agencies, which offences fall within the categories of ‘assault occasioning bodily harm and other serious offences.’ 2. Work with WA Police to ensure that the definition[s] they and VSS are using for victims of serious offences are consistent and current. 3. Review and update current arrangements with relevant agencies. 4. Improve its monitoring of victim referrals by type of offence so it can better identify and address gaps in referrals and take-up of service. 5. Do more to ensure that key agencies and organisations likely to be in contact with victims are aware of its service. 6. Assess whether there is a better service delivery model for regional VSS. 7. Improve the way it measures timeliness of services. 8. Review its processes for making contact with victims to ensure victims are given reasonable opportunity to use VSS. 9. Seek regular feedback from victims and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and ensure its service meets victims’ needs. |
| <i>WA Police should:</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Develop and document a coordinated approach for referring victims to VSS, including internal guidance for dealing with victims of crime. 11. Consider approaches, including more regular awareness training, to ensure all staff understand the impact of crime on victims, how to deal with victims, and the services available. |

¹⁵² Auditor General Western Australia, *Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime*, Report 8 - May 2012, pp. 6-7.

Committee Follow-up

Department of the Attorney General

- 6.13 DotAG advised the previous Committee that it had accepted all of the recommendations and provided an outline of the steps it was taking towards their implementation. Regarding the first two recommendations, the Department confirmed that relevant information technology and statistical experts from DoTAG and WA Police would work together on plans to improve the current automated referral process. This would include identifying relevant information categories and needs, as well as methods of data transfer. The planned changes were expected to be agreed by 1 December 2012.¹⁵³
- 6.14 DotAG agreed to modify its database in order to improve how it monitors victim referrals by offence type so that it can better address gaps in its service provision. The Department advised that it will create a new reporting template that extracts the appropriate data, which is already collected and stored in its database. DotAG will create another new reporting template in order to better monitor the timeliness of its services. It had also agreed to introduce 'enhanced Counselling waitlist management' to expedite service delivery. These initiatives were due for completion by 30 September 2012.¹⁵⁴
- 6.15 The Department accepted that all key agencies and organisations needed to have a greater awareness of its referral service and committed to identifying corrective measures by 30 October 2012. This included planning an extension of its service promotion to 'secondary stakeholders'.¹⁵⁵
- 6.16 DotAG has subsequently confirmed to the current Committee that these actions have all been completed.¹⁵⁶
- 6.17 DotAG had also commenced a review in order to identify its current referral arrangements with other agencies, any gaps that may be evident in its referral processes, and any remedial strategies that could be adopted. This review was due to be completed with arrangements updated 'as necessary' by 30 November 2012.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter, 11 September 2012. WA Police confirmed the establishment of this working group. Dr Karl O'Callaghan, APM, Commissioner of Police, Letter, 26 September 2012.

¹⁵⁴ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter, 11 September 2012, pp. 2-5.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter 19 July 2013, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter, 11 September 2012, p. 3.

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- 6.18 DotAG advised the new Committee on 19 July 2013, that this recommendation was yet to be fully implemented. The review of the referral processes was completed in September 2012 and it identified gaps in the referral arrangements with WA Police. Correction of these gaps required an amendment to the existing MOU between the two agencies and the development and implementation by WA Police of a fully automated referral system. The automated referral system had its initial roll-out in April 2013 and is being carefully monitored by both agencies during a testing phase to ensure the integrity of the data. The MOU is in the process of final review between the agencies and is expected to be completed by August 2013.¹⁵⁸
- 6.19 DotAG undertook another review to identify reasons for the disparity in take-up of referral services between metropolitan and regional areas. This review considered whether 'revised models for service delivery would improve consistency in the level of service delivery'.¹⁵⁹ The Department's summary of the review as provided to the current Committee noted that the volume of referrals in regional areas is smaller and that officers can 'provide a more personalised service in some instances'.¹⁶⁰ In contrast, all victims identified by Police in metropolitan areas received a letter offering support services with further offers provided to relatives of homicide victims, who are also considered victims under the *Victims of Crime Act 1994* (WA) (see 6.1 above). The response from DotAG was unclear on whether a revised model could improve the consistency of services between metropolitan and regional areas. However, it did confirm that '[s]trategies for interagency engagement [used in metropolitan areas] are being shared between staff in the regions throughout the State.'¹⁶¹
- 6.20 Finally, the Department has reviewed its communication strategies and implemented several initiatives to improve the manner in which it evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of its services. Most significantly, it has identified more appropriate client feedback methods and has completed new survey forms. These are currently being trialled.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter 19 July 2013, p. 2. See also Mr C.J. Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 15 July 2013, p. 4.

¹⁵⁹ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter, 11 September 2012, p. 4.

¹⁶⁰ Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General, Department of the Attorney General, Letter 19 July 2013, p. 2.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

¹⁶² *ibid.*

WA Police

- 6.21 WA Police stated in the Auditor General's report that 'more can be done to assist the victims of crime.'¹⁶³ In acknowledgement of this point, WA Police established a Victims of Crime project team within its Judicial Services Portfolio to implement the report's recommendations and to address other 'service issues that have emanated through internal reviews.'¹⁶⁴ The project team has examined numerous aspects of WA Police's approach to victim support including officer training, IT systems, interagency meetings and forums, and the current role played by Police Family Liaison Officers (FLOs). The team will also be investigating 'resource implications that may impede service delivery improvements.'¹⁶⁵
- 6.22 Already the project team has reviewed WA Police's Manual and its Corporate Knowledge Database 'to ensure effective communication for referral[s] of victims of crime.'¹⁶⁶ Results of this review were gazetted in September 2012. As noted above, WA Police is finalising its MOU with the Department of the Attorney General and the automated victim referral process between both agencies is in its early stages of operation.¹⁶⁷ WA Police confirmed that the automated referral process had been rolled-out four months later than originally anticipated due to 'technical complications, and additional issues relating to the referral of mandatory reported offences for children.'¹⁶⁸

Committee Conclusion

- 6.23 Notwithstanding the slight delay in the roll-out of the automated referral service, it appears that DotAG and WA Police are responding appropriately to the Auditor General's recommendations. It is hoped that the automation of referrals between these two main agencies will improve the numbers of victims who are informed about the support services that are available.
- 6.24 It is also noted that the recent appointment of WA's first Victims of Crime Commissioner, Ms Jennifer Hoffman, should ensure that a constant focus remains on how the delivery of these services can be enhanced.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Auditor General Western Australia, *Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime*, Report 8 - May 2012, p. 7.

¹⁶⁴ Dr Karl O'Callaghan, APM, Commissioner of Police, Letter, 26 September 2012, p. 1.

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Mr C.J. Dawson APM, Acting Commissioner of Police, Letter, 15 July 2013, p. 4.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Hon Michael Mischin, MLC, Attorney-General, 'WA's first Victims of Crime Commission appointed', Media Release, 24 July 2013.

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- 6.25 Moreover, the recently announced \$2 million injection of funds for victim support services in regional areas should contribute to reducing the disparity in take-up currently evident for victims of crime in these areas.¹⁷⁰

MR D.C. NALDER, MLA
CHAIRMAN

¹⁷⁰ Hon Michael Mischin, MLC, Attorney-General, 'Boost to victims of crime in regional WA', Media Release, 31 July 2013.

Appendix One

Extract from Report No. 12 of the Public Accounts Committee of the 38th Parliament

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

CHAPTER 1

information provided.⁴ A report of the Committee's activities in relation to its follow-up of the AG's performance reports is tabled in the Legislative Assembly each year.

As the Committee's follow-up process has matured, and agency follow-up is rolled from one year into the next, the associated workload has increased substantially. During the three-and-a-half year period of the 37th Parliament, the Committee recorded a total of 659 AG-related items of correspondence. The total number for the first two-years of the 38th Parliament was over 930.

For PAC, the current process is resource intensive and its level of effectiveness is unclear. Committee discussions with the AG showed that the OAG also found the process resource intensive. Furthermore, agency responses were sometimes overly bureaucratic, voluminous and not particularly meaningful. The Committee developed a set of guidelines to assist agencies prepare their response. However, this did not result in a marked improvement in the quality of responses.

Given this, the Committee determined to develop an alternative procedure. This involved examining AG report follow-up procedures used in other jurisdictions to devise a best-practice model. It also involved consultation with the AG.

1.3 Revised Follow-up Procedure

The revised procedure aims to increase agency accountability and thus improve the effectiveness of AG reports while, at the same time, allowing PAC to follow-up on selected reports in more detail, making for more efficient and effective use of Committee resources.

While the Committee will implement this procedure immediately, it will monitor the new procedure and refine it in the light of its experience.

(a) Steps Involved

- The AG tables an audit report in the Legislative Assembly and briefs members of parliament.
- PAC writes to all agencies requesting information in relation to their implementation of the AG's recommendations, and progress made to date.
- PAC reviews the report and considers the information provided by the agency.
- PAC may request a briefing from the AG at this stage to assist its considerations.
- To determine which, if any, AG reports it will follow-up in detail, PAC will prioritise them using a number of criteria developed to aid the selection process. This will generally be done six months from the tabling of the AG report.
- On completion of this follow-up process, PAC will table a report in the Legislative Assembly.

⁴ Public Accounts Committee, *Review of the Reports of the Auditor General 2005-2006*, Legislative Assembly, Western Australia, Report No. 6, 30 November 2006, p.2.

- The relevant minister(s) will be required to respond to the Legislative Assembly in relation to recommendations, if any, made in the Committee's report.

(b) Procedure in Detail

Following the tabling of an audit report in the Legislative Assembly, the AG provides a briefing for all members of parliament. This briefing will also be attended by the PAC secretariat. The briefing provides an opportunity for the AG to explain the audit process, the report's findings and the AG's recommendations to agencies. It also provides an opportunity for members to ask questions in relation to the audit process and issues raised in the report.

The next step involves PAC sending a letter to all agencies reported on by the AG. The letter will ask agencies about their:

- acceptance in full, or otherwise, of each of the AG's recommendations;
- programme for implementation of the recommendations;
- timeframe for full implementation of all the accepted Auditor General's recommendations; and
- progress to date in the implementation.

The letter will make clear that the Committee may select their agency for a more detailed inquiry and call them to a hearing to elaborate on their response to the Committee's initial letter.

Agency responses will be sent to the AG for his information only, and comment will not be sought.

While the precise timing of the next step will depend on the tabling dates of the AG's reports and the sitting dates of the Legislative Assembly, every six months PAC will review the AG reports and consider the response provided by the agencies. At this time the Committee may request a briefing from the AG to clarify particular points raised.

Having reviewed the reports tabled in the previous six months, the Committee will determine which agencies, if any, it will follow up in greater depth. This determination will be through a process of prioritisation using criteria including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the implications of the findings, risks, social impact, public interest, materiality and potential to increase accountability. This process will result in three possible categories of action for the Committee:

- no further follow-up
- follow-up in further detail
- initiate a formal inquiry

For those agencies for which the follow-up process is concluded, the Committee will provide advice of its decision. At approximately six-monthly intervals the Committee will prepare a report

on these concluded follow-ups. This report, which will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly, may contain further recommendations to the agencies. In this case, the responsible minister will be requested to respond to the House as to action taken in relation to these recommendations.

For those agencies the Committee decides to follow-up in further detail, the Committee will request either a briefing from or hearing with the AG. The Committee may invite a further submission from the agencies. It may also invite each agency to attend a hearing. Following consideration of the evidence gathered during this process, the Committee will table a report in the Legislative Assembly. The report may include recommendations from the Committee and in these cases, the relevant minister will be requested to report to the Legislative Assembly on any actions taken in relation to those recommendations.

If the evidence gathered in the follow-up process indicates a high degree of seriousness and risk, the Committee may initiate a discrete inquiry into the matter. In such cases, the Committee will proceed as it does for any other Committee Inquiry, ultimately tabling a report in the Legislative Assembly.

1.4 Issues Considered in Developing the Revised Process

The following lists the issues considered by the Committee in developing its revised follow-up process:

- It is unclear precisely what is achieved by PAC's current practice.
- What is the key purpose of the follow-up? Is it intended to:
 - ❖ help measure the effectiveness of the AG's work?
 - ❖ monitor agency progress with implementing recommendations?
 - ❖ both of the above?
- If part of PAC's function is to measure the effectiveness of the AG's work, how might that be accomplished?
- How does this current follow-up process improve agency accountability?
- How effective is PAC's follow-up of OAG reports?
- PAC does not always have the expertise to determine the appropriateness of the agency responses. Therefore, the Committee must rely on the OAG to advise and guide PAC responses to agencies.
- The process takes considerable secretariat time and resources (as indicated above).
- Agencies are required to comply with Treasurers Instructions in relation to internal audit, with some agencies compiling an audit log that registers the results of AG compliance and finance

Appendix Two

Department of Training and Workforce Development: Report on Developing Measures of Social Outcomes of Student Services

Included on the following pages is the report DTWD undertook in determining its response to the first recommendation of the Auditor General's Report No. 4 of 2012 *Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training*.

ATTACHMENT B

Supporting Aboriginal students in training:

Progress report on the Office of the Auditor General's recommendation regarding developing measures of social outcomes of student support services.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development
December 2012



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Executive Summary

In May 2012, the OAG's audit of support services for Aboriginal students at Western Australia's state training providers (STPs) found that these services were appropriate and effective and provided support that met key elements of national best practice. However, the audit also found that existing performance measures did not provide a comprehensive picture of how well STPs and the Department of Training and Workforce Development (the Department) support Aboriginal students. The audit report made the following recommendations to address this:

- The Department should lead the development of new performance measures to better assess the difference that support makes for individuals and communities. These measures should include social indicators, at individual and community levels, and add to the existing measures of course enrolments and completions.
- State Training Providers should work with the Department to develop a better evaluation framework for the community and social outcomes of their student support services.

In response to these recommendations, the Department consulted with a wide range of stakeholders at Western Australia's STPs. Feedback from nine STPs indicates that measuring social outcomes and adopting them as performance indicators would be problematic for four key reasons, as follows:

- **Negative impact:** The investigation would single out Aboriginal students for personal scrutiny. This is perceived as inequitable, given that STPs are not required to analyse the lives of non-Aboriginal students in this way.
- **Validity:** Any attempt to link support services to social outcomes would be of questionable validity as there are many other variables which contribute to social outcomes. It would be inappropriate to make judgements about support service delivery based on invalid data.
- **Reliability:** STPs operate in a wide range of contexts and serve vastly different Aboriginal populations. To be 'fit for purpose', any measurement would need to use different data collection mechanisms and different social indicators as appropriate to each population. This inconsistency in data would make comparisons over time, between cohorts and between STPs meaningless.
- **Resources:** Measuring social outcomes would be costly and time consuming and would require staff with technical expertise. STPs would not be able to do it within their current budgets and with existing staff.

Based on these findings, the Department concludes that it would be inappropriate to use social and community outcomes for the performance measurement of STP support services for Aboriginal students. The Department does not intend to add social indicators to its delivery and performance agreements with STPs.

Process

The Department consulted with STPs in a two-stage process, between September and November 2012. Communication between STPs and the Department was via web conference and email. STPs also consulted internally and with their community stakeholders.

STP Stakeholders involved in the consultation

| Position of stakeholder | stage of consultation |
|---|------------------------------|
| A/Director Training | 1 |
| A/Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Development | 1 |
| Aboriginal Development Officer | 1 |
| Aboriginal Liaison Officer | 1 |
| Aboriginal programs staff | 1 |
| Aboriginal Workforce Consultant | 1 |
| AEETC Chair | 1 |
| AEETC members | 1 and 2 |
| ATS team members | 1 |
| Director Client Services | 1 |
| Director Foundation and Cultural Studies | 1 |
| Director Industry and Community Relations | 1 |
| Director Organisational Effectiveness | 1 |
| Director Strategic Partnerships | 1 and 2 |
| Director Student Services | 1 and 2 |
| General Manager Client Services and Communications | 1 and 2 |
| General Manager Training Services | 1 |
| Indigenous Trainee & Apprentice Support Officer | 1 |
| Manager Aboriginal Training Strategy | 1 |
| Manager Planning & Performance | 1 |
| Manager Student Support Services | 1 |
| Managing Directors | 2 |
| Program Manager Aboriginal Workforce Development | 1 |
| Senior Project Officer | 1 |

Consultation stage one

The Department circulated a document to STPs describing the OAG findings and recommendations and the Department's response. It presented an overview of five evaluation methods which might be appropriate for measuring social indicators and encouraged STPs to consider any other approaches they were familiar with. STPs were asked to use this document as a discussion guide and consult with stakeholders to gather feedback on the following themes:

- **What are the main considerations for the STP when collecting data to measure social indicators?** Ten criteria were described (for example cost, respondent burden, validity) and STPs were asked to rank them from most important to least important. This provided a platform for discussion within STPs, prompting key stakeholders to define their needs and concerns.
- **How does the STP rate each evaluation approach for each of the criteria above?** STPs were given a 50-cell matrix showing the five evaluation approaches against the ten criteria. They were asked to discuss each evaluation approach to determine its relative

benefits. For example, the 'Most significant Change' evaluation approach might be highly rated for 'cultural appropriateness', but be poorly rated for 'validity'. This would produce weighted rankings of each evaluation approach, giving a richer description of STPs' choices than a simple selection exercise.

At a state-wide web conference, the OAG's recommendations and the five approaches were discussed in more detail. As a result of the discussion, the Department added two open-ended questions to elicit qualitative data.

- **Please justify the ranking of the "best" and "worst" ranked approaches.**
- **Please state which social outcomes should be considered and why.**

Feedback was received from six STPs, and two non-responders addressed the stage 1 questions in following stages of the consultation. Each STP interpreted the weighting activity differently – making the quantitative data non-comparable – and in many cases the qualitative commentary was lacking. The Department perceived the feedback to have several gaps, so a second stage of consultation was initiated, using a different approach.

Consultation stage two

The second stage of consultation aimed to investigate STPs' needs and concerns with a more qualitative approach. A summary of the first round of responses was circulated, to share opinions between STPs, and follow up questions focused STPs on areas not well covered by previous responses. STPs were asked to consider three key themes, as follows:

- The evaluation process
- The evaluation data
- Existing evaluation mechanisms

Feedback to stage two of consultation came from seven STPs, and represented a different range of stakeholders from stage one. These respondents noted the findings of the first stage of consultation and provided further commentary.

Findings

A large proportion of respondents in the first stage of consultation were those involved in the delivery of services. Therefore, their views give insight into the concerns of those who are likely to be involved in administering the evaluation. Their responses to the weighting activity showed that their main concerns are that the evaluation tools are culturally appropriate (5/6 STPs rated this as among the top two concerns) and are not too burdensome for respondents (4/6 STPs rated this among the top two concerns). This supports the qualitative comments, below, showing concern about the impact on stakeholders.

In the second stage of consultation, the majority of respondents were STP staff at the managerial and strategic level, including three managing directors. The main concerns for this group, indicated by qualitative comments, are validity, reliability and cost.

In total, over both rounds of consultation, nine STPs provided qualitative feedback with the key themes being validity, reliability, resources and negative impact on stakeholders.

Validity

STPs raised several concerns about the validity of judging the performance of STP support services based on observed changes in the community. Many other variables contribute to social changes and their effects cannot be disaggregated. It would be difficult to provide a direct, cause-and-effect link between the inputs (support services) and outcomes (social change). STPs question how these links would be validated and note that it would be inappropriate to make inferences about the performance of support services based on unproven links. Support service staff note that their performance should not be judged by outcomes that are beyond their control: *"Aboriginal staff at the Institute are uncomfortable with this approach to evaluating the worth of their interventions given that the effectiveness of the services they provide are measured by student enrolment, retention and progression."*

One STP highlighted the validity issues with the following example: *"After completing a qualification a student may gain employment in a completely different industry. Is this considered an improvement? Would they have got the job anyway? were they more confident when applying for a position? did the unrelated training indicate other personal attributes that the employer considered beneficial?"* Note that the proposed evaluation would, in fact, be attempting an even finer measurement – disaggregating the effect of VET support services from the overall effect of VET.

Given these validity problems, STPs expressed concerns about the 'end use' of evaluation findings: *"If it's going to be used as a formal evaluation technique tied to funding, the information collected will need to be thoroughly analysed to ensure that valid information is contained and valid decisions are made"*. Many respondents in the first stage of consultation, including members of STPs' Aboriginal Education Employment and Training Committees, questioned how the evaluation findings about broad social changes could be interpreted to make concrete improvements to the delivery of support services.

Aboriginal programs staff were uncomfortable with the proposed approach to evaluating the worth of their interventions as it is measuring their performance for areas they have no influence over. They noted that the effectiveness of the services they provide is already monitored with accepted measures of participation rates, completions and numbers of students supported. These measures are reasonable, given that current funding mechanisms allocate support funding to help enrolled students with their study program.

It was noted that there are many government initiatives to bring about positive social outcomes for Aboriginal people, and that it would be impossible to isolate their effects from the effect of STP support services: *"To expect the Institute to extrapolate student outcomes to improvements in the Aboriginal community in isolation of a raft of other 'Closing the Gap' initiatives is impossible."* The Department notes that other agencies, such as the Department of Communities and the Department of Indigenous Affairs, have community development as

central to their portfolio. Attributing positive community outcomes to the work of STPs rather than these agencies would be problematic.

Reliability

The Aboriginal student population is not homogenous and support services encompass a range of responses to address their needs. This diversity of input adds to the complexity of the outcomes and increases the difficulty of meaningful comparisons over time, between cohorts and between STPs. The communities in which students live are also not homogenous. Measuring the effects of Aboriginal support services on the "community" would be difficult in communities that have significant mixes of Aboriginal and non Aboriginal members. The latter group receive no input from support services but have an effect on the overall "community-level outcomes". These issues impact the reliability of results: it would not be possible to make generalisations about community-wide impact based on a sample population.

A common theme in the consultation was that there cannot be a 'one size fits all approach' for all STPs –what may be considered relevant for some will be unsuitable for others. The definition of positive social outcomes would need to be specific to each student and each community. For example, a STP that operates in remote Western Australia noted: *"There are not necessarily employment outcomes in some Communities. Private enterprises within Communities, i.e. opening of a store/café, are greater indicators of successes here"*. This need for a context-driven evaluation framework is supported by the quantitative data: all STPs included a 'mixed methods' approach among their top two preferences.

The Department notes that the above issues mean that any findings would not be comparable across STPs, so could not be used for centralised performance monitoring.

Resources

All STPs raised concerns about the resources needed to undertake the evaluation with any degree of success. They could not carry out such a project within budget and with existing staff. Regional STPs, particularly, would not be in a position to carry out such collection, given the extent of their regions and the vast differences in their Aboriginal student cohort.

STPs noted that data collection would be particularly expensive and require specialised skills, because the most appropriate approach for Aboriginal respondents would involve face-to-face data collection. To spend time meeting with students to obtain feedback, one-on-one, would be costly and time consuming.

There would be ongoing costs involved in training and moderating the staff using the evaluation tool. Due to budget constraints, it is unlikely that specialised staff would be engaged for the data collection, the support service staff would undertake it in addition to their existing duties. There would be ongoing issues with making sure that staff are available who can conduct the interviews, as staff are currently fully occupied with delivering support services. It was noted that an in-house evaluation represents a major methodological problem, because it would mean that the Aboriginal support staff are evaluating their own performance. The Department also sees this as a major concern.

Some STPs noted that, although the evaluation would be interesting, the scale of the project is vast. Quantifying the social effects of STP support services on individuals and communities is too large a project for STPs and would require a state-wide research project. It was felt that this sort of project is beyond the scope of STPs' services: *"We are not social researchers nor are we resourced to find out what is happening in the lives of our Aboriginal graduates, or any of our graduates for that matter"* and *"A training organisation can measure enrolment, attendance and completion data only."* It was suggested that this may be a more complex research project that the Department should be undertaking in conjunction with other agencies.

One STP reported that, while a full scale evaluation is out of scope due to the issues described here, it intends to implement a small research project, using the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique. They offer to report back to the Department and other STPs on the methodology and outcomes of this measurement tool. The STP notes that even a small project such as this will require extra funding, including the cost of travelling to remote communities. The Department supports this initiative but notes the data quality issues associated with the MSC technique. The technique shows a selection bias due to its unbalanced reporting of positive outcomes, and the outcomes reported are highly individual so cannot be generalised. The methodological issues of in-house evaluations compound the problems of the MSC technique and there is risk that the need to elicit MSC stories may affect the way that staff interact with clients.

Negative impact on stakeholders

The proposed evaluation could have a negative impact on students. STPs reported that Aboriginal students are often asked to respond to surveys and provide feedback on services – more so than the general student population. To enforce additional reporting requirements for Aboriginal students may be seen as discriminatory. Furthermore, it was noted that the nature of the investigation would require students to answer deeply personal questions, which could be met with resistance: *"No student, current or past, will give you financial information about their employment or the financial status of their families"*. One STP observed that *"Aboriginal students who enrol in VET [vocational education and training] have already made an informed decision about their future. Engaging the Institute's staff in evaluating that student's individual contribution to the social capital of their community strikes me as patronising."* The Department acknowledges the need to limit the survey burden on Aboriginal students.

STPs may face other difficulties with data collection. Positive social outcomes from training may take time to emerge: *"Often Aboriginal students undertake skill sets in order to obtain work readiness skills that will hopefully result in an employment option down the track. This may happen immediately or after a period of time"* Therefore any evaluation would require a longitudinal survey, and: *"as this is done at the end of the studies it will be hard to get students to participate."* Follow-up surveys of former students also raise ethical issues: *"is this a misuse of student records?"*

Support services staff may also view the proposal as discriminatory. It was noted that it would be inequitable to require Aboriginal support services to justify their interventions by measuring

social outcomes, given that support services for other target groups (for example students with a disability and students speaking English as a Second Language) are not required to meet the same performance measures. The Department notes that this inequality, combined with the belief that social outcomes are beyond the direct influence of the support services staff, would create the perception of unfairness.

Conclusions

There are several data quality issues with the proposed evaluation of social outcomes. The data would have low reliability – as the indicators would need to be tailored to context – meaning that STPs would not be able to compare results across their client base or across time. It also means that the Department would not be able to use the data for centralised performance monitoring. The data would have low validity, given the difficulty in establishing a causal link between STP support services and social outcomes. These wider social outcomes are affected by many other variables, for example the input of other service providers, making it difficult to isolate and quantify the effect of each variable. Lastly, social outcomes may emerge months or years after the input of support services. As they are not a time-bound performance indicator, they cannot be tied to a regular reporting schedule.

Links between inputs and outcomes can only be measured, with any validity and reliability, for the areas where support services have direct influence. The support services have a narrow focus: helping Aboriginal students successfully progress through a VET qualification. STPs have existing approaches to evaluating the effectiveness of support services in providing these services. This includes performance indicators of student enrolment, retention and progression, as well as consultation with AEETCs and the local Aboriginal community.

While some STPs felt it would be useful to know more about the wider effects of their support services, they noted that this would be beyond their ability as they are not resourced to investigate the lives of their students. They do not have the skills base within their staff nor do they have the budget allocated to fund specialist social researchers. Regional STPs would find it more difficult than metropolitan STPs to collect the information, given the extent of their regions and the diversity of their Aboriginal cohort.

The evaluation process could have a negative impact on stakeholders and undermine the good work it is attempting to measure. If STPs implement the evaluation within their current budgets, it is likely that support services staff will conduct the evaluation. This would use up valuable staff time at the expense of their core business and detract from service provision. The Department notes its concern about the data quality issues that would arise from staff evaluating their own performance. Furthermore, support services staff and clients may feel that it is discriminatory to require Aboriginal students to engage in these additional, highly personal, reporting requirements when services for non-Aboriginal students are not required to report in this way.

The Department concludes that a social outcomes model would not be fit for the purpose of centralised performance monitoring. The Department funds STPs to deliver vocational education and training (VET) and part of this funding is allocated to STP support services that

help VET students complete their training successfully. Any performance measurement tied to this funding should only assess areas that are directly within the control of the STPs. Therefore, the existing measures of student retention, progression and completion are the only measures that can reasonably be applied within the current funding. While it would be interesting to know about social outcomes from support services, in practice, the cost of determining this may outweigh the benefits. Aboriginal students would be subjected to an inequitable survey burden, STPs would struggle to undertake the evaluation within their current budgets, and the data gained would be of questionable validity and usefulness.

Recommendations

1. The Department does not endorse the use of individual or community-level social indicators for performance monitoring of STP support services, as the cost to stakeholders is likely to outweigh the benefits. The resulting data is likely to be of poor quality and if it were used for ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement, it could adversely affect STP support services.
2. The Department recommends that STPs are not required to evaluate the broader social and community outcomes from Aboriginal support services and that STPs should not be required to adopt new performance measures that use social indicators at the individual and community level. The Department does not intend to incorporate these performance measures into its delivery and performance agreements with STPs.
3. The Department is supportive of any independent initiatives that STPs may undertake to investigate the broader social outcomes of their support services, and recommends that the findings be shared with other STPs.

Acronyms and abbreviations

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| AEETC | Aboriginal Education Employment and Training Committee |
| OAG | Office of the Auditor General |
| MSC | Most significant change technique |
| STP | state training provider |
| Support services | Support services for Aboriginal students in training at Western Australia's state training providers |
| The Department | The Department of Training and Workforce Development |
| VET | vocational education and training |

Appendix Three

Committee's Functions and Powers

The Public Accounts Committee inquires into and reports to the Legislative Assembly on any proposal, matter or thing it considers necessary, connected with the receipt and expenditure of public moneys, including moneys allocated under the annual Appropriation bills and Loan Fund. Standing Order 286 of the Legislative Assembly states that the Committee may:

- 1 Examine the financial affairs and accounts of government agencies of the State which includes any statutory board, commission, authority, committee, or trust established or appointed pursuant to any rule, regulation, by-law, order, order in Council, proclamation, ministerial direction or any other like means.
- 2 Inquire into and report to the Assembly on any question which -
 - a) it deems necessary to investigate;
 - b) (Deleted V. & P. p. 225, 18 June 2008);
 - c) is referred to it by a Minister; or
 - d) is referred to it by the Auditor General.
- 3 Consider any papers on public expenditure presented to the Assembly and such of the expenditure as it sees fit to examine.
- 4 Consider whether the objectives of public expenditure are being achieved, or may be achieved more economically.
- 5 The Committee will investigate any matter which is referred to it by resolution of the Legislative Assembly.