

NSW GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO REPORT 3/55 OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE - *REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDITS OCTOBER 2009 - JUNE 2010*

RECOMMENDATION	NSW GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Roads and Traffic Authority publish the findings of its review of the M4 handback process.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) will publish the findings of the review on the RMS website by the end of 2012.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Department of Premier and Cabinet continue to monitor compliance with the NSW Government Advertising Guidelines to ensure that publicly funded government advertising campaigns are consistent with the Guidelines and are free of political party bias and are not excessive or gratuitous.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) will continue to have a role in monitoring compliance with the <i>NSW Government Advertising Guidelines</i>.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> Since December 2010, DPC has published reports of media expenditure for each government advertising campaign at the end of each quarter on the Government's Strategic Communications website (<a href="http://www.advertising.nsw.gov.au">www.advertising.nsw.gov.au</a>).</p>

<p>that the Department of Premier and Cabinet publish quarterly monitoring reports on <a href="http://www.advertising.nsw.gov.au">www.advertising.nsw.gov.au</a></p>	<p>The quarterly information is compiled and published as a year-to-date report. In addition, DPC also publishes each agency's total media expenditure for all advertising types, which is updated every six months.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW Police continue to actively monitor the backlog of DNA samples and review the effectiveness of current strategies to reduce waiting times for processing.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> As a result of streamlining business practices, the DNA backlog has been cleared. DNA samples are now generally analysed within 24 hours and fingerprints are generally analysed within 12-14 days.</p> <p>The NSW Police Force will continue to actively monitor the processing time of DNA samples.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Minister for Citizenship and Communities introduce legislative amendments to allow the NSW Commission for Children and Young People to fully implement the recommendations of the Auditor-General, to ensure the Working with Children Check is able to reliably identify those who may pose a risk to children.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> The <i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i> was assented to on 27 June 2012. The Act establishes a new Working With Children Check (the check) that applies equally to paid and volunteer roles with children.</p> <p>The new check meets the Auditor-General's Report recommendation 1(a) by extending checks to volunteers as well as paid workers. Volunteer organisations offering services to children will register as child-related employers to verify that volunteers have been screened.</p> <p>The new check also meets the Auditor-General's Report recommendations 1(b), 2(b) and 2(c) by extending the check to volunteers. The new check will be an online service, and will provide a portable five year clearance to successful applicants.</p> <p>The new check meets the Auditor-General's Report recommendation 3(a) by having the Commission for Children and Young People assess all working with children checks.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 6</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW ensure that the forthcoming Metropolitan Bus Service Contracts include comprehensive performance benchmarking with a focus on outcomes for bus users as per the Auditor-General's recommendations.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> The new Sydney Metropolitan Bus Service Contracts will include expanded performance requirements which focus bus contractors on clear customer outcomes. Further, the improved contracts include a sensible penalty regime to address poor performance.</p> <p>Extensive performance benchmarking has been undertaken to ensure appropriate measures and Key Performance Indicators, which focus on outcomes for bus users, are incorporated in the new contracts.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW publicly and regularly report operator performance by route and by region on its website.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> Transport for NSW is publicly reporting on-time running performance by region on its website (at <a href="http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/b2b/bus/mbsc-on-time-running-results.pdf">www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/b2b/bus/mbsc-on-time-running-results.pdf</a>).</p> <p>As the Public Transport Information and Priority System is progressively rolled out, Transport for NSW will investigate publishing service reliability information by route.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW publish findings of Mystery Shopper surveys on its website.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> Mystery Shopper surveys are not performed under the current bus contracting arrangements. However, the proposed new contracts do support this approach. Transport for NSW intends to publish mystery shopper survey results on its website.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Government</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> <i>Working Together: Public Sector Workplace Health and Safety and Injury Management Strategy 2010-2012</i> (the Strategy) officially ceased on 30 June 2012. Final reporting is expected to occur in early 2013 when the data is available. While final reporting and development of a follow-on initiative is taking place, all public sector agencies are encouraged to continue to maintain</p>

<p>regularly monitor the implementation of <i>Working Together: Public Sector Workplace Health and Safety and Injury Management Strategy 2010-2012</i>, and the compliance of all government agencies with its objectives.</p>	<p>compliant safety and injury management systems and procedures in line with the Strategy.</p> <p>Interim results show the implementation of compliant systems, policies and procedures in the vast majority of the public sector, with the majority of agencies indicating they had met relevant actions and qualitative targets at the midpoint of the strategy. Targets relating to incidence rates and returning longer-term injured workers to work also show improvement.</p> <p>Concerning trends are noted in the average cost of active claims and the average duration of claims, particularly early in the claim. Though the incidence of new claims has reduced, the duration and cost of those claims lodged is increasing. It is expected that recent changes to workers compensation legislation will improve the cost and duration of claims and a follow-on initiative will also target this area for improvement.</p> <p>WorkCover NSW, the Public Service Commission and the NSW Self Insurance Corporation are in the process of considering a follow-on initiative to commence in 2013. While it is important to ensure that previous gains are maintained, further attention is needed to address the drivers of increased cost and duration of claims throughout the sector, even after expected improvements resulting from legislative change have been considered.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 10</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) publish the results of its current stocktake of centre-based respite provided by non-government organisations (NGOs).</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> ADHC will publish the number of full-time equivalent NGO centre-based respite beds. Results of a preliminary audit, including indicative numbers of NGO respite beds per region, have been provided to the Public Accounts Committee. This data is being validated through regions and is anticipated to be finalised by September 2012 as part of the Department of Family and Community Services Respite Program Review being undertaken.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 11</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that ADHC publish data</p>	<p><b>Support in-principle:</b> The Performance Indicators for ADHC operated centre-based respite services, provided to the Public Accounts Committee, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• occupancy rates for ADHC respite centres;</li> <li>• the proportion of people with very complex needs accessing centre-based respite; and</li> </ul>

<p>derived from its Centre-based Respite Performance Indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the proportion of people with challenging behaviours accessing centre-based respite.</li> </ul> <p>In its Annual Report, ADHC currently publishes the number of clients, the number of ADHC centre-based respite beds and the number of nights of respite provided per region, derived from the centre-based respite Performance Indicators. As the Performance Indicators are under ongoing improvement, ADHC supports, in-principle, publishing data derived from Performance Indicators, subject to an assessment by ADHC regarding the data quality, integrity and suitability for publication. ADHC is adopting a staged approach to the development of Performance Indicators that reflects the disability respite program as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Department of Premier and Cabinet continue to monitor severance payments to Special Temporary Employees, to ensure the payments adhere to the guidelines and are correctly processed for taxation purposes. Additionally, the reasoning for the termination of an employee's services should be fully documented.</p>	<p><b>Partially Support:</b> Severance payments to Special Temporary Employees are correctly processed for taxation purposes and the reasoning for the termination of an employee's services is documented.</p> <p>The Government does not support the position that all payments to Special Temporary Employees adhere to the guidelines. The Director General of DPC will retain the right, consistent with statutory powers, to make exemptions to the guidelines when appropriate. As evidenced by the Audit Report, this occurs very rarely. If these powers are exercised, the Director General will document the reasons.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13</b></p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Museum continue to progress work on the implementation of the Auditor-General's</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> The Australian Museum has secured seed funding to develop a business case for digitisation of significant state collections. A consultant has been engaged and development of the business case for a digitisation project to be commenced in 2013-14 is underway. Other opportunities for priority digitisation projects have been pursued through Commonwealth Government funding and internal budgets. Funding has also been received for the construction of a shared-storage collection facility with the Powerhouse Museum at its Castle Hill site. This facility will improve the storage conditions for collections.</p>

Performance Audit  
recommendations and seek  
additional funding and  
resources to assist in this  
project.