



# Premier & Cabinet



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Mr Russell D Grove  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Grove

I refer to your correspondence to the Premier, the Hon Kristina Keneally MP, of 10 June 2010. The Premier has asked me to provide the NSW Government's response to Report No 10/54 of the Public Accounts Committee, entitled, *Fifth Report on the examination of the Auditor-General's Performance Audits*. This response encompasses the advice sought from respective Ministers on specific recommendations contained within this report.

A detailed response to each of the recommendations is provided at Attachment 1.

Should you require any further information please contact Mr Ian Hunter, Assistant Director, Infrastructure, Environment and Economic Development Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet on 9228 3498.

Yours sincerely

Brendan O'Reilly  
Director General

9/12/10

✓ Original to P.O. - Table for budget on website  
cc. PAC.

By 9/12

NSW Government Response to the recommendations of Report No 10/54 of the Public Accounts Committee, entitled, *Fifth Report on the Examination of the Auditor-General's Performance Audits.*

Response	
Portfolio area	Recommendation
<p>Transport</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 1</b>                      The Committee recommends that RailCorp negotiate with the COMET/Nova International Benchmarking group to publish industry averages for the purpose of publicly reporting on RailCorp's performance.</p>
<p>Climate Change and the</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 2</b>                      The Department continues to identify high waste generating reporting-</p>

RailCorp has set the target of December 2011 to publicly report limited comparisons of CityRail against averages. RailCorp had originally set the timeline of late 2010; however this was later revised to allow data quality issues to be resolved and sufficient time for robust benchmarking data to be built.

The Railway & Transport Study Centre (RTSC), Centre for Transport Studies and Imperial College, London, who undertakes all COMET/Nova benchmarking administration, analysis and reporting, also identified the need to undertake extensive calibration of CityRail data to make it sufficiently comparable to its Nova peers. This is due to the size and characteristics of the CityRail network and its operations. The RTSC has commenced this effort and work is continuing on how to best calibrate CityRail's results to make the most effective comparison. Once the RTSC is satisfied with the quality and comparability of CityRail data, RailCorp will be able to negotiate with the RTSC for the regular production of the set comparisons that will be publicly reported. Availability of this information will be subject to the RTSC's timelines.

It is important to note that strict confidentiality requirements are applied to the membership of the Nova Benchmarking Group, designed to protect any commercial sensitivities. Therefore the extent to which benchmarking results will be able to be publicly disclosed in the future is limited by the requirement for strict compliance to the benchmarking community confidentiality agreements.

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) has identified seven agencies to which this recommendation applies: Landcom, Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation, Sydney Olympic Park

<p>Environment</p>	<p>exempt agencies in order to encourage them to provide data on their WRAPP performance.</p>	<p>Authority, Port Kembla Port Corporation, Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, the NSW Electoral Commission and the Newcastle Port Corporation.</p> <p>Since the report was released, DECCW's Director General wrote to these agencies requesting they continue to provide WRAPP reports and offering the department's assistance to meet WRAPP obligations and reduce waste generation.</p> <p>In addition, DECCW conducted a review of the agencies' annual reports and found that all seven had systems in place to reduce waste, capture materials for recycling and purchase recycled content materials. Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation submitted WRAPP reports in 2009, despite being exempt. Sydney Olympic Park Authority also supplied data with its WRAPP Plan in May 2010.</p> <p>Due to the large volume of waste they generate and/or materials they procure, DECCW supported these agencies at the Sustainable Government Forum and workshops in March 2010, which were attended by four of the seven agencies. DECCW also provided resources to assist agencies with developing and implementing programs to reduce waste.</p> <p>DECCW is conducting a review of the WRAPP, as recommended by the Auditor-General, to ensure it reflects current thinking in sustainable purchasing, recycling and reuse. As a result of that review, agency reporting requirements may change for the next WRAPP reporting period (2009-2011).</p> <p>In the interim, DECCW will continue to provide support to all agencies, and to encourage them to operate more sustainably and submit a biennial WRAPP report under their WRAPP Plans.</p>
<p>Education and Training</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> The Committee recommends that the Department ensure that all schools set</p>	<p>The Department of Education and Training (DET) has a number of strategies in place to ensure that individual schools set literacy and numeracy targets, including:</p>

literacy and numeracy targets, develop strategies for meeting those targets, and report against those targets.

- The School planning policy, published July 2008, requires schools to determine priorities, identify outcomes and targets, develop strategies and indicators, set time frames and allocate resources flexibly;
- The School Education Director monitors and approves all school plans and targets, including literacy and numeracy targets, before they are reported in schools' annual reports. The subject of literacy and numeracy targets is raised as part of the Principal Assessment and Review Schedule (PARS);
- The Office of Schools Plan, published in July 2008, which sets as outcomes increased levels of literacy and numeracy achievement for every student in line with State Plan targets. The plan indicates increased levels of literacy and numeracy achievement for Aboriginal students in line with State Plan targets; and
- The Department's Literacy K-12 Policy and the Numeracy K-12 Policy require targets to be identified in the school plan for both literacy and numeracy including those for Aboriginal students.

DET has ensured that there is an extensive range of high quality literacy and numeracy programs available to schools to assist them to meet their targets. These include:

- Best Start Kindergarten Assessment;
- the Best Start Literacy and Numeracy Leaders initiative;
- Reading Recovery;
- Focus on Reading 3-6 program;
- Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN) intervention program;
- Accelerated Literacy; and
- Successful Language Learners pilot program.

Major strategies that support the implementation of literacy and numeracy programs for disadvantaged students include the:

- Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2009-2012;
- Priority Schools Funding Program;
- Refugee Support Strategy;
- National Partnership in Literacy and Numeracy; and
- National Partnership Low Socioeconomic Status.

DET's Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau is conducting a major evaluation of National Partnership in Literacy and Numeracy in NSW. The evaluation will inform the department about the extent to which literacy and numeracy programs have improved the educational outcomes for students.

DET also has the following strategies in place to ensure that schools and the department report against targets:

- The requirement for schools to report progress on achievement of targets in annual school reports;
- The requirement for schools engaged in National Partnerships programs and the NSW Focused Support School programs to submit a range of performance reports;
- Implementation of regional monitoring processes for schools' improvements of student learning performance over time; and
- Reporting of achievement of targets through regional principals' conferences, Department of Education and Training annual reporting and media reporting including through the Department's *Side By Side* magazine.

Currently, the large majority of schools comply with departmental policies and guidelines in relation to both setting and reporting on literacy and numeracy targets. However, analysis of a sample of Annual School Reports indicates that some schools are not setting or reporting against both literacy and numeracy targets.

		<p>In order to address this issue, and ensure that all schools set and report on targets, DET has put in place the following additional strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regional Directors, with the support of their School Education Directors, have taken responsibility at the local level for monitoring compliance with departmental requirements as part of the school planning process; and</li><li>• The Office of Schools Plan is in the process of being updated to include specific reference to the need for every school to have both literacy and numeracy targets.</li></ul>
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