

## Department of Premier and Cabinet

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Hon Ruth Forrest MLC  
Chair  
Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts  
By email to: [Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Dear Ms Forrest

### **Re. Follow-up of Auditor-General Report No.4 of 2020-21 – Information and Communications Technology Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment and Response to the Public Accounts Committee Questionnaire**

With reference to your correspondence to the Minister for Innovation, Science, and the Digital Economy dated 29 May 2025, I write to provide a response to the Committee's questions regarding the extent to which the recommendations of the *Auditor-General Report No.4 of 2020-21 – Information and Communications Technology Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment* (ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit) have been implemented by Government.

Work relating to the ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit commenced in 2019 with the final report being published in August 2020. As this audit was progressing two initiatives were underway that were also significant for digital and ICT in government – the *Tasmanian State Service Review* and the development of *Our Digital Future*. Further complicating matters, all three activities occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The convergence of the Audit with the other three activities heavily influenced Government's response to the Audit recommendations, which are well summarised in the report's Executive Summary under the heading of "Collective response from Digital Services Board members" (pp8).

The Government's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Tasmanians reinforced the need for government to focus on digital services; to understand user needs and design and deliver accessible 'anytime, anywhere' services to protect Tasmanians and strengthen our economic recovery.

As a consequence, some of the recommended actions from the ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit were absorbed by *Our Digital Future* and the associated strategic action plan, and the digital reforms recommended in in the final report of the *Tasmanian State Service Review*. In fact, the recommendations of the ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit were referenced as informing the recommendations Tasmanian State Service Review.

*Our Digital Future* has been instrumental in driving a range of strategic digital and ICT investments that have delivered tangible benefits to the Tasmanian community. These achievements demonstrate the government's commitment to its digital transformation agenda and its ability to translate strategy into action.

The ongoing contribution of the Data and Digital Subcommittee, which was established via recommendations 24 and 25 of the *Tasmanian State Service Review*, also remains central to digital governance. Replacing the Digital Services Board as a standing subcommittee of the Secretaries Board, the Data and Digital Subcommittee provides continuous oversight of whole-of-government digital priorities, facilitates cross-agency coordination, and supports consistent data governance and information-sharing practices.

In addition to the whole-of-government impacts, agencies have also actively progressed digital transformation initiatives aligned with core business priorities. The collective momentum of these efforts, illustrate the diverse ways in which Government has adopted new digital and ICT technologies to improve operations and service delivery.

In relation to the recommendations from the *ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit*, and the questionnaire provided by the Public Accounts Committee, I have attached our response to the Committee's questionnaire. It outlines the key information relevant to the recommendations.

Your sincerely



Shane Gregory  
**Associate Secretary**

28 July 2025

Enc: Response to Public Accounts Committee Questionnaire

## Response to the Public Accounts Committee Questionnaire

**Recommendation 1:** The Government enhance ICT investment evaluation and prioritisation by developing, through its current ICT framework, a whole-of-government ICT vision informed by an understanding of each agencies key ICT assets, their age profile, key risks, interdepartmental reliance and proposed replacement timetable. This vision, and the strategy to implement it, should be developed as a priority. It should be delivered and executed within the next 18 months.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b>Accepted in principle.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Digital Services Board audit response, published in the final report outlined the boards position in relation to work that was already underway developing the Government’s Digital Strategy, <i>Our Digital Future</i>.</li> <li>The Board accepted the recommendation in principle but tempered the proposed response, indicating that “it would be inappropriate for the Government to define an ICT strategy or vision in the absence of a digital vision and strategy”, and that <i>Our Digital Future</i> specifies the development of a whole-of-government technology roadmap as a strategic action and this body of work would address Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Audit.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Our Digital Future</i> was released in June 2020 and this strategy set a broader strategic context for digital transformation and articulated the government's commitment to leveraging digital technologies to improve the lives of Tasmanians, drive economic growth, and enhance public service delivery.</li> <li>Later in 2020 and also accounting for urgent actions required to support the COVID-19 recovery, Government release the <i>Strategic Action Plan</i> supporting <i>Our Digital Future</i>.</li> <li>Under the digital government workstream, an action was included to develop a whole of government technology road map.</li> <li>Critically the development of this roadmap for whole-of-government has been largely subsumed into the annual <i>Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan</i>, it is also recognised that the pragmatic development of detailed technology roadmaps is undertaken by system owners and those who deliver the systems working in alignment with government digital priorities, directions and standards (whole of government or within agencies).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Our Digital Future</i> <a href="https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future.PDF">https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future.PDF</a></li> <li><i>Our Digital Future</i> – Strategic Action Plan <a href="https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf">https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf</a></li> <li>Attachment 1. Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025.</li> </ul> <p>..</p>

**Recommendation 2:** The WoG ICT vision and strategy identify – (a) key priorities for the short, medium, and longer term; (b) strategies for greater collaboration targeting cost efficiency gains, increased productivity, removal of duplication of effort across agencies and alignment to government strategy and policy; (c) known key ICT assets targeted for replacement or renewal; and (d) critical assets that are significantly aged or at potential risk of failure.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b>Accepted in principle.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As for Recommendation 1.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of the Data and Digital Subcommittee of the Secretaries Board and its annual work program addresses planning for the short-, medium- and longer-term whole-of-government initiatives that are focused on collaboration, efficiencies and policy alignment.</li> <li>The 2024 and 2025 work programs have comprised five active work streams – Digital Services, Common Systems and Platforms, Data and Information Governance, Cyber Resilience and Risk, and Digital Workforce Capabilities.</li> <li>Agency ICT strategies and infrastructure plans address plans for assets primarily supporting agency outputs, although there are exceptions for shared capabilities and service across various agencies.</li> <li>Whole of government digital infrastructure and common business systems are predominantly delivered by DPAC Digital Strategy and Services (DSS). DSS maintains detailed roadmaps and plans for those services.</li> <li>Similarly, addressing recommendations 5 and 7 has allowed agencies to progress the replacement and renewal of ICT assets and to help identify critical assets that are significantly aged or at potential risk of failure (see responses outlined for recommendation 5 and 7).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Our Digital Future</i> <a href="https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future.PDF">https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future.PDF</a></li> <li><i>Our Digital Future – Strategic Action Plan</i> <a href="https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf">https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p>Selected example strategies, roadmaps and plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attachment 1. Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025</li> <li>Attachment 2. Department of Justice (DoJ) ICT Strategy 2017 -2022</li> <li>Attachment 3. Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE) Digital &amp; Data Services Strategic Roadmap 2024 – 2027</li> <li>Attachment 4. Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) IT Infrastructure Plan 2024 to 2029</li> <li>Attachment 5. Digital Strategy and Services Whole of Government Services Roadmaps 2022</li> <li>Attachment 6 - DSS Roadmap Networks and Infrastructure 2022</li> </ul>

**Recommendation 3:** The government review the terms of reference for the Digital Services Board (DSB) to ensure it has the mandate to better support a prioritised and collaborative approach to ICT across agencies with DSB providing support and guidance, where needed, to agencies for ICT strategic planning and management of critical asset.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b>Accepted in principle.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In its audit response the DSB advised that if a formal review of ICT governance was to be undertaken, it should be an end to end review and include the entire ICT governance framework including the Terms of Reference for both the Deputy Secretaries Digital Services Committee (DSDSC) and the role of the Digital Services Advisory Group (DSAG), noting that a biennial review was already part of the Terms of Reference of each of these governance bodies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Completed April 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ICT Governance Framework was subsequently reviewed and restructured in response to recommendations 24 and 25 of the Tasmanian State Service Review.</li> <li>In April 2022, the newly formed Tasmanian Government Secretaries Board established the Data and Digital Subcommittee comprising agency CIOs and key information management stakeholders from across government.</li> <li>The endorsed role of the Data and Digital Subcommittee is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>oversee whole-of-government digital initiatives;</li> <li>monitor progress and the delivery of significant government digital priorities (including Our Digital Future);</li> <li>lead engagement and collaboration across government agencies to promote a user-focused, and 'one government' approach to the design and delivery of digital services; and</li> <li>facilitate the establishment of effective data governance and data sharing capabilities across government.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Terms of Reference are reviewed on an annual basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations 24 and 25 in the Tasmanian State Service Review pp134 <a href="https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/policy/review_of_the_tasmanian_state_service/TSSR_Final_Report.pdf">https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/policy/review_of_the_tasmanian_state_service/TSSR_Final_Report.pdf</a></li> <li>Attachment 7. Data and Digital Committee Terms of Reference.</li> </ul>

**Recommendation 4:** The DSB to review implementation of the WoG ICT strategy to ensure it supports the government’s ICT vision and ensure plans are developed to implement the strategy.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b><i>Accepted in full</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Continuous delivery</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Data and Digital Subcommittee continue to meet on a monthly basis and provide a monthly report on activities underway to the Secretaries Board.</li> <li>• An annual workplan is submitted to the Secretaries Board for endorsement.</li> <li>• The Data and Digital Subcommittee has regular reviewed progress against the <i>Our Digital Future Strategic Action Plan</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attachment 7. Data and Digital Committee Terms of Reference, and endorsed role to monitor progress and the delivery of significant government digital priorities (including Our Digital Future);</li> <li>• Attachment 1. Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025.</li> <li>• Attachment 8. example progress tracking for the <i>Our Digital Future Strategic Action Plan</i>.</li> </ul>

**Recommendation 5:** Agencies proactively plan and prioritise long-term, large scale and high value key ICT asset investment more effectively by improving their understanding of their current ICT environments and collaborating where mutual benefits exist.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b>Accepted in principle.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future agency planning and prioritisation of investment in key ICT assets will be informed by the strategic action under Our Digital Future to develop a whole-of-government Technology Roadmap.</li> <li>• Agencies consider that this recommendation does not recognise diverse nature of their respective business and portfolio drivers – including, for some, interactions with national systems - and rapid changes in the technology sector.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Digital Future – Strategic Action Plan was first published in 2020 and is reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Agencies are also committed to developing long term plans.</li> <li>• Since finalisation of the ICT Strategy, Critical Systems and Investment Audit Report Agencies have progressed the renewal or replacement of a considerable number of ICT systems and assets through various programs and plans. This is evidenced in budget papers from 2020-21 through to 2024-25.</li> </ul> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasmanian Government Radio Network (TASGRN) – TASGRN went live in July 2024 providing a single, unified, and secure digital radio network for emergency services and other government users across Tasmania.</li> <li>• Networking Tasmania – The government’s private interagency network connecting government has seen uplift and renewal through continued investment and planning.</li> <li>• The Digital Communications Transformation – In 2021 Digital Strategy and Services within the Department of Premier and Cabinet commenced a program to explore the future state of whole-of-government digital communications.</li> <li>• Fisheries Digital Transition Project - Transitioning Tasmania's commercial wild-capture fisheries to digital processes, including the FishPort web portal and FishReport mobile application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Our Digital Future</i> – Strategic Action Plan <a href="https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf">https://www.digital.tas.gov.au/downloads/Our-Digital-Future-Strategic-Action-Plan.pdf</a></li> <li>• Budget Papers 2020-21 through 2024-25 <a href="https://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/budget-and-financial-management/2025-26-tasmanian-budget/budget-papers-archive">https://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/budget-and-financial-management/2025-26-tasmanian-budget/budget-papers-archive</a></li> </ul> <p>Selected example plans from agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attachment 1. Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025</li> <li>• Attachment 2. DOJ ICT Strategy 2017 -2022</li> <li>• Attachment 3. NRE Digital &amp; Data Services Strategic Roadmap 2024 – 2027</li> <li>• Attachment 4. DECYP IT Infrastructure Plan 2024 to 2029</li> <li>• Attachment 6 - DSS Roadmap Networks and Infrastructure 2022</li> </ul>

- PlanBuild Tasmania Portal - Streamlining the process for lodging and assessing planning, building, and other applications to local councils.
- myServiceTas Digital Services Portal - Developing a secure, easy-to-use access point for government services, including driver licence renewals and vehicle registration.
- Digital Health Transformation – The Tasmanian Government's Digital Health Transformation Program (2022-2032) is a 10-year, \$476 million initiative being delivered by the Department of Health that focuses on leveraging digital technologies to improve patient outcomes by creating a more connected and accessible health system for all Tasmanians.
- Project Unify – Project Unify is an initiative being delivered by the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management and is focused on upgrading outdated ICT systems within Tasmania Police to enhance operational efficiency, data security, and information access for frontline officers.
- Justice Connect – Justice Connect is a project within the Department of Justice that focused on a major digital transformation of the state's justice system, aiming to replace outdated systems with an integrated end-to-end digital solution called Astria. This is being implemented in stages; the initial focus is on criminal and corrective justice.
- eCabinet – The eCabinet project delivered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet has successfully delivered a modern electronic workflow system to streamline Cabinet processes for the Cabinet Office, Ministers' Offices, and government departments, aiming for improved efficiency in handling Cabinet documents and decisions.

**Recommendation 6:** Treasury to revisit the feedback approach for SIIRP submissions to better inform agencies on areas for improvement for future SIIRP submissions.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b><i>Accepted in principle.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treasury had indicated through the findings that it considered SIIRP process an effective process to evaluate investment proposals.</li> <li>As part of the DSB management response, the Department of Treasury and Finance agreed to review its feedback and guidance to agencies seeking funding through the SIIRP process rather than modify its approach to providing feedback.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Partially completed October 2021</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback was provided by Treasury suggesting ICT business cases developed from SIIRP often failed to articulate the benefits or provide accurate costs for ICT based investments.</li> <li>Treasury provided additional resources for Agencies to use as guidance; however, these resources did not directly address implementing a change in the approach for providing feedback.</li> <li>In 2023 DPAC Digital Strategy and Services initiated work to review the Treasury guidance and explore practices relating to ICT investment funding and assurance used in other jurisdictions. Additional funding and resourcing have not been identified to continue this work.</li> <li>Since October 2020, a range of ICT related proposals have been initiated via SIIRP, high profile examples being – the development of the strategy that unpins the Digital Transformation Program in Health, and the preliminary business case for Justice Connect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the number of successful SIIRP proposals following additional awareness and guidance work.</li> </ul>

**Recommendation 7** Agencies maintain up-to-date ICT critical asset registers in a consistent format which identify key risks replacement dates and level of funding required.

Acceptance	Implementation Progress	Supporting Evidence
<p><b>Accepted in full.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies agreed to explore opportunities to build more consistent asset management practices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies initiated various projects and activities to improve information and risks associated ICT critical asset.</li> <li>All agencies currently maintain a register of critical ICT assets, although there are differences across agencies that reflect the prioritisation of systems in terms of operational dependencies and the agencies appetite for risk.</li> <li>In 2024 the Department of Health initiated a program to enhance its ICT asset register by mapping the interlinked asset dependencies for the agency. The Data and Digital Committee resolved that this approach and the platform being used to accomplish the capability could be utilised by all agencies to enhance visibility of critical assets and assist to manage investment lifecycles. The committee agreed to add a project to 2025 Data and Digital Committee Work Plan to explore the establishment of a whole of government critical systems register, with a view to extend the register into an investment planning.</li> <li>The DDC's role in defining the methodology for asset management and format of registers will also be captured in the Terms of Reference.</li> <li>The Tasmanian Government has further strengthened the requirements for managing critical ICT assets with the development and implementation of the Tasmanian Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF). Specifically, INFOSEC-3 requires that Accountable Authorities ensure the security of technology and information assets to safeguard data, information and privacy, and to ensure continuous delivery of government business during all stages of the asset life cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attachment 1 Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025, pp6 (item 25/02 Critical Systems and Infrastructure Investment Plan Initiative).</li> <li>Attachment 9. Example Data Dictionary for the NRE Information Asset Register.</li> <li>PSPF INFOSEC-3  <a href="https://www.security.tas.gov.au/protective-security/information-security/infosec-3-robust-technology-and-information-systems">https://www.security.tas.gov.au/protective-security/information-security/infosec-3-robust-technology-and-information-systems</a> </li> </ul>

**Supporting Attachments:**

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Data and Digital Subcommittee Work Plan 2025, pp6
2	DOJ ICT Strategy 2017 -2022
3	NRE Digital & Data Services Strategic Roadmap 2024 – 2027
4	DECYP IT Infrastructure Plan 2024 to 2029
5	Digital Strategy and Services Whole of Government Services Roadmaps 2022
6	DSS Roadmap Networks and Infrastructure 2022
7	Endorsed Terms of Reference - Data and Digital Committee - March 2024
8	Example progress tracking for the <i>Our Digital Future Strategic Action Plan</i> .
9	Example Data Dictionary for the NRE Information Asset Register.