

TASMANIAN AUDIT OFFICE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Auditor-General reviews use of credit cards by councils' general managers and elected members in councils

Report of the Auditor-General No. 4 of 2017-18

Today, the Auditor-General, Mr Rod Whitehead, tabled a report in Parliament presenting his findings on the use of credit cards by councils' general managers and elected members.

Mr Whitehead stated "the examination found instances of policy breaches and a lack of guidance that led to different interpretations of standards of accountability" However, he concluded there was no evidence of serious, systemic misuse of public funds or fraud.

The examination also found instances where credit cards were used to make purchases that were not consistent with responsible expenditure of public funds.

Mr Whitehead stated "areas where policies need to be strengthened include expenditure on travel, gifts, fines and fuel as well as the use of alternative online payment methods."

He has recommended a model policy be developed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Local Government Division to provide clear guidance on acceptable use and improve the level of accountability in respect to credit card use by councils.

The report examined how councils managed and controlled the use of credit cards issued to general managers and elected members, focussing on the:

- guidance provided to cardholders
- issue, use and cancellation of credit cards
- monitoring of transactions by cardholders.

The complete Report can be downloaded from www.audit.tas.gov.au.

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