

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Auditor-General's report to Parliament on Information and communications technology strategy, critical systems and investment**

The Auditor-General, Mr Rod Whitehead has submitted his report to Parliament on Information and communications technology (ICT) strategy, critical systems and investment across all nine government departments (agencies).

The audit assessed how well the Government set out the ICT vision and whole-of-government approach for the future development of ICT and how this was supported by agency ICT strategies and planning, which was vital to securing investment for the maintenance, replacement or upgrade of systems critical for service delivery.

Mr Whitehead said "Despite the implementation of a digital governance and decision making framework, there was insufficient guidance to support whole-of-government ICT planning and prioritisation. Opportunities to develop shared ICT services, products or develop a whole of government ICT vision improving the efficiency and effectiveness of ICT delivery had not been realised."

The audit found that although agencies could demonstrate a logical, systematic approach to ICT strategic planning and key asset management, the lack of a whole-of-government ICT vision and plan meant ICT planning was siloed within agencies and was variable, with differing levels of capability and maturity impacting on the quality of their strategies and plans. Guidance for agencies in developing plans was limited and, together with the absence of a whole-of-government ICT vision, agencies were unable to plan for government priorities or realise effectiveness and efficiency improvements.

Mr Whitehead said "There was no strategic approach to prioritising agency ICT investment proposals that could better inform and guide Government and Budget decision making." As a result, Mr Whitehead found significantly aged and unsupported (by the vendor) ICT assets, or those at risk of failure, remain in operation with no real plan for replacement.

Mr Whitehead also found the development of agencies digital capability was at an early stage. Agencies were developing planned pathways to digital capabilities, which included future delivery models and potential efficiencies to be gained through shared services or business processing.

Mr Whitehead made seven recommendations to assist in strengthening the whole-of-government approach to ICT development, management and investment.

The complete Report can be downloaded from [www.audit.tas.gov.au](http://www.audit.tas.gov.au).

**ENDS**

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## Recommendations

1. The government enhance ICT investment evaluation and prioritisation by developing, through its current ICT framework, a WoG 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.
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
  - d. critical assets that are significantly aged or at potential risk of failure.
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 assets.
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.
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.
6. Treasury revisit the feedback approach for SIIRP submissions to better inform agencies on areas for improvement for future SIIRP submissions.
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.