

TASMANIAN AUDIT OFFICE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Auditor-General's Report on the Financial Statements of State Entities Volume 3 Local Government Authorities 2016-17

The Auditor-General, Mr Rod Whitehead, today tabled his report on the outcomes of the financial audits of the 29 councils as well as five subsidiaries and seven other local government entities.

Mr Whitehead said “the overall financial operating performance of councils continued to improve compared to last year but some councils, albeit fewer in number, still having further work to do.”

The report includes commentary on submission of financial reports, timeliness of audit opinions and findings from financial audits. The report also provides aggregated financial results, an assessment of financial sustainability of councils and comparison of actual capital expenditure against budgeted amounts.

The combined 2016-17 Underlying surplus of the 29 councils was \$16m, an improvement of \$5m from 2015-16, with 23 councils returning break-even or better Underlying results this year, compared to 17 in 2015-16.

The report also examined council capital expenditure and working capital levels. Over the past four years capital investment totalled \$942m, with urban councils on average spending more than budgeted whilst rural councils spent less than budgeted.

Councils were in a strong working capital position (cash or other financial assets) with an aggregate working capital of \$424m across all councils. Rural councils had significantly higher working capital level than urban councils.

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

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