# Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations

Report to Parliament 2 : 2012-13

**QUEENSLAND**

Prepared under Part 3 Division 3 of the
*Auditor-General Act 2009*

October 2012

The Honourable F Simpson MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
BRISBANE  QLD  4000

Dear Madam Speaker

This report is prepared under Part 3 Division 3 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, and is titled *Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations.*

In accordance with s.67 of the Act, would you please arrange for the report to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General

# Contents

# Summary

This follow-up report covers three audit reports tabled in Parliament during 2010:

- **Report to Parliament No. 3 for 2010 – *Administration of Magistrates Court Services in Queensland***, examined the systems and processes in place to efficiently and effectively provide magistrates court services. The report contained eight recommendations addressing governance, planning, performance monitoring and reporting.
- **Report to Parliament No. 6 for 2010 – *Using student information to inform teaching and learning***, reviewed the systems in place to use student data to inform literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. The report contained eight recommendations, including additional training of teachers, strengthening data usage guidelines, improved curriculum monitoring and reporting.
- **Report to Parliament No. 9 for 2010 – *Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas***, dealt with the systems and processes that ensure conservation of the state's natural and cultural heritage is managed efficiently and effectively. The report contained seven recommendations, including the formalisation of a comprehensive planning process and evaluation framework.

These three 2010 reports to Parliament were the result of performance management systems audits, in accordance with the audit mandate in effect at the time.

This report examines the extent of implementation of the audit recommendations made in the three reports. It also identifies further areas for improvement.

# Conclusions

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of Education, Training and Employment have made good progress towards implementing the recommendations from the 2010 audits.

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing has made little progress in implementing the recommendations from the **Report to Parliament No. 9 for 2010 – *Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas***. This is unsatisfactory given the department's acceptance of the 2010 recommendations and its commitment to act on them by October 2011.

More work is required to resolve data integrity issues. The risk remains that the quality of available data is not reliable enough to use for decision-making.

# Key findings

## Implementation status

The three reports had a combined total of 23 recommendations; 14 of these recommendations have been fully implemented, eight partially implemented and in one instance, the department took an alternative approach.

Figure A shows the implementation status of recommendation, by department.

**Figure A – Implementation status of recommendation by department**

| Report | Total | Status | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | I | P | AA | NA |
| Report to Parliament No. 3 for 2010 [Department of Justice and Attorney-General] | 8 | 7 | 1 | | |
| Report to Parliament No. 6 for 2010 [Department of Education, Training and Employment] | 8 | 6 | 2 | | |
| Report to Parliament No. 9 for 2010 [Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing] | 7 | 1 | 5 | 1 | |

LEGEND:

Status = assessment of progress made toward implementation.

I = Recommendation has been fully implemented

P = Recommendation has been partially implemented

AA = Alternative approach or action was elected by agency towards implementation

NA = No substantial action has been taken.

## Report No. 3 for 2010 – Administration of Magistrates Court Services in Queensland

The 2010 audit concluded that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General administered effective magistrates court services. It made eight recommendations to improve planning systems and performance reporting.

The department has strengthened its planning framework and process and is now better able to identify emerging needs and plan to deliver sustainable justice services. This addresses the original recommendations, centered around improving planning and performance management systems, to ensure magistrates court services are sustained in the future.

The recommendation about cost and quality performance indicators (recommendation number 6) has been partially implemented, with the adoption of a quality indicator but no cost indicator.

The department addressed recommendation number 5 by establishing risk registers and business continuity plans, which assisted in maintaining justice services during the 2011 natural disasters.

The department conducted a statewide survey of courts' users that indicated overall client satisfaction with the services provided.

## Report No. 6 for 2010 – Using student information to inform teaching and learning

The 2010 audit concluded that the Department of Education and Training had good practices and systems to support staff to analyse student data and use it to inform teaching and learning. The audit identified that these practices were not applied consistently across the regions and the schools.

The department can now more clearly measure performance and improvement. Teachers and principals are also better equipped to analyse and use the student data to inform literacy and numeracy teaching and learning.

In 2010, the department launched Teaching and Learning audits at all state schools. These audits examine each school across eight dimensions to drive improvement. School data reports contain comprehensive statistical and performance data, and assist in monitoring the school's progress.

Teachers and principals now have access to Curriculum into the classroom material with examples and templates, such as unit and lesson plans. This ensures that curriculum plans meet department standards.

The department has partially implemented recommendation number 4 about providing feedback to teachers, and recommendation number 7 about school performance reporting.

The department has a framework on the assessment of teacher performance; however, it cannot demonstrate that all teachers have received feedback on their skills, competencies and development needs. On 3 August 2012, Education Ministers at the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood endorsed the *Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework* which requires that all teachers receive regular formal and informal feedback on their performance. The department will need to fully implement recommendation number 4 to meet this requirement.

All state schools prepare an annual report on their performance, including comments on their progress towards their intended goals and quantitative information on parent satisfaction. The annual reports do not specify the targets that were set, thus making it difficult for readers to assess how successful the schools have been in meeting their goals.

## Report No. 9 for 2010 – Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas

The 2010 audit concluded that the former Department of Environment and Resource Management had systems in place to conserve the state's natural and cultural heritage and manage protected areas, but these systems were not applied consistently across the regions. The audit identified that only 98 of 576 protected areas had park management plans and that the department was not monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the extent to which its actions were protecting the parks values.

The Department of National Parks, Recreation Sport and Racing has implemented one of the seven recommendations. Five recommendations have been partially implemented and the department decided on an alternative approach for recommendation number 1 about park management plans.

In his response to the 2010 report, the Director-General of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management accepted all but one of the seven recommendations. Recommendation number 4, concerning the Master Plan was partially accepted.

The number of park management plans has not increased since 2010, but the department has progressed 129 park management plans in draft form, based on each park's values and threats. As it takes one to two years to develop park management plans, progress is satisfactory. Management statements have been prepared for a further 245 protected areas without a management plan, as an interim measure.

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* requires management plans to be prepared for protected areas. In 2010 the Director-General of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management also commented that to develop all outstanding management plans would require a commitment of 30 years at a cost of approximately $60 million and the use of 600 full time equivalent staff years effort. The department states in its 2012-13 Service Delivery Statement that it will undertake a review of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992.*

The department completed an evaluation framework, consistent with international guidelines. The Rapid Assessment Program survey, which is part of the evaluation process, needs better data validation and the inclusion of trend analysis on the condition of the protected areas' cultural and natural resources and their values.

The department has commenced rolling out a manual which provides guidance to the users and sets standards for the information captured. However, more work is required to address the problems about the integrity, accuracy and quality of the data collected, as the implementation of the IT system collecting the data has been delayed.

The objective and performance indicators relating to protected areas are significantly different in the *Strategic Plan 2012-16* than those audited in 2010. They could be further improved by complementing the performance indicators on the level of activity with indicators about the intended outcomes.

## Report No. 5 for 2010 – Performance Reviews – Using performance information to improve service delivery

Report No. 5 for 2010 – *Performance Reviews – Using performance information to improve service delivery*, examined performance reviews and outlined seven better practice principles to conduct these reviews effectively. Report No. 5 for 2010 recommended all Queensland Government departments consider the better practice principles in the report in adopting or enhancing their performance review processes.

While not part of this follow-up review, it was pleasing to observe that both the Departments of Justice and Attorney-General, and Education, Training and Employment have established operational performance review processes.

# Reference to agency comments

In accordance with section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, a copy of this report was provided to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice; the Minister for Education, Training and Employment; the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing; the Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney-General; the Director-General, Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Director-General, Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.

Their views have been considered in reaching our conclusions and are represented to the extent relevant and warranted in preparing this report.

The full comments received are included in Appendix A of this report.

# 1. Context

## 1.1. Follow up of audit recommendations

The *Auditor-General Act 2009* provides the Auditor-General with the ability to report observations and suggestions about matters arising from an audit. These observations and suggestions may be reported to management and those charged with governance of an agency, relevant Ministers and ultimately the Parliament.

While the Auditor-General reports to the Parliament with recommendations to improve the performance of public sector entities or enhance public sector accountability, it is not the Auditor-General's role, nor does the Auditor-General have the power, to enforce the implementation of these recommendations.

The primary responsibility for implementing any change rests with the Executive and the individual agencies.

As a matter of good governance, all public sector entities should have systems and processes to consider and, where appropriate, implement recommendations of the Auditor-General.

Parliamentary committees also have a key role in reviewing findings and recommendations reported to Parliament.

## 1.2. Changes to the audit mandate

In August 2011 the *Auditor-General Act 2009* was amended to include section 37A which provides the mandate to conduct performance audits of public sector entities, excluding government-owned corporations. A performance audit assesses whether a public sector entity is achieving its objectives economically, efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with all relevant laws. A performance audit can report directly on the effectiveness of the area subject to audit.

Prior to the amendments, the Auditor-General's mandate was limited to performance management systems audits, which examined the systems and methods agencies used to manage and measure performance.

The audit reports being followed up were conducted under the performance management systems audit mandate in effect at the time.

# 1.3. Machinery-of-government changes

Machinery-of-government changes occurred in April 2012 and affected the departments subject to the original audits.

**Figure 1A – Machinery-of-government changes**

| Departments selected for 2010 audits | Departments selected for 2012 follow up |
|---|---|
| Department of Justice and Attorney-General | Department of Justice and Attorney-General |
| Department of Education and Training | Department of Education, Training and Employment |
| Department of Environment and Resource Management | Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing |

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General retains responsibility for implementing the recommendations in Report No. 3 for 2010. The Department of Education, Training and Employment also maintains responsibility for implementing recommendations in Report No. 6 for 2010.

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing has not retained full responsibility for all of the areas covered in Report No. 9 for 2010. Liaison with other departments will be required to fully address all recommendations, including the Department of Environment and Heritage, and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

# 1.4. Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 examines the progress in implementing the eight recommendations of Report No. 3 for 2010 - *Administration of Magistrates Court Services in Queensland*.
- Chapter 3 discusses the progress in implementing the eight recommendations of Report No. 6 for 2010 - *Using student information to inform teaching and learning*.
- Chapter 4 reviews the progress in implementing the seven recommendation of Report No. 9 for 2010 - *Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas*.
- Appendix A contains responses received.
- Appendix B details the objectives and approach used for the follow-up review.

# 1.5. Cost

The total cost of the follow up review was $110 000.

# 2.    Report No. 3 for 2010

In brief

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**Background**

The 2010 performance management systems audit examined whether the Department of Justice and Attorney-General had effective and efficient systems in place to provide court services to support the Queensland Magistrates Court. The report contained eight recommendations.

**Key findings**

- Seven recommendations have been fully implemented.
- One recommendation has been partially implemented, with the adoption of a quality performance indicator; however, the department has not adopted cost performance indicators.
- The department is rolling out a Registry Operation Performance Review process to measure the performance of each courthouse and identify emerging needs.
- The development of regional business continuity plans ensured that justice services continued during the 2011 natural disasters.

# 2.1.    Background

The Queensland Magistrates Court is a fundamental part of the Queensland justice system undertaking a wide range of judicial responsibilities, including initial criminal and civil matters up to pre-determined levels. The court consists of a coordinating branch called the Magistrates Courts Service, four regional offices and 80 registries that provide administrative services to support individual magistrate's courthouses.

The 2010 performance management systems audit found the Department of Justice and Attorney-General administered effective magistrates court services in Queensland and met its statutory obligations. However, the audit also found that the systems to plan for, and measure the performance of, court services were inadequate to ensure services were sustained into the future.

Key findings included:
- the Magistrates Courts Service planning process did not include a fully documented, statewide analysis of service needs, including short, medium and long-term projections and the impact these service needs will have on resourcing requirements.
- there were no risk registers at the court or regional levels.
- court and regional management were not provided with an effective suite of operational performance information to assist them to monitor court services.

The 2010 audit made eight recommendations. The department accepted the audit findings and advised the recommendations would form the basis of an implementation plan that its Audit and Risk Committee would monitor.

The former Public Accounts and Public Works Committee reviewed the audit report No. 3 for 2010 – *Administration of Magistrates Court Services in Queensland* tabled in April 2010.

In its *Report No.8 – Review of Auditor-General's Reports – January 2010 to December 2010*, the committee said it was satisfied with the results of the audit and considered that the actions proposed by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General were sufficient to overcome the areas for improvement identified by the Auditor-General.

This chapter examines the department's progress in implementing the recommendations.

# 2.2.    Implementation status

The department has implemented seven of the eight recommendations made in the original audit report. Recommendation number 6 is partially implemented.

Figure 2A outlines the implementation status of recommendations.

**Figure 2A – Implementation status by recommendation**

| Recommendations in Report No. 3 for 2010 | Status | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | P | AA | NA |
| *Governance and planning* | | | | |
| **It is recommended the Department of Justice and Attorney-General:** | | | | |
| 1. Develops an overarching framework which formally outlines department wide planning processes including elements, such as roles and responsibilities, linkages between departmental plans, reporting relationships, prioritisation and endorsement processes and performance measurement against endorsed plans | ✓ | | | |
| 2. Ensures the Magistrates Courts Branch's operational plan adequately covers the operational needs of the region and individual courthouses | ✓ | | | |
| 3. Ensures the Magistrates Courts Branch endorses a service planning tool that sets minimum service planning standards and ensures consistency of approach across all regions and magistrates courts | ✓ | | | |
| 4. Incorporates performance measurement for regional services into all Magistrates Courts Branch service and operational plans | ✓ | | | |
| 5. Ensures its current risk management system is implemented at the registry level to ensure all magistrates court risks are identified and managed | ✓ | | | |
| *Performance monitoring and reporting* | | | | |
| **It is recommended the Department of Justice and Attorney-General:** | | | | |
| 6. Enhances its performance measurement framework for the Magistrates Courts Service by considering the inclusion of cost and quality performance indicators | | ✓ | | |
| 7. Enhances performance management through further analysis of performance information at the regional and registry levels and provision of the information more widely across the Magistrates Courts Branch and regional management | ✓ | | | |
| 8. Further develops and utilises operational performance measurement to assist in the identification and monitoring of developing trends for use on future service planning | ✓ | | | |
| **Total** | **7** | **1** | | |

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Status = assessment of progress made toward implementation.

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# 2.3.     Progress update

This section discusses the work completed and its impacts on the department's operations and outcomes. It also identifies where further improvements can be made.

## 2.3.1.     Work completed

The department now has a planning framework that cascades from the strategic plan down to regional business plans and registry operational plans. As a result, the contribution of regional staff is firmly aligned with the strategic directions of the department. This addresses recommendation number 1.

The development of a planning framework also assisted the establishment of a Registry Operation Performance Reviews (ROPR) process in 2011.

The ROPR process aims to measure the performance of each courthouse and identify needs resulting from emerging demographic, economic or environmental trends. For instance, a ROPR examines the registry performance, including clearance rates and workforce management. The ROPR process responds to recommendations numbers 2 and 4, and better informs future plans to ensure sustainable service delivery, which satisfies recommendation number 8.

The department has implemented recommendation number 3 by holding annual planning days attended by all relevant senior management, including the regional directors. The participants are involved in the development of the strategic plans, business plans and associated risk registers.

Each region has developed and maintains a risk register and business continuity plan. In response to recommendation number 5, the department now has a system tracking the regional business continuity plans. The benefit of having these risk registers and business continuity plans was evident when a spate of natural disasters affected Queensland in 2011. Although magistrate's court services were affected, the activation of the business continuity plans ensured that justice services continued even if in a reduced capacity.

From October to December 2011, the Queensland Courts Service (QCS) conducted a statewide survey of courts users and partners to gain their opinions of the services courts provide. The results of the survey informed the quality performance indicator, thus partially addressing recommendation number 6. The survey collected both qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of respondents, including legal professionals, self-represented litigants, jurors, witnesses, mercantile agents and members of the public. The high response rate has provided QCS with significant feedback to review and consider.

Overall, results indicate satisfaction with QCS's services across the state. Figure 2B present the survey results relating to four questions.

**Figure 2B – Selected survey results**

| Statement | Agree or strongly agree % | Neither agree or disagree % | Disagree or strongly disagree % | Not applicable % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with how quickly I was attended to by staff | 87.8 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 1.7 |
| I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff | 90.8 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 0.8 |
| I am satisfied that the information provided by staff answered my question/s | 89.9 | 6.0 | 4.1 | – |
| I found the public facilities overall satisfactory | 76.1 | 7.1 | 6.6 | 10.2 |

*Source: Queensland Audit Office, from data supplied by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.*

The survey offered the respondents the opportunity to suggest improvements in court building and/or registry services and access. The most common suggestions relate to online payment facilities, community information sessions on court processes and improvements to facilities. Respondents were also invited to provide additional comments that were analysed and captured in the report on the results of the survey.

The results will be used to establish baseline data of court user's satisfaction and their expectations of court services.

# 2.3.2.  Work still to be done

Recommendation number 6 is partially implemented. The following work remains outstanding:

- The 2010 audit recommended that the department enhance its performance measurement framework for the magistrate's court services by including cost and quality performance indicators. The department considered setting up cost performance indicators on a regional or individual court basis and began capturing the entire workload of a court. The department considers that the information in Report on Government Services is useful. However, regional directors are no better informed about workload or resource allocation because the information is not broken down regionally. The data is also incomplete because it excludes some areas, such as breaches and interim domestic violence matters. Due to a lack of capacity, the department is relying on a quality indicator based on the survey of courts users and partners.
- **Rollout of Registry Operation Performance Reviews across all registries:** the department has scheduled the remaining ROPR for the 10 registries in the former Far North Queensland region between October 2012 and January 2013.

This follow-up review also identified areas for further improvement:

- **Regional business plans and registry operational plans:** these plans include objectives, strategies and actions about the services delivered. Regional business plans include performance indicators but registry operational plans do not. Examples of performance indicators are:
  - development of a workforce plan
  - outcomes of operational reviews, particularly compliance with policy and procedure within registries.

  The indicators measuring activities should be complemented with output and outcome indicators on the quantity, quality, and timeliness of services provided and the results achieved. Also, no targets have been set for the indicators. Without a target, the region or the registry is not able to assess whether its results meet expectations. The inclusion of performance indicators on outputs and outcomes to be achieved, with associated targets, would add clarity and objectivity in measuring the performance of the registries.

- **Registry Operation Performance Reviews:** the reviews examine existing processes and practices and gather qualitative information through interviews with staff. The reviews also identify emerging issues, and check that the registries comply with the department's policies. Quantitative data, such as number of matters lodged, finalisation rate, timeliness and costs, could complement the current process and provide a more comprehensive picture of the registry's performance.

# 3.    Report No. 6 for 2010

In brief

**Background**

The 2010 performance management systems audit examined whether the former Department of Education and Training had effective and efficient systems to use student data to inform literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. The report contained eight recommendations.

**Key findings**

- Six recommendations have been fully implemented.
- One recommendation has been partly implemented with the release of the developing performance framework; however, the department cannot demonstrate that teachers have received feedback on their skills, competencies and development needs.
- One recommendation has been partly implemented with the revision of the Annual Reporting Policy for all Queensland schools. The stakeholders do not get sufficient information from the schools' annual reports to assess how successful schools have been in meeting their goals.
- In 2010, the department completed teaching and learning audits at all schools and is now going through a four-year cycle to measure progress and drive improvements.
- The department has published a wide range of resources to assist teaching staff in delivering the curriculum to the department's standards.
- The department has implemented a performance review of the regional operational plans, which includes quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results.

# 3.1. Background

While the public focus is on the results of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), schools undertake other in-class testing and collect data about students to develop school specific strategies and targets. Developing and modifying the school curriculum in response to student data helps ensure students are receiving the learning opportunities that meet their needs.

The 2010 performance management systems audit found that some schools had good practices and systems to support staff to analyse student data and use it to inform teaching and learning. However, the audit also identified opportunities for important improvements to deliver services more effectively and efficiently at all schools.

Key findings included:
- schools' analysis of NAPLAN and school-based data was inconsistent
- teachers required more guidance and training to have the skills and confidence to analyse and interpret data
- the department did not have a strategy to ensure teachers were provided with effective feedback on their performance
- all schools visited had school curriculum plans, annual operation plans and a school annual report
- there were large variations between regions in the extent and effectiveness of their monitoring and analysis of the NAPLAN data.

The former Public Accounts and Public Works Committee reviewed the audit report No. 6 for 2010 - *Using student information to inform teaching and learning* tabled in May 2010. In its *Report No.8 – Review of Auditor-General's Reports – January 2010 to December 2010*, the committee indicated it was satisfied with the overall results of the audit and considered additional action by the committee to be unnecessary at the time. The committee also considered that the additional training programs being progressively rolled out by the department will address many of the issues identified during the audit.

This chapter examines the department's progress in implementing the recommendations.

# 3.2. Implementation status

The department has implemented six of the eight recommendations made in the original audit report. Recommendations numbers 4 and 7 are partially implemented.

Figure 3A outlines the implementation status by recommendation.

**Figure 3A – Implementation status by recommendation**

| Recommendations contained in Report No. 6 for 2010 | Status | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | P | AA | NA |
| **It is recommended the Department of Education and Training:** | | | | |
| 1. Provide teachers and principals with access to further training in the skills and competencies necessary for them to analyse the full range of student data - NAPLAN and school-based | ✓ | | | |
| 2. Strengthen guidelines for regions about how to use a broad range of data, including information on school systems to prioritise the support provided to schools to improve outcomes for students | ✓ | | | |
| 3. Ensure that school curriculum plans and assessment policies are regularly monitored for compliance with the department's standards | ✓ | | | |
| 4. Strengthen existing performance management processes to ensure feedback is provided to teachers on their skills, competencies and development needs to implement the school's curriculum plans | | ✓ | | |
| 5. Revise the department's model for planning, monitoring and reporting on the delivery of regional services to provide greater clarity of responsibility to this part of the organisation | ✓ | | | |
| 6. Review school planning processes to ensure that the principal's supervisor provides regular feedback and monitoring of the implementation of the priorities in school and annual operation plans | ✓ | | | |
| 7. Revise the requirements for school annual reports to ensure that information reported allows stakeholders to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of school performance | | ✓ | | |
| 8. Review the objectives and performance measures relating to schooling in its strategic plan and service delivery statement to ensure they are measurable and relevant | ✓ | | | |
| **Total** | **6** | **2** | | |

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NA = No substantial action has been taken.

# 3.3. Progress update

This section discusses the work completed and how it impacted the department's operations and outcomes. It also identifies where further improvements can be made.

# 3.3.1. Work completed

In 2009 an external review entitled—*A Shared Challenge, Improving Literacy, Numeracy and Science Learning in Queensland Primary Schools* was conducted. Following this review, the department initiated teaching and learning audits at every state school in 2010 to:

> *'…provide quality feedback on how the school is performing against key standards and to inform school planning processes.'*

From 2011, every school is audited every four years or earlier if necessary. For example, a school can request an audit outside the four-year cycle, or a school may be audited when a new principal is appointed.

The teaching and learning audits examine and rate each school across eight dimensions, three of which are highly relevant to the audit recommendations being followed up:

- **analysis and discussion of data:** relevant to audit recommendation number 1
- **systematic curriculum delivery:** relevant to audit recommendation number 3
- **effective teaching practices:** relevant to audit recommendation number 4.

These audits provide the department with baseline data against which it can measure progress. Of the schools which were subject to a teaching and learning audit in 2011, 47 per cent achieved higher ratings than in 2010 for data analysis. The department has provided coaches and support material to help schools interpret the data. In the 2011 principals survey, 80.7 per cent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that '…staff at this school have the necessary expertise to analyse student assessment data to inform teaching practice', compared with 73.1 per cent in 2010.

The teaching and learning audit reports include recommendations to the school principal, who proposes a set of actions to address the recommendations. Principals are supervised by an Assistant Regional Director, School Performance. The Assistant Regional Director monitors the implementation of the actions. The regions also use the results of these audits to determine and prioritise the level of support and supervision of each school, which addresses audit recommendation number 2.

The ratings from the teaching and learning audits are captured in school data reports, which are prepared centrally and provided to the school principal and the relevant departmental regional director at least twice a year. These reports contain measures of school achievement and improvement, and comprehensive statistical and performance data sets such as:

- enrolment numbers
- attendance rates
- class sizes
- NAPLAN results
- academic grading
- workforce data
- financial data.

The NAPLAN results for each school are compared against the national results and those of similar schools, as well as previous results for that school. This enables the reader to quickly get a sense of the school performance. The school data reports also assist in the monitoring of schools.

## Curriculum units

The department has completed implementation of recommendation number 3 by publishing curriculum units for students in Prep-Year 10 in english, maths and science under the Curriculum into the classroom project. Schools have to use the Curriculum into the classroom material if their rating on curriculum delivery from the teaching and learning audit on curriculum delivery is less than high.

Resources available to teaching staff and principals include examples and templates, such as a whole-school curriculum and assessment plan, year-level plan, unit plan and lesson plan. These documents provide practical guidance to teaching staff and illustrate the department's standards. For instance a lesson plan includes:

- lesson content description linked to the curriculum
- lesson objectives
- evidence of learning explaining what the student should be able to do as a result of the lesson
- resources required or suggested
- teaching and learning sequence outlining how to open, conduct and close the lesson.

## Regional reports

The department has set up a performance review of the regional operational plan. Twice a year, each region performs a quantitative and qualitative analysis of its results against expectations and submits a report to the department's executive management. The regional report clearly links back to the regional plan and the department's strategic plan ensuring consistency. The regions also use the review process as an opportunity to reassess the risks and associated treatments, and perform an environmental scan to identify ongoing or emerging issues. These regional reports satisfy recommendation number 5.

## Feedback to principals

The department has developed and implemented a principal supervision and capability development framework at the regional level that addresses recommendation number 6. Under the framework, principals have regular conversations with their supervisors on a range of matters, including school performance, principals' capabilities and development needs. Records of the conversations are kept in a secure environment within the department's MyHR human resource system.

The department has also reviewed its *School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework 2012-15* which:

> *'…outlines the requirements for Queensland state schools to implement state and national reforms, and to meet the objective of the department's strategic plan to drive improved learning outcomes for all students.'*

**Figure 3B – School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Cycle**
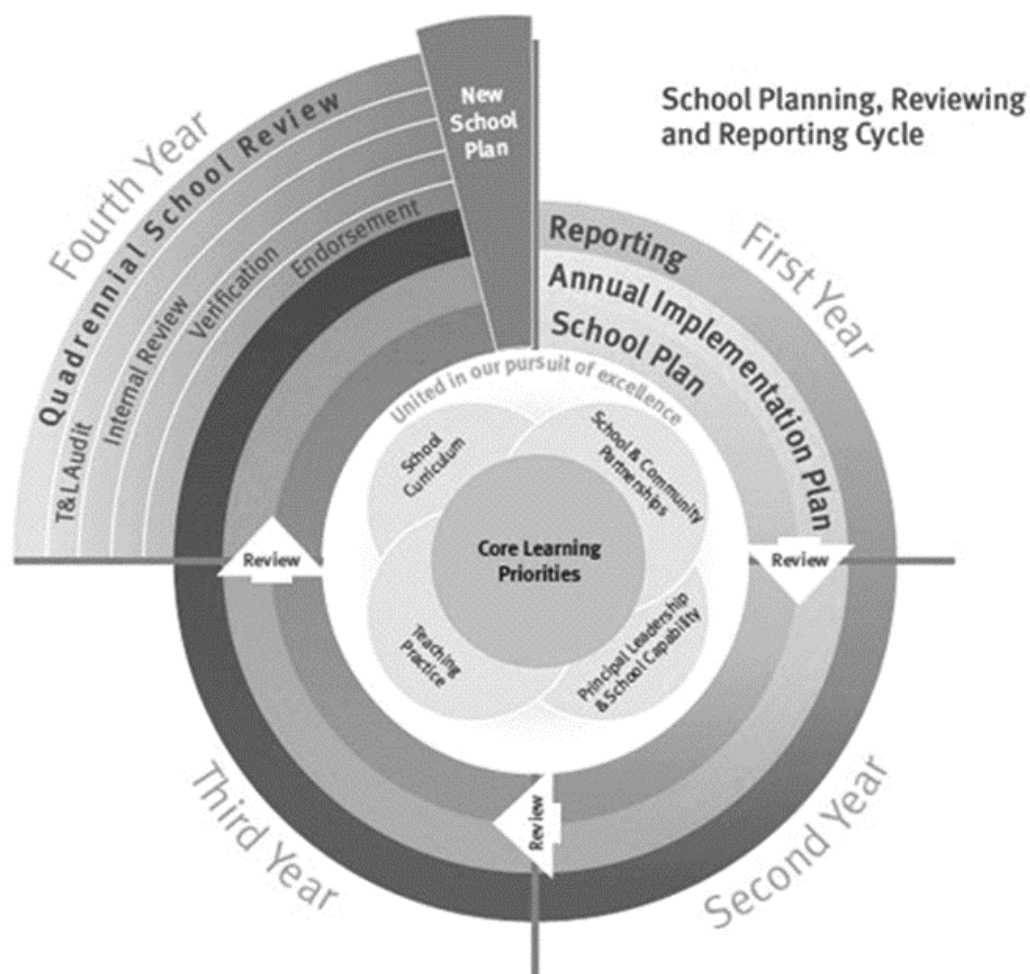


*Source: School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework 2012-15, Department of Education, Training and Employment.*

These two frameworks combined clarify the roles and responsibilities of the principal and his or her supervisor when planning, reviewing and reporting on the school performance and improvement.

The revised *School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework 2012-15* sets out the review principles and processes. It also includes a range of review questions to guide the principal and his or her supervisor.

**Better practice case study**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="1" align="center">**Review questions**</td></tr>
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There are high level questions underpinned by more detailed questions.

The higher level questions suggested are:
- How are we performing?
- Where do we want to be?
- How will we get there?
- How do we know that we are on the right track?
- How do we know when we get there?

Examples of detailed questions:
- Have we achieved all we aspired to in the School Plan? If not why?
- What are we comparing our results to?
- What are our targets? What do we need to improve?
- Who is responsible for change? What are the timelines?
- What evidence/measures will we use? What information will we use?
- How do we measure our progress? How do we monitor our progress?
- How often do we monitor our progress?

The suggested questions are a good starting point for meaningful discussions and ensure the review process is comprehensive, grounded, and driving improvement.

*Source: Queensland Audit Office, from School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework 2012-15.*

## External reporting

In response to recommendation number 8, the school education objective in the department's strategic plan was changed from—'Every young person will be well prepared for life success through learning and education', to—'Every young Queenslander will be prepared with the educational foundations to support successful transitions to further education, training and work'.

The revised objective is more measurable, and also more clearly relates to students' ability to transition into further education, training, or employment rather than the less tangible term 'life success. Transitions are measured and reported via student destination surveys.

# 3.3.2. Work still to be done

Recommendation number 4 has been partially implemented.

The department has issued a developing performance framework applicable to all staff but is unable to demonstrate that feedback is provided to teachers on their skills, competencies and development needs.

The framework has four phases:
- clarify expectations and work focus
- reach an agreement
- perform ongoing support, including coaching and feedback
- review progress and recognise achievement.

There is a series of information sheets, templates and prompts for each phase.

There is no requirement for any of the phases to be documented and there is no process to record whether conversations have been held between a teacher and his or her supervisor. The department considers that its framework complies with the Public Service Commission Directive No. 21/10 on employee performance management because the directive does not expressly stipulate that the process needs to be recorded or documented.

The lack of documentation presents a number of risks, including:

- the framework is not being applied and teachers do not receive coaching and feedback that would support their professional development, improve teaching practices or recognise their achievements
- the teacher and his or her supervisor have different recollection about what was agreed or discussed and cannot go back to written documents for clarification and confirmation
- there are no records to support moving to the formal process for managing unsatisfactory performance if necessary.

The need to fully implement the 2010 recommendation is becoming more urgent as Education Ministers endorsed the *Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework* at the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood on 3 August 2012. One of the essential elements identified in the framework is:

> *'All teachers receive regular formal and informal feedback on their performance. This includes a formal review against their performance and development goals at least annually, with verbal and written feedback being provided to the teacher.'*

Recommendation number 7 has been partially implemented.

The department revised its *Annual Reporting Policy for All Queensland Schools* and the school annual report template in response to recommendation number 7, but the information reported does not allow stakeholders to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of school performance.

The template for the 2011 school annual report applicable to state schools required them to provide quantitative information on class size, disciplinary absences, staff/parent/student satisfaction, environmental indicators, workforce headcounts and teacher qualifications. In their annual reports, schools also have to comment on their progress towards their intended goals. Schools' annual reports are available on their websites.

The template does not require schools to compare the quantitative information or progress towards intended goals against the targets set in the annual implementation plans, or prior years' results if available. The schools' annual implementation plans are not systematically available on their websites.

The stakeholders would get more valuable information and be able to better assess the schools' performance if the goals, performance measures and targets from the annual implementation plans were included in the schools' annual reports.

# 4.    Report No. 9 for 2010

## In brief

**Background**

The 2010 performance management systems audit examined whether the former Department of Environment and Resource Management had adequate systems in place to ensure conservation of the state's natural and cultural heritage is managed efficiently and effectively. The report contained seven recommendations.

**Key findings**

- One recommendation has been fully implemented, five partially implemented, and alternative action was taken in response to one recommendation.
- The number of finalised park management plans has not increased since 2010. The department has made progress with 129 park management plans in draft form, and 245 of the 355 protected areas without a management plan in place have a management statement.
- The department completed an evaluation framework consistent with international guidelines. It analysed the combined Rapid Assessment Program (RAP) data from 2001 to 2010 to evaluate the original goals of the RAP and to track progress in protected area management. However, the RAP survey needs better data validation.
- The department started rolling out guidance and standards for the data collection. However, more work is required to address the issue on data integrity as the department has not implemented the ParkInfo 2.0 system.
- The performance indicators have changed significantly since 2010 but could be further improved by having indicators relevant to the intended outcomes.

# 4.1.    Background

National parks and protected areas are vital to conserve natural and cultural assets. They preserve habitats for a wide range of flora and fauna, maintain biodiversity and protect endangered species. The estate of national parks, conservation parks and resource reserves comprised 581 protected areas at 30 June 2012.

The original audit found that overall the department had systems in place to conserve the state's natural and cultural heritage and manage protected areas. However, the audit also found that the systems were not applied consistently and had weaknesses.

The key findings included:
- park management plans were in place for only 98 of the 576 protected areas for which they are required under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- thematic management strategies were in place and well implemented but there was no formal monitoring process to ensure they maintain currency and relevance
- the Master Plan had not been updated since it was issued in 2001, despite a requirement for a review and process evaluation every five years
- monitoring of activities was output focused and could be complemented by outcome data to demonstrate whether the projects had been effective in achieving the conservation outcomes desired
- monitoring data across regions varied in quality, quantity and timeliness, and there was a lack of evidence that the data was validated
- the performance indicators were not relevant or appropriate for the conservation of nature outcomes established by Parliament.

The 2010 audit made seven recommendations. The department accepted all but one recommendation. The department partially accepted recommendation number 4, indicating it will consider options when reviewing the Master Plan.

The former Public Accounts and Public Works Committee has reviewed the audit report No. 9 for 2010 – *Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas* since it was tabled in October 2010.  In its *Report No.8 – Review of Auditor-General's Reports – January 2010 to December 2010*, the committee said that: '…it remained concerned that so few of the management plans have been completed. However, in the view of the fact that the department had committed to implementing the audit recommendations the committee would await the results of the follow-up audit before assessing whether further action is required.'

# 4.2.    Implementation status

More than 18 months after report No. 9 for 2010 was tabled, the department has implemented only one of the seven recommendations made in the original audit report. Overall progress is not satisfactory given the department's acceptance of the 2010 recommendations and its commitment to act by October 2011.

**Figure 4A – Implementation status by recommendation**

| Recommendations contained in Report No. 9 for 2010 | Status | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | P | AA | NA |
| **It is recommended the Department of Environment and Resource Management:** | | | | |
| 1. Formalise a comprehensive planning process for park management plans which will:<br><br>a) provide an evaluation process to prioritise the timely completion of plans for those parks which were declared because of their significant conservation values<br><br>b) establish a forward plan for the finalisation of the management plans for the balance of the protected areas. | | | ✓ | |
| 2. In accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, formally and regularly review park management plans, and ensure that the associated thematic strategies remain current and relevant. | | ✓ | | |
| 3. Ensure all business units and regions undertake a consistent approach to planning, aligned to the better practice principles outlined in the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidelines. | | ✓ | | |
| 4. Establish a formal system that coordinates the various documents addressing the statutory requirement for an integrated and comprehensive conservation strategy for the whole of the state, including an examination of the options to be included in a new Master Plan. | ✓ | | | |
| 5. Establish a system to validate and improve the integrity, accuracy and quality of the data collected and ensure a reliable and consistent approach to monitoring of operations. | | ✓ | | |
| 6. Formalise a monitoring and evaluation framework, such as the IUCN's Management Effectiveness Evaluation framework, and apply this process consistently to ensure adequate evaluation is undertaken to inform the future departmental direction and actions. | | ✓ | | |
| 7. Develop performance indicators that are relevant and appropriate and which are capable of fairly representing the agency's achievements in managing national parks and protected areas in line with the objective of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and departmental strategic planning objectives. | | ✓ | | |
| **Total** | **1** | **5** | **1** | |

LEGEND:

Status = assessment of progress made toward implementation.

I = Recommendation has been fully implemented

P = Recommendation has been partially implemented

AA = Alternative approach or action was elected by agency towards implementation

NA = No substantial action has been taken.

# 4.3. Progress update

This section discusses the work that has been completed and work that still needs to be done. It also identifies where further improvements can be made.

## 4.3.1. Work completed

The department developed a draft Master Plan *Naturally Queensland 2020* and released it for public comment in July 2011. It reviewed the submissions received and, in April 2012 prepared an overview document titled *A brighter future: a new Master Plan for Queensland's protected areas, forests and wildlife*, thus addressing recommendation number 4.

The newly established Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing no longer has primary responsibilities for certain aspects of nature conservation. For example wildlife and biodiversity are now the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Heritage. Holistic management of protected areas will require input from other departments. The department has advised that it will be reviewing the Master Plan because of changes in policy and responsibilities.

## 4.3.2. Work still to be done

### Management plans

In 2010, 17 per cent of protected areas had management plans, whether final or due for review. As at 30 June 2012 the proportion and number of protected areas with management plans was similar (97 of 581 areas, or 17 per cent). The department made progress in drafting management plans for a further 129 protected areas (22 per cent). Research shows that most management plans require one to two years to develop.

Figure 4B compares the number of management plans in 2010 and 2012.

**Figure 4B – Management plans**

| | 2010 | | | | 30 June 2012 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Completed | | | | Completed | | | | |
| | Required | Current | Due for review | Note in place | Required | Current | Under review # | Draft | Not in place |
| National park | 315 | 10 | 63 | 242 | 322 | 36 | 36 | 60 | 190 |
| Conservation park | 216 | 0 | 22 | 194 | 214 | 11 | 12 | 51 | 140 |
| Resources reserve | 45 | 1 | 2 | 42 | 45 | 0 | 2 | 18 | 25 |
| **Total** | **576** | **11** | **\*\*87** | **478** | **581** | **47** | **50** | **129** | **355** |

LEGEND:

\*\* There were 81 final management plans incorporating 'aggregate' plans covering some multiple reserves.

# This refers to management plans previously in place and subject to review. The original plans were approved 10 or more years previously.

*Source: Queensland Audit Office from data supplied by the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.*

In his response to the 2010 report, the Director-General of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management commented:

> *'It is estimated that if this approach is adopted in relation to the outstanding protected areas this would require a commitment of 30 years at a cost of approximately $60 million and the use of 600 full-time equivalent staff years effort'.*

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* requires management plans to be prepared for the protected areas classified as national parks, conservation parks and resource reserves as soon as practicable after protected areas are declared. Protected area management plans provide the framework and guidelines on how an area is managed. They set out the proposed long term considerations, outcomes and strategies that provide the basis for day-to-day management decisions.

The department adopted an interim measure in response to recommendation number 1 and started developing management statements for protected areas. These statements contain key information that can be expanded in future management plans. Of the 355 areas that did not have a management plan in place at 30 June 2012, 245 (69 per cent) had a management statement. This leaves 110 protected areas without any form of management plan or management statement.

Management statements do not have formal or legislative standing under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and they are prepared using a streamlined process that includes limited or no public consultation. According to best practice on protected area management planning, providing opportunities for the public to have input to management of protected areas is a major role of the management planning process.

**Figure 4C – Management statements at 30 June 2012**

| Category | Total protected areas | Approved | Commenced | Draft | Not Commenced |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| National park | 322 | 250 | 3 | 9 | 60 |
| Conservation park | 214 | 66 | 15 | 17 | 116 |
| Resources reserve | 45 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 27 |
| **Total** | **581** | **332** | **20** | **26** | **203** |

*Source: Queensland Audit Office, from data supplied by the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.*

In its response to the 2010 audit, the department committed to adopt a forward plan by December 2010. The five-year *Business Plan 2010-2015* lists all protected areas and rates them according to park value (no category, moderate, high, very significant, outstanding) and park category threats (low, medium, high, very high). Each protected area is assigned a priority rating from 1 to 3 based on their value and threat ratings to determine when their management plan should be developed. Of the 43 protected areas with ratings of 'outstanding' park value and 'very high' threat, eight have a draft or final management plan, 25 have an approved management statement, and planning has commenced for two of the remaining ten areas.

The department has committed to develop either a management plan or a management statement for all protected areas by 2015, although the current business plan does not specify dates by which management plans or statements for each protected area should be finalised. Setting clear milestones would assist the department to appropriately forward plan for the completion of management plans.

Recommendation number 2, accepted by the department, relates to regular review of the park management plans and associated thematic strategies. The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* requires formal reviews of management plans every 10 years and interim reviews every four to five years. The five-year business plan does not indicate when a management plan is due for review and does not contain a review schedule that would assist the department in planning its activities.

The 2010 audit found that thematic plans, such as pest management, fire burns and visitor plans were implemented in most regions, but there was no system to ensure all of these documents are up-to-date or relevant to the conservation of nature objective. This is still the case in 2012. From a sample of five outdated plans in 2010, only one plan has been updated in 2012.

Recommendation number 3, accepted by the department, relates to business units and regional plans. The recommendation has been partially implemented, with 2011-12 business plans completed for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service division and three of the six regions. Another region had a business plan in draft form.

The branches —terrestrial, conservation services, business and asset services branches—did not have business plans for 2011-12. The department advised that it has made substantial changes to its work programs and structures and a new structure is being finalised before new business plans for 2012-13 can be completed.

## Accuracy and quality of data

More work will be needed to fully address the issue of integrity, accuracy and quality of data in response to recommendation number 5. The department uses a computerised information system, called ParkInfo, to collate data for fire and pest activities undertaken in the protected areas estate. It uses another system to capture asset maintenance, values and condition.

The 2010 audit found that the data was not always validated at point-of-entry, which reduced its integrity and reliability. ParkInfo did not integrate with other park management systems. Version 2.0 of ParkInfo, which was being developed during the 2010 audit, was supposed to address this issue.

The department committed to implement the new system by October 2011. However, ParkInfo 2.0 has still not been completed due to delays in completing and testing two modules. The IT unit coordinating the system has been disbanded and a revised completion date of September 2013 has been set.

In September 2011 the department launched its *Protected Area Folio User's Manual*. The manual provides guidance on the data collection, entry and analysis using the Park Folio system.

Recommendation number 5 also deals with a consistent approach to monitoring of operations. The department developed a database to track the management planning and the evaluation process. It is in the process of populating the database with information on the management actions identified within each management plan/statement.

## Management effectiveness evaluation process

The department has partially implemented recommendation number 6 and has developed a draft Management Effectiveness Evaluation framework, based on the framework that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) developed. In addition, the 2010 audit recommended the department apply the framework consistently to inform future departmental direction.

The department uses a Rapid Assessment Program (RAP) survey to measure and report on how effectively Queensland's parks and forests are being managed. The first survey was developed and trialed in 2000-01 and further iterations were done in 2003, 2006, 2008 and 2010. The original audit examined the 2008 RAP survey and identified areas where improvements could be made. For instance the questions focused on processes, and the survey needed to incorporate IUCN better-practice questions to assess progress towards conservation outcomes. Responses to the survey were subjective because they were based on the expertise and opinion of the officers completing the survey.

The 2010 RAP included new questions on the condition of threatened species and heritage values, and the effect of park management actions on negative impacts. Analysis of the combined RAP data from 2001 to 2010 was done to enable original goals of the RAP to be evaluated and to track progress in protected area management.

The department did a limited desktop check of the 2010 RAP responses. It compared answers about fire, pest and management strategies and plans with the actual status of these documents. It did not moderate the assessments about the condition of threatened species or the change in negative impacts to mitigate the subjectivity of the responses.

A RAP survey is planned for 2012 to identify protected management improvements and inform the overarching Management Effectiveness Evaluation process. The proposed questions are identical to those in the 2010 survey, which will start to make it easier to compare performance over time, not previously possible due to changes in the survey structure and changed survey areas.

Validation of the answers to the RAP survey would improve the reliability of the data and moderation would make the data comparable and enable the department to aggregate it. Also, the inclusion of trend data on the condition of threatened species and heritage value would increase the department's ability to use the survey instrument as an evaluation tool.

The 2010 audit also identified that more than 60 per cent of questions were answered as 'not applicable' or not answered at all. The 2010 RAP, which surveyed only national parks, improved on this result with 26 per cent of questions answered with 'not applicable' and no questions left unanswered. The higher response rate provides the department more data to assess progress and to make informed decisions.

## Performance indicators

The department has partially addressed recommendation number 7. The Department of Environment and Resource Management *Strategic Plan 2010-14* contained one objective related to national parks - 'Ecosystems are healthy, protected and bio-diverse.' The original report found that the performance indicators against this objective were not relevant to its achievement and that the strategic objective and performance indicators have often changed over time, reducing the ability to track progress and trends.

The department's *Strategic Plan 2012-16* contains one objective about protected areas - 'National parks are well managed and available to be enjoyed by all Queenslanders.' The key performance indicators are:

1.  Improved access to Queensland's National Parks and a reduction in permits required for access

2.  Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Strategic Pest Management Program implemented (measured as a percentage of projects delivered annually)

3.  Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service fire management system implemented (measured by planned burns implemented as a percentage of the managed estate)

4.  Delivery of infrastructure on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed estate.

Indicators 2, 3 and 4 measure the activities of the department, but do not give an indication whether the activities achieved their purpose. These indicators are included in the department's Service Delivery Statement and have targets. The first indicator is not included in the Service Delivery Statement. The department has not specified how it will measure improved access and what the target is.

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* sets the management principles for national parks, including a cardinal principle:

> *"A national park is to be managed to provide, to the greatest possible extent, for the permanent preservation of the area's natural condition and the protection of the area's cultural resources and values."*

The new objective and indicators could be more closely aligned with the management principles set in the legislation, in particular preservation and protection. The indicators could also be complemented by indicators relevant to the intended outcomes.

The figures below are extracted from Parks Canada performance report as an illustration of another jurisdiction's objectives, targets and performance indicators.

**Figure 4D – Selected objectives, targets and performance indicator–Parks Canada**

| PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | | | TARGET AND DATE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of national parks with at least one improved ecological integrity indicators | | | 20 national parks improve one ecological integrity indicator from March 2008 to March 2014 | |
| **NATIONAL PARK** | **ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY INDICATOR TO BE IMPROVED** | **OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVE** | **PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS 2010/11** | **ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY IMPROVEMENT EXPECTED BY MARCH 2014** |
| Gwaii Haanas NPR and Haida Heritage Site | Streams | To restore the ecological integrity of logging-affected streams and riparian areas through rehabilitation of ecosystem structure and function | Complete restoration activities to improve salmon habitat along 410 metres of highest priority streams<br><br>Installed 17 in-stream structures to create refugia for salmon spawning<br><br>Developed and implemented forest restoration activities, including creation of gaps and understory protection, to restore degraded shoreline forest habitat adjacent to targeted streams<br><br>Collected salmon broodstock and completed hatchery rearing of fry for 2011 introduction | Improvement in indicator trend |

*Source: Queensland Audit Office, adapted from Parks Canada Agency – Performance report for the period ending March 31, 2011.*

Parks Canada reported on the ecological integrity indicators, by national park, in its *State of Natural and Historic Places 2011* report. The indicators show both the state and the trend.

**Figure 4E – Ecological integrity indicators by national park**

| Prov. | National Park | Ecological Integrity Indicators | | | | | | | | | | Visitor Experience Indicators | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Forests | Freshwater | | Wetlands | Tundra/Barrens | Coastal | Glaciers | Grasslands | Marine/Subtidal | Other | Visitation (2010/11) | Visitor Satisfaction | | Visitor Learning | Visitor Enjoyment |
| | | | Lakes | Streams/Rivers | | | | | | | | | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | | |
| NL | Gros Morne | ⬇ | ↔ | | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | | | | 186,798 ↑ | 97% | 66% | 84% | N/R |
| | Terra Nova | ● | ● | | N/R | N/R | ● | | | | | 259,079 ↔ | 80% | 40% | 66% | 85% |
| | Torngat Mountains | | ● | | | ● | ▼ | N/R | | | | | | | | |

Legend

| Indicator State | | Indicator Trend | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ● | Good | ↑ | Improving |
| ▼ | Fair | ↔ | Stable/No Change |
| ⬛ | Poor | ↓ | Declining |
| N/R | Not Rated | ☐ | Not Rated/Not Applicable |

*Source: Queensland Audit Office, adapted from Parks Canada Agency – State of Canada's Natural and Historic Places 2011.*

# Appendices

## Appendix A

*Auditor-General Act 2009* (Section 64) – Comments received

### Introduction

In accordance with section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* a copy of this report was provided to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, the Department of Education, Training and Employment, and the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing with a request for comments.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of the comments rests with the head of these agencies.

## Comments received

Response provided by the Acting Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney-General on 22 October 2012.

61

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2 2 OCT 2012

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AUDIT
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Our reference: 2017324
Your reference: 2012-9100

**Queensland Government**

Office of the
**Director-General**

Department of
**Justice and Attorney-General**

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Mr Greaves

Thank you for your letter dated 27 September 2012, inviting comment on extracts from the proposed report on the follow up of 2010 audit recommendations of Report No 3:2010 *Administration of magistrates court services in Queensland*.

In relation to the outstanding recommendation to develop a cost performance indicator as part of measuring the overall performance measurement framework, Regional Directors can access Report on Government Services (ROGS) information which provides some cost indicators, albeit on a State-wide basis. When additional capacity is forthcoming attention will be given to developing a cost performance indicator.

Thank you for the opportunity to make the above comments.

Yours sincerely

Terry Ryan
**Acting Director-General**

18/10/12

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## Comments received

Response provided by the Director-General, Department of Education, Training and Employment on 18 October 2012.

59

18 OCT 2012

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Mr Greaves

Thank you for your letter dated 27 September 2012 regarding the performance audit to review the progress achieved by my Department in implementing the recommendations outlined in *Report to Parliament No. 6 for 2010 – Using student information to inform teaching and learning.*

I am pleased that the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) has found that the department has made good progress towards the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the 2010 audit with six recommendations fully implemented and the remaining two recommendations partially implemented.

The department has been working hard to lift the performance of all schools and our commitment in this regard is further demonstrated by the refinement of our processes as a result of the original audit.

Can I again thank your officers for their work under this follow-up audit. This information provides us with a further reference point from which we can continue to refine our work in the areas identified.

Should you or your officers wish to discuss aspects of my response further, I invite you to contact Mr Jeff Hunt, A/Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services by email jeff.hunt@dete.qld.gov.au or telephone (07) 3405 6329.

Yours sincerely

Julie Grantham
**Director-General**

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## Comments received

Response provided by the Acting Director-General, Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing on 18 October 2012.

*58*

**Queensland Government**

Office of the
**Director-General**

Department of
**National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing**

Ref    CTS 15207/12
         CTS 14741/12

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002

*Andrew*

Dear Mr Greaves

Thank you for your letter of 27 September 2012 regarding the proposed report on the 2010 audit recommendations, including Report No 9: 2010 *Sustainable management of national parks and protected areas.*

Consistent with Section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* (the Act), the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (NPRSR) has reviewed the draft report and provided a response for inclusion as part of the final submission to Parliament. I note that separate discussions between departmental officers of NPRSR and the Queensland Audit Office have already resolved a number of comments and concerns from NPRSR on the report. The response below relates primarily to further progress made by NPRSR in the delivery of recommendations from Report No 9: 2010 since the time of the assessment:

> *The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (NPRSR) is committed to ensuring that Queensland's parks and forests are managed in a manner consistent with the range of values they contain. As such, NPRSR takes the recommendations from the Auditor-General's Report No 9: 2010 very seriously and is committed to progressing necessary action to deliver appropriate management systems and processes.*

> *While there is recognition of the significant work that is still to be completed, progress has been made on all seven of the recommendations. As recognised in this report, this progress has been made within the context of recent machinery of government changes and the current review of the Nature Conservation Act 1992. In many cases, these factors have impacted on the approach and timing associated with the delivery of required action.*

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*Since the time of assessment, NPRSR has made further progress on a number of actions. A summary of this progress is provided below.*

*In regard to audit recommendation one, the report notes that the department is currently undertaking a review of the forward plan for the development of management plans. In light of new government priorities, consideration is also being given to the future management planning process, including the important role of management statements as an alternative planning mechanism. The department remains committed to delivering a comprehensive planning process for park management and is working towards having management statements or plans completed for all national parks by the end of the 2012-13 financial year.*

*This target has been substantially met with 98% of all national parks now having either a management plan or statement. A further commitment has been made for all protected areas to have either a management plan or statement by 2015.*

*The department remains committed to the implementation of recommendations two and three, noting the progress that has already been made and the ongoing nature of the business planning and the management plan review processes.*

*In regard to audit recommendation four, the report recognises the work of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management in developing a draft Master Plan to deliver on this recommendation. However, the subsequent change of government has resulted in a need to undertake a full review of the Master Plan to ensure alignment with current priorities and policies. The review and development of a new Master Plan is underway and aims to deliver a strategic document to guide the management of Queensland's parks and forests over the next ten years.*

*The Master Plan will form the overarching framework for all other strategic planning processes, including management / operational planning, the development of performance indicators and monitoring / assessment processes. A project plan has been developed to guide the Master Plan review process, with a draft Master Plan expected for release within six months. The development of the new Master Plan will include a public consultation phase and also take into consideration community feedback provided on the previous government's draft plan.*

*While this Master Plan will contribute towards the achievement of recommendation 4, it should be noted that the plan will focus solely on QPWS-managed lands and will not deliver a state-wide strategy on the conservation of nature. The establishment of a formal system to co-ordinate a conservation strategy for Queensland is not within the scope of NPRSR business. Following the change of government, responsibility for the Queensland Biodiversity Strategy rests with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. This Biodiversity Strategy reflects previous government strategies which are under review by the current government.*

*In regard to recommendation five, the report recognises the ongoing work by the department in validating and improving the integrity, accuracy and quality of data collected. In addition to the database developed to track the management planning and evaluation process, work has also been underway to improve the integrity of data collected for individual systems. This includes the development and roll-out of a user manual and training program for the use of the Protected Area Folio system in collecting and recording natural and cultural resource information.*

*As noted in the report, the department has experienced difficulties in the roll out of the ParkInfo2.0 system which aimed to better integrate with other park management systems and ensure point-of-entry data validation. NPRSR recognises the importance of ensuring the integrity of its data and the efficiencies that can be achieved through an integration of data systems. As such, NPRSR is currently undertaking further work to consolidate and validate data systems, and this work is due for completion by December 2013.*

*As described in the report, NPRSR is continuing to work towards the implementation of recommendation number six with the development of a draft Management Effectiveness Evaluation framework. Consistent with the recommendations of this report, NPRSR will also introduce spot audits of answers in the 2012 Rapid Assessment Program (RAP) survey to assist in improving data accuracy.*

*In regard to recommendation seven, the report recognises the initial work undertaken by NPRSR in developing performance indicators that reflect new government priorities and represent achievements in the management of national parks and protected areas. It is noted that further assessment and development of performance indicators will be informed by the new Master Plan. These indicators will aim to represent the department's achievements in line with the objective of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and other departmental strategic objectives.*

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to this report. I hope this information provides further clarification and evidence of NPRSR's response to the audit findings. Should you have queries or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Liz Young, Director from my office on 07 3033 0750.

Yours sincerely

18/10/12

Dr John Glaister
A/ Director-General

CC      **Steve Dickson MP**
        **Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing**
        PO Box 15187
        CITY EAST  QLD  4000

## Appendix B

### Follow up objective

The objective of the follow-up is to inform Parliament of the current status of the audit recommendations and whether changes the departments made address the issues originally raised.

### Follow up approach

Departments were asked to self-assess their progress in implementing each recommendation using the following criteria. They were also asked to provide comment on the progress they have made and their future plans.

- I - Recommendation has been fully implemented
- P - Recommendation has been partially implemented
- AA - Alternate action has been undertaken
- NA - No substantial action has been taken.

A desktop review of the self-assessments has been conducted and risk-based spot checks were performed to gain a level of comfort on the departments' representations.

# Auditor-General
# Reports to Parliament

Tabled in 2012-13

| Report number | Title of report | Date tabled in Legislative Assembly |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Racing Queensland Limited: audit by arrangement | July 2012 |

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