



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT **COMMITTEES**

Consideration of Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 – *2025 status of Auditor-General's recommendations*

Governance, Energy and Finance Committee



Report No. 21

58th Parliament, February 2026

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Governance, Energy and Finance Committee

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All references and webpages are current at the time of publishing.

Acknowledgements

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Chair's Foreword

Chair's Foreword - Consideration of Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26

The Governance, Energy and Finance Committee (committee) is responsible for considering the Auditor-General's reports to Parliament under section 94 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*. The Auditor-General's reports to Parliament assist the committee with assessing the integrity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness of government financial management.

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 – 2025 status of Auditor-General's recommendations which was referred to the committee for consideration on 16 October 2025.

I acknowledge the work of the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) to compile this report and all officers from government departments, hospital and health services, local councils and other relevant entities who have contributed to the implementation of the QAO's recommendations between 2016-17 and 2023-24.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Auditor-General and staff from the QAO for assisting the committee with fulfilling its oversight responsibilities regarding this report. I also thank the Parliamentary Service staff.

I commend this report to the House.



Michael Crandon MP

Chair

Executive Summary

This report presents the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee's (committee's) examination of Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 – 2025 *Status of Auditor-General's recommendations* (Report 3).

Report 3 documents the status of 362 recommendations made by the Queensland Audit Office to government entities between 2016-17 and 2023-24. It is based on entities' self-assessments of the progress they have made in implementing those recommendations. The report also identifies challenges that entities have reported in relation to implementation.

Report 3 shows that in the last year, government entities made significant progress in implementing recommendations, with 43 per cent of the recommendations examined in the report being fully implemented. However, progress in implementing recommendations was uneven. Certain types of recommendations were more commonly assessed as outstanding, while some entities reported more progress in implementation than others.

The committee observed that there appears to have been a decline in the rate of implementation of the Auditor-General's recommendations in the last few years. There are likely many reasons for this change and this could be explored further by the Auditor-General in future reports.

The committee made one recommendation, found on page v, that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of this report.

Recommendations

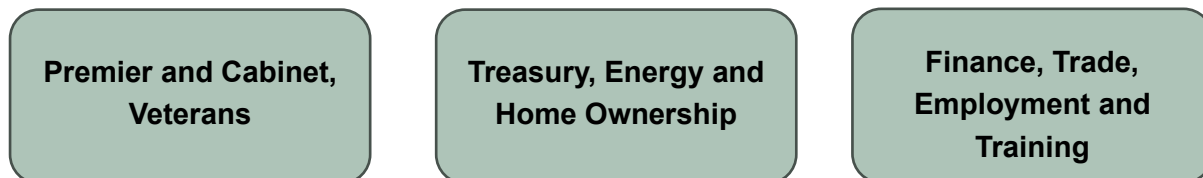
Recommendation 1 2

The committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of this report.

1. Role of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee

The Governance, Energy and Finance Committee (committee) of the 58th Parliament was established by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2024 as a portfolio committee.¹

The committee's portfolio areas of responsibility include:²



The committee's role also includes statutory oversight of the Auditor-General (along with a monitor and review function in relation to the performance of the functions of the Cross-Border Commissioner and Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland).³

1.1. Role of the Auditor-General

The Auditor-General, supported by the Queensland Audit Office (QAO), is parliament's independent auditor of all of Queensland's state and local government public sector entities. These entities include departments, government-owned corporations, statutory bodies, controlled entities, and the state's 77 councils.⁴

The Auditor-General provides the Parliament with independent assurance of public sector accountability and performance by reporting to Parliament on the results of its financial⁵ and performance⁶ audits.

1.2. Report to Parliament

As a portfolio committee, the committee is to consider a report of the Auditor-General referred to it by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly (CLA).⁷

On 16 October 2025, the CLA referred the Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 – 2025 *Status of Auditor-General's recommendations* (Report 3) to the committee for consideration.⁸

¹ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 88; Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, Standing Order (SO) 194.

² Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, SO 194, sch 6.

³ Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, SO 194, sch 6.

⁴ Queensland Audit Office (QAO), *Annual Report 2024-25*, p 2.

⁵ A financial audit assesses whether the information contained in the financial statements of public sector entities is accurate, can be relied upon and is prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and relevant legislative requirements: QAO, *Financial audit practice statement*, p 1.

⁶ A performance audit evaluates whether an agency or government program is achieving its objectives effectively, economically and efficiently, and is compliant with relevant legislation. It does not consider the merits of government policy. Rather, it focuses on how that policy is implemented: QAO, *Fact sheet – About QAO*, p 2.

⁷ Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, SO 194B.

⁸ Queensland Parliament, Record of proceedings, 16 October 2025, p 3216.



Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of this report.

2. Consideration of Report 3

2.1. Scope of Report 3

As part of their performance audits, QAO makes recommendations to state and local government entities to address issues identified in their audit reports. While QAO cannot make entities implement the recommendations, QAO tracks, reports and shares insights into the progress of implementation in this report and shares those findings with Parliament.⁹ QAO may also adjust their audit program to include an additional focus on those areas that emerge as a priority.¹⁰

To track the implementation of recommendations, QAO asks entities to self-assess their progress. This means QAO has not audited the actions entities have taken and cannot provide assurance over their responses.¹¹

Entities provided their self-assessments to QAO in May 2025. Accordingly, Report 3 reflects entities' progress in implementing the recommendations at that point in time.¹²

Report 3 provides insights from QAO's analysis of entities' reported progress against 362 individual recommendations. This comprised:

- 92 recommendations from 6 reports tabled in 2023-24
- 270 outstanding recommendations from 30 reports tabled between 2016-17 and 2022-23.¹³

The report also highlights common challenges and opportunities for the public sector and how entities can improve their systems and practices.

2.2. Summary of QAO findings

2.2.1. Overall progress in implementation

QAO found that entities covered by the report had made progress in implementing its recommendations. Entities reported that they had:

- fully implemented 43 per cent of the recommendations examined in the report
- partially implemented 52 per cent of the recommendations examined in the report

⁹ QAO, Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 – 2025 status of Auditor-General's recommendations, (Report 3), p 1.

¹⁰ See evidence received by the committee in relation to its oversight of the Auditor-General: Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 19 February 2025, p 2.

¹¹ QAO, Report 3, p 2.

¹² QAO, Report 3, p 2.

¹³ QAO, Report 3, p 1.

- not implemented 4 per cent of the recommendations examined in the report
- identified 1 per cent of the recommendations as no longer applicable.¹⁴

QAO also found that entities' progress in implementing recommendations is uneven. Progress has been better with respect to certain types of recommendations than others, and certain entities have made more progress in implementing outstanding recommendations than others. In addition, the rate of progress has varied depending on the age of QAO's recommendations. These issues are discussed further in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 below.

2.2.2. Progress in implementation – by type of recommendation

QAO classified outstanding recommendations into 11 categories:¹⁵



This includes a new category – service delivery – which QAO introduced because several of its 2023-24 reports made recommendations in this area. The titles of 3 other categories were revised to clarify what they include.¹⁶

QAO found that recommendations relating to strategic and operational planning, information systems and data management, and workforce capability and planning were the most common types of recommendations to remain outstanding. Together, they accounted for almost half (48 per cent) of outstanding recommendations.¹⁷ However, this does not mean that no progress was made in implementing those recommendations as entities reported that they had partially implemented 91 out of 97 outstanding recommendations falling into these 3 categories.¹⁸

¹⁴ QAO, Report 3, p 1.

¹⁵ QAO, Report 3, p 2.

¹⁶ Previous reports used the categories of governance, strategic planning, and regulation and oversight: QAO, Report 3, p 2.

¹⁷ QAO, Report 3, pp 1, 3.

¹⁸ This was calculated by the secretariat using data contained in Report 3: QAO, Report 3, pp 3, 4.

2.2.3. Progress in implementation – by age of recommendation

The data reported by QAO suggests that progress may have slowed with respect to the implementation of its older recommendations.

The number of outstanding recommendations from reports tabled between 2018-19 and 2022-23 roughly halved for each year, compared to last year.¹⁹ In contrast, limited progress has been made in implementing older recommendations, particularly recommendations made in two reports relating to local government in 2016-17 and 2017-18. In total, 19 recommendations from those reports remain outstanding, a decrease of 2 from last year.²⁰

2.2.4. Progress in implementation – by type of entity

Report 3 shows that progress in the implementation of QAO's recommendations varies significantly between types of entities. As illustrated in Table 1 below, while departments and Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) reported (on average) reasonably similar progress in implementation, local councils typically reported far less progress.

Table 1: Entities' self-reported progress

| Type of entity | Status of recommendations (%) | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | Fully implemented | Partially implemented | Not implemented | No longer applicable |
| Departments | 46 | 49 | 5 | 0 |
| Hospital and health services | 58 | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| Local councils | 26 | 63 | 8 | 3 |
| Other entities ²¹ | 38 | 58 | 2 | 2 |

Note: This table includes recommendations made in 2023-24 and outstanding from previous years.

Source: QAO, Report 3, Figures 2E, 2G, 2I and 2K.

i. Departments

Progress in the implementation of recommendations varied between government departments. Three departments reported they had fully implemented all recommendations covered by Report 3.²²

In contrast, some departments, including the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Justice made less progress, with both those entities reporting that most of the recommendations made to them (and covered by Report 3) remained outstanding.²³

¹⁹ QAO, Report 3, Figure 2C, p 7.

²⁰ QAO, Report 3, pp 1, 7-8.

²¹ This category includes statutory bodies and some other state entities: QAO, Report 3, p 14.

²² Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development; Department of State Development Infrastructure and Planning; and Queensland Treasury: QAO, Report 3, p 9.

²³ QAO, Report 3, pp 9-10.

ii. Hospital and health services

Hospital and health services' progress in implementation varied between QAO reports.²⁴ They reported, on average, good progress in implementing recommendations in Auditor-General Report 14: 2022-23 – *Health outcomes for First Nations people*.²⁵ In contrast, they reported limited progress on implementing recommendations from Auditor-General Report 5: 2022-23 – *Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence*.²⁶

iii. Local councils

Some local councils told QAO that they faced a variety of barriers to implementation of its recommendations, including high staff turnover, competing priorities, lack of expertise and capability, and old information technology systems.²⁷

Considering the rate of progress by local councils, QAO noted that it plans to undertake an audit on the sustainability of local government in 2025-26.²⁸

2.2.5. Departmental responses to QAO findings

In accordance with section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, QAO gave a copy of its report with an invitation to comment to the Premier and Minister for Veterans Affairs, the chief executive officers of the 79 entities that self-assessed their progress, and the Ministers to which those entities are responsible.²⁹

QAO received 9 responses, which are contained in Appendix A of Report 3. Eight responses came from departments.³⁰ The other response was from Redland City Council.³¹

These responses did not offer substantive commentary on Report 3. However, several departments provided updates on their progress in implementing outstanding recommendations.³²

²⁴ QAO, Report 3, pp 10-11.

²⁵ QAO, Report 3, p 11.

²⁶ QAO, Report 3, p 11.

²⁷ QAO, Report 3, p 8.

²⁸ QAO, Report 3, p 14.

²⁹ QAO, Report 3, p 17.

³⁰ These departments were the Department of Premier and Cabinet; Queensland Health; Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games; Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers; Department of Trade, Employment and Training; Queensland Police Service; and Queensland Corrective Services: QAO, Report 3, pp 18-29.

³¹ QAO, Report 3, p 30.

³² See the responses from the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers and Queensland Police Service: QAO, Report 3, pp 20-22, 24-25, 27-28.

Committee comment

The committee recognises that some of the recommendations made by QAO take time to implement properly. This can be due to a range of factors, such as the complexity of certain recommendations and, in some cases, the need to coordinate with other entities.

Accordingly, the committee encourages the Auditor-General, departments, HHSs, local councils and other relevant entities to continue working together to address the issues identified in the performance audits conducted by QAO.

2.3. Comparison of progress over time

Table 2, below, shows how entities have assessed their progress in implementing QAO's recommendations over time. It shows both the total number of recommendations assessed in each of QAO's reports on implementation tabled between 2021 and 2025 (i.e. Report 3 and its equivalents from prior years) as well as the percentage of recommendations that were assessed as fully implemented by different types of entities.

The data presented in Table 2 suggests that the rate at which entities are implementing recommendations made by QAO is declining over time.

In 2021, entities reported to QAO that they had fully implemented 72 per cent of recommendations assessed in the relevant report. In contrast, by 2025 this figure had declined to 43 per cent.³³

Report 3 does not provide an analysis of trends in implementation over time. As a result, the reasons for any decline in the rate of implementation have not been examined and are likely to be varied.

Table 2: Changes in rate of implementation over time

| Year report tabled | Recommendations assessed in report (#) | Recommendations self-assessed as fully implemented (%) | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|-------------|------|----------------|----------------|
| | | Overall | Departments | HHSs | Local councils | Other entities |
| 2025 | 362 | 43 | 46 | 58 | 26 | 38 |
| 2024 | 603 | 52 | 58 | 48 | 18 | 47 |
| 2023 | 678 | 64 | 72 | 64 | 34 | 48 |
| 2022 | 454 | 64 | 74 | 69 | 26 | 65 |
| 2021 | 447 | 72 | 84 | 66 | 29 | 100 |

Note 1: The status of recommendations is typically assessed by entities in the first half of the calendar year in which the relevant report is tabled. However, there is some variation in precisely when this occurs. For example, for Report 3, tabled in 2025, QAO received entities' self-assessments in May 2025 and reported progress at that point in time, while for the equivalent report tabled in 2023, QAO received

³³ QAO, Report 3, p 1; QAO, Report 4: 2020-21 – 2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations, p 2.

entities' self-assessments in June and August 2023.³⁴

Note 2: The entities included in the 'other entities' category vary significantly over time so it may not be appropriate to compare data for this category over time.

Source: QAO³⁵

One relevant factor may be the substantial number of recommendations made by QAO in reports tabled in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23, with an average of around 300 recommendations issued each year.³⁶ In contrast, between 2015-16 and 2019-20, QAO typically made around 150 recommendations each year.³⁷ Notably, in the last financial year assessed by Report 3 (being the 2023-24 financial year), QAO made 92 recommendations, a significant reduction.³⁸

Further, the scope of these reports has changed over time. In particular, for the report tabled in 2021, QAO reported on the status of implementations made in older reports tabled between 2015-16 and 2017-18.³⁹ This may have led to the higher percentage of recommendations being assessed as implemented in that report. Conversely, Report 3 includes recent recommendations made in 2023-24, some of which may take between 12 to 24 months to implement.

Committee comment



The committee notes that, based on the entities' self-assessments, the rate of implementation of the Auditor-general's recommendations appears to have declined between 2021 and 2025. The underlying causes of this decline are likely to be diverse.

It may be helpful for the Auditor-General to include further qualitative analysis of trends in implementation over time in future reports on the status of their recommendations. Such analysis could assist in identifying any systematic issues affecting the rate at which public entities implement recommendations.

³⁴ QAO, Report 3, p 133; QAO, Report 3: 2023-24 -2023 Status of Auditor-General's recommendations, p 150.

³⁵ QAO, Report 3; QAO, Report 1: 2024-25 – 2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations; QAO, Report 3: 2023-24 – 2023 status of Auditor-General's recommendations; QAO, Report 4: 2022-23 – 2022 status of Auditor-General's recommendations; QAO, Report 4: 2020-21 – 2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations.

³⁶ In 2022-23, QAO tabled reports making 375 individual recommendations. In 2021-22, QAO tabled reports making 237 recommendations. In 2020-21, the QAO tabled reports making 295 recommendations: QAO, Status of Auditor-General's recommendations dashboard, <https://www.qao.qld.gov.au/status-auditor-generals-recommendations-dashboard>.

³⁷ The annual number of recommendations varied between 118 (in 2017-18) and 214 (in 2018-19) in this window: QAO, Status of Auditor-General's recommendations dashboard, <https://www.qao.qld.gov.au/status-auditor-generals-recommendations-dashboard>.

³⁸ QAO, Report 3, p 1.

³⁹ QAO, Report 3; QAO, Report 1: 2024-25 – 2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations, p 3.

Statement of Reservation



Statement of Reservation

Governance, Energy and
Finance Committee

Auditor-General Report 3: 2025-26 - 2025
Status of Auditor-General's recommendations



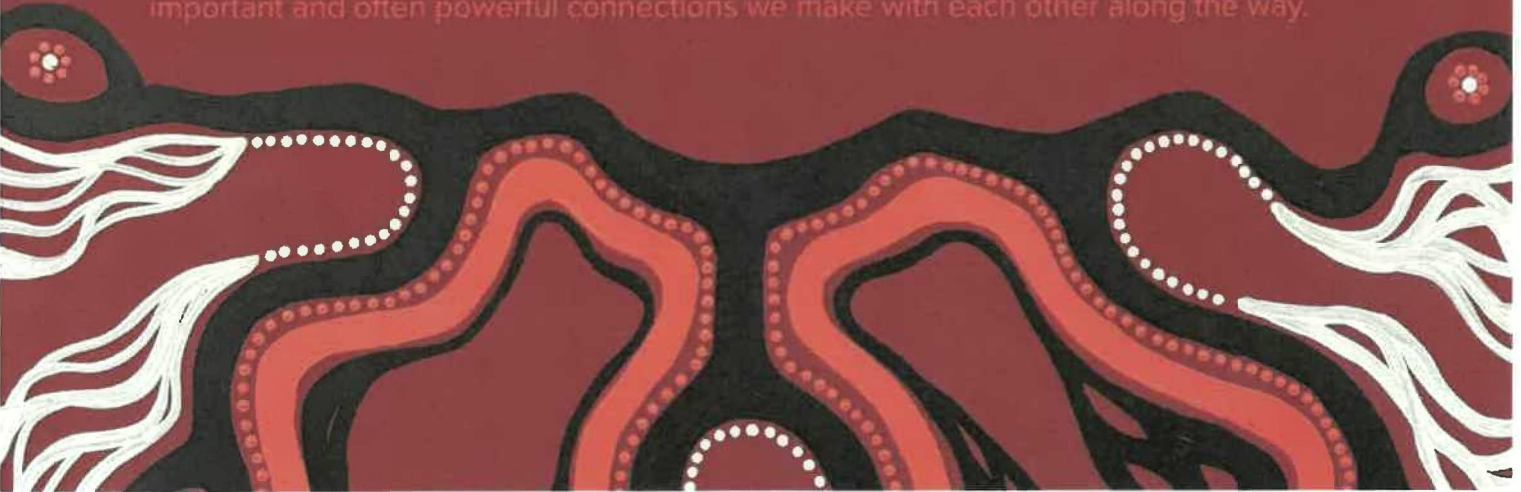


Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland.

We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This artwork by The Hon LEEANNE ENOCH MP is called "The Power of Many" from her "Connections" series. It represents the paths we take to reach our goals and the many important and often powerful connections we make with each other along the way.



Queensland Labor Opposition

The Queensland Audit Office Report Number 3: 2025-26 entitled “2025 status of Auditor-General’s recommendations” which was published on 8 October 2025 outlines the status of a number of recommendations from reports.

The Queensland Labor Opposition thanks the work undertaken by the Queensland Audit Office not only for this report, but all reports and investigations as they continue to ensure proper government and assist deliver an even better public service for Queenslanders.

The report covers recommendations including:

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and entities with mandatory reporting responsibilities establish a multi-disciplinary intake process for efficiently and effectively triaging all child harm reports. The intake process should integrate information from all relevant agencies, including non-government organisations, to assess the cumulative risk and to facilitate a shared responsibility for triaging and responding to all child harm reports. This should prioritise the immediate safety of the child and not delay the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women from immediately responding to a child harm report.

The report outlines that the status of the recommendation is “fully implemented” in respect of the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, where the department has stated in the “entity’s self-assessment response or where necessary a summary”:

*DFSDSCS enhanced its intake and assessment approach. The system provides opportunities for earlier needs assessment, targeted support, and issues resolution at various points of contact. The system has additional responses for families with a low risk of child harm who could receive support from other services. It focuses on identifying and assessing cumulative harm, helps professional notifiers to provide quality information, and enables information from all agencies to be integrated at intake. **The new system solution, Unify, now live, supports these process enhancements.***

It is clear from the public reporting that since the Unify system was turned on by the Crisafulli LNP Government in 2025, there has been serious problems, which have potentially put the lives of vulnerable Queensland children at risk.

It is clear that the actions of the Crisafulli LNP Government in turning on a Unify system and then the subsequent delayed response has not supported the enhanced processes in respect of intake and assessment, in fact it has potentially harmed the process and in turn harmed vulnerable Queensland children.

It is disappointing that there were no public hearings in respect of this report, because it is important to let the sunshine in in relation to what led up to the turning on of the Unify system by the Crisafulli LNP Government and their subsequent decisions and actions, which

in the view of the Queensland Labor Opposition have been deficient and potentially negligent.

The Queensland Labor Opposition and the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee have written previously to the Queensland Audit Office to expedite their review and assessment of the Unify rollout under the Crisafulli LNP Government and the Queensland Labor Opposition echoes and reaffirms this call to do so. Particularly in light of the Crisafulli LNP Government's recent action of terminating the Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety early, which would have had the ability to look into the turning on of the Unity system under the Crisafulli LNP Government and the steps that occurred thereafter.



CHRIS WHITING MP
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DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE



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