Performance Audit Reports Tabled in Parliament Since Volume Five of 2007

We have tabled one performance audit report in Parliament since Volume Five 2007 of our New South Wales Auditor-General's Report on financial audits.

Our findings and recommendations for any performance audit reports can be found on our website www.audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/reports/performance/performance_reports.htm.

POLICE ROSTERING: NSW POLICE FORCE

In this audit we reviewed whether the general duties roster supports efficient and effective policing.

Key Findings

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) adopted flexible rosters in 1995 to better match police numbers with workload and to provide officers with extra rest days. Flexible rosters mix the length and start-time of shifts to maximise capacity.

While some commands roster more police on busier nights, most general duties shifts are 12-hours long, start around 6.00 am and 6.00 pm and are worked in blocks. As a consequence both the community and police are missing out on some of the benefits that flexible rosters could provide.

Although a number of factors affect performance, the rigidity of the roster increases the risk that police may be unable to attend calls quickly, provide good customer service and protect the well-being of officers.

The NSWPF is currently reviewing the impact of the roster on officer welfare and is developing a fatigue management policy. The NSWPF needs to ensure that rosters balance the needs of the community, victims of crime, the Force itself and officers.

The report was tabled in Parliament on 5 December 2007.