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## MEDIA RELEASE AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

### Major IT project 9 years late and over budget

The NSW Auditor-General, Mr Peter Achterstraat, today announced that a major IT project that commenced in 2001 is still not completed and is unlikely to be finished until 2014.

"It is now 9 years late, \$23 million over budget, and will return less than one third of the original estimated net savings. This is simply not good enough", Mr Achterstraat said.

The government has been working on a project to centralise licences that are required by the people of NSW. It is a good concept and will make applying for and renewing a licence much easier. The Government Licensing Project intends to simplify the licensing processes of all licensing agencies except for the Roads and Traffic Authority.

These were some of the findings that were released today by the NSW Audit Office in a report into the *'Government Licensing Project'*. This report discusses the problems and achievements of the project. The lessons learnt from the history of this project can be applied to its future as well as to any large scale whole of government project.

It is not all bad news Mr Achterstraat outlined: "To date it has been implemented in six agencies responsible for 1.7 million licences. It has so far replaced 15 legacy systems and consolidated 102 licence types to 55."

Mr Achterstraat called for change: "Put simply, this is poor project management. I recommend that all staff responsible for managing any large-scale projects read this report to learn from the problems encountered and mistakes made during this project."

"What concerns me is that this is not the first time my Office has raised issues about government IT projects. Most notably, in 2003 my Office reported numerous problems with the governance and implementation of another large IT system - Sydney Water's Customer Information and Billing System, he added.

Mr Achterstraat summarised the report by stating:

"A centralised licensing system is a good idea. But this project has gone on for too long and should be completed as soon as possible. The people of NSW deserve to have more flexibility and convenience in applying for, renewing, and paying for licences. It really is basic 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology and service."

#### Further Information

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