

Corporate Plan



Our vision

Our insights inform and challenge government to improve outcomes for citizens.

Our purpose

To help parliament hold government accountable for its use of public resources.

Our values



PURPOSE

We have impact, are accountable and work as a team.



PEOPLE

We trust and respect others and have a balanced approach to our work.



PROFESSIONALISM

We are recognised for our independence and integrity and the value we deliver.

Who we are

We hold a privileged position as one of a small number of independent agencies that provide the checks and balances integral to our system of government.



We report directly to the Parliament of New South Wales on financial reporting, performance and controls, on governance and on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of NSW Government agencies, universities and councils.

We are an organisation of around 270 highly professional and committed staff and we partner with a number of private sector specialists to ensure our audits and reports are of the highest standard.

What we do

Our core business is the conduct of audits and reporting our findings from this work to the Parliament of New South Wales.

Each year this sees us carrying out almost 600 statutory financial audits of NSW Government agencies', universities' and councils' financial statements. These audits are fundamental to building community trust in the public sector organisations that regulate and deliver infrastructure or services for the citizens of this State.

We also conduct around 20 performance audits in any one year. Performance audits assess whether public money is spent efficiently, effectively, economically and in accordance with the law. Our performance audits are relied upon to 'tell it like it is' and for the insights they provide to help government organisations improve outcomes for the people of New South Wales.

From time to time we also conduct special reviews that seek to confirm that specific legislation, directions and regulations have been adhered to by government entities.

We go out of our way to engage with our key stakeholders to share the insights derived from our work and to ensure that our contribution remains relevant and timely.

Our key stakeholders



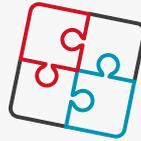
PARLIAMENT
OF NEW
SOUTH WALES



THE PEOPLE
OF NEW
SOUTH WALES



NSW
COUNCILS



NSW
GOVERNMENT
ENTITIES



NSW
UNIVERSITIES

The work we do is to ultimately benefit the community. Our primary stakeholder is the NSW Parliament that represents the people of New South Wales.

We report directly to parliament as the elected representatives of NSW citizens.

We aim to work constructively with our audit clients ensuring there are no surprises and that we understand their organisational context and objectives.

Our operating environment

The Audit Office has a proud history stretching back to 1824. Our core purpose, to scrutinise and hold government to account, has not wavered in all that time.

That said, our mandate, powers and approach has changed from time to time and will need to continue to adapt to reflect the changing environment in which we operate.



BIG PICTURE

Increasing expectations of government service delivery

Making our objective analyses and transparent reporting even more important today than ever before in order to ensure trust in government.

Digital disruption and cyber security

We need to keep pace with rapidly changing technologies that present opportunities, particularly in the application of big data and automation, but also threats to security and privacy.

Governments working more through non-government agencies

Our challenge is to ensure we can still provide assurance that the services government is paying for are delivered as intended.

A greater focus on outcomes measurement

The parliament and community would benefit from our independent assurance of agency performance statements.



NSW SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Some of the immediate challenges facing us here in New South Wales include:

- record high spending on infrastructure
- local government reform, including making the Auditor-General the auditor of all local councils from October 2016
- equitable planning for future generations
- managing energy, natural resources and the environment.

These challenges influence our agency risk assessments and choice of audit topics.



WORKFORCE

And like all organisations, we need to live within our means, constantly striving for efficiencies and continuously improving everything we do.

We want to create a vibrant and challenging workplace that engages our staff and ensures we can employ and retain the best and brightest in a highly competitive market.

The Audit Office will continuously examine how we operate to be reflective of the changing world, deliver greater public value, and be more appealing for employees.

Our strategic risks

We manage key risks that reflect our operating environment and are specific to achieving our vision.

We accept there is some inherent risk in our activities and acknowledge that accepting a certain level of risk helps us develop, improve and make good use of opportunities as they arise.

Our risk appetite in the conduct of audit activities is low, while we have a more moderate appetite for risk in our corporate and management activities.

Our strategic risks are:



1.

Our insights are not relevant and do not result in a demonstrable improvement in public administration.



2.

Our audits are not defensible resulting in lost credibility, trust and confidence by government and the public.



3.

We do not act according to our own ethical standards and are not transparent and beyond reproach damaging our reputation.



4.

We are not efficient such that we don't keep pace in a contestable environment.



5.

We cannot develop or access required capabilities compromising our ability to achieve our objectives.

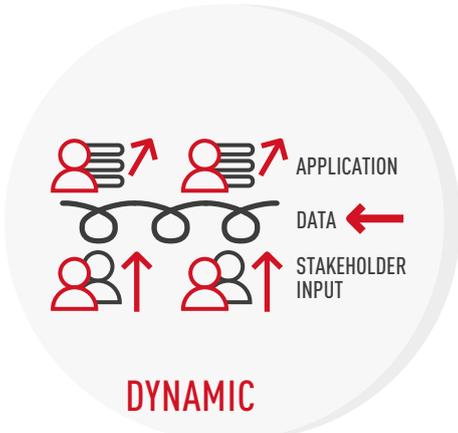


6.

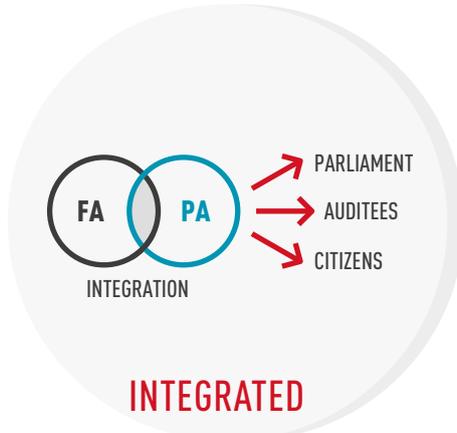
We lose confidential information (including client and personal staff information) resulting in legal or regulatory breaches, or reputational damage.

How we want to operate

To achieve our vision we need to operate in a way that reflects the changing nature of work, the worker and the workplace.



Moving from an operational model that is highly structured, working to strictly defined peaks and troughs to a more dynamic model. This will allow us to leverage data and stakeholder input to undertake more timely and relevant audits.



Bringing together our financial and performance audit skills and knowledge to deliver value for parliament, clients and citizens.



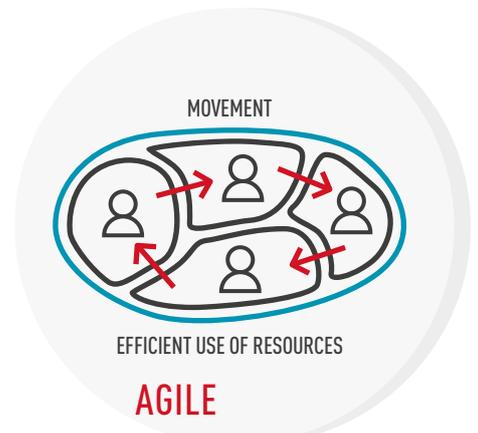
Moving from a process focus to a focus on generating relevant insights and outcomes. If we are to adapt our methods to deliver these insights, we will need to allow for different audit approaches.



Moving from an ethos of separation - separate teams, roles, contract auditors and stakeholders - to one of connection where we collaborate and engage both across our teams and with our external partners and stakeholders.



Moving from providing highly structured career paths for our employees to a learning environment that develops potential beyond the traditional career ladder, including moving between teams and fostering experience outside the Audit Office.



Encouraging our staff to move beyond their physical and professional work areas in an agile workplace that promotes creativity, collaboration, flexibility and diversity.

Our strategic objectives

We focus our effort and measure our success against four strategic objectives that take into account our operating environment, our strategic risks and the way we want to operate.



PRODUCTS

Our insights are trusted as independent, relevant, timely and impactful, and they make a positive contribution to government financial reporting and performance. Our partnerships with stakeholders will be responsive and value-adding.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

Our people are diverse, dynamic, agile and insightful and work in a collaborative and constructive environment. They are connected to each other and our stakeholders, and are developed to be leaders in their field.



SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

Our innovative technology, systems and processes are integrated, efficient and improve organisational performance. We have the capability and capacity to keep pace with a fast-changing world.



FINANCES

Our financial frameworks are fiscally responsible, future-focused, and ensure our sustainability.

How we will get there

We have six strategic initiatives that will help us achieve our vision and strategic objectives.



PRODUCTS

Influencing for Impact

The Audit Office has a strong desire to engage effectively with all our external stakeholders to ensure we deliver audits that are of a high quality and lead to improved public sector reporting and performance. Our immediate focus in this initiative is building a new, more functional website, and in the longer term, to develop an impactful stakeholder engagement strategy.

Local Government

The Auditor-General was appointed the auditor of local government from 2016-17. This initiative is focused on developing our capacity to deliver high quality audit services to the local government sector into the future. Key areas of focus include developing a commissioning strategy, and implementing tools to enable better engagement and information sharing with local councils.

Data Analytics

This initiative seeks to use data analytics to improve audit insights. We will develop a data analytics strategy that will identify and define how data will be used. A data dashboard that uses data visualisation to enhance key messages in our first local government report to parliament will provide a pilot for future development of other sector data dashboards.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

Working Better, Working Together

This initiative is focused on defining what our work will look like in the future, the capabilities we will need, and the culture and conditions we will need to create. A key focus is creating a new, modern office space that enables collaboration, integration and more agile ways of working. We will also ensure our people work in an environment of diversity and empowerment, supported by clear and focused leadership.



SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

Reporting Process

In this initiative, we will build streamlined, efficient processes that support the production of clear, concise and insightful reports. This includes developing an all-of-office reporting process and timetable, a more modern and streamlined report design, and implementing collaborative reporting tools to ensure the report production process runs more smoothly.

Technology and Process Innovation

Continuously improving our systems and processes is crucial to ensure our sustainability, and the efficiency and effectiveness of our work. The key areas of focus of this initiative will be the replacement of our data centre, the uplift of our cyber security, and developing a robust corporate reporting framework.

The detailed projects and activities underpinning these strategic initiatives can be found in our Future State Roadmap 2017-2020 on our website.

Measures of success

We regularly survey clients and benchmark against other audit offices. The key current measures of success against our strategic objectives are set out below.



Parliamentarians are satisfied with our reports and services.



Parliamentarians agree we operate independently from government.



Auditees believe that performance audits help them improve the performance of the audited activity.



Auditees value the assurance obtained from our audit of statutory financial statements.



PRODUCTS

20 PERFORMANCE AUDITS COMPLETED

590 FINANCIAL AUDITS COMPLETED

1,315 TOTAL ASSURANCE ENGAGEMENTS

We meet or do better than our budgeted result for the year.

We generate a net cash inflow from our operating activities.

FINANCES



Measures of success



PEOPLE & CULTURE

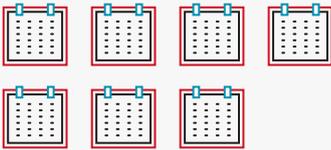


Employee satisfaction.



Employee engagement.

7 TRAINING DAYS
PER STAFF
MEMBER



MIDDLE &
EXECUTIVE
MANAGEMENT
POSITIONS HELD
BY WOMEN.

SYSTEMS & PROCESSES



Audit staff available
hours charged to
audit.



Financial audits
are completed
within 10 weeks of
receiving financial
reports.



Audits conclusions
are supportable as
per Independent
Quality Assurance
Program.

100%

FINANCIAL AUDITS ARE
REPORTED TO PARLIAMENT
WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF YEAR END

OUR VISION

Our insights inform and challenge government to improve outcomes for citizens.

OUR PURPOSE

To help parliament hold government accountable for its use of public resources.

OUR VALUES

Purpose - we have an impact, are accountable, and work as a team.

People - we trust and respect others and have a balanced approach to work.

Professionalism - we are recognised for our independence and integrity and the value we deliver.

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