

# AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

## PERFORMANCE AUDIT

### Coordination of Rescue Services

### State Rescue Board of New South Wales



The Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

The Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

In accordance with section 38E of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, I present a report titled **Coordination of Rescue Services: State Rescue Board of New South Wales**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R J Sendt'.

R J Sendt  
Auditor-General

Sydney  
July 2005

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## **Foreword**

Nearly 11,000 rescues are carried out each year in New South Wales, the majority involving motor vehicle accidents.

In metropolitan areas we have three emergency services providing general land rescue - NSW Police, the Ambulance Service and the NSW Fire Brigades. The two volunteer services, the State Emergency Service and the Volunteer Rescue Association, generally cover the remainder of the State.

Rescue arrangements in NSW are different to all other mainland states. Elsewhere, the trend in metropolitan areas has been towards consolidation with only one provider of rescue services.

The State Rescue Board of NSW was set up in 1989. Its primary role is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the State.

In this audit we examined how well placed the Board was to provide assurance to Parliament and the community that the organisation of rescue services in NSW best serves those in need of rescuing.

NSW deserves a clear and unequivocal answer on such an important issue. However, the issues are complex, often strongly argued, and generally there is insufficient relevant information upon which to make judgements about performance and value. This report outlines a way forward.

Bob Sendt  
Auditor-General

July 2005



## Executive summary

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## Executive summary

There are five providers of land rescue services in NSW: three permanent services, namely NSW Police, Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Fire Brigades, and two volunteer organisations, the State Emergency Service and the Volunteer Rescue Association.

Today there are 326 rescue units across the State, each with its own designated response area, and in 2003-04 they responded to 10,876 rescues. Over one-third of these were undertaken by the NSW Fire Brigades, and two-thirds were motor accident rescues. Overall coordination of the various providers rests with the State Rescue Board (the Board).

This audit examines the extent of strategic planning for land rescue and how the Board assigns rescue units and establishes and maintains minimum service levels.

We do not comment on which agency or agencies should be providing rescue services, nor do we evaluate the performance of individual providers in regard to rescue.

## Audit opinion

The number of agencies and volunteer organisations involved in rescue presents challenges to how best to coordinate services. To address this issue, the Government established the Board. This was an effective initiative in our view.

The Board has established policies and procedures that:

- effectively coordinate single incident rescue
- establish minimum requirements for equipment and training
- remove confusion over areas of responsibility.

This was not always the case, and the Board has been successful in facilitating change. The next challenge that we consider the Board needs to address is: are rescue services arranged so as to perform effectively and in the most economical way?

It may be that they are. But at present the Board is not in a position to be confident about this, as it is not provided with enough detailed information on how best to arrange rescue and on rescue performance.

Comparisons with other jurisdictions suggest that whilst current arrangements operate adequately, other ways of organising rescue are worth careful examination.

The Board has recognised the need for better information on performance and has recently introduced minimum reporting standards for road rescue. We agree with the Board's approach and would like to see this extended to include all rescue types and reporting against service standards.



We also believe that the Board should be able to assure the Government that arrangements for rescue in NSW are optimal. Although several reviews over a number of years have recommended reduction in the number of rescue providers in metropolitan areas, a lack of information has meant that the Board has been unable to settle the issue. This should be done.

## Summary of recommendations

### Develop a strategic approach to rescue

It is recommended that the Board:

- collect data on rescue performance and cost over the next 12 months to inform the planning process (page 19)
- use this data to develop an overarching strategy for land rescue that recommends to the Government who the providers of rescue should be (page 19)
- use the strategy to review current arrangements and develop a five year plan to implement rescue arrangements which align with the strategy (page 19)
- develop a risk management framework to assist committees in assessing applications for accreditation (page 24).

If data on rescue performance indicates immediate opportunities for improvement these should be addressed by the Board.

### Introduce service standards

It is recommended that the Board develop response time standards for metropolitan and rural rescue services to guide committees in determining the number, type and location of rescue units (page 25).

### Enhance accreditation criteria

It is recommended that the Board:

- include time standards for responding to an incident in accreditation standards (page 29)
- revisit the need for specific accreditation criteria for various rescue activities (page 29).

### Improve information on performance

It is recommended that providers supply data to the Board:

- for each rescue attended, the location and type of incident, turnout time, response time and time when available for re-tasking (page 30)
- on the cost of rescue (page 25).

### Improve compliance

It is recommended that the Board:

- require the Chief Executive of each rescue provider to certify on an annual basis that all rescue units comply with the Board's accreditation standards (page 31)
- develop an audit program to test compliance with accreditation standards (page 31).

## Audit findings

### Chapter 1 Introduction

Since the 1940s, the three permanent services (NSW Police, the Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Fire Brigades) have established rescue units where they considered there was a need and where they had spare capacity to undertake rescue operations.

Volunteer units were established by the State Emergency Service (SES) and the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA), mainly in rural areas.

Until the late 1980s, no one agency had responsibility for the coordination of land rescue, and there were no standards in place for practices or equipment. There was reportedly over-responding by rescue units to incidents and disputes over which service had authority at the scene.

The *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* and the subsequent establishment of the Board addressed these problems. Police were made responsible for coordinating and determining priorities at a rescue, and the Board was made responsible for recommending to the Minister which rescue units should be accredited.

Today there are 326 accredited rescue units, each with a designated response area.

### Chapter 2 Developing a strategic approach to rescue

The primary role of the Board is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the state.

The Board recommends the accreditation of suitably qualified and equipped providers to undertake rescue. It also assigns providers a geographical region in which the provider is responsible for responding to rescue calls.

What is missing from rescue is an overarching strategy or plan to ensure that the current division of responsibilities across the five providers leads to optimal service delivery. We have seen very few changes in rescue arrangements since 1990.

We still have three permanent services involved in land rescue. In contrast, we found that most other jurisdictions have moved to having a single provider, generally the Fire Brigades, undertake land rescue in metropolitan areas.

There is no reliable and consistent information on what it costs the permanent services to provide rescue. There is insufficient information on which to offer an opinion on whether or not rescue is efficient or effective.

What arrangements are best suited for NSW is not known, but an overarching plan for service delivery would help guide the Board in deciding who the providers of rescue should be in order to maximise efficiency and effectiveness and avoid duplication and waste.

### Chapter 3 Planning for rescue

The Board relies on local and district rescue committees to assess risks and advise it when changes are needed.

We agree that committees are best placed to do this.

However, it is rare for a local committee to review rescue coverage and performance and to approach the Board for additional resources. Generally, local committees respond to requests for accreditation from potential providers.

Currently, there is nothing available to guide committees in conducting local hazard assessment or threat analysis that would indicate if additional rescue units were required and where units should be located.

Also, there are no minimum performance standards for rescue such as response time. Committees are not able to judge whether their existing rescue units have capacity to deal effectively with changes in demand or whether capacity exceeds requirements.

**Chapter 4**  
**Achieving an**  
**effective response**

The principal aim of rescue is to minimise the consequence of injuries arising from an incident.

Rescue providers must be able to respond in a timely manner and have appropriately trained operators and the necessary equipment to undertake rescue.

Only accredited providers can respond to calls for assistance. The Board has developed criteria, addressing operator skill levels, essential equipment and communications, that providers must meet in order to be accredited for rescue.

However, in regard to assuring that providers can respond in a timely manner, the accreditation criteria only require the provider to respond in an 'acceptable' time. That time is not defined. The Board needs to expand accreditation criteria to include actual performance standards reflecting differences between metropolitan, rural and remote locations, for responding to an incident including turnout time, response time and time when available for re-tasking.

In order to retain accreditation, providers must maintain the skills of operators and ensure equipment and vehicles comply with standards. Yet there is no obligation for a provider to advise the Board if compliance may be at risk.

There are also no agreed standards or targets for rescue performance against which providers are required to report. There is a risk that neither the Board nor its committees would be aware of changes affecting a provider and its ability to respond to an incident.

## Response from State Rescue Board of New South Wales

*Thank you for providing me with a copy of the Audit Office's Performance Audit of the Coordination of Rescue Services and the opportunity to comment on its findings. The Report has been provided to all State Rescue Board members and the views of their agencies are broadly incorporated in this response.*

*I would like to thank the Audit Office for undertaking the Audit, which provides an external perspective of the operations of the Board and its Secretariat, and has helped to identify possible improvements to the provision of rescue services to the people of NSW. The Board members appreciated the consultative approach taken by the Audit Office staff, both in conducting the Audit and preparing this Report.*

*The State Rescue Board was established in 1990 and has overseen the stable and successful provision of rescue services in the intervening 15 years. At its first meeting, the Board recommended to the then Minister for Police and Emergency Services the accreditation of 212 primary and 135 secondary land rescue units. This has remained largely unchanged, with a minor reduction in the number of rescue units to 197 primary and 129 secondary. Most change has been in the Sydney metropolitan area, where there has been a reduction of 15 primary units.*

*These changes largely occurred before 1993 and while some units have changed title or been raised from secondary to primary or vice versa, there have been very few major changes since that time. The Board deals with very few new applications for land rescue accreditation, having recommended only four in the past 10 years.*

*The Board is supported in its role by local and district rescue committees across the State. The Report's statement that "there is a risk that neither the Board nor its committees would be aware of changes affecting a provider and its ability to respond" needs to be placed in perspective. These committees, comprising representatives of the agencies involved in rescue services in their respective local areas, regularly discuss local operations. The emergency service community is a very close grouping and agencies are well aware of difficulties one local body may be facing. Where necessary, minor difficulties can be resolved and temporary arrangements agreed in these forums. Only major issues are referred to the Board for information or resolution.*

*With an average of about 8,000 rescue call-outs a year, there have been about 120,000 rescue responses since the current arrangements were set in place in 1990. The effectiveness of the current rescue arrangements is seen in the extremely low level of complaint over 15 years, with only one incident in which the Coroner later questioned the effectiveness of the rescue arrangements.*

*The Board supports the majority of the recommendations of the Performance Audit Report but in doing so notes that their implementation could in some cases pose significant challenges to both the Board and participating agencies.*

The Board will consider the implementation of the Audit Report recommendations in conjunction with those made in a review of the current State Rescue Policy, which the Board commissioned in 2004 and received earlier this year. This review, undertaken by the Chair of the State Emergency Management Committee, Major General Hori Howard, is yet to be considered in detail by the Board, as it was considered prudent to await the outcome of the Performance Audit and consider both reports together.

It is important to note that a number of the Audit Report's recommendations have already been largely addressed. These include:

- The Report recommends the Board develop a risk management framework to assist committees in assessing applications for accreditation. The State Emergency Management Committee has already developed a Risk Management Framework that could be suitable for, and available to, all local and district rescue committees.
- The Report recommends that the Board revisit the need for specific accreditation criteria for various rescue activities. Following the review of the accreditation of specialist units, the Board tasked the Training Advisory Panel to work with the units on the development of agreed training standards. This process is ongoing.
- The Report recommends that rescue providers certify unit compliance with accreditation standards and develop an audit program. The agencies, in accordance with a Board resolution, already conduct a rolling inspection program of their units on an annual basis. The requirement for the chief executives to certify compliance is also a recommendation of the Board's policy review.

The Board has made a number of other observations in relation to the Report and its recommendations.

The Board has not until now considered that it has had a strategic role, rather seeing its task as working within Government policy which since 1990 has involved five individual providers.

However, the collection of the rescue performance and financial data that is recommended may provide the Board with sufficient material to make strategic recommendations on service providers to Government.

While there may be scope to reduce the number of rescue providers and rescue units, the Board advises that this will require significant stakeholder consultation. For example, there are 60 accredited units in the major metropolitan areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, which are the areas of the highest workload and the greatest risk of major incidents. While the number of units in these areas may exceed that which might be justified if unit locations were to be based on response time criteria, the Board considers the potential demand in these areas requires the maintenance of a "surge" capacity, particularly in a counter-terrorism context.

*In rural areas there is likely to be little scope to rationalise the 266 accredited units. Units are located where local communities have both the capacity and the will to support a rescue unit. Volunteer rescue units usually fulfil a broader community role and could not be closed on an arbitrary response time-efficiency basis.*

*The development of performance indicators for different rescue operations (for example, road, vertical and marine rescue) has proved a challenging task, as illustrated by the Productivity Commission's similar difficulties in the national forum. The Board is continuing to collect data the Commission has requested on individual rescue units' workloads in terms of number of rescues and personnel involved and will continue work to develop appropriate performance indicators.*

*The Report has recommended enhanced accreditation criteria, including time standards and specific criteria for different kinds of rescue. The Board has in place extensive operational criteria. In order to obtain and maintain accreditation, a unit is required to have the specified number of trained and current operators, the minimum serviceable equipment level as set out in the Rescue Policy, a registered vehicle, an operating communications system and a system to ensure an appropriate response when called out by the Rescue Coordinator in Police Communications.*

*While monitoring and reviewing turn-out and response times would be useful additional information, the Board is of the view that it would not be appropriate to set response time standards in the short term. Standards would need to be developed that recognise the differences between rural and metropolitan resource availability, travel times, distances to be travelled and safety issues. .*

*Again, the Board thanks the Audit Office for its consultative and constructive approach to this Review.*

*(signed)*

*Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM  
Chairman*

*Dated: 8 July 2005*

## 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Changes to land rescue

Since the 1940s, the three permanent services (NSW Police, the Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Fire Brigades) have established rescue units where they considered there was a need and where they had spare capacity to undertake rescue operations.

Volunteer units were established by the State Emergency Service (SES) and the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA), mainly in rural areas.

Until the late 1980s, no one agency had responsibility for the coordination of land rescue, and there were no standards in place for practices or equipment. There was no common legislation covering rescue, with each service being authorised by its own legislation to conduct rescue.

There was no minimum standard of equipment or training for rescue units. There were reports of over-response to incidents, with rescue units of several services attending the same incident, and of disputes between rescue crews of different services. The authority of the senior Police officer at the scene was apparently often challenged.

In 1988, the Government requested a review of rescue services to determine which organisations should be involved in rescue, their roles and functions and who should be responsible for coordination and control of rescue operations.

In March 1989 the Government approved a major restructuring of the rescue services and emergency management arrangements in NSW and introduced the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* establishing the State Rescue Board (the Board). The Act:



- assigns NSW Police responsibility for coordinating providers at the scene of a rescue
- assigns the Board responsibility for establishing rescue standards and regulating rescue units
- makes it an offence for non-accredited rescue units to respond to a rescue without NSW Police approval.

In implementing changes to rescue the Government:

- reduced the number of rescue units
- assigned each accredited rescue provider a geographical area within which it could be called out.

These improvements effectively eliminated the problems which faced rescue. Excessive responses, with multiple rescue units competing at the rescue scene, no longer occur. All services involved accept Police authority for coordinating rescue operations, and there is a level of cooperation between the services which was previously absent.



## 1.2 Governance arrangements

The principal function of the Board is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the state. The Board is made up of eight members representing each of the providers, the State Emergency Operations Controller and representatives of the NSW Rural Fire Service and Volunteer Marine Rescue Council of NSW. The Board is currently chaired by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

The Board met on four occasions in 2003-04. The main functions of the Board are to:

- develop policies to promote comprehensive, balanced and coordinated rescue services throughout the State
- review planning for single incident rescues within the State
- provide technical information relating to rescue operations to providers, including advice on rescue and communications equipment
- recommend to the Minister rescue units to be accredited
- monitor the training standards of providers.

The Board is supported by District and Local Rescue Committees. The functions of these committees are to:

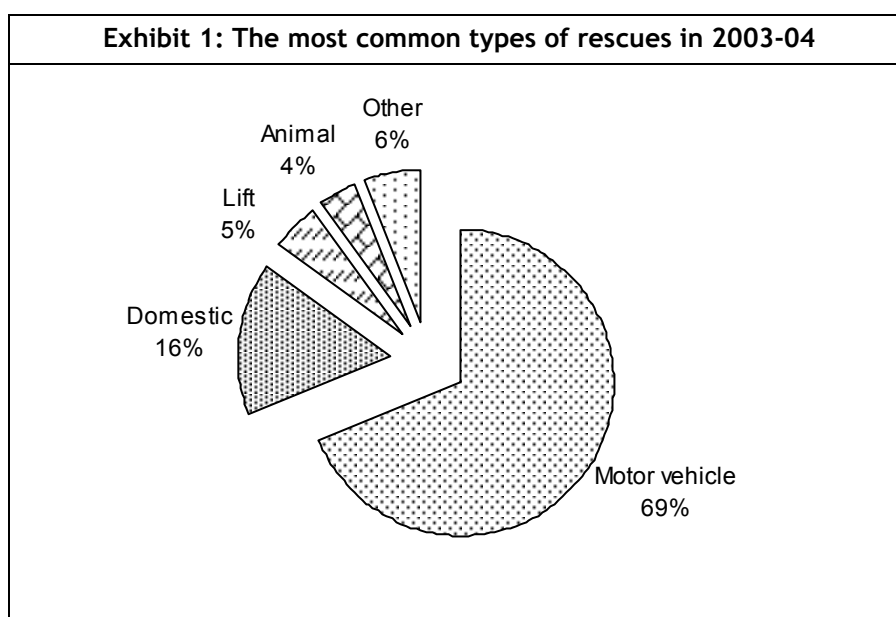
- implement the policy directions of the Board
- coordinate and review planning for rescue
- make recommendations to the Board on the accreditation of rescue units
- identify and arrange for training and conduct training exercises in rescue operations.

## 1.3 What is a rescue?

The Act defines rescue as the safe removal of persons or domestic animals from actual or threatened danger of physical harm. In practice, two-thirds of rescues are in response to motor vehicle accidents.

A rescue may be initiated either by a call to 000 by a civilian or by the first emergency service, NSW Police, Ambulance Service of NSW or NSW Fire Brigades, that arrives at the scene of an incident.

All calls requesting rescue services are directed to the Police Communications Centre's Rescue Coordinator (RCO) who dispatches the appropriate accredited rescue unit by contacting the service provider's operations centre.



Source: NSW Police

The great majority of rescue incidents involve a team response from Ambulance Service of NSW, NSW Fire Brigades and NSW Police as well as the rescue unit. The rescue unit may belong to any of the five organisations. A rescue crew's role is to assist the ambulance crew gain safe access to the patient, to extricate trapped patients and to assist the ambulance crew to remove them from the site if required. The rescue unit will attend the incident in addition to any other service providers.

All but the most minor incidents will involve a person who may be injured. While the rescue unit is trying to extricate the patient in such cases, ambulance officers will triage, determine priorities of clinical care, provide initial and on-going treatment and advise rescue operators about the timing and priority of release of patients based on clinical condition. Upon release the ambulance officers will transport patients to the most appropriate hospital for their clinical condition.

If there is risk of fire at the rescue incident, for example in some motor vehicle accidents, the NSW Fire Brigades or the NSW Rural Fire Service will attend. If there is a risk of a hazardous chemical spill, for example an industrial incident, the NSW Fire Brigades attend.

NSW Police attend most incidents. The Act provides that the senior Police officer present at the scene of a rescue is responsible for coordinating the agencies engaged in the rescue operation. Depending on the incident, the Police may also be required to control access to the site and to control traffic.

**Exhibit 2: A significant rescue operation**

On 4 May 2004 near the small township of Baan Baa, 30 kilometres south of Narrabri, a collision between the CountryLink Explorer train and a motor vehicle with the subsequent derailment of part of the train necessitated a major multi-agency rescue response. There were 33 passengers and three crew on board the train at the time of the collision. Rescue units from VRA Narrabri, SES Boggabri and Gunnedah attended along with NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire Brigades, Ambulance Service of NSW and NSW Police. A number of passengers had to be rescued from the train, and a deceased person was extricated from the motor vehicle. Five people were taken to hospital and in total 15 passengers were treated for various injuries at the scene.

Source: State Rescue Board Annual Report 2003-04

**1.4 Rescue today**

Rescue units are accredited as either primary units, those called out to respond first to rescue incidents in their area, or secondary units, those which respond when the primary unit is already committed or otherwise unavailable.

One of the Board's principles of accreditation is that for each area in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, the primary unit accredited should preferably be one of the permanent service providers (Police, Ambulance or Fire Brigades) rather than one of the volunteer services.

There are currently 197 primary and 129 secondary accredited general land rescue units in NSW. Of these 326 units, 92 are also accredited for vertical rescue operations.

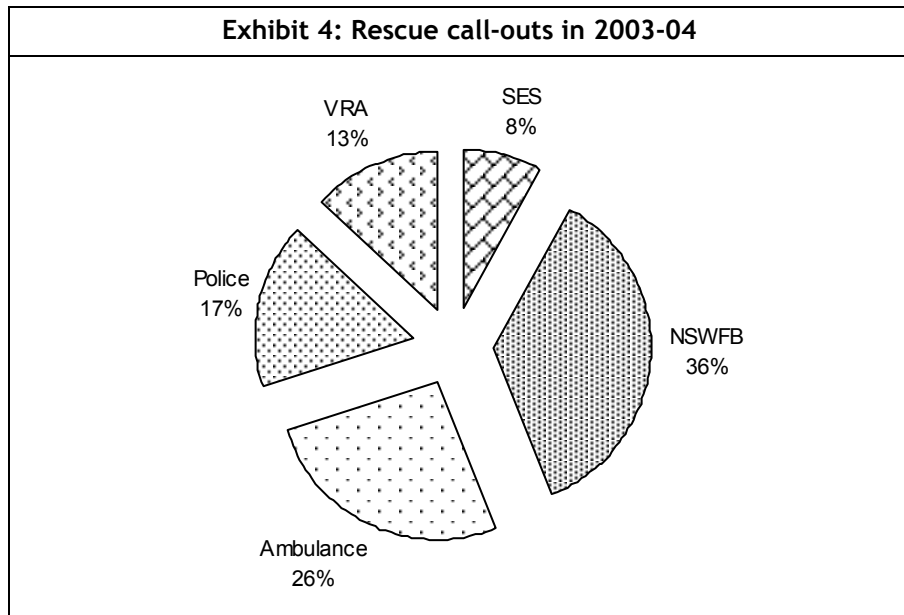
Prior to 1988 the NSW Police had 22 rescue units and the Ambulance Service of NSW 17. These have since decreased to nine and 14 units respectively.

**Exhibit 3: Rescue Providers in NSW 2003-04**

Provider	Primary	Secondary	Total
NSW Police	9	-	9
Ambulance Service of NSW	14	-	14
NSW Fire Brigades	45	119	164
SES	81	10	91
VRA	48	-	48
Total	197	129	326

Source: State Rescue Board

Over one-third of the 10,876 rescue call-outs in 2003-04 were handled by the NSW Fire Brigades.



Source: NSW Police

### 1.5 About the audit

This audit examined how well the State Rescue Board manages and coordinates rescue activities.

The audit focused on land rescue only in metropolitan and rural areas. It did not seek to make recommendations on which agencies should be providing rescue services or to evaluate the performance of specific rescue providers.

Further information on the scope, criteria and approach of the audit can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

## **2. Developing a strategic approach to rescue**

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**At a glance**

The primary role of the Board is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the state.

The Board recommends the accreditation of suitably qualified and equipped providers to undertake rescue. It also assigns providers a geographical region in which the provider is responsible for responding to rescue calls.

What is missing from rescue is an overarching strategy or plan to ensure that the current division of responsibilities across the five providers leads to optimal service delivery. We have seen very few changes in rescue arrangements since 1990.

We still have three permanent services involved in land rescue. In contrast, we found that most other jurisdictions have moved to having a single provider, generally the Fire Brigades, undertake land rescue in metropolitan areas.

There is no reliable and consistent information on what it costs the permanent services to provide rescue. There is insufficient information on which to offer an opinion on whether or not rescue is efficient or effective.

What arrangements are best suited for NSW is not known, but an overarching plan for service delivery would help guide the Board in deciding who the providers of rescue should be in order to maximise efficiency and effectiveness and avoid duplication and waste.

## **2.1 Current rescue arrangements**

The principal function of the Board is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the state.

Prior to the Board's establishment, emergency services evolved their own rescue functions, largely in isolation from each other. Generally, each service established units where it considered there was a community need, and spare capacity was redirected to provide what was considered complementary services.

However, despite changes in demography, demand for services, technology, costs and risk factors, there have been few changes in land rescue arrangements in NSW since 1990.

## **2.2 Rescue arrangements are different in NSW**

**Rescue in NSW is different to other states**

In NSW we have five services providing general land rescue: the three permanent services, mainly in metropolitan areas, and two volunteer services covering the rest of the state.

In most other jurisdictions, the trend has been towards consolidation with only one provider of rescue services in metropolitan areas, the Fire Brigade.

Although there have been reviews recommending changes to current arrangements, there has been no move to consolidation in NSW similar to what has happened elsewhere.

Both the Audit Office in 2001 and the NSW Public Accounts Committee in 2004, in reviewing the operations of the Ambulance Service of NSW, raised the negative impact rescue has on core services particularly as the Service was finding it difficult to meet response time standards.

The Service agreed and in 2001 proposed to withdraw from rescue.

In response, the Board undertook its own study to identify alternative rescue providers and found sufficient capacity in the remaining services to cover any losses. However, in 2002 the Board recommended to the Minister for Emergency Services that it was not in the community interest to allow the Ambulance Service of NSW to withdraw from rescue at that time.

While the boundaries between some units have been changed since then, the Ambulance Service of NSW has not withdrawn any rescue units from service.

### 2.3 The absence of change

There are two possible reasons why we have not seen any significant changes to rescue arrangements in NSW. Firstly there is an absence of any information such as responsiveness, quality or cost which could indicate that change was warranted. Secondly, the Board is unable itself to bring about major changes to service delivery.

**There are no performance standards for rescue**

While the Board's 2003-04 Annual Report includes the number of road rescue call-outs and extrications, the Board has not developed any performance standards which can be used to set targets for rescue and to monitor performance.

**The actual cost of rescue is not known**

The actual cost of undertaking land rescue is not identified or reported. The cost of vehicles, equipment, training and personnel involved in land rescue is absorbed in the operating budgets of the various services. None of the reviews or studies of rescue services have included any analysis of cost, and we have been unable to obtain valid and reliable data on the cost of responding to an incident to allow cross comparisons between agencies and to judge the most cost effective arrangements.

Exhibit 5: How much does rescue cost?
<p>While some agencies collect some cost data it is not comparable and cannot give a reliable indication of the cost of rescue services.</p> <p>In order to estimate the cost of a rescue we have used 2003-04 data on the total cost of fire and rescue services from providers in Victoria and Queensland. In these states, the average cost of responding to a call-out is estimated to be anywhere between \$4,000 and nearly \$7,000 each response.</p> <p>Although this is a useful guide, we have no data to indicate whether the cost of responding to a fire is more or less expensive than responding to a rescue.</p>

While some agencies collect some cost data it is not comparable and cannot give a reliable indication of the cost of rescue services.

In order to estimate the cost of a rescue we have used 2003-04 data on the total cost of fire and rescue services from providers in Victoria and Queensland. In these states, the average cost of responding to a call-out is estimated to be anywhere between \$4,000 and nearly \$7,000 each response.

Although this is a useful guide, we have no data to indicate whether the cost of responding to a fire is more or less expensive than responding to a rescue.

Source: Audit Office research.

The original assumption behind the participation of the permanent services in rescue - that it absorbed spare capacity and did not represent additional cost - is probably no longer correct. The permanent services have been driving efficiency gains over the last decade. This along with increases in demand for services has utilised spare capacity. New rescue technology and techniques also mean that the marginal cost of providing these services has increased with the need for special equipment, vehicles and training.

According to the Ambulance Service of NSW in 2001, continuing to provide rescue services presented an opportunity cost which was affecting its core business.

**The Board has seen no reason to change**

From the Board's perspective there is no incentive or reason to change. It has emphasised that minor problems should be resolved where possible by local and district rescue committees, and should only be referred to the Board if they cannot be resolved at the local level. The Board has also relied on informal systems to report performance, and reports that it responds promptly to unsatisfactory performance.

However without any performance standards or targets, and with no requirement for reporting against these, committees cannot consistently judge whether or not performance is satisfactory and whether problems need to be drawn to the Board's attention. In the absence of standards, it cannot be safely concluded that lack of feedback from committees offers assurance that performance is satisfactory.

As the Board does not meet the cost of rescue services, it therefore reaps no benefit from efficiency gains. However the Board is not able to assure the Government that the most economical and possibly the most effective arrangements are already in place.

The Board's primary role is to ensure efficient and effective rescue services are maintained throughout the state. However because performance and cost information is poor, the Board cannot be confident that retaining the status quo is the best model for rescue in NSW.

## **2.4 Some of the benefits of consolidation**

As discussed above, in most other metropolitan jurisdictions rescue is handled by a single provider, the advantages being:

- less complex coordination, control and regulatory arrangements
- economies of scale in training, equipment and vehicles
- it establishes a critical mass to support specialisations in rescue and the creation of career paths
- it avoids duplication and waste.

**We need a more strategic approach to rescue**

NSW is missing an overarching strategy or plan that would help the Board to decide who the providers of rescue should be.

The Board has established policies and protocols to coordinate the various providers but it cannot be sure that current arrangements are the most efficient and effective compared to approaches in other jurisdictions.



Changes in demography, technology, demand for services, costs and risks are not reflected in current arrangements and it is beyond the Board's role to make sweeping changes to the permanent services to better serve the interests of citizens.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

- collect data on rescue performance and cost over the next 12 months to inform the planning process
- use this data to develop an overarching strategy for land rescue that recommends to the Government who the providers of rescue should be
- use the strategy to review current arrangements and develop a five year plan to implement rescue arrangements which align with the strategy.

If data on rescue performance indicates immediate opportunities for improvement these should be addressed by the Board.

Operational issues such as the use of performance standards to help determine the best location of rescue services and whether or not additional services are needed are discussed in the next chapter.



### 3. Planning for rescue

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**At a glance**

The Board relies on local and district rescue committees to assess risks and advise it when changes are needed.

We agree that committees are best placed to do this.

However, it is rare for a local committee to review rescue coverage and performance and to approach the Board for additional resources. Generally, local committees respond to requests for accreditation from potential providers.

Currently, there is nothing available to guide committees in conducting local hazard assessment or threat analysis that would indicate if additional rescue units were required and where units should be located.

Also, there are no minimum performance standards for rescue such as response time. Committees are not able to judge whether their existing rescue units have capacity to deal effectively with changes in demand or whether capacity exceeds requirements.

### **3.1 Planning for rescue**

Under the Board's policy, local and district committees are responsible for:

- recommending to the Board whether a new unit is needed and should be accredited
- ensuring an appropriate level of rescue resources in the area
- preparing, coordinating and reviewing planning for rescue
- liaison and coordination with other organisations in connection with rescue
- identifying, arranging and conducting training exercises in rescue.

The committees are best placed to manage coordination matters at local and district level, monitor rescue response and identify changing needs.

### **3.2 Reviewing applications for accreditation**

**Local rescue committees are responsible for recommending accreditation**

In reviewing an application for accreditation the local rescue committee needs to consider:

- need based on an analysis of local hazard or threat
- if the unit has sufficient resources and equipment and is located at an acceptable base.

Applications for accreditation are considered first by the local rescue committee on the basis of whether the unit can meet the requirements for personnel, training, equipment, and communications and can demonstrate the need for additional rescue units. If the application meets these requirements the local committee will recommend to the district committee that the unit be accredited. The district committee makes a similar recommendation to the Board which, if it agrees, will recommend accreditation to the Minister. Only the Minister can accredit rescue units.

Although local committees are required to prepare local rescue plans and complete local hazard assessments to determine if additional rescue units are needed, there is no agreed methodology for assessing local hazard or risk or if needs have changed.

According to the Board, there are no guidelines on when the number of rescue incidents in an area would warrant the establishment of a rescue unit. The current network of accredited rescue units evolved from what was in place at the time of the original accreditations in 1990.

We observed in reviewing a sample of applications for accreditation that although the analysis of threat was often comprehensive, there was significant variation between the quality of the analysis undertaken and the data supporting it.



#### Exhibit 6: an example of risk assessment

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Authority's Integrated Risk Management Planning assesses risks associated with:

- houses
- other buildings
- road traffic accidents
- special service incidents
- major incidents (e.g. aircraft, terrorism and rail disasters).

As well as fires, the risk assessment includes other incidents such as:

- road traffic accidents
- lift rescues
- lock in/out of premises
- water rescues
- hazardous material incidents
- extrications (e.g. trapped in machinery)
- other incidents requiring special techniques (e.g. vertical rescue).

Source: *Integrated Risk Management Plan 2005-2006*, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Authority

#### Local committees need guidance on how to assess risk

The factors that should be considered by local committees in assessing risk or threat are:

- historical data on the number, location and type of rescue incidents
- local land use patterns and specific hazards, for example increasing tourism in national parks
- local population demographics and changes such as new housing estates
- environmental factors contributing to hazard such as specific industries
- data on rescue unit response times, turnaround times and availability.

**Exhibit 7: Determining if a new rescue unit is needed**



The Victorian Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner requires proof that response time standards are not being met under current arrangements before a new application for providing road accident rescue will be considered.

Applications must:

- identify the response area
- demonstrate, using actual response times for all road rescue attendances in the area for the previous two years, that the response time standards are not being achieved.

Source: *Road Rescue Arrangements Victoria*, Department of Justice, Victoria 2002

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board develop a risk management framework to assist committees in conducting local hazard and threat assessments.

**3.3 Ensuring rescue resources are appropriate**

While there have been changes in rescue unit status and responsibility for rescue in some areas, there have only been four new accreditations in the last ten years. Nonetheless committees have a role in determining:

- if additional rescue units are required
- the number of new units required
- where units are best located in their area
- if the current number of units exceeds requirements.

**Minimum performance standards need to be established**

Any methodology to assist committees in deciding what is the optimum number, location and type of rescue units must be guided by minimum standards for rescue performance.

The Board has established standards for training, equipment and vehicles. In regard to response times, the Board requires operators to respond within an acceptable time. A unit is judged to have responded within an acceptable time as long as the treatment and transfer of a patient from the scene of a rescue is not delayed due to late arrival of the rescue unit.

**In other jurisdictions response time is used to decide if additional services are needed**

Response time is one of the most important factors used to guide resource allocation decisions in an emergency service. For example:

- road rescue units in Victoria are located to achieve a maximum travel time of 20 minutes in urban areas and 40 minutes in rural areas to the incident
- the Ambulance Service of NSW had a target of responding to 55 per cent of emergency cases within ten minutes for Sydney (now being reviewed following the adoption of call prioritisation)
- for planning station locations the NSW Fire Brigades Resource Allocation Model adopts a target of seven to eight minutes road travel time for calls within fire districts
- the Victorian Metropolitan Ambulance Service has a target of 90 per cent of urgent cases attended to within 14 minutes.

Emergency services in other jurisdictions also specify targets for crew turnout and travel time to allow more detailed analysis of performance.

#### Exhibit 8: Responsiveness targets

The Victorian Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner specifies a turnout time standard in both urban and rural zones of eight minutes maximum. It is expected that paid on-station crews will turn out within one and one-half minutes.

The travel time standard applicable to each zone is 12 minutes for responses in the Urban zone and 32 minutes in the Rural zone (both at the 90th percentile).

Source: Department of Justice, Victoria 2002



#### Exhibit 9: Responsiveness targets

The City of Arlington, Texas, has the following targets for turnout time and travel time as well as response time:

- respond to 90 per cent of all structure fire and emergency medical service calls with a travel time of four minutes or less
- maintain an average turnout time to all structure fire and emergency medical service calls of less than one minute.

Source: Fire Department, City of Arlington, Texas 2003-04

We recognise that developing appropriate response time standards for metropolitan and rural services is a difficult and complex task and should be completed in consultation with providers.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board develop response time standards for metropolitan and rural rescue services to guide committees in determining the number, type and location of rescue units.

Where appropriate these should be consistent with measures being developed for the Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services*.

It is also recommended that all rescue providers furnish to the Board data on the cost of rescue using an agreed methodology for assessing cost.

Committees need to routinely monitor data on rescue unit performance against standards to determine if rescue resources are appropriate.





## **4. Achieving an effective response**

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**At a glance**

The principal aim of rescue is to minimise the consequence of injuries arising from an incident.

Rescue providers must be able to respond in a timely manner and have appropriately trained operators and the necessary equipment to undertake rescue.

Only accredited providers can respond to calls for assistance. The Board has developed criteria, addressing operator skill levels, essential equipment and communications, that providers must meet in order to be accredited for rescue.

However, in regard to assuring that providers can respond in a timely manner, the accreditation criteria only require the provider to respond in an 'acceptable' time. That time is not defined. The Board needs to expand accreditation criteria to include actual performance standards reflecting differences between metropolitan, rural and remote locations, for responding to an incident including turnout time, response time and time when available for re-tasking.

In order to retain accreditation, providers must maintain the skills of operators and ensure equipment and vehicles comply with standards. Yet there is no obligation for a provider to advise the Board if compliance may be at risk.

There are also no agreed standards or targets for rescue performance against which providers are required to report. There is a risk that neither the Board nor its committees would be aware of changes affecting a provider and its ability to respond to an incident.

### 4.1 Establishing minimum standards

**The Board has developed comprehensive accreditation criteria for rescue**



Prior to 1988 there were no uniform standards for rescue equipment or for the training of rescue operators.

With the introduction of the Act in 1989, the Board established minimum rescue standards for both the permanent and volunteer services. The standards require providers to:

- maintain an appropriate vehicle and equipment
- achieve a specified level of rescue training, with regular retraining
- respond to rescue within a time frame acceptable to the District Rescue Committee
- have at least two registered crew members available to respond to a rescue incident.

Although the Board has established comprehensive accreditation criteria, these could be enhanced by developing response time standards and by reviewing the way in which various rescue activities such as caves rescue are dealt with.

As discussed in the previous chapter, emergency services in other jurisdictions use response time as an indicator of both performance and demand for services. Emergency services use this information to guide resource allocation decisions.

Response time standards not only allow committees to determine what rescue resources they require, they provide standards against which the performance of applicants and accredited units can be judged.

**Recommendation** It is recommended that the Board expand accreditation criteria to include time standards for responding to an incident - turnout time, response time and time when available for re-tasking.

In 2002, the Board reviewed a number of rescue activities to identify if specific accreditation criteria were needed for:

- caves rescue
- confined space rescue
- diving rescue
- land search operations
- inland waterway search and recovery.

**There are no specific criteria for some types of rescue** The review identified that although units had been accredited there were no specific criteria or standards to assess operators against such as:

- the risk of incidents leading to the need for this type of rescue
- the specialist capability (skills, equipment, training) a unit would require to undertake these types of rescue operations.

**Recommendation** It is recommended that the Board revisit the need for specific accreditation criteria for various rescue activities.

## 4.2 Monitoring and reporting rescue performance

The number and type of rescues and performance against agreed standards should be routinely monitored by local committees.



Exhibit 10: Incident reporting
<p>Victorian road rescue arrangements require operators to report on every rescue and to submit an annual report summarising its activities and achievements over the last twelve months.</p> <p>Data reported includes the number of calls attended and persons extricated, turnout time and response time. Units must also provide reasons for any failure to respond and for any response times greater than standard.</p>

Source: *Road Rescue Arrangements Victoria*, Department of Justice, Victoria 2002

In 2003, the Productivity Commission indicated it intended to include data on road crash rescue in the Emergency Management chapter of the *Report on Government Services*.

**New reporting requirements have been introduced** While the Productivity Commission moves to develop performance indicators for road crash rescue, the Board has required each provider to report on the number of incidents and extrications.

The Board has extended this requirement to providers to report the following in regard to each road crash incident since 2004:

- date and time of call out
- location of incident
- if unit is called-off
- whether extrication is performed
- when the unit is available for re-tasking.

Around two-thirds of all rescues in NSW are road accident rescues. While the Board's new reporting requirement will provide valuable information on provider performance, it should be extended to include all rescue operations and performance against response time standards.

These reports would then provide comprehensive data on provider capacity and would serve as an early warning of any changes affecting a provider's ability to respond to an incident.

**Recommendation** It is recommended that the Board expand current reporting requirements to include reporting on location and type of all rescue incidents and performance against standards for turnout time, response time and time when available for re-tasking.

### **4.3 Ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements**

The Board initially had intended to conduct audits of rescue units to test compliance with accreditation criteria. However it has been unable to undertake an audit program.

In regard to maintaining accreditation standards, the Board relies on providers maintaining a register of the personnel who comprise rescue units. A copy of the register must be provided to the Board following accreditation of any rescue unit and every six months thereafter.

**Additional practices are required to assure compliance with standards** All agencies have inspection programs in accordance with Board requirements. However this does not provide the Board with formal assurance that the provider complies with accreditation standards, particularly in regard to:

- having an appropriate vehicle and equipment
- maintaining skills in rescue
- being able to respond to rescue within a time frame which is acceptable to the District Rescue Committee.

If a rescue unit becomes temporarily unable to meet standards because of shortage of personnel or a vehicle breakdown, the provider must advise the local Police Coordinator. In these cases the district committee will usually agree on changes to ensure that rescue arrangements continue to be workable.

**Exhibit 11: Temporary changes in rescue arrangements**

When the Ambulance Service of NSW's rescue vehicles at St Ives and Bankstown were off the road for repairs for an extended period during 2004, local arrangements organised in conjunction with the Police Rescue Coordinator led to the NSW Fire Brigades assuming responsibility for rescue in these areas.

As these were considered to be 'temporary' arrangements, there was no requirement to report these arrangements to the Board.

Source: State Rescue Board.

However, it is not clear what constitutes a 'temporary' change in arrangements compared to a more long-term problem with the rescue unit's ability to meet accreditation standards.

There is no requirement in either case to report a 'temporary' change in operator capability to the Board.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board require the Chief Executive of each rescue provider to certify on an annual basis that all rescue units comply with the Board's accreditation standards.

It is also recommended that the Board develop an audit program to test rescue unit compliance with accreditation standards.



## Appendices

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## **Appendix 1: About the audit**

**Audit objective** The objective of the audit was to assess the means by which the State Rescue Board manages and coordinates rescue activities.

The audit focused on land rescue only in metropolitan and rural areas and examined how the Board:

- is able to shape the long-term strategic direction for rescue
- establishes standards for performance and monitors the results
- designates rescue units
- recommends the accreditation of rescue units
- assures their ongoing compliance with accreditation requirements.

Our audit did not:

- seek to determine which agency or agencies should be providing rescues services
- evaluate the performance of specific providers
- seek to assess the effectiveness of specific rescue cases
- examine marine rescue.

**Audit criteria** The audit reviewed whether:

- the Board is able to set the strategic direction of land rescue in metropolitan and rural areas
- planning for land rescue and the designation of land rescue units is based upon a risk assessment that clearly identifies needs
- the accreditation of land rescue units is based on best practice and procedures are in place to ensure compliance
- the Board establishes minimum standards for land rescue and routinely monitors performance.

**Audit approach** The audit acquired subject matter expertise through:

- reviewing previous reviews/reports on the organisation of rescue services
- interviewing relevant Board members and staff and representatives of NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Police, Ambulance Service of NSW, State Emergency Service and the Volunteer Rescue Association
- reviewing policies, procedures, performance data and management reports
- research into practices in other jurisdictions.

**Acknowledgements** We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and assistance provided by representatives of the Ambulance Service of NSW, NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Police, NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Treasury, Office of Emergency Services, State Emergency Service, Volunteer Rescue Association and the State Rescue Board.

**Visits to other jurisdictions** We were assisted by meetings in Melbourne with representatives of the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner, Victorian State Emergency Services, Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board and the Country Fire Authority.



<b>Audit cost</b>	Including printing and all overheads, the estimated cost of this audit is \$314,000.
<b>Audit team</b>	Our team leader for this performance audit was Geoff Moran, who was assisted by Brian Holdsworth. Direction and quality assurance was provided by Jane Tebbatt.

## Appendix 2: Glossary

<b>Accredited rescue unit</b>	A rescue unit accredited by the Minister under Division 4 of Part 3 of the <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989</i> .
<b>Call-out</b>	Dispatching an accredited rescue unit to an incident.
<b>Rescue</b>	The safe removal of persons or domestic animals from actual or threatened danger of physical harm ( <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989</i> ).
<b>Rescue Coordination</b>	The bringing together of agencies and individuals to ensure effective emergency or rescue management, but not including the control of agencies and individuals by direction ( <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989</i> ).
<b>Rescue provider</b>	A rescue provider may be from the Ambulance Service of NSW, the NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigades, State Emergency Service or the Volunteer Rescue Association, or other body that has accredited rescue units.
<b>Rescue unit primary</b>	An accredited rescue unit that is available to respond 24 hour, 7 days a week. In the Sydney rescue area, all accredited rescue units are designated as primary units. In other rescue areas, primary and secondary units have been accredited.
<b>Rescue unit secondary</b>	An accredited rescue unit. These units respond when the primary unit is already committed to a rescue incident or is otherwise unavailable to attend.

## **Performance audits by the Audit Office of New South Wales**

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## Performance Auditing

### What are performance audits?

Performance audits are reviews designed to determine how efficiently and effectively an agency is carrying out its functions.

Performance audits may review a government program, all or part of a government agency or consider particular issues which affect the whole public sector.

Where appropriate, performance audits make recommendations for improvements relating to those functions.

### Why do we conduct performance audits?

Performance audits provide independent assurance to Parliament and the public that government funds are being spent efficiently and effectively, and in accordance with the law.

They seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government agencies and ensure that the community receives value for money from government services.

Performance audits also assist the accountability process by holding agencies accountable for their performance.

### What is the legislative basis for Performance Audits?

The legislative basis for performance audits is contained within the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, Part 3 Division 2A*, (the Act) which differentiates such work from the Office's financial statements audit function.

Performance audits are not entitled to question the merits of policy objectives of the Government.

### Who conducts performance audits?

Performance audits are conducted by specialist performance auditors who are drawn from a wide range of professional disciplines.

### How do we choose our topics?

Topics for performance audits are chosen from a variety of sources including:

- our own research on emerging issues
- suggestions from Parliamentarians, agency Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and members of the public
- complaints about waste of public money
- referrals from Parliament.

Each potential audit topic is considered and evaluated in terms of possible benefits including cost savings, impact and improvements in public administration.

The Audit Office has no jurisdiction over local government and cannot review issues relating to council activities.

If you wish to find out what performance audits are currently in progress just visit our website at [www.audit.nsw.gov.au](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au).

### How do we conduct performance audits?

Performance audits are conducted in compliance with relevant Australian standards for performance auditing and operate under a quality management system certified under international quality standard ISO 9001.

Our policy is to conduct these audits on a "no surprise" basis.

Operational managers, and where necessary executive officers, are informed of the progress with the audit on a continuous basis.

### **What are the phases in performance auditing?**

Performance audits have three key phases: planning, field work and report writing.

During the planning phase, the audit team will develop audit criteria and define the audit field work.

At the completion of field work an exit interview is held with agency management to discuss all significant matters arising out of the audit. The basis for the exit interview is generally a draft performance audit report.

The exit interview serves to ensure that facts presented in the report are accurate and that recommendations are appropriate. Following the exit interview, a formal draft report is provided to the CEO for comment. The relevant Minister is also provided with a copy of the draft report. The final report, which is tabled in Parliament, includes any comment made by the CEO on the conclusion and the recommendations of the audit.

Depending on the scope of an audit, performance audits can take from several months to a year to complete.

Copies of our performance audit reports can be obtained from our website or by contacting our publications unit.

### **How do we measure an agency's performance?**

During the planning stage of an audit the team develops the audit criteria. These are standards of performance against which an agency is assessed. Criteria may be based on government targets or benchmarks, comparative data, published guidelines, agencies' corporate objectives or examples of best practice.

Performance audits look at:

- processes
- results
- costs
- due process and accountability.

### **Do we check to see if recommendations have been implemented?**

Every few years we conduct a follow-up audit of past performance audit reports. These follow-up audits look at the extent to which recommendations have been implemented and whether problems have been addressed.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) may also conduct reviews or hold inquiries into matters raised in performance audit reports. Agencies are also required to report actions taken against each recommendation in their annual report.

To assist agencies to monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations, the Audit Office has prepared a Guide for that purpose. The Guide, *Monitoring and Reporting on Performance Audits Recommendations*, is on the Internet at [www.audit.nsw.gov.au/guides-bp/bpplist.htm](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/guides-bp/bpplist.htm)

### **Who audits the auditors?**

Our performance audits are subject to internal and external quality reviews against relevant Australian and international standards. This includes ongoing independent certification of our ISO 9001 quality management system.

The PAC is also responsible for overseeing the activities of the Audit Office and conducts reviews of our operations every three years.

### **Who pays for performance audits?**

No fee is charged for performance audits. Our performance audit services are funded by the NSW Parliament and from internal sources.

### **For further information relating to performance auditing contact:**

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## Performance Audit Reports

No	Agency or Issues Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
65	Attorney General's Department	<i>Management of Court Waiting Times</i>	3 September 1999
66	Office of the Protective Commissioner Office of the Public Guardian	<i>Complaints and Review Processes</i>	28 September 1999
67	University of Western Sydney	<i>Administrative Arrangements</i>	17 November 1999
68	NSW Police Service	<i>Enforcement of Street Parking</i>	24 November 1999
69	Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW	<i>Planning for Road Maintenance</i>	1 December 1999
70	NSW Police Service	<i>Staff Rostering, Tasking and Allocation</i>	31 January 2000
71*	Academics' Paid Outside Work	<i>Administrative Procedures Protection of Intellectual Property Minimum Standard Checklists Better Practice Examples</i>	7 February 2000
72	Hospital Emergency Departments	<i>Delivering Services to Patients</i>	15 March 2000
73	Department of Education and Training	<i>Using Computers in Schools for Teaching and Learning</i>	7 June 2000
74	Ageing and Disability Department	<i>Group Homes for People with Disabilities in NSW</i>	27 June 2000
75	NSW Department of Transport	<i>Management of Road Passenger Transport Regulation</i>	6 September 2000
76	Judging Performance from Annual Reports	<i>Review of Eight Agencies' Annual Reports</i>	29 November 2000
77*	Reporting Performance	<i>Better Practice Guide A guide to preparing performance information for annual reports</i>	29 November 2000
78	State Rail Authority (CityRail) State Transit Authority	<i>Fare Evasion on Public Transport</i>	6 December 2000
79	TAFE NSW	<i>Review of Administration</i>	6 February 2001
80	Ambulance Service of New South Wales	<i>Readiness to Respond</i>	7 March 2001
81	Department of Housing	<i>Maintenance of Public Housing</i>	11 April 2001
82	Environment Protection Authority	<i>Controlling and Reducing Pollution from Industry</i>	18 April 2001
83	Department of Corrective Services	<i>NSW Correctional Industries</i>	13 June 2001
84	Follow-up of Performance Audits	<i>Police Response to Calls for Assistance The Levying and Collection of Land Tax Coordination of Bushfire Fighting Activities</i>	20 June 2001
85*	Internal Financial Reporting	<i>Internal Financial Reporting including a Better Practice Guide</i>	27 June 2001

No	Agency or Issues Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
86	Follow-up of Performance Audits	<i>The School Accountability and Improvement Model (May 1999)</i> <i>The Management of Court Waiting Times (September 1999)</i>	14 September 2001
87	E-government	<i>Use of the Internet and Related Technologies to Improve Public Sector Performance</i>	19 September 2001
88*	E-government	<i>e-ready, e-steady, e-government: e-government readiness assessment guide</i>	19 September 2001
89	Intellectual Property	<i>Management of Intellectual Property</i>	17 October 2001
90*	Intellectual Property	<i>Better Practice Guide Management of Intellectual Property</i>	17 October 2001
91	University of New South Wales	<i>Educational Testing Centre</i>	21 November 2001
92	Department of Urban Affairs and Planning	<i>Environmental Impact Assessment of Major Projects</i>	28 November 2001
93	Department of Information Technology and Management	<i>Government Property Register</i>	31 January 2002
94	State Debt Recovery Office	<i>Collecting Outstanding Fines and Penalties</i>	17 April 2002
95	Roads and Traffic Authority	<i>Managing Environmental Issues</i>	29 April 2002
96	NSW Agriculture	<i>Managing Animal Disease Emergencies</i>	8 May 2002
97	State Transit Authority Department of Transport	<i>Bus Maintenance and Bus Contracts</i>	29 May 2002
98	Risk Management	<i>Managing Risk in the NSW Public Sector</i>	19 June 2002
99	E-Government	<i>User-friendliness of Websites</i>	26 June 2002
100	NSW Police Department of Corrective Services	<i>Managing Sick Leave</i>	23 July 2002
101	Department of Land and Water Conservation	<i>Regulating the Clearing of Native Vegetation</i>	20 August 2002
102	E-government	<i>Electronic Procurement of Hospital Supplies</i>	25 September 2002
103	NSW Public Sector	<i>Outsourcing Information Technology</i>	23 October 2002
104	Ministry for the Arts Department of Community Services Department of Sport and Recreation	<i>Managing Grants</i>	4 December 2002
105	Department of Health Including Area Health Services and Hospitals	<i>Managing Hospital Waste</i>	10 December 2002
106	State Rail Authority	<i>CityRail Passenger Security</i>	12 February 2003
107	NSW Agriculture	<i>Implementing the Ovine Johne's Disease Program</i>	26 February 2003

No	Agency or Issues Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
108	Department of Sustainable Natural Resources Environment Protection Authority	<i>Protecting Our Rivers</i>	7 May 2003
109	Department of Education and Training	<i>Managing Teacher Performance</i>	14 May 2003
110	NSW Police	<i>The Police Assistance Line</i>	5 June 2003
111	E-Government	<i>Roads and Traffic Authority Delivering Services Online</i>	11 June 2003
112	State Rail Authority	<i>The Millennium Train Project</i>	17 June 2003
113	Sydney Water Corporation	<i>Northside Storage Tunnel Project</i>	24 July 2003
114	Ministry of Transport Premier's Department Department of Education and Training	<i>Freedom of Information</i>	28 August 2003
115	NSW Police NSW Roads and Traffic Authority	<i>Dealing with Unlicensed and Unregistered Driving</i>	4 September 2003
116	NSW Department of Health	<i>Waiting Times for Elective Surgery in Public Hospitals</i>	18 September 2003
117	Follow-up of Performance Audits	<i>Complaints and Review Processes (September 1999) Provision of Industry Assistance (December 1998)</i>	24 September 2003
118	Judging Performance from Annual Reports	<i>Review of Eight Agencies' Annual Reports</i>	1 October 2003
119	Asset Disposal	<i>Disposal of Sydney Harbour Foreshore Land</i>	26 November 2003
120	Follow-up of Performance Audits NSW Police	<i>Enforcement of Street Parking (1999) Staff Rostering, Tasking and Allocation (2000)</i>	10 December 2003
121	Department of Health NSW Ambulance Service	<i>Code Red: Hospital Emergency Departments</i>	15 December 2003
122	Follow-up of Performance Audit	<i>Controlling and Reducing Pollution from Industry (April 2001)</i>	12 May 2004
123	National Parks and Wildlife Service	<i>Managing Natural and Cultural Heritage in Parks and Reserves</i>	16 June 2004
124	Fleet Management	<i>Meeting Business Needs</i>	30 June 2004
125	Department of Health NSW Ambulance Service	<i>Transporting and Treating Emergency Patients</i>	28 July 2004
126	Department of Education and Training	<i>School Annual Reports</i>	15 September 2004
127	Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care	<i>Home Care Service</i>	13 October 2004
128*	Department of Commerce	<i>Shared Corporate Services: Realising the Benefit including guidance on better practice</i>	3 November 2004
129	Follow-up of Performance Audit	<i>Environmental Impact Assessment of Major Projects (2001)</i>	1 February 2005



No	Agency or Issues Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
130*	Fraud Control	<i>Current Progress and Future Directions including guidance on better practice</i>	9 February 2005
131	Follow-up of Performance Audit Department of Housing	<i>Maintenance of Public Housing (2001)</i>	2 March 2005
132	Follow-up of Performance Audit State Debt Recovery Office	<i>Collecting Outstanding Fines and Penalties (2002)</i>	17 March 2005
133	Follow-up of Performance Audit Premier's Department	<i>Management of Intellectual Property (2001)</i>	30 March 2005
134	Department of Environment and Conservation	<i>Managing Air Quality</i>	6 April 2005
135	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Sydney Water Corporation Sydney Catchment Authority	<i>Planning for Sydney's Water Needs</i>	4 May 2005
136	Department of Health	<i>Emergency Mental Health Services</i>	26 May 2005
137	Department of Community Services	<i>Helpline</i>	1 June 2005
138	Follow-up of Performance Audit State Transit Authority Ministry of Transport	<i>Bus Maintenance and Bus Contracts (2002)</i>	14 June 2005
139	RailCorp NSW	<i>Managing Disruptions to CityRail Passenger Services</i>	22 June 2005
140	State Rescue Board of New South Wales	<i>Coordination of Rescue Services</i>	July 2005

\* Better Practice Guides

#### Performance Audits on our website

A list of performance audits tabled or published since March 1997, as well as those currently in progress, can be found on our website <[www.audit.nsw.gov.au](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au)>

If you have any problems accessing these Reports, or are seeking older Reports, please contact our Executive Officer on 9275 7220.