
Appendix three – About the audit

Audit objective

This audit assessed whether the Critical Communications Enhancement Program (CCEP) to enhance the Public Safety Network (PSN) is being effectively implemented by the NSW Telco Authority.

Audit scope and focus

We addressed the audit objective by answering the following two questions:

1. Have user requirements, as per the agreed Statement of Requirements for the CCEP between NSW Telco Authority and emergency service organisations of NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service, and the NSW State Emergency Service (ESOs), been met under day-to-day and emergency operational conditions?
2. Has there been adequate transparency to the NSW Government and other stakeholders regarding whole-of-government costs related to the CCEP?

Audit criteria

In answering the above questions, we used the following criteria:

1.
 - a) The enhanced PSN has met the agreed requirements of emergency services organisations during their routine operations.
 - b) The enhanced PSN has met the agreed requirements of emergency services organisations during emergency operations, including natural disasters.
 - c) The agreed user requirements take into account any relevant laws, policies, standards, or operational lessons.
2.
 - d) The full cost of the CCEP to the NSW Government has been established and is regularly updated.
 - e) There has been adequate transparency to the NSW Government and other stakeholders about the full cost of the CCEP.

Audit exclusions

The audit did not:

- assess the value-for-money of the costs incurred as reported by the NSW Telco Authority or by the ESOs
- assess the NSW Telco Authority response to the findings and recommendations in the Infrastructure NSW assurance reports
- assess the performance of the PSN to standards greater than the agreed Statement of Requirements except where the Statement of Requirements does not take into account relevant laws, policies, standards or operational lessons
- examine the costs incurred by organisations other than ESOs as users of the PSN (such as local councils)
- question the merits of NSW Government policy objectives.

However, we commented on these issues where they affect our findings or to provide context.

Audit approach

Our procedures included:

- interviewing key personnel from the NSW Telco Authority associated with the implementation of the CCEP, particularly in relation to costs, scope and operation of the PSN
- consultation with ESOs particularly in relation to their costs and CCEP scope and performance of the PSN
- fieldwork on site with selected ESOs to better understand how the PSN under CCEP is meant to work and how it is performing
- examining documentation relating to decisions made by the NSW Telco Authority regarding implementation of the CCEP.

We also examined documentation from other stakeholders obtained throughout the audit, such as Infrastructure NSW.

The audit approach minimised overlap and duplication of the assurance work already performed by Infrastructure NSW on the CCEP implementation. It will draw on the experiences of ESOs in using the PSN in actual emergency management and incident response, including whether those experiences have been taken into account in subsequent design and implementation decisions.

The audit approach was complemented by quality assurance processes within the Audit Office to ensure compliance with professional standards.

Audit methodology

Our performance audit methodology is designed to satisfy Australian Audit Standard ASAE 3500 Performance Engagements and other professional standards. The standards require the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance and draw a conclusion on the audit objective. Our processes have also been designed to comply with requirements specified in the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and assistance provided by staff of the NSW Telco Authority and the Emergency Services Organisations: NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service, and the NSW State Emergency Service.

Audit cost

The total cost of this audit is estimated at \$480,000.