
Government Responses to the Recommendations of PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE'S 54th Report on the 2003-2004 Budget Estimates

Pursuant to Section 36 of the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, this paper provides a response to the recommendations contained in the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's (PAEC) 54th Report.

Guide for Readers:

Following is the explanation of the format of this paper.

1 Chapter number and topic			
2 Responsibility			
1 PAEC Recommendation	2 Response	3 Action Taken to Date	4 Further Action Planned

Row 1: Indicates the number and topic of the response to the PAEC recommendations.

Row 2: Indicates the Department with primary responsibility for responding to the recommendation as outlined in the PAEC Report.

Column 1: Contains the PAEC's recommendations as published in its 54th Report.

Column 2: Indicates the Government's response to each recommendation (**Accept, Accept in Part/Principle, Under Review or Reject**).

Column 3: Indicates those actions relevant to the implementation of the recommendation that have been taken to date.

Column 4: Indicates the additional actions planned that are relevant to implementation of the recommendation, together with an explanation of the Government's position concerning the recommendation.

CHAPTER 3: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 1:** (page 114)

As part of the 2003-04 review of general planning processes, the Parliamentary Departments give consideration to changing the timing of their business planning cycle.	Accept	Parliament will give consideration to changing the timing of its business planning in the following business plans.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
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• **Recommendation 2:** (page 117)

All vacant positions, beyond a six month period, with the Parliamentary Departments be advertised externally.	Reject	Parliament believes that the decision to advertise internally or externally should be a Parliament decision. All positions are advertised internally throughout Parliamentary Departments and if deemed appropriate are advertised externally.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
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• **Recommendation 3:** (page 123)

The Parliamentary Departments, and in particular the Joint Services Department: (a) ensure that appropriate officers receive training in project management; and	Accept	Parliament will ensure that appropriate officers will receive training on project management.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
(b) develop project management guidelines and financial systems that will enable the Parliamentary Departments to manage, track progress and cost major projects.	Accept	Parliament will further develop the management guidelines and keep track of progress and costs.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.

CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 4:** (page 131)

<p>The Department of Education and Training reconcile ministerial responsibilities to departmental outputs and divisional structure to ensure that responsibilities are well defined and publicly understood.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>Specific legislative and delegated responsibilities have been allocated to portfolio Ministers.</p> <p>Public information about ministerial responsibilities is presented in Appendix 11 of the Department of Education and Training's (DET) annual report which details the Acts administered by the respective Ministers and their responsibilities in relation to outputs.</p> <p>As indicated in the annual report Ministers have shared responsibility for some departmental outputs. Responsibility for outputs is in some instances shared across divisions of DET. It is not possible in these circumstances to reconcile ministerial responsibilities with outputs and divisional structures.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 5:** (page 137)

<p>The Department of Education and Training give consideration to developing a detailed model to anticipate the particular disciplines and locations of teacher shortages and an audit of teacher supply and demand be undertaken.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>In 2003, the Department of Education and Training (DET) commissioned the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to design a Schools Workforce Development Strategy, including teacher supply and demand. The BCG report indicated that the number of teachers to meet overall demand in Government schools is broadly in balance and is likely to remain so in the medium term, although there are subject and geographic shortfalls which need to be managed.</p> <p>With a teacher labour market in balance, recruitment difficulties by subject and geographic area will be sporadic. As such a predictive model of projected teacher recruitment difficulties by geographic and curriculum area would be unreliable.</p> <p>DET has a comprehensive workforce management strategy, which is informed by research and modelling. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an annual Teacher Recruitment census in February that identifies recruitment difficulties by location and discipline and informs the DET recruitment strategy; • an annual census in August on the recruitment of casual replacement teachers; and • a biennial Forecasting Teacher Demand by Subject survey that identifies teacher demand by subject area for the next 2 years. <p>The above information, together with information provided by the Catholic Education Office and the Victorian Institute of Teaching, is used to inform a teacher supply and demand report. The report informs stakeholders of the teacher supply and demand situation in Victorian, including universities to assist with planning for teacher training.</p> <p>The Auditor-General conducted a follow up audit in 2003 regarding the status of recommendations on teacher workforce planning. The report was supportive of DET's progress in implementing the recommendations of the Auditor-General's 2001 performance audit of teacher workforce planning and identified only a small number of areas for action.</p>	<p>The Teacher Supply and Demand Report 2003 could be used to inform advice to the Commonwealth Government on the distribution of funding for university places, including for teacher training in 2005 and beyond.</p> <p>The Forecasting Teacher Demand by Subject survey will be conducted annually and for 2004 only will be extended to all government secondary schools.</p> <p>The initiatives to address teacher supply issues, particularly for difficult-to-fill vacancies in specific geographic or subject areas (recently announced by the Minister for Education Services) will be progressively implemented from 2004 over a 4-year period.</p> <p>They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing non-teaching professionals to undertake teacher education courses; • providing refresher training to returning teachers seeking to re-enter the teaching workforce; • extending the promotion of teaching as a rewarding career to non-traditional areas of recruitment; • providing student teachers with financial incentives to undertake their school placements in hard-to-staff schools; • assisting teachers in rural schools to retrain in areas where schools have problems in attracting teachers in particular curriculum / subject areas; and
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CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 5: (continued)** (page 137)

		In January 2004, the Minister for Education Services announced a range of new initiatives to boost teacher supply in Government schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively engaging with university education faculties on pre-service course quality.
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• **Recommendation 6:** (page 142)

The Department of Education and Training:	Accept in Principle	The Department of Education and Training (DET) uses definitions for each category for internal purposes.	DET will work within Whole-of-Government frameworks determined by the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF).
(a) clarify the definitions of 'new', 'replacement', 'modernisation' and 'maintenance' in relation to schools and publish the definitions in future Budget Papers;			
(b) clearly distinguish, and report separately, funding allocated to the different categories of 'new', 'replacement', 'modernisation' and 'maintenance' for schools;	Accept in Part	Budget Paper No. 2 <i>Budget Statement</i> identifies categories of capital expenditure for new, replacement and modernisation for schools. In line with Whole-of-Government arrangements, maintenance is not detailed separately in the Budget Papers, as it is a recurrent expenditure.	DET will work within Whole-of-Government frameworks determined by DTF.
(c) monitor capital spending on new and established schools and report publicly on the progress made with implementing projects; and	Accept in Principle	DET monitors capital spending and reports on it publicly through Budget Information Paper No. 1 <i>Public Sector Asset Investment Program</i> consistent with Whole-of-Government budget requirements.	DET will work within Whole-of-Government frameworks determined by DTF.
(d) track and analyse the impact of capital spending on future maintenance requirements in educational institutions.	Accept in Principle	DET has processes to track and analyse the impact of capital spending on future maintenance requirements in educational institutions.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.

CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 7:** (page 146)

<p>The Department of Education and Training:</p> <p>(a) develop measurements and benchmarks for class size data that separately identify trends in regional and metropolitan areas; and</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The Department of Education of Training (DET) assumes that this recommendation relates to Prep to Year 2 class sizes given the preceding discussion in the Public Account and Estimates Committee (PAEC) report.</p> <p>DET already monitors and reports on regional and metropolitan class size trends following the February School Census. This information is included in the annual <i>Summary Statistics Victorian Schools</i> publication.</p> <p>The Government has set a benchmark for Prep to Year 2 class sizes of an average of 21 students. This was achieved in 2003.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 7: (continued)** (page 146)

<p>(b) consider collecting and publishing data on the number of prep to year 2 (and other reporting categories) teachers alongside class sizes.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>DET collects class size information as part of its annual February School Census. As part of this, DET collects additional information on teaching support present in the classroom to enable a better understanding of class size profiles. There has been an extensive communication and monitoring strategy to ensure that the Prep to Year 2 class size target was and continues to be achieved.</p> <p>DET currently collects data for the calculation of student teacher ratios in August for the Ministerial Council of Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) National School Statistics Collection.</p> <p>The teacher numbers used in the calculation of the nationally recognised teacher student ratio include all teaching staff in a school (including principals) involved in the delivery of education. This broad definition, which is used in public reports, only allows for ratios to be calculated at primary or secondary school level and it is not possible to determine ratios at an individual year level.</p> <p>The PAEC report indicates that the publication of teacher student ratios alongside class sizes data for Prep to Year 2 would enable the better channelling of efforts and resources to those areas where there are greater identified needs.</p> <p>DET does not support this view since:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The allocation of resources through the School Global Budget model is already based on enrolment numbers and special needs of schools; and • Decisions to have larger class sizes are decisions made at the school level and take into account a number of factors such as enrolment profile, school attitude to composite classes and classroom availability. 	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 8: (page 148)</p>			
<p>The Department of Education and Training continue to monitor and support numeracy and literacy programs to determine their effectiveness in maintaining and improving current standards.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>The Department of Education and Training (DET) supports and monitors literacy and numeracy programs to determine their effectiveness in maintaining and improving current standards. Major actions and key performance monitoring activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early years literacy and one-to-one intervention programs for students in Year 1 such as Reading Recovery. Data relating to student improvement in literacy is monitored through National Benchmark data, Assessment of Reading Prep to Year 2 data and Reading Recovery data; • early years numeracy coordinators in schools. Data relating to student improvement in numeracy is monitored through National Benchmark data; • initiatives to reduce class sizes in Prep to Year 2. This initiative is monitored through the annual census process; and • Restart initiative, which targets 'at risk' students in year 7. Student data is submitted annually by schools and monitored by DET. Allocation of teachers funded through this initiative is monitored through the annual census process. 	<p>DET will continue with existing levels of support and monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of literacy and numeracy programs in maintaining and improving standards.</p> <p>The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program will be reviewed in 2004. Findings from the review will influence further strategies to support early years literacy and numeracy development.</p>

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 9:** (page 150)

<p>To enable an assessment of the outcomes of the completion bonus program, the Department of Education and Training establish baseline information and targets that identify current and anticipated apprentice and trainee completion rates.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>Completion rates for apprenticeships are currently between 70 and 77 per cent. Completion rates for traineeships are about 55 per cent.</p> <p>The Government has introduced the completions bonus initiative to increase completion rates among young apprentices and trainees.</p> <p>(It should be noted that the Public Account and Estimates Committee (PAEC) report inaccurately says that the completion bonus program will be funded from the phase-out of the Private Sector Skills Development Program (PSSDP) and that the bonus would be phased in as the PSSDP was phased out. The Minister for Education and Training advised the PAEC on 16 May 2003 that the completion bonus would replace the payroll tax exemption and would be phased in for apprentices/trainees who have already attracted a payroll tax exemption.)</p>	<p>The Department of Education and Training (DET) will monitor changes in completion rates over time to assess the impact of the completion bonus initiative.</p>
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• **Recommendation 10:** (page 153)

<p>The Department of Education and Training:</p> <p>(a) ensure all Victorian tertiary institutions are aware of the concerns raised by the Auditor-General and recommendations made by the 'Review of University Governance of Victorian Universities'; and</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>All Victorian universities commented on the contents of the Review of University Governance report. Similarly they all contributed to the preparation of the University Acts (Amendment) Bill 2003 that implemented those decisions of Government on the report that required change to each university's enabling Act. In addition, as a result of the decisions on the review, the Minister now requires universities to report on additional governance and financial matters in their annual report to Parliament.</p>	<p>A review of the implementation of the changes has been commissioned to be completed in 2004.</p>
<p>(b) in conjunction with the Auditor-General continue to promote and insist on good governance through follow-up reviews and audits.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>The Department of Education and Training works in collaboration with the Auditor-General's Office to keep relevant senior managers informed of the Auditor-General's requirements and the Minister's reporting requirements.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 11:** (page 173)

<p>The Department of Human Services monitor the funding requirements of relevant primary health care agencies to ensure that they are adequately resourced to accommodate the increased demand for services that are diverted from the acute health system.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Diversion of demand from hospitals already involves a flow of resources to primary health providers. The Hospital Admission Risk Program (HARP) systematically provides funding for new models of care for patients at risk of hospitalisation. In 2002-03, 79 per cent of HARP initiatives involved funds flowing to primary health care agencies and an additional \$2 million of growth funds allocated to the Community Health Program was sourced from the HARP budget.</p>	<p>In 2003-04, 76 per cent of HARP initiatives will involve funds flowing to primary health care agencies and a further \$2 million has been allocated from the HARP budget for Community Health Program growth.</p>
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• **Recommendation 12:** (page 175)

<p>The Department of Human Services, as a result of the experience gained from the redevelopment of the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre and other similar capital projects, as well as insights gained from the whole of government Gateway initiative, review and refine its practices in relation to the development and management of capital works projects, in order to minimise future project delays and cost escalations.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services (DHS) is fully implementing the new Gateway processes, including the Business Case approach to project endorsement, the Gateway review requirements, and the project review and reporting requirements. As part of the Gateway processes, DHS has also reviewed its internal capital planning processes and defined new project planning and sign off requirements consistent with the Gateway approach which will ensure more robust decision making in the planning stages of projects.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 13: (page 177)</p>			
<p>The Department of Human Services and the Department of Treasury and Finance undertake a review of the effectiveness of existing funding arrangements for hospitals, taking into account the Auditor-General's recommendations, and implement strategies that will improve both the short and long term financial viability of public hospitals.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Departments of Human Services, the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Premier and Cabinet are undertaking a review of public hospital financing arrangements. The review is addressing both short term and long-term financing issues.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 14:** (page 178)

<p>The Department of Human Services ensure that:</p> <p>(a) appropriate governance arrangements are established for the Government's health ICT project with sector wide representation to ensure that implementation proceeds in an efficient and co-ordinated manner; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services (DHS) has established the Office of Health Information Systems (OHIS) with the sole task of delivering the Health Information, Communication and Technology Strategy. It has also established the Board of Health Information Systems, a broadly representative senior group chaired by the Secretary, to provide governance of the Strategy. three steering committees have also been established to oversee the planning and implementation of each of the Strategy's major project streams; these committees draw on broad stakeholder representation at a senior level. The Chief Information Officers within the sector also meet formally on a regular basis with representatives of the OHIS to provide advice and feedback on the planning and implementation of the Strategy. All of these mechanisms will support the efficient and coordinated achievement of the Strategy.</p>	<p>Action taken to date is expected to achieve the outcome recommended by the Committee. Further action will be designed to use these governance arrangements to deliver an efficient and coordinated implementation of the Strategy.</p>
<p>(b) appropriate performance measures and targets are established, which enable effective monitoring of project costs, timelines and implementation outcomes.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>All projects and the Strategy as a whole are being carefully planned using established processes. Development and monitoring of appropriate performance measures and targets are an intrinsic part of these planning processes, and will provide the basis on which effective monitoring will be undertaken by both DHS and the other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Action taken to date is expected to achieve the outcome recommended by the Committee. Further action will be designed to use these planning processes, performance measures and targets to deliver effective monitoring of project costs, timelines and implementation outcomes.</p>

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 15: (page 180)</p>			
<p>The Department of Human Services monitor and review the effectiveness of the new mental health initiatives through the development of appropriate performance measures and targets, and that these health initiatives provide an accurate indication of their impact on demand and client outcomes.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services (DHS) is introducing new performance measures for mental health services as part of a project involving key industry stakeholders, service managers and Departmental contract managers. These include demand management measures to monitor the impact of demand management strategies on service efficiency, effectiveness and client outcomes. The new key performance indicators will be reported in 2003-04 and will become part of agency service agreements in 2004-05.</p>	<p>As new initiatives are brought on line, standard key performance indicators will be incorporated into the relevant service agreements. In addition, specific key performance indicators for new initiatives are also being incorporated. Combined with planned service evaluations, these will allow DHS to monitor the impact and relative financial and clinical effectiveness of new services.</p>

CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 16:** (page 182)

<p>(a) The Government have urgent discussions with the Commonwealth Government in relation to funding for public dental care; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Victoria is lobbying the Commonwealth Government through the National Advisory Committee on Oral Health (NACOH) to take up its shared responsibility for funding public dental care. NACOH was established by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference to develop a national oral health plan and is due to report by July 2004.</p>	<p>The Government will continue to implement the Victorian Oral Health Promotion Strategy, Dental Workforce Project and Geriatric Dentistry Action Plan.</p>
<p>(b) the Department of Human Services develop an action plan aimed at reducing the substantial waiting lists for restorative dental care and for the provision of dentures.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The State Government has committed \$21 million to dental health over the next 4 years, starting from 2003-04. An additional 83 000 cardholders and 38 000 disadvantaged adolescents have been treated since 1999.</p> <p>Access to dental care has been improved through a 25 per cent increase in the number of community based dental chairs since 1999 at a cost of \$11 million. The total number of community dental chairs including Royal Dental Hospital and community clinics increased from 156 in 1999 to 195 in 2003. Private providers are also used in areas with limited access to public clinics. Demand management strategies are already in place. Services are restricted to concession cardholders, and co-payments apply. Frequency of access is tightly controlled. There is limited provision of high-cost specialist items. Access policies specify that emergency needs must be addressed within 24 hours, and that priority dentures are provided within 3 months. A comprehensive evidence based oral health promotion strategy is being implemented as funds allow.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 17:** (page 189)

<p>The Department of Human Services ensure that the strategies being developed to meet increasing demands for disability services do not affect the wellbeing of people with disabilities in urgent need of appropriate care.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Additional funding has been provided in 2003-04 to assist the Department of Human Services (DHS) respond to demand pressures. Funding has been allocated to the expansion of individual support packages, better planning, additional respite services and the expansion of the Rural Access Program to metropolitan Melbourne. DHS's work with respect to managing demand gives emphasis to delivering individualised, flexible services that provide support for individuals within their home rather than providing institutional care. Such services aim to provide an improved quality of life for people with a disability and maximise the level of independence that people may enjoy.</p>	<p>DHS is developing a comprehensive individualised planning and support framework. This works implements a major element of the State Disability Plan. This new approach is based on ensuring the person has more control, enabling them to direct the planning process as much as possible. Key features of the approach include maintaining and developing the person's informal and formal networks in their local community and ensuring disability supports are considered among other supports a person may need. Over 900 support and choice packages will be provided in 2003-04.</p>
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• **Recommendation 18:** (page 190)

<p>The Department of Human Services closely monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives implemented to address the occupational health and safety concerns of disability workers and report on these matters in the Department's annual report.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>Consistent with the 2003-04 priority strategies of the Safer Staff Better Services Project to improve Occupation, Health and Safety (OH&S) / Work Cover data collection and analysis, business processes and IT systems. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is in the course of significantly improving its ability to monitor OH&S performance.</p> <p>DHS has developed a number of performance indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the OH&S / Work Cover strategies.</p>	<p>The level of reporting of OH&S in DHS's Annual Report is currently under review.</p>
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CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

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• **Recommendation 19:** (page 194)

<p>The Department of Human Services undertake a study to examine the effectiveness of the Take-Two program on easing pressure on kinship and permanent care placements.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Take-Two Program is still in its establishment phase and will not be fully operational across the State until January 2004.</p>	<p>An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Take-Two Program will be undertaken when the program has been operational for 12 months.</p>
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• **Recommendation 20:** (page 205)

<p>The Department of Human Services:</p> <p>(a) undertake research to explore potential options and develop innovative strategies to reduce the current shortfall in residential aged care beds, including the number of people awaiting such beds in public hospitals; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services (DHS) is in negotiation with the Commonwealth over the establishment of an innovative project to develop high-care community care places particularly targeted at people in hospital and assessed as requiring nursing home level care. The final number of places will be established during the negotiations. In addition, the number of interim care places is currently being expanded.</p>	<p>DHS is initiating research to explore statewide town planning processes with the aim of expediting the establishment of new places and redevelopment of existing aged care places.</p>
<p>(b) continue its negotiations with the Commonwealth Government regarding the issue of pricing arrangements in an effort to address the ongoing inequity in funding for aged care services in Victoria.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>DHS continues to participate in the Commonwealth's review of aged care pricing and to press its case at every opportunity.</p>	<p>DHS will use all available forums to press the case for adequate funding for Victoria to ensure the sustainability of residential aged care.</p>

CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 21:** (page 209)

<p>The Victorian Government, in conjunction with other States and Territories, make representations to the Commonwealth Government on the need for an agreement on a capital program to ensure the current public housing stock can be expanded and upgraded to keep pace with current and future community needs and demands.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>In July 2003 the Minister for Housing signed the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) for a 5 year period. Ministers successfully negotiated a 5-year agreement - the longest agreement to date - with partially indexed funding.</p>	<p>Over the last 10 years, Commonwealth funding to Victoria for housing assistance has reduced by 30 per cent, necessitating significant additional State expenditure on the acquisition and maintenance of social housing. The Bilateral Agreement between Victoria and the Commonwealth will form the basis for negotiations for the Housing capital program. However, the total quantum of funding arrangements for the period 2003-08 has been outlined within the signed 2003 CSHA, so no further funding from the Commonwealth is anticipated. The Office of Housing will continue to lobby the Commonwealth about the need for increased funding to meet housing need in the face of growing demand. Any new funding initiatives allocated for housing assistance from the Federal budget would sit outside the capital program associated with the CSHA.</p>
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• **Recommendation 22:** (page 210)

<p>To improve the level of transparency associated with variations in capital funding, including those attributable to changes in accounting arrangements, the Department of Treasury and Finance provide additional information in future Budget Papers to explain the variations.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Budget Information Paper No. 1 <i>Public Sector Asset Investment Program</i> discloses information on the Government's capital asset investment programs, including the total estimated investment, future estimated expenditure and the remaining future expenditure.</p> <p>Major variations in capital funding would be also disclosed in departmental annual reports.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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• **Recommendation 23:** (page 212)

<p>The Office of Housing:</p> <p>(a) undertake a review of the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reducing rental arrears and maintenance bills and implement corrective action; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Review of the status of tenants rent arrears and effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reducing rent arrears and maintenance bills is ongoing. Initiatives such as the deployment of Specialist Housing Support Coordinators across that State will facilitate earlier intervention for clients. There will be a focus on comprehensive case coordination where specialist needs exist, and linking vulnerable tenants with greater support. A Client Home Visit Scheme has been introduced as a means of delivering improved client service, including fostering more proactive management of issues, including rent arrears and maintenance damage. Tenant Advice and Referral Service providers funded by the Office of Housing provide advocacy and referral service to tenants, including those with rent arrears.</p>	<p>Improving the written rent arrears information provided to tenants, including advice to tenants about seeking guidance.</p>
<p>(b) ensure that tenants in arrears are provided with an opportunity to seek guidance and advice from financial planners.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 23(a) response.</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 23(a) response.</p>

CHAPTER 6: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 24:** (page 223)

Where substantial financial adjustments occur, such as a major reclassification of operating expenditure to capital expenditure, the Budget Papers include detailed information on the reasons for the adjustment.	Accept in Part	Budget Paper commentary includes comments on major reclassifications of expenditure where appropriate. However details of Section 30 Transfers are more appropriately included in Note 32 of the <i>Annual Financial Report for the State of Victoria</i> .	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
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• **Recommendation 25:** (page 236)

The Department of Infrastructure seek urgent discussions with the Commonwealth Government in relation to achieving a more timely and equitable distribution of national road funding for Victoria.	Accept in Principle	Numerous pieces of correspondence were sent to Department of Transport and Regional Services (DoTaRS) by VicRoads and Minister for Transport seeking more equitable distribution of national road funding for Victoria. Continual liaison occurs between officers of VicRoads and DoTaRS. A meeting was held in December 2003 between the Minister for Transport and the Federal Minister for Roads, Territories and Local Government, Senator the Hon Ian Campbell, in regard to federal road funding issues in Victoria.	Submission of Victorian Government's <i>National Roads in Victoria 2004-05 to 2008-09 Forward Strategy</i> to the Commonwealth Government. Further actions will depend upon outcomes of the Commonwealth Government's proposed Auslink Road funding program, currently under development.
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• **Recommendation 26:** (page 240)

The Department of Infrastructure, in conjunction with public transport operators, develop and implement an evaluation strategy that will permit the ongoing review of the effectiveness of public safety measures.	Accept	The effectiveness of operational safety measures is analysed through the review and publication of periodical safety statistics. The Safe Travel Taskforce established by the Minister for Transport monitors personal safety in terms of performance and operational initiative and has established strong links between operators and the Victoria Police to exchange information on trends, security program, resources and coordination.	A project is currently underway to develop a national incident database and to better identify and code the causal factors of public transport incidents. The Safe Travel Taskforce will continue to monitor and review safety programs and consultations.
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CHAPTER 6: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 27: (page 241)</p>			
<p>The Department of Infrastructure ensure its annual report contains information on:</p> <p>(a) the performance standards for the effective operation of the automated ticketing system;</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The Department of Infrastructure (DOI) releases information to the public on the performance of the Automated Ticketing System equipment. DOI's 2002-03 Annual Report provides summary information under Outcome 3 <i>Access and Mobility</i> (page 21) on ticketing system reform and performance.</p>	<p>DOI will continue to make information on the performance of the Automated Ticketing System equipment publicly available on a quarterly basis.</p>
<p>(b) the performance of OneLink in achieving those standards; and</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>DOI also releases publicly <i>Track Record</i>, which is a quarterly performance bulletin on Victoria's train, tram and bus services. <i>Track Record</i> contains detailed information on the performance of Automated Ticketing System equipment. Copies of all past issues of <i>Track Record</i> are available on the DOI's website (www.doi.vic.gov.au/transport).</p> <p>In May 2002 the Minister for Transport announced a new performance regime will apply to OneLink with higher standards to ensure that more ticketing machines on Melbourne's train, tram and bus network are fully operational at any point in time.</p> <p>This regime includes payments to One Link of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to \$3 million per year if it achieves new performance measures which incorporate the management of vandalism; however, it stands to lose up to \$2 million each year in penalties if it fails to reach these standards; and • where superior performance results in increased public transport revenue, OneLink can earn a bonus of around \$500,000 per year (assuming real revenue growth of 3 per cent per annum). 	<p>DOI will give consideration to the appropriate means of reporting in the future.</p>
<p>(c) bonuses or penalties incurred by OneLink.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>The net value of incentives and penalties incurred by OneLink are modest relative to the value of the contract and the overall cost of public transport. According it is not considered essential to include these in the annual report.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

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• **Recommendation 28:** (page 245)

<p>The Department of Infrastructure establish relevant performance measures and targets that reflect the expected benefits of the road safety initiatives around schools and in regional Victoria.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Business Case for the <i>Arrive Alive!</i> School Speed Zones Program was predicated on a reduction of around 130 casualty crashes per year as a result of the school speed zone program, which will be used as the basis for performance measures and targets.</p> <p>The Business Case for the program of infrastructure improvements to address run-off-road crashes on curves on 'A' roads was based on reducing crashes at treated sites by an average of 30 per cent which will be used as the basis for performance measures and targets.</p>	<p>Evaluation of effectiveness is to commence 12 months (minimum) following completion of each program.</p>
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• **Recommendation 29:** (page 252)

<p>Major Projects Victoria develop best practice models and guidelines for managing large and complex public projects.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Major Projects Victoria (MPV) adheres to, as appropriate, the well established and well recognised body of knowledge relating to best practice in project management.</p> <p>MPV recruits project managers with the appropriate levels of expertise to ensure proper management of the large and complex public projects it is responsible for.</p> <p>An annual planning session is attended by MPV project teams at which responsibility for internal projects is allocated, developed and discussed.</p>	<p>MPV will continue to strive for quality outcomes in relation to time, cost and quality aspects of major projects. MPV will strive to achieve this by adhering to recognised best practices, and by continuing to recruit staff with the appropriate levels of expertise.</p> <p>Among others, 3 of the key internal projects plans and developed for 2003-2004 are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and Streamlining MPV's Oversighting Role; • Defining and Controlling Quality; and • Developing and Refining Systems to Control Key Outcomes.
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• **Recommendation 30:** (page 253)

<p>Major Projects Victoria work closely with the Departments that are receiving capital funding for projects to assist them with scoping future projects and providing more accurate budget and time estimates.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>In mid-2003, Major Projects Victoria established the Project Development Group (PDG). The PDG works closely with the Department of Infrastructure (DOI), and where appropriate other departments, in providing assistance with scoping future projects and providing cost, time and quality estimates.</p> <p>For example, current projects include Jolimont Station redevelopment DOI, Commonwealth Games projects relating to traffic, transport and lighting DOI, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre feasibility study (the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development ((DIIRD) is the client agency) and the Melbourne Wholesale Markets relocation (the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is the client agency).</p>	<p>Major Projects Victoria will continue to work with DOI, and other Departments as appropriate, to assist them with scoping future projects.</p>
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• **Recommendation 31:** (page 264)

<p>The roles of all Government agencies involved in the investment attraction and retention programs for information and communication technologies be better defined, and the alignment of ministerial accountability with responsibility be strengthened.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>During the 2002 election campaign the Government made a commitment to establish Invest Victoria as a Whole-of-Government response to the attraction and facilitation of investment.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that Invest Victoria will play a key coordination and reporting role in the attraction and facilitation programs of all of the Government's key industry sectors.</p>
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• **Recommendation 32:** (page 271)

<p>The Essential Services Commission undertake a review, within the next year, of the effectiveness of competition in the electricity and gas sectors.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Minister for Energy Industries has issued a special reference to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) directing the ESC to investigate the effectiveness of competition in the electricity and gas industries and the continued need for consumer safety net arrangements.</p> <p>The ESC has commenced information gathering in relation to this investigation, including publishing an issues paper. A final report is to be provided by the ESC to the Minister in mid-June 2004.</p>	<p>Continued liaison with ESC in relation to the investigation and preparation of possible legislative amendments or other relevant Government responses as a result of the investigations.</p>
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• **Recommendation 33:** (page 272)

<p>The Department of Infrastructure closely monitor the effectiveness of current and proposed market mechanisms to ensure Victoria's future electricity requirements are met.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>To inform the market of future power system capability, the National Electricity Market Management Company (NEMMCO) provides short- and long-term supply and demand forecasts. NEMMCO is jurisdictionally-owned body established under joint legislation to operate the wholesale electricity market. The Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Security Division, liaises closely with NEMMCO and regularly monitors its forecasts to inform the Victorian Government on any electricity security of supply issues.</p> <p>NEMMCO's long-term assessment is provided in its Annual Statement of Opportunities for the National Electricity Market. This document forecasts the supply-demand balance - the ability of installed and committed generation and interconnection to meet peak demand - over a 10 year period.</p> <p>NEMMCO's short-term assessment is provided in its weekly Projected Assessment of System Adequacy (PASA). The PASA forecasts the supply-demand balance over the coming 2 years, taking into account the outages of generators and transmission lines that have been scheduled by their owners. These forecasts signal, and can often trigger, the need for investment in new generation in the National Electricity Market or the need for other operational activity by owners of supply system capacity to meet any supply-demand imbalance.</p> <p>Another mechanism designed to ensure Victoria's future electricity requirements are met is NEMMCO's reserve trading powers. When NEMMCO has sufficient notice of an upcoming shortfall of supply, where minimum reserve levels will be compromised, it can tender for contracts for supply capacity that are not part of the usual forecasts provided to the market. NEMMCO also has the power to direct registered generators into production when a supply shortfall is expected if these generators have not bid in their total capacity.</p>	<p>Further action planned in this area includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the process of NEMMCO forecasting and monitoring the effectiveness of market price signalling to ensure the market responds to potential shortfalls in supply capacity. • Facilitating investment in electricity generation; • A key outcome of the <i>Greenhouse Challenge for Energy</i> project will be to forecast opportunities for investment in new baseload supplies in Victoria, and to advise Government on policy options to ensure that this investment occurs in a timely manner; • Continued work on National Energy Market Reforms. The Victorian Government's leadership on reform of the national energy market and in particular its economic regulation and framework for transmission development is designed to clarify and improve the climate for energy sector investment to ensure that electricity supply meets demand; and • Continued support for demand management initiatives that seek to reduce the pressure on electricity suppliers at periods of otherwise peak demand.
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CHAPTER 7: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF INNOVATION, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 34:** (page 280)

<p>The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development take immediate steps to resolve its complex framework of ministerial responsibilities and issue a statement that clearly aligns ministerial responsibilities with accountability for budget and departmental activities and resource issues.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The question of ministerial responsibilities is a matter for the Premier and Ministers, not the Department. The complex framework of responsibilities reflects the interconnectedness of the various aspects of the state and regional development function. The desirability of clear accountability for budget and departmental activities is accepted and will be considered.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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• **Recommendation 35:** (page 289)

<p>Government contracts published on the web include a summary of the key performance indicators contained in the contracts.</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>Financial Reporting Direction 12 <i>Disclosure of Major Contracts</i> requires that:</p> <p>For contracts greater than \$10 million, a department's annual report must include a statement by the Accountable Officer, advising that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts entered into during the reporting period have been disclosed in part or in full, except for certain material that falls within 1 or more of the criteria contained in Part IV of the <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> (FOI Act); • Brief details of the contractors and the purpose of contract that have not been disclosed, and the date when it will be disclosed; and • Where the details of contracts that have been disclosed are publicly available. <p>As Guidance, the Direction also states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of contracts that are above \$10 million should be fully disclosed on the Victorian Government Contracts Publishing System, unless the contract material is excluded from disclosure for satisfying 1 or more of the criteria contained in Part IV of the FOI Act. <p>Contracts that are uploaded on the Contracts Publishing System include information on key performance indicators unless excluded from disclosure for satisfying criteria contained in Part IV of the FOI Act.</p>	<p>The Contracts Publishing System (CPS) is used by departments and many public sector agencies to meet the government's disclosure requirements. (For public sector agencies, government policy requires that their policies on disclosure be documented, having regard to the government's policy on openness and probity.)</p> <p>The CPS is currently under review. Guidelines for the uploading and maintenance of contract data are under development. As part of the guidelines development, consideration is being given to the viability of using performance indicator headings where associated text has been deleted in accordance with FOI Act criteria.</p>
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• **Recommendation 36:** (page 292)

<p>The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development:</p> <p>(a) continue to actively negotiate with, and seek support from, the Commonwealth Government, other States and interested parties to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the synchrotron will meet the needs of their research communities; ii. the synchrotron beam lines are fully subscribed; and iii. investors and users are prepared to cover operating costs. 	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>An integral part of the Australian Synchrotron project is consultation with the Australian research and development community on what basic and applied researchers need from the facility. The National Scientific Advisory Committee for the project comprises research leaders based in Commonwealth institutions, other states and industry. This committee has consulted widely across the Research and Development community as to its needs and contributed to identifying synchrotron research priorities in the National Science Case for beam line funding. User groups for various beam lines are at varying stages of development, with a view to capturing the widest possible input on development of the facility to meet user needs. A group of synchrotron experts has also provided valuable input in relation to specifications for the synchrotron building. Another key part of this project is building awareness of the capabilities of the facility, and growing the user base outside the current synchrotron user community. For example, during 2003 a highly successful seminar introduced the medical community to emerging developments in medical imaging and cancer therapy using synchrotron techniques. Another example is support provided for the first ever synchrotron summer school at the Australian National University, which will introduce a new generation of young scientists to synchrotron techniques. A program to encourage early industry adopters of synchrotron techniques is soon to be implemented.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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• **Recommendation 36: (continued)** (page 292)

<p>(b) in the absence of such commitments, the Department should disclose in the Budget Papers the potential financial risk this poses to the project.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Major efforts during 2002-03 have been focused on preparing the National Science Case for beam line funding. This establishes the case for beam line funding from potential partners, including the Commonwealth, other States, major research institutions and their industry partners. It will form the basis of discussions with potential beam line funding contributors, and seeks a contribution from the Commonwealth to match the beam line funds provided by other partners. The science community and its industry partners are expected to raise a very large part of the cost of building and installing beam lines and instrument stations over the next 5 years.</p> <p>There is widespread national recognition in the Research and Development community that, in providing three quarters of the capital cost, Victoria has assured this long overdue facility will be built and that it will provide an outstanding platform for groundbreaking research. The Australian Synchrotron will be a national facility, serving the needs of science and industry nationwide, and we expect substantial support for it from other stakeholders.</p> <p>The Government is confident that financial structures will be in place before the facility opens in 2007 that will firmly underpin operations of this most significant development in the nation's science infrastructure in decades.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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DEPARTMENT OF INNOVATION, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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• **Recommendation 37:** (page 300)

<p>The Small Business Commissioner develop relationships with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and, at an early stage, clearly define the Commissioner's roles and responsibilities in relation to these larger established bodies.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Since the commencement of the <i>Small Business Commissioner Act</i> 2003 on 1 May 2003, the Office of the Small Business Commissioner has developed good working relationships with various State and Commonwealth bodies, including the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). These bodies have clearly defined roles and responsibilities under their respective pieces of State and Commonwealth legislation that are separate, yet complementary. In this way, the Office, acting either separately or in conjunction with other relevant bodies, will enhance a fair operating environment for small business in Victoria.</p>	<p>The Office will maintain and enhance the good working relationships it has developed with both VCAT and the ACCC (and other relevant State and Commonwealth bodies). This will facilitate the complementary nature of the roles and responsibilities of these respective bodies.</p>
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• **Recommendation 38:** (page 307)

<p>To facilitate the monitoring and review of the Government's achievements in relation to the financial services industry, the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development develop performance measures and targets that are specific to the financial services industry and portfolio, and integrated with the strategic plan for the financial services industry.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Performance measures and targets have been established for the financial services industry for 2003-04, and these will be reviewed in light of the Financial Services Industry Action Plan. The performance measures and targets are a component of those listed in Budget Paper No. 3 <i>Budget Estimates</i>.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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DEPARTMENT OF INNOVATION, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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• **Recommendation 39:** (page 309)

<p>The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development:</p> <p>(a) review financial services in regional and country Victoria; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The suggestion for a review was made in 2002, and reflected a view by some in regional communities that banks should move back to traditional branch banking services in regional Australia. It was a response to the restructuring in the delivery of financial services by banks – less emphasis on branches and increased use of electronic banking, ATMs, Internet-based services, consolidated regional centres and mobile banking.</p> <p>A review was done as part of the development of the Financial Services Industry Action Plan during 2003. Following that review work, and consistent with its election commitment, the Government has introduced the <i>Your Town Your Bank</i> initiative, which provides one-off grants to assist regional communities to investigate the feasibility of establishing a community-based bank or other financial services. It is noted that several of the banks are including a return to regional bank branches as part of their strategic future direction.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(b) noting the success of the community banking project grants scheme, give consideration to extending the initiative to metropolitan areas.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The <i>Your Town Your Bank</i> program was launched in July 2003. Since that time the demand for program funds has been modest. Regional Development Victoria has assessed the expected future demand for funds, and consideration is being given to broaden program funding guidelines to include metropolitan areas.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

• **Recommendation 40:** (page 316)

<p>Industrial Relations Victoria develop a system for costing and recording work that relates specifically for the Commonwealth Games.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) currently records the cost of its work relating to the 2006 Commonwealth Games as part of its normal accounting procedures.</p> <p>OIR also records and communicates the industrial relations advice and assistance it provides to the 2006 Commonwealth Games to the Minister for Industrial Relations on a weekly basis.</p>	<p>To establish a process for incorporating the cost of OIR's Commonwealth Games work into the Commonwealth Games 2006 Special Purpose Report.</p>
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CHAPTER 8: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 41:** (page 323)

<p>The Department of Justice:</p> <p>(a) delete the average prison design daily capacity utilisation rate as a performance measure for the Prisoner Supervision and Support output group; and</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>The measure has been reviewed in the light of the Minister's response to the Committee's questions at the 2003 Public Account and Estimates Committee hearings.</p> <p>The measure is an accepted national performance comparator used in the Council of Australian Governments report on Government Service Provision and should be retained.</p> <p>Current measures and targets of average daily prison design capacity utilisation rate are updated as new capital improvements are completed.</p> <p>While temporary beds assist in providing additional capacity to manage peaks and movements in prisoner numbers they are a short-term strategy only. Doubling up in cells designed for 1 bed is only a solution for the short term.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(b) develop and report in the Budget Papers on the number of beds available and capacity utilisation for the different types of prison accommodation including permanent, flexible and temporary facilities.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 41(a) response.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

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• **Recommendation 42:** (page 337)

<p>To assist with reducing the level of fines written off each year, prompt action be taken by the Department of Justice to introduce new measures to increase fine collections prior to Court action.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>A Whole-of-Government Infringement Notice Policy framework is under development which has a focus on all aspects of the infringement and enforcement process with an emphasis on encouraging early settlement of outstanding fines.</p>	<p>Policy framework to be considered by Social Development Cabinet Committee.</p>
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• **Recommendation 43:** (page 343)

<p>The Victorian Government discuss with the Commonwealth Government, other States and Territory Governments the need for a nationally co-ordinated and co-operative approach to enhance aerial support for fire fighting.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Victorian Government in its response to the <i>Report of the Inquiry into the 2002-2003 Victorian Bushfires</i> (VBI) released on 14 October 2003 accepted the following recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recommendation 17.51: That an appropriately resourced, national aerial firefighting strategy is urgently required, and that the Victorian Government make representations to the Commonwealth to support the Australasian Fire Authorities Council recommendations.</i> <p>and stated that <i>Victoria will continue to work with other States and Territories and the Commonwealth to achieve national aerial firefighting capability.</i></p> <p>The need for this national approach is recognised in the VBI Report as addressing: the speed and guaranteed access to additional aerial resources, as well as the lower relative costs even in peak use times to increase the capability within this State.</p>	<p>Further negotiations planned with the Commonwealth, with the assistance of the Australasian Fire Authorities' Council, to ensure appropriate Commonwealth support.</p> <p>At the State level in response to the VBI Report, an Inter Department Committee will be formed to assist in implementing a number of recommendations that will see greater transparency and accuracy in the use and effectiveness of current aircraft available to be deployed through the State Aircraft Unit.</p>
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• **Recommendation 44:** (page 343)

<p>The Government provide immediate funding to implement the recommendations arising from the 2002-03 State Bushfire Inquiry in time for the 2003-04 bushfire season.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Implementation of the <i>Report on the Inquiry into the 2002-03 Victorian Bushfire</i> (VBI) recommendations is being considered by an Interdepartmental committee.</p>	<p>A coordinated Whole-of-Government funding bid to support implementation of VBI recommendations is being developed for the Budget process.</p>
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• **Recommendation 45:** (page 349)

<p>The Department of Justice provide more detailed information to the Parliament and the public on the effectiveness of Victoria Police in fulfilling its mission and objectives.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>It should be noted that the full impact of the 'overall increase of 1 400 projected in police numbers' cannot be clearly demonstrated until those additional police have been recruited and made available for operational deployment. This is scheduled to occur by November 2006.</p> <p>As at 30 June 2003, an additional 800 police had been recruited and were involved in delivering frontline policing services to the community.</p> <p>Police statistics show that during 2002-03 the overall crime rate was reduced by 6.8 per cent (per 100 000 population), with a decrease of 3.4 per cent in crimes against the person and a decrease of 8.3 per cent in property crime. In addition, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics demonstrated that Victoria was the safest State in Australia, with a victimisation rate 23 per cent below the national average.</p>	<p>Evaluation of the impact of additional police following completion of the recruitment and deployment program.</p>
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• **Recommendation 46:** (page 351)

<p>The Department of Justice:</p> <p>(a) evaluate the success of the diversion and community support programs and report to the Parliament on the outcomes of the various strategies that have been developed; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Justice (DOJ) has an existing program of evaluation of the initiatives within the Corrections Long Term Management Strategy. The Government may release such information when it becomes available.</p>	<p>Complete evaluations.</p>
<p>(b) undertake research on the underlying reasons the prison population is increasing, particularly with women, and the results of this research be channelled into the development of relevant social policies and existing diversion programs.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The existing Correction Long Term Management Strategy (complemented by the range of other relevant initiatives in crime prevention, policing and courts) is based upon such research. A women's policy unit has been established within DOJ (in Corrections Victoria) to provide a specific focus upon the causes and characteristics of the increase in the women's prison population and to develop recommendations to Government for policy and program responses to this growth.</p>	<p>Ongoing research.</p>

• **Recommendation 47:** (page 353)

<p>The Department of Justice develop mechanisms to capture the data produced by the Mobile Data Network in order to develop performance information and targets from which the efficiency and effectiveness of Victoria Police and the Metropolitan Ambulance Service in responding to emergencies and calls for assistance.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Mobile Data Network is in the design and construction phase and will not due to be fully operational until November 2005.</p> <p>The Service Provider, Motorola, has reporting obligations under the Mobile Data Network contract that will provide a range of performance information including information relating to Victoria Police and the Metropolitan Ambulance Services emergency responses.</p> <p>Measurement of the success of the implementation of the Mobile Data Network will include measurement of improvements in efficiency and effectiveness in emergency responses. Work has commenced on establishing benchmarks.</p>	<p>Complete design and construction phases of the Mobile Data Network.</p>
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• **Recommendation 48:** (page 357)

After the contracts for the Ravenhall and Lara institutions have been signed, the Department of Justice publicly release details of: (a) the public service comparators; and	Reject	At this stage the Public Service Comparators are subject to Cabinet in Confidence decisions.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
(b) the contracts including the level and type of risks transferred to the contractor and the financial arrangements.	Accept	Victorian Government purchasing policy requires that the contracts are released within a reasonable period post contract execution.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 49:** (page 359)

The Department of Justice: (a) regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the substance abuse and domestic violence rehabilitation programs provided for offenders in institutions and in the community (after release) to ensure resources are focused on those areas where attention is most needed; and	Accept	Evaluation of the Corrections Long Term Management Strategy (CLTMS) and the Victorian Prison Drug Strategy is being undertaken.	Performance measures in relation to substance abuse and domestic violence rehabilitation programs are a subset of CLTMS performance.
(b) develop performance measures that are designed to reduce the risk of re-offence.	Accept	Performance measures around reducing the risk of re-offence are a key feature of the monitoring and evaluation processes of the substance abuse and domestic violence rehabilitation programs.	Ongoing evaluation program.

CHAPTER 8: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 50:** (page 364)

<p>The Building Commission and Building Advice and Conciliation Victoria:</p> <p>(a) work together to assess the appropriateness of existing builder entry and registration standards in conjunction with the development of a continuous professional development program for builders;</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) has provided input into the Building Advisory Council / Building Commission's review of the categories and classes of building practitioner registration in Victoria.</p>	<p>CAV will continue to liaise with the Building Commission on the review of registration categories. The Building Commission, in conjunction with the Building Practitioners Board and Industry are introducing voluntary continuing professional development for registered building practitioners in February 2004.</p> <p>A recent Supreme Court Decision (VSC 38) Winslow Constructions PTY LTD v Mt Holden Estates PTY Ltd; Lanigan Baldwin Pty Ltd v Mt Holden Estates Pty Ltd (2004) may have implications for the review of registration categories. CAV will continue to explore these issues with the Building Commission.</p>
<p>(b) undertake an analysis of the more common complaints received and develop strategies to address these areas of concern; and</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>The Consumer Affairs Victoria / Building Advice and Conciliation Victoria service records information on complaints and enquiries.</p>	<p>Strategies to identify and address problem areas are being developed including the enhancement of electronic information recording facilities.</p>
<p>(c) encourage builders to reach acceptable standards within a reasonable time frame through avenues such as additional training and satisfying an independent review of their operations. Alternatively, action be taken to remove substandard operators from the building industry.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>Builder competencies for registration are continually under review and a review of competencies for all practitioner categories has commenced.</p>	<p>A competency manual for each practitioner category will be developed.</p>

CHAPTER 8: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 51:** (page 366)

<p>The Department of Justice, in consultation with the Advocate for Responsible Gambling, develop appropriate performance information that will enable an assessment of the effectiveness of the Advocate's Office in discharging its responsibilities.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The Department of Justice (DOJ) undertakes an ongoing review of departmental outputs and performance measures to better reflect the achievement of key targets and outcomes.</p>	<p>DOJ will continue to review and improve its output performance measures on an annual basis.</p>
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• **Recommendation 52:** (page 370)

<p>The Gambling Research Panel and the Department of Justice ensure that:</p> <p>(a) appropriate performance measures and targets are established, which enable effective monitoring of the Panel's project costs, timelines and implementation outcomes; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Performance measures and targets addressing the outputs of the Gambling Research Panel are being developed for the 2004-05 Budget Papers and will be reported in the Gambling Research Panel's Annual Report.</p>	<p>New measures to be proposed in the 2004-05 Budget process.</p>
<p>(b) performance information is reported in the Gambling Research Panel's annual report.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 52(a) response.</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 52(a) response.</p>

CHAPTER 9: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 53:** (page 376)

Where machinery of government changes result in the transfer of responsibilities to other Departments, all comparative performance information should, where possible, be reported in the one place in the Budget Papers, against the full cost of those achievements.	Accept in Principle	Comparative performance information on responsibilities transferred as part of Machinery of Government changes is disclosed for the full reporting period by the receiving Department.	The Department of Premier and Cabinet will continue to comply these arrangements.
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• **Recommendation 54:** (page 381)

The Department of Premier and Cabinet develop a way of tracking or allocating resources, including staff resources, across outputs to improve the accuracy of budget estimates and to facilitate analysis of the costs associated with outputs.	Accept	The current structure of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) outputs has resulted in the more efficient allocation of resources across outputs.	DPC will continue to strive to improve resource allocation across current outputs.
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CHAPTER 9: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 55:** (page 384)

<p>To assist with scoping future projects and providing more accurate budget and time estimates, Arts Victoria, and where appropriate in conjunction with the Office of Major Projects, review all relevant capital projects, including those recently completed, and identify deficiencies in original budget or time estimations.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Arts Victoria is working closely with the Office of Major Projects to ensure the delivery of relevant capital projects. Where appropriate, project controls have been implemented to ensure the timely delivery of projects and ensure mechanisms are in place to identify any budget concerns.</p>	<p>Arts Victoria will continue to work with Office of Major Projects to ensure the effective project monitoring of capital projects including the Yarra Precinct Arts Integration project.</p>
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• **Recommendation 56:** (page 388)

<p>The Department of Premier and Cabinet closely monitor the operations of the Ombudsman's Office to determine whether, in the absence of an increase in funding for 2003-04, the Ombudsman is able to function effectively and discharge all his statutory responsibilities.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Premier and Cabinet closely monitors all budgets, including the Office of the Ombudsman to ensure adequate resources are provided to meet outcomes.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 9: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 57: (page 389)</p>			
<p>As part of the review and update of the Growing Victoria Together strategy, to be undertaken in 2003-04, the Government:</p> <p>(a) clearly define the strategy's purpose and role;</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>The Department of Premier and Cabinet is currently undertaking a major review of the reporting of outcomes of <i>Growing Victoria Together</i>. This is being done in consultation with other Departments and is expected to be completed in the first half of 2004-05.</p> <p>The aim of this is to refine the strategy's purpose and role, performance measures and progress measures, and examine reporting against the progress of the strategy in respect of outputs and other departmental plans.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(b) advance work being done to define progress measures and determine benchmarks; and</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 57(a) response.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(c) frame links between outputs and outcomes.</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 57(a) response.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 9: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 58:** (page 393)

<p>The Victorian WorkCover Authority:</p> <p>(a) review the effectiveness of the strategies to address the incidence of stress in the public sector workforce; and</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>The Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA) accepts the need to continually review the effectiveness of programs addressing the incidence and management of stress amongst public sector employees.</p> <p>Like other public sector jurisdictions across Australia and overseas, stress in the Victorian public sector workplace continues to grow is of concern.</p> <p>The Authority has in place a range of programs that are monitored and remain under regular review. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Industry Program and Improvement Strategy focused on occupational health and safety issues specifically in the public and community services sectors; and • The development of pilot programs to determine the most effective approaches to reducing stress in public sector organisations and assist in the development of guidance material. <p>The VWA has been successful in ensuring these issues remain a high priority for senior management across the public sector through a range of high-level consultative and policy making forums.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(b) report on this matter in its annual report.</p>	<p>Under Review</p>	<p>The VWA will continue to report on the progress of initiatives to reduce the incidence, and improvement the management of stress in the Victorian public sector.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 10: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 59:** (page 405)

<p>The Department of Primary Industries in determining its current and future research activities consider a range of flexible strategies to retain and attract specialist staff for key research programs.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) applies a range of flexible strategies to attract and retain specialist scientific staff. To attract specialist staff, DPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has created a Departmental specific cadetship program, supporting undergraduate study and post study employment; • Targets placement of recruitment advertisements into key journals and other publications; • Participates in university career forums for graduating students; • Standardises remuneration rates for new entrant scientists (above usual rates); and • Offers post-graduate study opportunities. <p>To retain specialise staff, DPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages further study (including study leave without pay); • Has established an arrangement with universities for joint appointment (eg. as an Associate Professor) whilst retaining employment with DPI; • Has created a mixed career model which will lead to promotion on basis of expertise, not only management duties; and • Offers a range of flexible leave options to assist individuals in balancing career and personal lives. 	<p>Preliminary discussions have been held with the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development with the view to developing a Whole-of-Government approach to the protection and commercialisation of intellectual property including a framework for rewarding and providing incentives to staff critical to the creation of this intellectual property.</p>
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CHAPTER 10: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 60:** (page 411)

<p>The Department of Primary Industries develop performance measures that would enable an assessment of the effectiveness of its compliance activities in the different categories of fisheries and report this information in the Budget Papers and the Department's annual report.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Compliance performance measures for specific key fisheries are being progressively developed in consultation with stakeholders through annual compliance strategies.</p> <p>Compliance strategies are in place for abalone and freshwater native fish fisheries.</p>	<p>Compliance strategies are currently being developed for the rock lobster and giant crab fisheries. As part of the development of a 5 year Strategic Plan for Fisheries Victoria, performance measures for compliance will be reviewed during 2003-04.</p> <p>The outcome of this process will be incorporated in revised performance measures for 2005-06. Any revised performance measures and accompanying information would be included in Budget Paper No. 3 <i>Budget Statement</i> and the departmental annual report for the appropriate year.</p>
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CHAPTER 10: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 61:** (page 414)

<p>The Department of Primary Industries in developing a state wide sustainability strategy for the mining and extractive sectors, ensure:</p> <p>(a) the targets are clear, understandable and reasonable;</p> <p>(b) the targets and actions are clearly linked to goals and objectives; and</p> <p>(c) performance reporting is relevant, meaningful and transparent.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>A Sustainability Unit has been established within the Minerals and Petroleum Division of the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). The Unit has defined its vision, purpose and identified its critical success factors in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health; • Safety; • Environment; • Planning; • Community engagement; and • Regulatory affairs. <p>Each of the critical success factors includes clear targets and actions designed to promote and support sustainable development of the mining and extractive industries in Victoria.</p> <p>The Sustainability Unit's business plan is currently being reviewed against the DPI business plan and overall DPI sustainable development strategy.</p> <p>The review will ensure that relevant actions within the Sustainability Unit business plan are compatible with the DPI business plan and sustainable development strategy.</p>	<p>A sustainable development strategy will be developed specifically for the mining and extractive industries. This will focus on operational and strategic policy actions to meet the objectives of sustainable development.</p> <p>Key industry stakeholders will be consulted on the goals and strategies associated with the sustainable development strategy for the mining and extractive industries so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All goals and objectives within the sustainable development strategy are clear, understandable and reasonable; • Targets and actions are linked to goals and objectives; and • Performance reporting protocols are relevant, meaningful and transparent. <p>The sustainable development strategy for the mining and extractive industries will be publicly released and available in both hard copy and located on the DPI web site.</p>
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CHAPTER 11: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 62: (page 432)</p>			
<p>The Department of Sustainability and Environment:</p> <p>(a) develop a performance monitoring and evaluation framework for the Victorian Water Trust to assess the outcomes of the Trust's activities; and</p>	Accept	<p>The Victorian Water Trust Advisory Council (VWTAC) has developed and endorsed Operating Guidelines for its proceedings that cover such matters as its reporting requirements and expenditure and financial commitment. The VWTAC Annual Report will be the vehicle for reporting on the Trust's operations, including expenditure and milestones achieved, as well as VWTAC activities.</p>	<p>Further action planned includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend to the Minister for Water an appropriate reporting, monitoring and evaluation framework for the Trust (the Framework); • Produce an annual report, including performance and evaluation of Trust and VWTAC activities against stated Government objectives; and • Ensure projects are monitored against key milestones and targets, as set out in the Framework.
<p>(b) report the performance information in the Budget Papers and the Department's annual report.</p>	Accept	<p>Inclusion of reporting requirements in the VWTAC Operating Guidelines.</p>	<p>Report performance information in the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Annual Report and in the Budget Papers.</p>

CHAPTER 11: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 63:** (page 433)

<p>The Department of Sustainability and Environment review arrangements relating to the effectiveness of each water retailer's activities to promote community and industry awareness about water conservation and recycling.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>All retail water businesses are administering the Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme.</p> <p>All retail water businesses are required to have a Water Conservation Plan setting out their initiatives for improving water conservation in their region.</p> <p>The Melbourne retail water businesses prepare annual Water Conservation Plans. The initiatives set out in these plans vary considerably. This variation was a concern to the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and accordingly, the Melbourne businesses are now preparing a consolidated Water Conservation Plan.</p> <p>Retail water businesses report monthly to DSE on their drought management activities. This is consolidated in the Water Status Report prepared by DSE.</p> <p>A review of water conservation activity is set out in each water business's annual report.</p> <p>All Water businesses contributed to and participated in the recent successful National Water Week.</p>	<p>The Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme will be reviewed.</p> <p>The Melbourne retail water businesses will prepare a consolidated Recycling Plan in the near future.</p> <p>An audit of the Water Conservation Plans developed by the retail water businesses is being considered.</p>
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• **Recommendation 64:** (page 438)

<p>Following the implementation of the recommendations arising from the review of planning processes, the Department of Sustainability and Environment develop performance information that will enable the effectiveness of the new measures to be determined and report this information in the Department's annual report.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>No action has yet been taken on this recommendation.</p>	<p>This recommendation will be implemented in conjunction with the implementation of the <i>Better Decisions Faster</i> initiatives that are accepted by Government. Submissions on <i>Better Decisions Faster</i> closed on 8 November 2003 and decisions on which initiatives will proceed will be made late December or early in 2004.</p>
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CHAPTER 12: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 65:** (page 442)

<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance build on the work undertaken to date to improve its performance measures and develop further performance information of a qualitative nature to provide more detailed information on whether Government outcomes were achieved.</p>	<p>Accept in Principle</p>	<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) has developed a series of best practice publications to assist Departments and the Victorian Public Sector to enhance output specification and performance management.</p> <p>These guides build on the information presented by the Auditor-General through his recent reports to the Parliament on performance management and reporting.</p>	<p>DTF will continue to develop and refine the guidance material to ensure they continue to exceed best practice and assist Agencies in setting performance measures which are accountable and quantifiable.</p>
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• **Recommendation 66:** (page 453)

<p>Summary information and rates of return on capital received and projected in the form of dividends from the respective government business enterprises be included in the Budget Papers.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Projections of total dividends and income tax equivalents from Government Business Enterprises (GBE) are already provided in the Budget Papers. Details of dividends and income tax equivalents paid are available in the individual annual reports of the GBEs.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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• **Recommendation 67:** (page 455)

<p>In implementing the new departmental funding arrangements, the Government ensure that full recognition is given to cost increases, especially salaries and wages, over which Departments have no control and provide adequate contingency funding in future budgets for such purposes.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Under the departmental funding model, the price provided for the provision of outputs to departments will be escalated by a given factor, usually the Consumer Price Index. Departments within this price are expected to meet all costs including salaries and wages. If the price paid for an output becomes unsustainable at the departmental level then Government can agree to a review of output price, modification of output specification and/or performance measures. The Government will continue to centrally hold contingencies such as the Advance to the Treasurer.</p>	<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance, in conjunction with all departments, is working to implement the model in time for the 2004-05 Budget.</p>
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CHAPTER 12: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 68:** (page 461)

<p>After the investment returns achieved by the State Superannuation Fund for 2002-03 are published, the Government review its strategy for achieving the 2035 full funding target.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Government does not consider that a review of its strategy for full funding of superannuation liabilities by 2035 is necessary at this time. While investment returns in recent years have been lower than expected, the strategy for full funding always contemplated that investment returns would vary from year to year. Lower than expected investment returns in 2001-02 and 2002-03 in the State Superannuation Fund have largely been offset by higher annual 'top-up' payments by Government and it remains on track for full funding of superannuation liabilities by 2035. The Government does not, however, rule out a review of that strategy at some point in the future.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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• **Recommendation 69:** (page 464)

<p>The Minister for Finance: (a) issue to public sector agencies a Direction on the level and nature of performance measurement required to complement the Government's Performance Management and Reporting Framework; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The <i>Directions of the Minister for Finance</i> require that Departments and Public Sector Agencies provide a summary of the operational and budgetary objectives, including the performance against those objectives.</p>	<p>The Department of Treasurer and Finance is working with the Auditor-General to develop and encourage output and performance measurement disclosures for various sectors of the Government.</p>
<p>(b) ensure consistency of performance information is included in the Budget Papers and the annual reports of Departments.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Departmental output information presented in the Budget Paper No. 3 <i>Budget Estimates</i> is reproduced in Departmental annual reports, disclosing the performance measures as reported in the corresponding Budget Paper year, together with the actual outcome.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 12: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 70:** (page 467)

<p>To enable Parliament to evaluate the total cost of rental accommodation, as compared with the capital costs involved in owning accommodation, consolidated information on all Government accommodation costs within the budget sector be included in the Budget Papers, along with relevant performance measures and targets.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Current performance framework adequately measures the cost of Government accommodation managed by the Department of Treasury and Finance.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 12: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 71:** (page 474)

<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance, in conjunction with WorkSafe and the Victorian WorkCover Authority, develop further strategies aimed at making employers more aware of their responsibilities for providing a safe workplace for their employees, in conjunction with communicating to employees the need to observe safe work practices.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance, WorkSafe and the Victorian Workcover Authority has developed and implemented major initiatives and strategies in creating awareness of a safe work environment. These strategies / activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive Compliance strategy; • Inspector visits to assist workplaces to meet legislative obligations and to enforce the legislation where necessary; • Planned interventions and blitzes; • Responses to information, such as complaints from workplaces; • Safety Development Fund; the Information and Education Fund, and the Small Business Funding Program; • Free information packs about various industry Occupational Health and Safety risks and issues; • Issuing of guidance notes, approved codes of conduct and other guidance material; • Grief Support Groups; • Communication, advertising, publications and alerts; • Events and forums in metropolitan and regional areas; and • Exhibitions at agricultural shows, expos and field days. 	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
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CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 72: (page 486)</p>			
<p>The Department for Victorian Communities:</p> <p>(a) ensure the evaluation of the Community Building Demonstration Projects and the Community Capacity Building Initiative assess the effectiveness of individual projects and activities; and</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>A mid-term review of the 10 Community Building Demonstration Projects (CBDPS) began in December 2003 to report on the progress and learnings of the effective strategies and outcomes resulting from activities of the projects.</p> <p>Regional Development Victoria is undertaking a final review of the Community Capacity Building Initiative (CCBI) over the next 6 months. A report on the 11 projects that details achievements and performance against the aims of the initiative will be prepared.</p>	<p>The mid-term review will inform the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) of the next steps and design of a final evaluation of the CBDPS in 2005.</p>
<p>(b) ensure the outcome indicators for the evaluation reflect the dimensions of community strengthening that specific projects target.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>The mid-term review of CBDPS will track progress against set goals and identify early outcomes of community strengthening activities undertaken by projects. The review of the CCBI will assess performance against project aims and established action plans that detail milestones and reflect community strengthening.</p>	<p>The mid-term review will provide information on the specific early outcomes and indicators for future evaluation. As the CCBI and CBDPS were underway prior to DVC, establishment and evaluation are measured against goals set at the commencement of both initiatives.</p>

CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 73:** (page 489)

<p>The Department for Victorian Communities:</p> <p>(a) develop relevant performance measures and targets that reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the status of the implementation of key components of the strategic grants framework; ii. the level of awareness among potential grant applicants of the availability of the new service; and iii. the extent to which grant applicants use the new service. 	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Progress to date against the Strategic Grants Framework includes agreement to 4 investment streams and common criteria regarding community strengthening outcomes.</p>	<p>This work is being progressed through the grants @ DVC project. These include the identification of milestones for the implementation of components of the strategic grants framework, performance measures, targets and reporting mechanisms.</p>
<p>(b) report on this performance information in the Budget Papers and the Department's annual report.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Once the output performance indicators have been determined, appropriate measures will be incorporated into DVC output structure and disclosed in the Budget Papers.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 74:** (page 496)

<p>(a) The Department for Victorian Communities' savings initiatives, as outlined in future Budget Papers, be accompanied by explanatory notes that clearly describe the composition of savings to be achieved in terms of their source(s), nature and associated amounts.</p>	<p>Accept in Part</p>	<p>Information on the composition and descriptions of specific savings initiatives for all departments is disclosed together with the output and asset investment initiatives in Budget Paper No.2 <i>Budget Statement</i>.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>
<p>(b) The Department for Victorian Communities assess the impact of efficiency savings on its capacity to deliver employment services and maintain existing service levels, including the impact on client access to services.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>The savings were the net result of new funding provided for the Jobs for Victoria initiative and budget reductions associated with the completion of a number of other initiatives. The 2003-04 Budget has committed \$155 million over 4 years to deliver the new consolidated Jobs for Victoria employment and training policy initiatives. Implementation of Jobs for Victoria initiatives has commenced, targeting those most in need of assistance to be able to participate in the Victorian labour market.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

• **Recommendation 75:** (page 499)

<p>The Office for Youth develop an appropriate evaluation strategy for FReeZA Central and the Advance youth development program, incorporating relevant effectiveness and efficiency indicators for both programs.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>An evaluation phase forms part of the implementation strategy for FReeZA Central and Advance.</p>	<p>FReeZA Central and Advance will continue to be evaluated against appropriate measures.</p>
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CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 76:** (page 502)

<p>The Victorian Multicultural Commission develop an evaluation strategy incorporating relevant and appropriate key performance indicators and targets to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commission's Community Grants Program in achieving the Government's desired outcomes.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>As part of its Forward Plan 2003-05, the Victorian Multicultural Commission has committed to undertaking an evaluation process of its core activities, assessing those against community and stakeholder expectations.</p>	<p>This evaluation process is expected to be complete by the end of August 2004.</p>
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• **Recommendation 77:** (page 505)

<p>(a) The Office of Women's Policy develop relevant and appropriate performance measures and targets relating to the timely finalisation and effective implementation of the Work, Family, Community Life Strategy; and</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The Action Agenda for Work and Family Balance was launched on 21 November 2003. The Action Agenda has a 2-year focus that demonstrates current and future action by the Victorian Government in terms of fostering better work and family balance.</p>	<p>A report card will be released after 12 months to demonstrate progress made in implementing initiatives and the major outcomes that have been achieved.</p>
<p>(b) the annual report of the Department for Victorian Communities provide detailed information on the progress against these performance measures and targets.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>The annual report of the Department for Victorian Communities will provide detail on achievements.</p>	<p>No further action will be taken on this recommendation.</p>

CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 78:** (page 506)

<p>The Government develop a comprehensive strategy for the ongoing operation of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre, based on the findings of the Ministerial Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre Trust to develop a strategy addressing the medium and long-term operation of the centre.</p> <p>The Government's role is the monitoring of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre's comprehensive strategy to ensure the ongoing operation of the centre.</p> <p>In addition, the Office of Women's Policy assisted the Queen Victoria Women's Centre in developing its strategic communication plan by the secondment of the Communications Officer to the Queen Victoria Women's Centre for 6 months.</p>	<p>Monitoring of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre's comprehensive strategy to ensure the ongoing operation of the centre.</p>
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CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 79:** (page 508)

(a) The Government establish formal reporting protocols for the Women's Safety Strategy to ensure key performance targets are established and regularly compared to actual performance;	Accept	A schedule of reporting requirements has commenced. The information in the report was collated across all relevant government departments with responsibility for implementing the Strategy. The first report to the Annual Meeting of Ministers on the progress of the Women's Safety Strategy and the 44 initiatives contained within was submitted on 10 December 2003.	Further action to be undertaken is to report annually to Ministers over the life of the Women's Safety Strategy. It is anticipated that an interim report will be released publicly in Year 2 of the Strategy (2004) and a final report to be released in the final year of the Strategy (2007).
(b) the annual report of the Department for Victorian Communities contain detailed information on the progress of the Women's Safety Strategy's implementation against the performance measures and targets; and	Accept	All performance measures listed in the Budget Papers will be reported in the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) Annual Report.	No further action will be taken on this recommendation.
(c) the Office for Women's Policy include the strategy's performance measures and targets under relevant outputs in future Budget Papers.	Accept in Part	DVC undertakes an ongoing review of departmental outputs and performance measures to better reflect the achievement of key targets and outcomes of significant projects.	DVC will continue to review and improve its output performance measures on an annual basis to accurately and meaningfully reflect its degree of success in delivering Government services and infrastructure.

CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
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• **Recommendation 80:** (page 508)

<p>Aboriginal Affairs Victoria develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework for the Indigenous Community Capacity Building Program. The framework should include relevant key performance indicators and targets that adequately reflect the effectiveness and efficiency of each of the program's four key components.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is being developed for the Indigenous Community Capacity Building Program.</p> <p>The framework is intended to incorporate the use of participant surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the Chief Executive Officer Network and Training and Support programs.</p> <p>Recipients of Indigenous Community Capacity Building Fund grants are now required to report against standardised and project specific performance criteria.</p> <p>Evaluation of the Internet Portal component will focus on monitoring increased Indigenous access to the Internet and Information Technology facilities.</p>	<p>The monitoring and evaluation framework for the Indigenous Community Capacity Building Program will continue to be reviewed and improved as necessary.</p>
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CHAPTER 13: GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PAEC REPORT NO. 54 – 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES

DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

PAEC Recommendation	Response	Action Taken to Date	Further Action Planned
<p>• Recommendation 81: (page 511)</p>			
<p>The Department for Victorian Communities develop performance measures for the Commonwealth Games output that:</p> <p>(a) reflect key issues and activities that are the subject of progress reports (rather than focusing on only the production of the reports);</p>	Accept	<p>Additional performance indicators, appropriate to the current stage of planning for the 2006 Commonwealth Games, are being considered as part of the Department's 2004-05 Budget process.</p>	<p>Performance indicators will be reviewed each year to ensure that they remain informative, relevant and appropriate to the status of preparation for the Commonwealth Games.</p>
<p>(b) relate directly to key project milestones, such as timeliness and cost; and</p>	Accept	<p>Refer to recommendation 81(a) response.</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 81(a) response.</p>
<p>(c) have targets that are disclosed in the Budget Papers</p>	Accept	<p>Refer to recommendation 81(a) response.</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 81(a) response.</p>