

2011

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**GOVERNMENT PROGRESS REPORT ON THE TERRITORY AND
MUNICIPAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT NO. 7 OF 2010: MANAGEMENT OF
FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS**

**Presented by
Mr Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for Territory and Municipal Services**

Progress Report

Implementation of the recommendations made in the Auditor-General's Report No. 7, 2010: Management of Feedback and Complaints (the Progress Report).

Introduction

On 27 October 2010 the ACT Auditor-General's Office tabled its report in the ACT Legislative Assembly on the Management of Feedback and Complaints performance audit in the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate (TAMS).

In accordance with the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' (the Committee's) resolution of appointment the Audit report was referred to the Committee for examination. On 22 February 2011 the Government provided its Submission to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Auditor-General's Report No 7, 2010: Management of Feedback and Complaints.

On 16 August 2011 the Committee tabled its report on the Review of Auditor-General's Report No. 7 of 2010: Management of Feedback and Complaints, Report 17 (the Review Report). The Review Report made four recommendations and a Government Response is being prepared to indicate the Government's intentions against each recommendation. Recommendation three of the Review Report is as follows:

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the ACT Legislative Assembly by the last sitting day in October 2011 on the progress and effectiveness of the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate's implementation of the Auditor-General's recommendations that have been accepted either in whole or part. This should include: (i) a summary of action to date, either completed or in progress (including milestones completed); and (ii) the proposed action (including timetable), for implementing recommendations, where action has not yet commenced.

The Progress Report addresses Recommendation 3 of the Review Report.

Progress Report on the implementation of the Auditor-General's Report No. 7, 2010: Management of Feedback and Complaints

RECOMMENDATION 1

TAMS should implement initiatives to improve the visibility of ACT Government feedback and complaints processes, especially utilising Canberra Connect infrastructure. This should include:

- a) clearly facilitating the provision of *complaints*, in addition to *feedback*, in public material and web-site information;
- b) making on-line feedback and complaints options more visible; and
- c) actively promoting on-line feedback and complaints options.

Agreed.

The Government agrees that initiatives will be implemented to improve the visibility and promotion of the ACT Government feedback and complaints process in public material and website information.

Progress Report

Completed.

The TAMS website now shows complaints and feedback as separate links to ensure increased visibility.

The whole-of-government feedback site carries a specific 'complaints' tab. The Canberra Connect portal has had its search function upgraded to return a specified complaints page with a redirect to the whole-of-government feedback site.

Canberra Connect has produced a customer service charter detailing complaint submission options for matters relating to Canberra Connect.

RECOMMENDATION 2

TAMS should provide more public information on Government processes for handling feedback and complaints. This should include:

- a) information on the administrative steps involved;
- b) expected timeframes; and

- c) limitations on its jurisdiction and capacity to address and resolve certain issues.

Agreed in part.

The Government agrees that processes within TAMS on the handling of feedback and complaints will be more clearly articulated to customers. It is also noted there is an opportunity to improve and consolidate the processes for handling feedback and complaints across government, and that Canberra Connect will work with Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate (CMCD) on developing a whole of government approach to feedback and complaints management.

Progress Report

Partially completed.

TAMS has published a 'Complaints about TAMS' page on the TAMS website.

TAMS has drafted a customer service charter which details processes, timelines and any limitations the customer can expect when lodging feedback.

TAMS is currently working on establishing structures and systems that support the implementation of the customer service charter. The Directorate proposes to publish its customer service charter in early 2012.

Discussions with the CMCD have commenced about developing a whole of government approach to feedback and complaints management. Further information on how this will be progressed will be reflected in the Government's Response to the Public Accounts Committee Review of Auditor-General's Report No. 7 of 2010: Management of Feedback and Complaints, Report 17.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Canberra Connect should develop consistent administrative procedures for recording all feedback and complaints received by telephone through the Canberra Connect Contact Centre.

Agreed.

The Government will ensure that consistent procedural documentation for complaints handling is developed and implemented consistent with TAMS Guidelines.

Progress Report

Completed.

An online Integrated Customer Support (ICS) system procedures manual has been developed and implemented. This assists call handlers deal with complaints in a consistent manner.

RECOMMENDATION 4

TAMS should develop a strategy for maintaining the accuracy and currency of information within its management information systems, including Canberra Connect's ICS System. This should involve continuously verifying the accuracy and currency of this information to ensure issues are directed to the right areas and staff.

Agreed.

The Government agrees that a strategy for maintaining the accuracy and currency of information within TAMS management information systems will be developed.

Progress Report

Completed.

In addition to daily monitoring, Canberra Connect has completed an audit and update of the ICS system redirect email addresses and URL links and has established regular automatic prompts within ICS to ensure content is reviewed on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION 5

TAMS should:

- a) in the short term, endorse the ICS as the management information system for recording and managing feedback and complaints across TAMS;
- b) ensure key staff members with responsibility for managing feedback and complaints across TAMS have appropriate access to the ICS; and
- c) in the long term, identify and implement an appropriate management information system for recording and managing feedback and complaints.

Noted.

The Government has endorsed ICS as the TAMS information management system for recording and managing feedback and complaints, ensuring appropriate access, in the short term. The long term identification and implementation of an appropriate system for recording and managing feedback and complaints is reliant on funding

through subsequent budget processes. The Government will consider any possible action on this recommendation as part of the 2012-13 Budget process.

Progress Report

Underway.

The TAMS Director-General has endorsed ICS as the management information system for feedback.

Canberra Connect has commenced consultation with relevant areas to ensure system access. Access to ICS consoles, and training for the Canberra Connect Contact Centre, has been completed.

The procurement process to identify a long-term management information system is underway.

RECOMMENDATION 6

TAMS should develop policy and procedural guidance for the management of feedback and complaints for its staff, which includes minimum standards of services and customer service principles and ongoing communication, when appropriate, with the provider of the feedback or complaint.

Agreed.

The Government has agreed that policy guidelines will be developed for the management of feedback and complaints across TAMS. These guidelines will include service standards, customer service principles, communication with the customer, monitoring and reporting expectations and process for gathering customer feedback on how their feedback was handled and resolved.

Progress Report

Underway.

Guidelines on the Management of Feedback and Complaints have been drafted, drawing on the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling and the Australian Standard for Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaint handling in organisations.

Implementation of the guidelines is linked to the roll out of ICS consoles across the Directorate. Further discussion around internal processes need to be considered before the guidelines are approved and implementation commences.

RECOMMENDATION 7

TAMS should improve the monitoring and reporting of feedback and complaints. Regular monitoring and reporting should address:

- a) quantitative and qualitative aspects of feedback and complaints received, including the nature of the feedback or complaint and the business activities to which it relates; and
- b) progress in resolving feedback and complaints, including timeliness of resolution.

Agreed.

The Government has agreed that following implementation of the TAMS Policy on feedback and complaints handling, improved monitoring and reporting will be established in TAMS. Where Service Level Agreements are in place between agencies and Canberra Connect, comprehensive reporting will continue to occur.

Provision of qualitative and quantitative information related to TAMS will be provided as part of the monthly Stewardship Report to the TAMS Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Progress Report

Underway.

The draft Guidelines for the Management of Feedback and Complaint details processes and timelines.

Data collection in relation to feedback and complaints is underway. Reporting will be made monthly to ELT and will address each of the elements identified in recommendation seven, noting not all of that data may be available in the initial stages of reporting as it is reliant on the roll out of the ICS console across TAMS.

It is proposed feedback and complaints management reporting to ELT will commence in October 2011. ELT will monitor the data and use this information to assist to inform service delivery improvement across the Directorate.

RECOMMENDATION 8

TAMS and Canberra Connect should seek feedback from customers on their satisfaction with the way that their feedback or complaint was handled and resolved.

Agreed.

The Government has agreed that TAMS and Canberra Connect will implement processes for customers to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the way their feedback or complaint was handled and resolved.

Progress Report

Underway.

Canberra Connect has purchased a survey module to be used in conjunction with the ICS system to seek feedback from customers regarding Canberra Connect service delivery. The survey module has been successfully tested and deployed to a segment of the customer base. Further testing of this module will be undertaken during October 2011.

It is anticipated the data on customer satisfaction with the way that their feedback or complaints was handled and resolved will be included in the TAMS Stewardship Report during 2011-12.

RECOMMENDATION 9

TAMS and Canberra Connect should review and evaluate its feedback and complaints management against appropriate performance indicators.

Agreed.

The Government has agreed that performance indicators on customer satisfaction and timeliness will be established for TAMS and identified in the Monthly Stewardship Report.

Progress Report

Underway.

Performance indicators have been established and published in the draft customer service charter.