

**Government Response to ACT Auditor-General's
Report No. 11 of 2019 - Maintenance of ACT
Government School Infrastructure**

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Executive Summary

The ACT Audit Office undertook a performance audit in the second half of 2019 to provide an independent opinion to the Legislative Assembly on the efficiency and effectiveness of repair and maintenance activities of ACT Public Schools infrastructure.

The final audit report was presented to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on 19 December 2019.

The overall conclusion of the final report highlights that the Education Directorate has a sound framework for the management of school infrastructure activities, including repair and maintenance activities.

The report also notes that the Directorate has not fully implemented its asset management framework and can improve supporting systems and processes.

The Government is satisfied that assets are being effectively managed but recognises that improvements can be made and is committed to continual improvements to further strengthen the management of public school infrastructure.

The final report makes a total of eight recommendations, these are all supported by the Government. Of these five are already in implementation or will be implemented this year. Work towards implementing the remaining three recommendations will commence during 2020.

The recommendations and responses are detailed as follows:

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Government Response	Status
<p>1. The Education Directorate should revise Module 7 of the School Management Manual to clearly identify responsibilities for repairs and maintenance activities between the Infrastructure and Capital Works Branch and schools, and in doing so ensure that there is consistency and clarity in language in both Module 7 and the building condition assessments reports.</p>	Education Directorate	Agreed	A review of Module 7 of the School Management Manual will commence this year.
<p>2. The Education Directorate should complete the development of property quality standards and incorporate them into the asset management system. Property quality standards should then be used to assess the performance of assets and identify if the assets are being appropriately used, maintained and are fit for purpose.</p>	Education Directorate	Agreed	Property quality standards will be developed and incorporated into the asset management system. This information will be combined with condition information to provide data for analysis of asset use and maintenance approaches.
<p>3. The Education Directorate should develop operational asset management plans for its school infrastructure assets. The plans should contain information to inform long term strategic asset planning for the Education Directorate and should address matters such as responsibility for the asset, arrangements for monitoring asset performance, operational training and estimated operating costs.</p>	Education Directorate	Agreed in principle	The Education Directorate supports the development of operational asset management plans in all schools. This work will follow the development of the annual maintenance plans, subject to budgetary constraints.

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<p>4. The Education Directorate should prepare and execute comprehensive annual maintenance plans for school infrastructure assets, which outline the specific tasks which are to be undertaken during the year as well as the estimated resources and cost of maintenance activities. The annual maintenance plans should align with, and support, operational asset management plans to be developed as part of Recommendation 3.</p>	<p>Education Directorate</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The development of annual maintenance plans has commenced with the appointment of School Network Support Officers. As part of their role, the Network Officers work with schools to identify the annual maintenance actions and forecast costs.</p>
<p>5. The Education Directorate should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) recommence its rolling program of building condition assessments; and b) populate its asset management information system, SPM Assets, with the results of the building condition assessments in order to facilitate and inform asset maintenance planning. 	<p>Education Directorate</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruitment of a new team of Infrastructure and Capital Works, School Network Support Officers has been undertaken. All four of these officers have commenced with the Directorate. Building condition assessments are being conducted by the School Network Support officers. b) In conducting the building condition assessments, data is entered into the asset management information system directly and is immediately available for reporting and asset maintenance planning.

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<p>6. The Education Directorate should develop baseline data for the cost of activities undertaken under the Service Level Agreement. Expectations should be developed for the benefits that the Service Level Agreement aims to provide and the expectations should be periodically reviewed to inform the performance of the Service Level Agreement.</p>	<p>Education Directorate</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Baseline data for the ACT Property Group Service Level Agreement has been developed. This data will be used to review performance throughout 2020.</p> <p>A review of the expectations of the Service Level Agreement will be undertaken during 2020</p>
<p>7. The Education Directorate should state the purpose and scope of the Specific Works Program and prepare guidelines and funding criteria. Record keeping should be improved with all funding decisions comprehensively recorded.</p>	<p>Education Directorate</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The usefulness of the Specific Works Program will be reviewed in the first half of the year to determine whether this program should continue in operation.</p>
<p>8. The Education Directorate should review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the methods used to record repair and maintenance activities, and the expenditure on repairs and maintenance, with a view to achieving consistent and consolidated reporting; and b) the operation of the School Operational Allocation, to determine why schools exceeded their maintenance component allocations in 2017 and 2018. 	<p>Education Directorate</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The methods used to record repair and maintenance activities will be reviewed during the year with recommendations for any changes to be provided to Government by the end of 2020. b) A detailed review of School Operational Allocation expenditure will be undertaken during the first half of 2020.