A. Entity responses

As mandated in Section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, the Queensland Audit Office gave a copy of this report with a request for comments to:

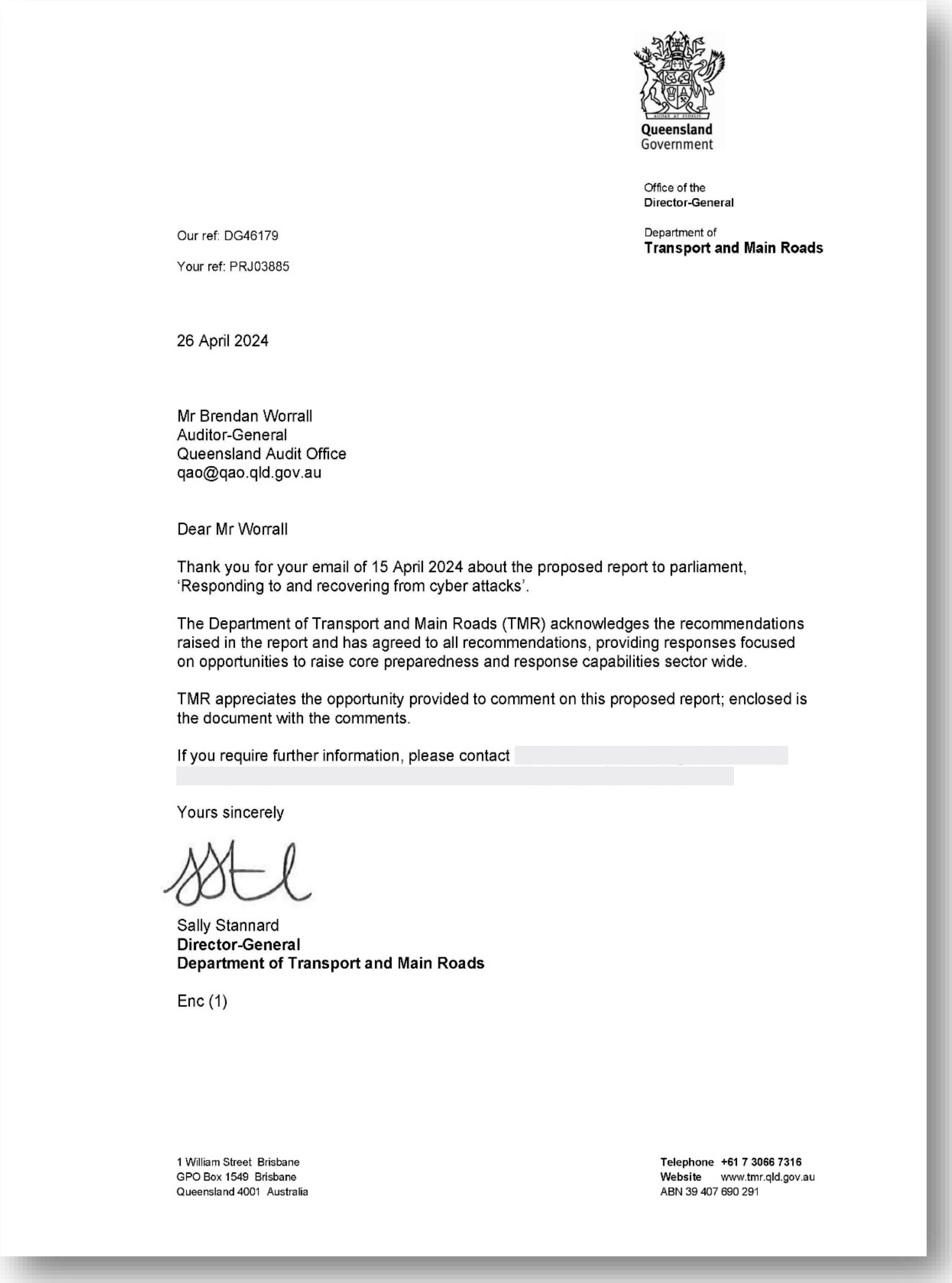
- the Queensland Government Cyber Security Unit within the Department of Transport and Main Roads
- the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

Excerpts of relevant sections were provided to the 3 public sector entities we audited. Due to the sensitivity of the findings and possible security implications, these entities were not named in this report.

This appendix contains the responses we received.

The heads of these entities are responsible for the accuracy, fairness, and balance of their comments.

Comments received from Director-General, Department of Transport and Main Roads



Queensland
Government

Office of the
Director-General

Department of
Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: DG46179

Your ref: PRJ03885

26 April 2024

Mr Brendan Worrall
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
qao@qao.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Worrall

Thank you for your email of 15 April 2024 about the proposed report to parliament, 'Responding to and recovering from cyber attacks'.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) acknowledges the recommendations raised in the report and has agreed to all recommendations, providing responses focused on opportunities to raise core preparedness and response capabilities sector wide.

TMR appreciates the opportunity provided to comment on this proposed report; enclosed is the document with the comments.

If you require further information, please contact [redacted]

Yours sincerely

Sally Stannard
Director-General
Department of Transport and Main Roads

Enc (1)

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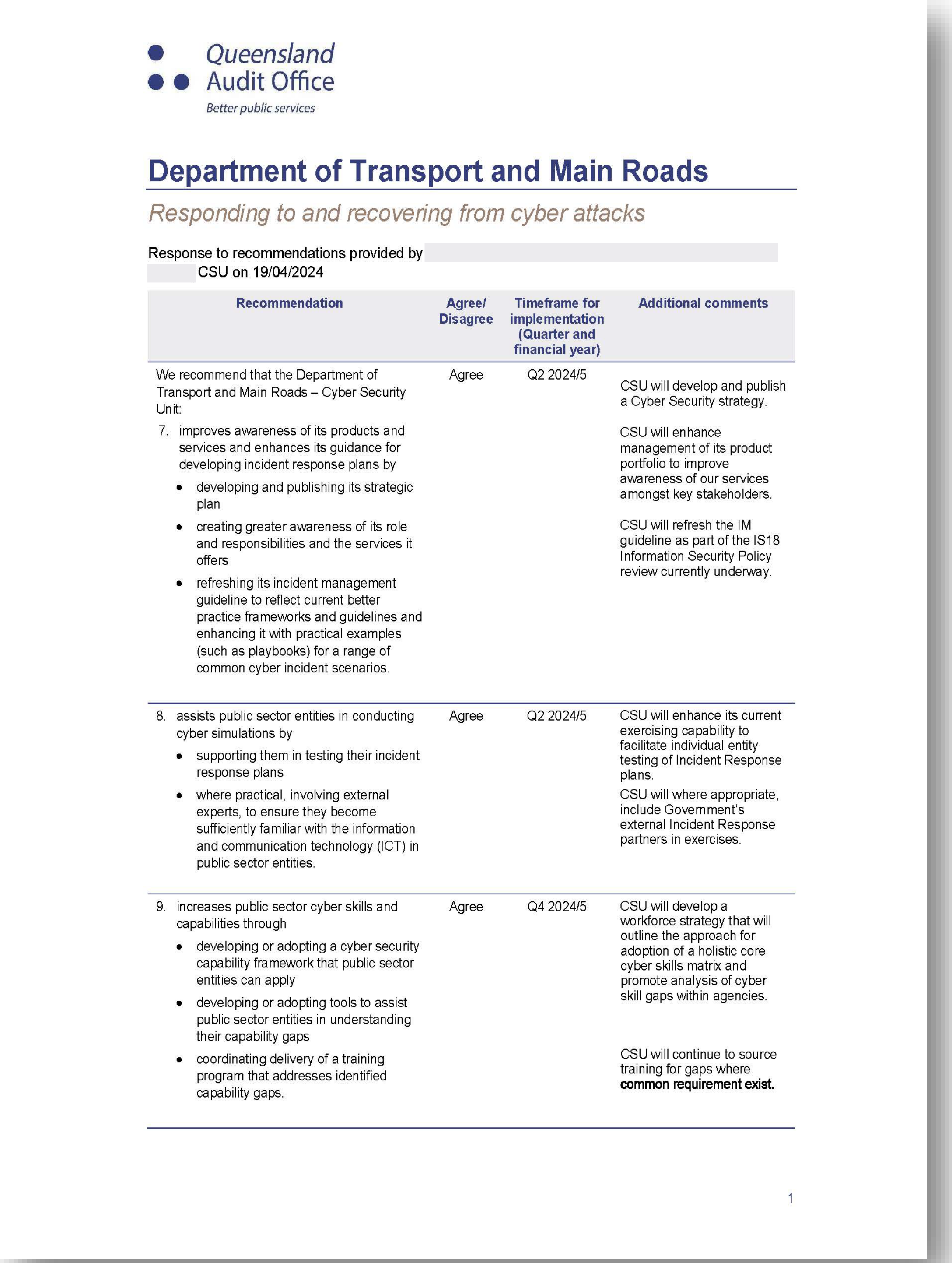
Responses to recommendations



Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Responding to and recovering from cyber attacks

Response to recommendations provided by [redacted]
[redacted] CSU on 19/04/2024

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Timeframe for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
We recommend that the Department of Transport and Main Roads – Cyber Security Unit: 7. improves awareness of its products and services and enhances its guidance for developing incident response plans by • developing and publishing its strategic plan • creating greater awareness of its role and responsibilities and the services it offers • refreshing its incident management guideline to reflect current better practice frameworks and guidelines and enhancing it with practical examples (such as playbooks) for a range of common cyber incident scenarios.	Agree	Q2 2024/5	CSU will develop and publish a Cyber Security strategy. CSU will enhance management of its product portfolio to improve awareness of our services amongst key stakeholders. CSU will refresh the IM guideline as part of the IS18 Information Security Policy review currently underway.
8. assists public sector entities in conducting cyber simulations by • supporting them in testing their incident response plans • where practical, involving external experts, to ensure they become sufficiently familiar with the information and communication technology (ICT) in public sector entities.	Agree	Q2 2024/5	CSU will enhance its current exercising capability to facilitate individual entity testing of Incident Response plans. CSU will where appropriate, include Government's external Incident Response partners in exercises.
9. increases public sector cyber skills and capabilities through • developing or adopting a cyber security capability framework that public sector entities can apply • developing or adopting tools to assist public sector entities in understanding their capability gaps • coordinating delivery of a training program that addresses identified capability gaps.	Agree	Q4 2024/5	CSU will develop a workforce strategy that will outline the approach for adoption of a holistic core cyber skills matrix and promote analysis of cyber skill gaps within agencies. CSU will continue to source training for gaps where **common requirement exist.**

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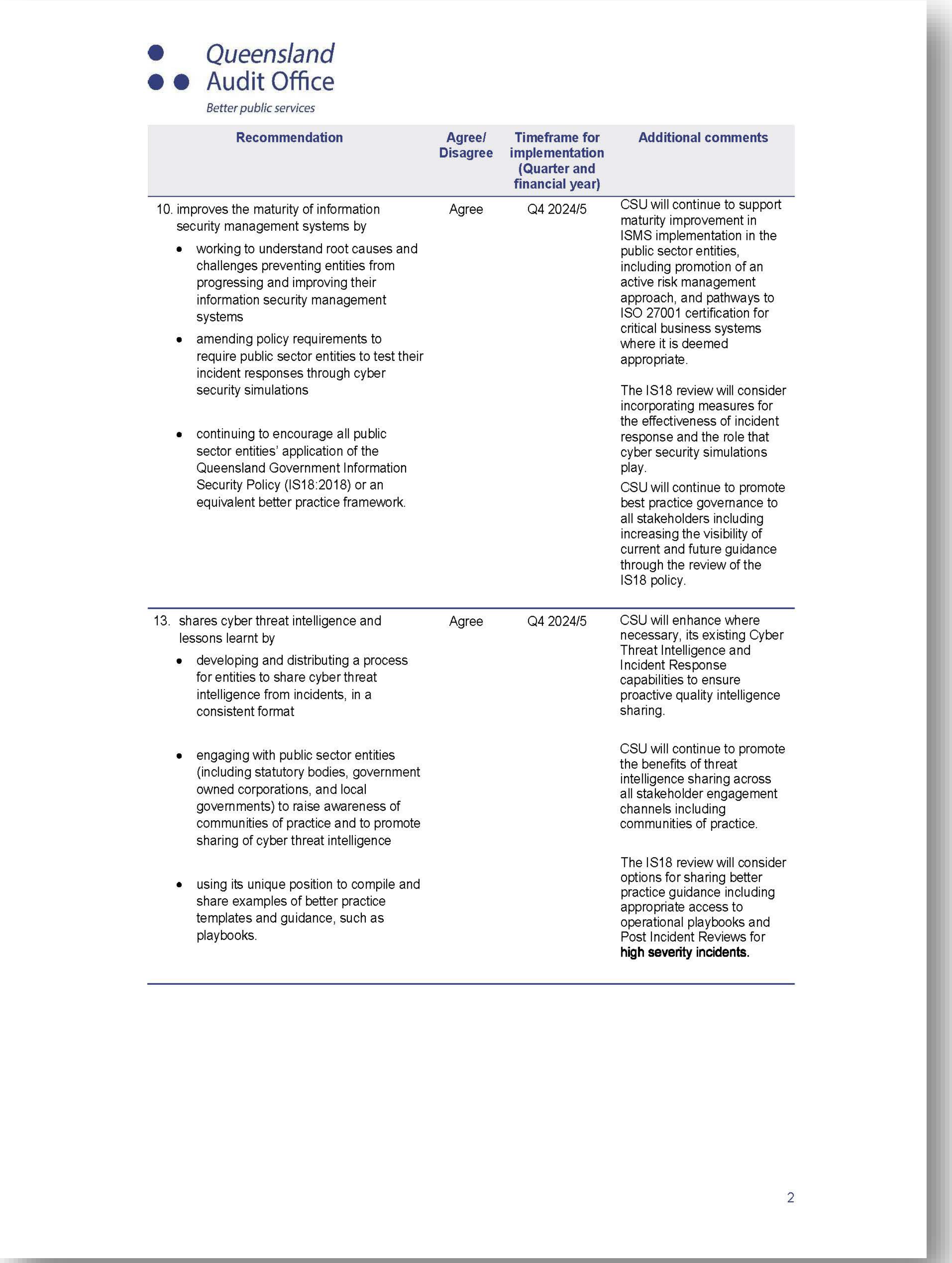
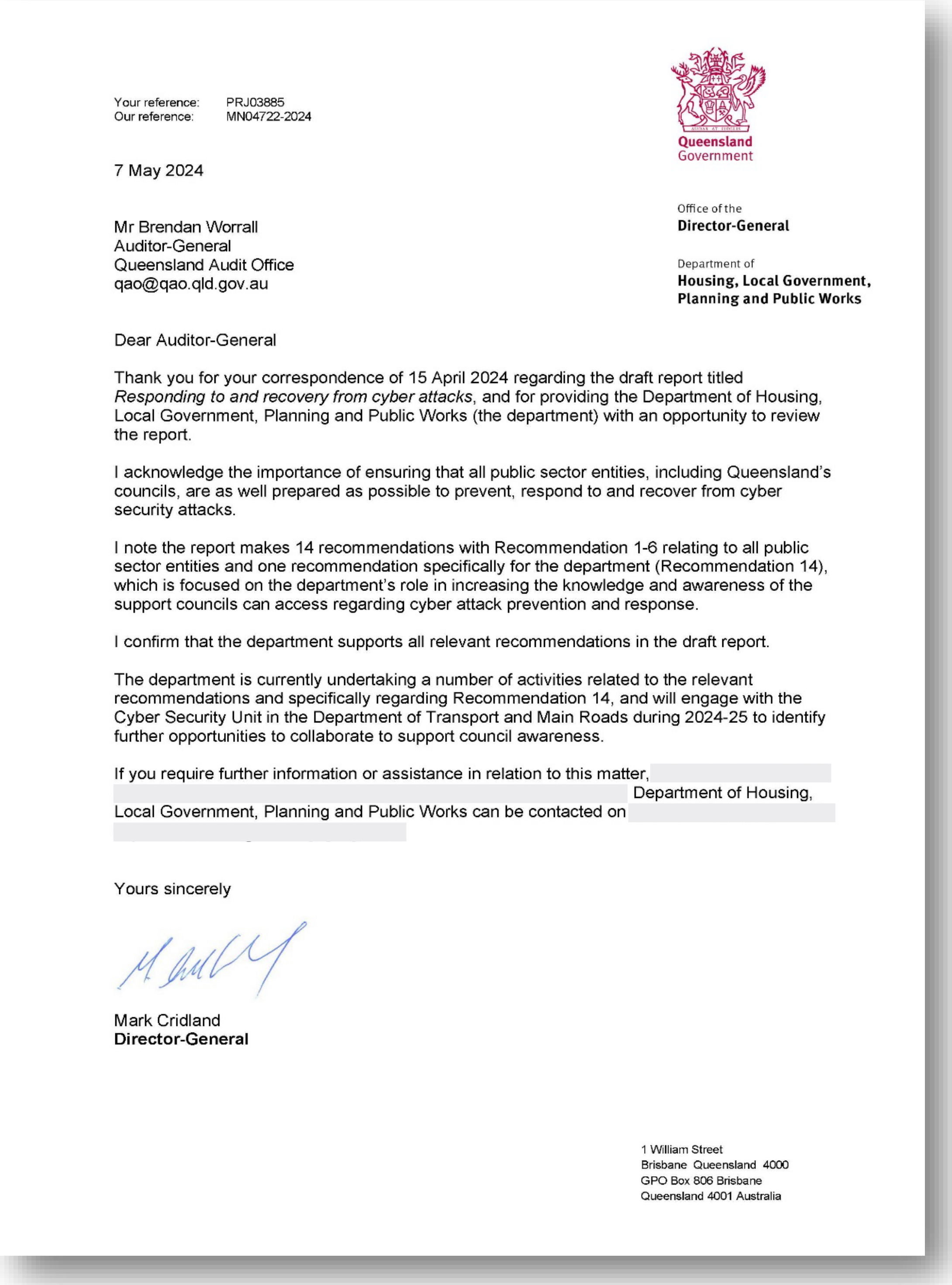


Queensland
Audit Office
Better public services

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Timeframe for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
10. improves the maturity of information security management systems by • working to understand root causes and challenges preventing entities from progressing and improving their information security management systems • amending policy requirements to require public sector entities to test their incident responses through cyber security simulations • continuing to encourage all public sector entities' application of the Queensland Government Information Security Policy (IS18:2018) or an equivalent better practice framework.	Agree	Q4 2024/5	CSU will continue to support maturity improvement in ISMS implementation in the public sector entities, including promotion of an active risk management approach, and pathways to ISO 27001 certification for critical business systems where it is deemed appropriate. The IS18 review will consider incorporating measures for the effectiveness of incident response and the role that cyber security simulations play. CSU will continue to promote best practice governance to all stakeholders including increasing the visibility of current and future guidance through the review of the IS18 policy.
13. shares cyber threat intelligence and lessons learnt by • developing and distributing a process for entities to share cyber threat intelligence from incidents, in a consistent format • engaging with public sector entities (including statutory bodies, government owned corporations, and local governments) to raise awareness of communities of practice and to promote sharing of cyber threat intelligence • using its unique position to compile and share examples of better practice templates and guidance, such as playbooks.	Agree	Q4 2024/5	CSU will enhance where necessary, its existing Cyber Threat Intelligence and Incident Response capabilities to ensure proactive quality intelligence sharing. CSU will continue to promote the benefits of threat intelligence sharing across all stakeholder engagement channels including communities of practice. The IS18 review will consider options for sharing better practice guidance including appropriate access to operational playbooks and Post Incident Reviews for **high severity incidents.**

2

Comments received from Director-General, Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works



Queensland
Government

Office of the
Director-General

Department of
Housing, Local Government,
Planning and Public Works

Your reference: PRJ03885
Our reference: MN04722-2024

7 May 2024

Mr Brendan Worrall
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
qao@qao.qld.gov.au

Dear Auditor-General

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 April 2024 regarding the draft report titled *Responding to and recovery from cyber attacks*, and for providing the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works (the department) with an opportunity to review the report.

I acknowledge the importance of ensuring that all public sector entities, including Queensland's councils, are as well prepared as possible to prevent, respond to and recover from cyber security attacks.

I note the report makes 14 recommendations with Recommendation 1-6 relating to all public sector entities and one recommendation specifically for the department (Recommendation 14), which is focused on the department's role in increasing the knowledge and awareness of the support councils can access regarding cyber attack prevention and response.

I confirm that the department supports all relevant recommendations in the draft report.

The department is currently undertaking a number of activities related to the relevant recommendations and specifically regarding Recommendation 14, and will engage with the Cyber Security Unit in the Department of Transport and Main Roads during 2024-25 to identify further opportunities to collaborate to support council awareness.

If you require further information or assistance in relation to this matter, [redacted] Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works can be contacted on [redacted]

Yours sincerely

Mark Cridland
Director-General

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