

STATES OF JERSEY



INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION FOLLOW UP (R.67/2023 RES.) – COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 13th July 2023
by the Public Accounts Committee

STATES GREFFE

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with paragraphs 69-71 of the [Code of Practice](#) for engagement between ‘Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee’ and ‘the Executive’, the Public Accounts Committee (the ‘PAC’) presents its comments on the [Executive Response](#) to the Comptroller and Auditor General’s (C&AG) Report entitled: [Integrated Technology Solution – Follow Up](#) (R.67/2023 presented to the States on 28th April 2023).

Background

1. A substantial part of the PAC’s role is to assess the use of public funds and whether sound financial practices have been applied. This includes understanding whether good governance and best practices have been applied in planning, implementing and administering projects undertaken by the Government of Jersey.
2. The C&AG published her report on 28th April 2023 as a follow up to a previous report ([ICT Cloud Implementation – Integrated Technology Solution – October 2021](#)) and made 10 recommendations and highlighted one area for consideration within the final report.
3. The report noted that the ITS programme was launched in early 2020 and was intended to enable the Government to use modern, cloud-based systems for finance, human resources (HR), procurement and asset management. It forms one part of a significant investment being made by Government in digital modernisation. The C&AG’s review identified some elements of good practice in the way in which the ITS programme has been managed. However, it identified that there is a need for Government to improve its management of strategic risks in major programmes, to ensure that sufficient specific business-unit level approval of functionality is gained prior to ‘go live’ and to enhance its processes to monitor the realisation of the benefits expected to be delivered over a sufficiently long-time span.
4. The PAC notes that all but one recommendation (recommendation 4) have either been accepted or partially accepted by the Government of Jersey within the response.

Comments on response to recommendations

5. The PAC has reviewed the Executive Response provided by the Government of Jersey and, whilst it is pleased to note that the majority of recommendations have been accepted, it has the following comments to make in relation to the response:

C&AG Recommendation 8	Executive Response	Target Date	Responsible Officer
Ensure business readiness checklists for future releases include a service-related dimension which provides evidence that each significant service area across the States of Jersey is satisfied that the functionality has been tested	Accept: This is already in place for projects that are delivered through the Project Delivery Framework and under the scope of the CPMO. It is a mandatory requirement for projects to complete an ‘Approval to Proceed to Stage	In place	Head of Corporate Portfolio Management Office

and signed off as meeting business needs.	4' document which must be signed off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the project. This document includes a readiness checklist which contains a section to confirm that the Senior Users have signed off the project's products/services acceptance criteria.		
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6. The PAC would like to see further evidence of the checklists which have been put in place and that they are operating in the manner in which they are intended. It is noted that the response has stated the processes are already in place, however, the recommendation made by the C&AG highlighted a need for evidence that each significant service area across the States of Jersey is satisfied that the functionality has been tested and signed off as meeting business needs. It appears that the evidence received during the review by the C&AG shows a system which requires improvement and may not be fit for purpose. For the Government to respond and state that this system is in place, the PAC is concerned that full consideration may not have been given to this particular recommendation within the response.

C&AG Recommendation 4	Executive Response	Target Date	Responsible Officer
Produce annual reports on benefits realisation from closed programmes to allow transparent reporting on long-term benefit realisation.	Rejected Based on the current maturity of the organisation, and limited SME resources in this area, this recommendation cannot be progressed at this time. Rather focus needs to be prioritised on putting foundational steps in place as above in R3 and focus on continued improvements to the quality of business cases.	n/a	n/a

7. The PAC is concerned about the rejection of this recommendation and the comments in relation to the maturity of the organisation and there being limited resources to report on benefits realisation. Given the significant investment that is being made within the ITS space in the Government of Jersey, the PAC would expect to see clear links between the outcomes of the programme and the initial business cases and objectives which have been set out at the outset of the programme. Whilst it is noted that a closure report will be produced at the end of the programme, further consideration is required around how the Government of Jersey highlights the long-term benefits of the programme.
8. Furthermore, if the Government of Jersey has identified its reporting ability as not being mature enough at present, further efforts should be made to improve

this as soon as possible so that it is able to collect accurate and timely data which can help drive improvements and value for money across the ITS programme.

General Comments

9. The PAC is aware that the roll-out of the ITS programme has not been without issues. Firstly, it would highlight the issue that appeared earlier in 2023 where suppliers were not able to be paid on time due to issues with the Connect Finance software. Whilst this has seemingly been resolved, there is concern over the risk management framework that was used in relation to roll-out of the programme, specifically the ‘big bang’ approach to roll-out where all departments took on the new software at the same time. The PAC would highlight that this situation was a considerable risk event and the escalation process in that regard is something it will be seeking further evidence of to ensure any future rollouts of ICT programmes are not affected in the same manner. It would also like assurances that the risks of suppliers not being paid on time have been documented within the corporate risk register.

10. Given the significant public interest in relation to the ongoing ITS improvements (especially in relation to payments to suppliers), the PAC intends to conduct a follow up of the implementation of the C&AG’s recommendations as part of a wider review into ICT implementation across the Government of Jersey. This will be taken forward in early 2024 as part of the PAC’s work programme.

Conclusion

In summary, the Committee will seek further evidence to ensure that the accepted recommendations are implemented and that improved practices are embedded. It also expects to see evidence that all (accepted, partly or partially accepted) recommendations have been added to the Recommendations Tracker so that their progress towards implementation can be tracked closely. The Committee is hopeful that Government will consider its comments and intends to monitor progress.