



AUDITOR GENERAL  
FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Serving the Public Interest

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### MANAGEMENT OF THE TRELIS PROJECT

Report 1  
April 2006

#### Background

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure's (DPI) Transport Executive and Licensing Information System (TRELIS) is a critical government computer system that:

- is a client-centric system with a database that contains personal information on the 1.3 million licensed drivers and 1.9 million registered vehicles in Western Australia. This information supports DPI's licensing function
- calculates applicable fees, records payments, and issues licenses and registration documents
- collects fees for the Insurance Commission of Western Australia, the Commissioner of Main Roads and the Police
- creates records of financial transactions which are used to update DPI's financial accounts.

The system was the result of the TRELIS Development Project, (the Project), which was initiated by the Department of Transport (DOT) in December 1999. Development was undertaken by a large national contractor following a tender process. In July 2001, DOT and the Ministry of Planning were amalgamated to form DPI. Responsibility for TRELIS was transferred to DPI in July 2002 when DOT was abolished.

TRELIS Version 3.1 went 'live' on 6 July 2004. A combination of user errors, data validation errors, system processing errors, poor control over data input by DPI's collecting agents and software compatibility problems with car dealers hampered the performance of TRELIS when it first went 'live'. However, by the end of the financial year close to 6.5 million transactions had been processed through TRELIS and more than a billion dollars in fees collected.

#### What the examination found...

- Testing indicates that TRELIS can be relied on for accurate financial reporting and raising of fees and charges.
- Poor specification of business requirements and software development problems resulted in TRELIS being two years behind schedule when it went 'live' on 6 July 2004. Software development to enhance functionality continues to be undertaken.

- An approved business case for TRELIS could not be located. Draft business cases were found though these lacked estimates for the ongoing maintenance and support of TRELIS. Approved funding for maintenance and support of TRELIS from July 2004 to June 2009 totals \$37.4 million.
- The capital cost of TRELIS when it went 'live' was \$32.6 million. DPI spent a further \$2.8 million in the year after it went 'live' in correcting software weaknesses. The cost of TRELIS was estimated at \$24.5 million in 1999 but was revised to \$29.7 million in 2001.
- Funding for TRELIS was provided on an incremental basis rather than total funding to match the requirements of the project and the level of project management, oversight and quality control were inadequate for a project of this size.
- Satisfactory procedures were followed in respect of contracting activities including tendering, vendor selection, probity audits, due diligence and contract formation. Other aspects of the project were also adequate including long term strategic planning, project planning including identification of project tasks and expected completion dates. Independent reviews of technical aspects of software architecture and high-level project management were arranged where appropriate.
- Sections of TRELIS software were rewritten at a cost to DPI of \$2.8 million. The causes of this were inadequate project management and specification of business requirements by DOT/DPI and inconsistent compliance with accepted software design and programming standards by the prime contractor. DPI was unable to determine the extent that these costs could be recovered under the agreed warranty plan though this assessment is not adequately documented.
- DPI has yet to fully test TRELIS' business continuity procedures and disaster recovery arrangements. Such testing is essential to confirm business continuity in the event of an emergency.

### What the examination recommended...

The Office of E-Government (a division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet) has recently developed a checklist for the Management and Implementation of Complex or Across Agency ICT Projects. DPI (or any other government agency) when undertaking any new large project should ensure that they address these check points, key elements of which include:

- build a strong business case, provide full disclosure of all funding required and ensure all funding requirements will be met
- adopt a proven approach to project and contract management
- undertake regular project reviews to monitor and manage how the project is progressing against its objectives.

DPI should also:

- test the TRELIS business continuity procedures and disaster recovery arrangements
- promptly address identified security weaknesses.

A copy of the report can be accessed at [www.audit.wa.gov.au/](http://www.audit.wa.gov.au/)  
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