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## Information security a continuing area of weakness for State government entities

The Auditor General today tabled in Parliament the [Information Systems Audit Report 2021 – State Government Entities](#).

The report summarises the results of the 2020 annual cycle of information systems audits for 59 State government entities and tertiary institutions in the Western Australian public sector.

Auditor General Ms Caroline Spencer said entities improved their general computer controls in 4 categories and remained constant in 1, but information security continues to be an area of significant weakness.

‘It’s disappointing to see only 50% of entities met our benchmark in this area, a drop of 7% from last year.

‘Poor information security controls leave entity systems and information vulnerable to misuse and may impact critical services provided to the public.

‘Consistent with previous years, we also found entities were not quickly addressing audit findings with 42% reported previously.

‘One way entities can remain vigilant against the rapidly changing threats to information systems is by promptly addressing audit findings,’ Ms Spencer said.

This is the Auditor General’s 13<sup>th</sup> separate report on State government entities’ information systems, and is the first year we have named the audited entities who received audit findings, in addition to the entities who have been consistently demonstrating good practices, in order to encourage more prompt action on our recommendations.

The report also includes a summary of common weaknesses found relating to remote access controls.

‘COVID-19 prompted organisations to quickly make changes to accommodate staff working remotely however we found important security controls, such as multifactor authentication, were not implemented,’ Ms Spencer said.

All public sector entities should consider the recommendations and case studies in the report to see how they can be applied to their operations.

### Report resources

- [PDF version](#)
- [summary video](#)