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Local governments fail to improve their information security, exposing them and their critical services to cyber attacks

The Auditor General today tabled in Parliament the [*Information Systems Audit Report 2022 – Local Government Entities*](#).

It summarises important findings and recommendations from our 2020-21 annual cycle of local government information system audits.

Auditor General Ms Caroline Spencer said capability maturity assessments were conducted at 12 entities which found information security continues to be a significant risk area.

‘Like last year, none of the 12 entities met our expectations across all 6 categories and none met the benchmark for information security.

‘As information and cyber security threats continue to evolve, it is increasingly important that entities implement appropriate controls to protect their valuable information and systems,’ Ms Spencer said.

The audit also included a review of the general computer controls at 45 local government entities and found over 350 control weaknesses.

‘Ten percent of this year’s weaknesses were rated as significant and 71% as moderate.

‘These weaknesses represent a considerable risk to the confidentiality, integrity and availability of local government’s information systems and need prompt resolution,’ Ms Spencer said.

Included in this report are case studies which highlight how weak controls can potentially compromise entities and result in system breaches, loss of sensitive and confidential information and financial loss.

Local governments need to continuously review and improve their practices to establish robust safeguards and enhance their resilience against cyber threats. Complex networks and systems require smaller entities to also dedicate resources to manage their information and cyber security.

Ms Spencer said local governments should use the recommendations in the report to address weaknesses in their information systems controls and improve their capability maturity.

Report resources

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