

## D. Status of prior recommendations

In *Health 2021* (Report 12: 2021–22), we identified the following recommendations for health sector entities.

<b>Procurement and contracting controls need to be strengthened</b>		<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>
2021– REC 1	<p>The Department of Health and 16 HHSs should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure they have appropriate contract management and procurement systems in place</li> <li>provide training in procurement processes and procedures</li> <li>maintain complete and up-to-date contract registers</li> <li>ensure all documents relating to contracts are kept in a central location.</li> </ul>	<p>There has been improvement, with most of the previously reported procurement deficiencies being resolved during the year. However, there continued to be a lack of a complete contract register at one health entity. At another entity we reported a new deficiency in relation to monitoring of financial delegations.</p>
<b>The Department of Health should arrange for another entity to manage hotel quarantine debts</b>		<b>No longer applicable</b>
2021– REC 2	<p>The Department of Health should pass the hotel quarantine invoicing and debt recovery functions to another government entity that is better suited to invoice processing and debt recovery, and is not as affected by COVID-19. This will allow the department to focus on provision of health care.</p>	<p>With the cessation of the mandatory returning traveller quarantine requirements, we consider this recommendation to be no longer applicable.</p>

In *Health 2021* (Report 12: 2021–22), we identified that 4 recommendations from our prior year report, *Health 2020* (Report 12: 2020–21), also remained outstanding. An update on the status of these issues is shown below.

<b>Resolve outstanding audit issues</b>		<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>
2020– REC 2	<p>Queensland Health entities and their audit committees should continue to regularly review the status of outstanding audit issues and ensure they are resolved in a timely manner.</p>	<p>As noted in Chapter 2, internal controls are generally effective. However, there remained 5 issues raised in prior years (2018 to 2021) yet to be resolved.</p>



<b>Strengthen the security of information systems</b>		<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>
2020– REC 3	<p>We recommend all entities strengthen the security of their information systems. They rely heavily on technology, and increasingly, they have to be prepared for cyber attacks. Any unauthorised access could result in fraud or error, and significant reputational damage.</p> <p>Their workplace culture, through their people and processes, must emphasise strong security practices to provide a foundation for the security of information systems.</p> <p>Entities should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide security training for employees so they understand the importance of maintaining strong information systems, and their roles in keeping them secure</li> <li>• assign employees only the minimum access required to perform their job, and ensure important stages of each process are not performed by the same person</li> <li>• regularly review user access to ensure it remains appropriate</li> <li>• monitor activities performed by employees with privileged access (allowing them to access sensitive data and create and configure within the system) to ensure they are appropriately approved</li> <li>• implement strong password practices and multifactor authentication (for example, a username and password, plus a code sent to a mobile), particularly for systems that record sensitive information</li> <li>• encrypt sensitive information to protect it</li> <li>• patch vulnerabilities in systems in a timely manner, as upgrades and solutions are made available by software providers to address known security weaknesses that could be exploited by external parties.</li> </ul> <p>Entities should also self-assess against all of the recommendations in <i>Managing cyber security risks</i> (Report 3: 2019–20) to ensure their systems are appropriately secured.</p>	<p>We continued to identify weaknesses in system security. We have made a new recommendation in this report – refer to <a href="#">recommendation 1</a>.</p>
<b>Approve service agreements for shared services</b>		<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>
2020– REC 4	<p>The Department of Health and the hospital and health services should work together to approve and sign service level agreements with each other for the purchasing and payroll services the department performs on behalf of the HHSs. The agreements should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party, including the quality and scope of services and the respective costs.</p>	<p>Seven service agreements remained unsigned. The service agreements that had been signed were due to expire on 30 June 2022.</p>
<b>Address backlog of asset maintenance</b>		<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>
2020– REC 5	<p>Queensland Health entities should continue to prioritise high-risk maintenance.</p> <p>The hospital and health services should work with the department to find ways to mitigate the operational, clinical, and financial risks associated with anticipated maintenance.</p>	<p>The anticipated maintenance has increased by \$196 million in 2021–22.</p>

Status	Definition	
<b>Fully implemented</b>	Recommendation has been implemented, or alternative action has been taken that addresses the underlying issues and no further action is required. Any further actions are business as usual.	
<b>Partially implemented</b>	Significant progress has been made in implementing the recommendation or taking alternative action, but further work is required before it can be considered business as usual. This also includes where the action taken was less extensive than recommended, as it only addressed some of the underlying issues that led to the recommendation.	
<b>Not implemented</b>	<b>Recommendation accepted</b>	No or minimal actions have been taken to implement the recommendation, or the action taken does not address the underlying issues that led to the recommendation.
	<b>Recommendation not accepted</b>	The government or the agency did not accept the recommendation.
<b>No longer applicable</b>	Circumstances have fundamentally changed, making the recommendation no longer applicable. For example, a change in government policy or program has meant the recommendation is no longer relevant.	

Where a general recommendation has been made for all entities to consider, we have assessed action on issues reported to specific entities in the prior year, as well as any further issues identified in the current year. On this basis, we have concluded whether appropriate action has been taken across the sector, or if further action needs to be taken to address the risk identified.

Status	Definition	
<b>Appropriate action has been taken</b>	Recommendations made to individual entities have been implemented, or alternative action has been taken that addresses the underlying issues and no further action is required. No new issues have been identified across the sector that indicate an ongoing underlying risk to the sector that requires reporting to parliament.	
<b>Further action needs to be taken</b>	Recommendations made to individual entities have not been fully implemented, and/or new recommendations have been made to individual entities, indicating further action is required by entities in the sector to address the underlying risk.	

