

Auditor-General of Queensland

Report to Parliament No. 5 for 2010

Performance Reviews – Using performance information
to improve service delivery

A Performance Management Systems audit



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QUEENSLAND

Prepared under Part 3 Division 3 of the
Auditor-General Act 2009

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ISSN 1834-1136

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Auditor-General of Queensland

May 2010

The Honourable R J Mickel MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Speaker

This report is prepared under Part 3 Division 3 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* (the Act), and is titled Performance Reviews – Using performance information to improve service delivery. It is number five in the series of Auditor-General Reports to Parliament for 2010.

In accordance with s.67 of the Act, would you please arrange for the report to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely



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Auditor-General



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1 | Executive summary

1.1 Audit overview

Performance monitoring and review has been raised as an issue in a number of Performance Management Systems (PMS) audits to date. These audits identified that while agencies reported against performance measures, some agencies did not analyse and use the information to monitor and improve performance and to better inform decision making.

Performance review systems which use data to review performance and inform decision making are used by government agencies nationally and internationally. Many are based on CompStat which was created by the New York City Police Department in 1994 to reduce the city's crime rate.

A performance review is '*...a series of regular, periodic meetings during which the [executive leaders] use data to discuss, examine and analyse, with the individual [unit director], past performance, future performance objectives and overall performance strategies*'.¹ The discussion seeks to:

- facilitate responsive decision-making
- identify problem areas and explore their underlying causes
- develop and evaluate strategies for both preventing and addressing problems
- recognise and share better practice across the organisation.

Some Queensland Government departments have implemented performance review systems which use performance information to promote continuous improvement. This audit looked at performance review systems within the Department of Communities, Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Police Service. The objective of the audit was to assess whether these systems enable management to evaluate operational performance to achieve continual improvement in organisational processes and service delivery. The audit also led to the development of better practice principles which should assist other departments to implement similar systems.

¹ Robert D. Behn, The varieties of CitiStat, *Public Administration Review*, May/June 2006, pg. 332.

1.2 Audit conclusion

All three agencies audited have introduced performance review systems. Although these systems are at varying levels of maturity, they all have strong foundational elements, including a clear purpose and focus, active executive involvement and clearly assigned responsibility and accountability. Enabling elements, including relevant performance information and coordinating teams are in place at the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service, and are being further developed in the Department of Communities. At all three agencies there is balanced and constructive discussion based around performance information with follow up systems to ensure action is undertaken to improve performance.

All agencies audited believe the system provides a greater level of accountability and responsibility with a focus on continuous improvement. For responsible officers, the system provides clarity of expectation from the leadership team and an opportunity to receive input and guidance on problem areas and showcase good performance. For executive leaders, the system provides them with greater insight into organisational performance and provides a forum for good practice to be identified and shared.

Through improved focus, accountability and communication, improvements in service delivery can be achieved. Independent research has concluded that in the first four years after its introduction, the Operational Performance Review process in the Queensland Police Service was the most significant factor impacting on reducing crime rates.²

I would encourage all departments to consider implementing a similar performance review system that:

- enables analysis and interpretation of performance information
- facilitates discussions on how performance can be improved
- translates these discussions into action.

This report includes seven principles that most government departments could adapt to fit their specific circumstances.

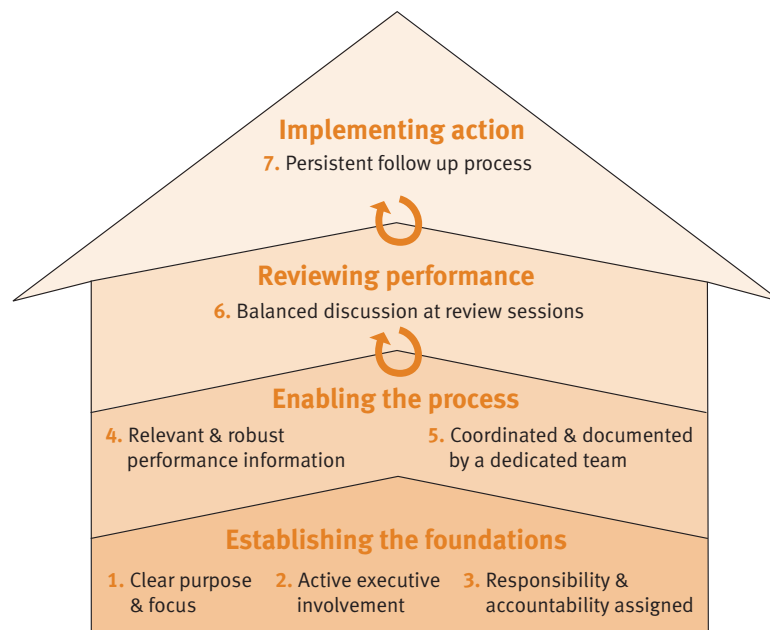
1.3 Better practice principles

Based on audit findings, observations and research undertaken, seven key principles were identified that underpin an effective performance review process. Audit considers that these basic principles can be adopted and adapted by other departments to achieve similar outcomes. The principles and their elements are detailed in Section 4.

Figure 1A shows the relationship between the principles and how they operate together to inform a successful system. The effectiveness of each level of the system is influenced by the robustness of the principles below it. Feedback loops are included in the process to ensure the system is regularly reviewed and improved.

² Lorraine Mazerolle, Sacha Rombouts and James McBroom, The impact of operational performance reviews on reported crimes in Queensland, *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice*, No. 313, May 2006.

Figure 1A – Better practice principles



1.3.1 Principle elements

A number of key elements were identified for each principle, as outlined below.

1. Clear purpose and focus

- Clear purpose and tone are set from the top of the organisation.
- Performance review sessions have clear area/s of focus and priorities.
- Performance review priorities are aligned with strategic planning.
- Performance review priorities are communicated across the organisation.

2. Active executive involvement

- Reviews are driven and supported by leaders with clear and explicit authority.
- Key decision makers attend review sessions.
- The leadership team understands the business and can interpret performance data.

3. Responsibility and accountability assigned

- Responsibility and accountability is set at an appropriate level.
- Expectations are clear.
- Managers are made aware of the benefits of the process.
- Tools and training help support and enable managers.

4. Relevant and robust performance information

- Performance measures are relevant and appropriate and align with externally reported measures.
- Data is accurate, reliable and readily-accessible to managers.
- Information is presented clearly with a basis for comparison provided for all data.
- Performance measures are regularly reviewed.

5. Coordinated and documented by a dedicated team

- A dedicated team coordinates, documents and communicates the process.
- The team provides independent analysis of performance information to help focus questioning.
- The process is regularly reviewed and improved.

6. Balanced discussion at review sessions

- Review sessions are formal, regular and scheduled.
- Leaders create a constructive environment that encourages honest and open discussion.
- The discussion focuses on both good and bad results.
- The process facilitates organisation-wide improvement and is flexible enough to address emerging issues.

7. Persistent follow up process

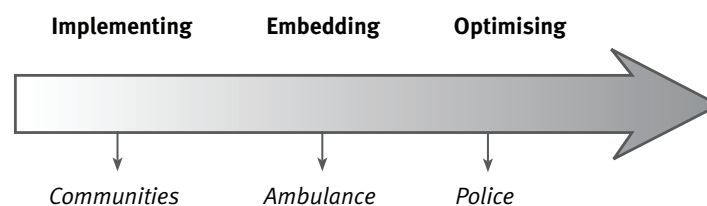
- Action plans for all areas of the organisation are recorded and communicated.
- Actions are monitored and progress is reported.
- Learnings and better practice are shared across the organisation.

1.4 Key findings

The audit confirmed that each agency has followed similar principles, in line with the better practice principles above, but adapted them to suit their needs. This adaptation is partly due to the maturity of the systems and partly due to differing complexities and agency focus.

The systems at the three agencies audited are at different levels of maturity, as illustrated in Figure 1B, reflecting how long performance reviews have been in place.

Figure 1B – System maturity



Implementing – Department of Communities

Although Operational Performance Reviews were previously in place in the former Departments of Communities and Child Safety, the new Department of Communities had its first ‘mid-year’ reviews in February and March 2010, reviewing all areas within the department. The department is currently reviewing the first round of reviews and refining and documenting frameworks.

The department has foundational principles, balanced discussion and follow up processes in place and is building enabling elements. As it is in early implementation, the discussion at each review session is focused more on identifying issues, with some problem solving occurring leading to follow up actions. Discussion also informs the development and improvement of performance measures and data to enable enhanced issue identification and problem solving in future sessions.

Embedding – Queensland Ambulance Service

Moving towards the end of its second year of Regional Performance Reviews, Queensland Ambulance Service has a robust and well documented regional review process. The system is regularly reviewed, amended and improved.

The agency has all principles in place and is regularly reviewing and continuously improving them. The discussion at each review session includes more advanced problem solving, with assessment of previously implemented strategies and further actions identified.

Optimising – Queensland Police Service

The Queensland Police Service has been conducting Operational Performance Reviews for its District Officers since 2001. During this time the system has been refined and expanded to include Corporate Performance Reviews of corporate and support areas and Themed Performance Reviews around agency-wide topics of interest.

The department has all principles in place and regularly reviews and continuously improves them. Discussion at each review session includes more advanced problem solving, with assessment of previously implemented strategies and further actions identified. Changes implemented have led to improved departmental systems and processes as well as delivery of core services.

1.4.1 Establishing the foundations

All three agencies audited have strong foundational elements. All have formal, regular performance review systems in place with clear purpose, focus and priorities. The executive teams in all agencies drive the process through their involvement in the design of the systems and through chairing performance reviews. Review panels at all agencies include key departmental decision makers. Each agency has set the level of accountability and responsibility and made expectations clear to responsible officers.

1.4.2 Enabling the process

The Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service both have sound enabling elements in place. Both have developed relevant suites of performance measures, informed by data which is analysed and presented with a basis for comparison for all results. Dedicated teams coordinate the review processes and provide independent analysis of performance information to inform review panel members.

The Department of Communities has commenced reviews using available performance information however, it has recognised the limitations of its current data and measures. Significant work is underway to improve both measures and data. Two separate teams in the department coordinate the review processes, with oversight provided by an executive committee. Due to the limited quality of current performance information, these teams provide minimal independent data analysis at this stage.

1.4.3 Reviewing performance

The quality of review discussions is perhaps the most important feature of an effective performance review system. In all three agencies, executive management creates a positive environment that supports open discussion. Discussion focuses on highlighting positive achievements and exploring challenges, risks and results that do not meet expectations. This includes identifying and examining underlying causes of performance results. Executive management also shares strategic information and seeks to identify common issues and trends across the organisations.

1.4.4 Implementing action

All three agencies have formal follow up systems in place which capture, allocate, communicate and monitor actions arising from review discussions. Importantly, this holds officers accountable for implementing actions and ensures that reviews prompt change and continuous improvement.

1.5 Recommendation

No adverse issues of significance warranting reporting to Parliament were raised however, a number of suggestions for improvement have been communicated to the individual agencies and are outlined in Section 3.

The following recommendation relates to all Queensland Government departments.

Recommendation

It is recommended that all Queensland Government departments consider the better practice principles in this report in adopting or enhancing their performance review process.

1.6 Department responses

1.6.1 Department of Communities

The Director-General provided the following response on 5 May 2010.

The Department of Communities welcomes the findings of the audit and is encouraged by your assessment of its performance review process.

The department is currently reviewing its performance review processes following completion of the first round of mid-year reviews and in light of the findings of your audit report.

The department is also researching the way other agencies coordinate their performance reviews to determine the most appropriate model for supporting coordination of the process and the independent analysis of performance information for future Performance Reviews.

1.6.2 Department of Community Safety

The Director-General provided the following response on 30 April 2010.

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is pleased to receive acknowledgement through this report of the high quality of its Regional Performance Review (RPR) system. A number of suggestions contained in the report to improve the current process will be considered by the QAS as the system matures, including:

- *introducing corporate and themed reviews;*
- *providing additional assistance to regions in setting up local mini-RPR processes; and*
- *considering an improved process to share learnings and better practice to assist in the wider implementation of successful strategies.*

Consideration of better practice principles highlighted in the report will also assist in optimising benefits from the RPR process.

1.6.3 Queensland Police Service

The Commissioner provided the following response on 5 May 2010.

I was pleased to review the report and note the positive findings and conclusions it details. The suggested 'opportunities for improvement' outlined in sections 3.2.2 and 3.3.2 will be given close consideration by the Queensland Police Service.

The report clearly highlights that Operational Performance Reviews (OPRs) can assist public sector organisations to improve service delivery outcomes for the community. This is consistent with the findings of an independent evaluation of the Police OPR which found it contributed to a reduction in crime.

I remain committed to enhancing and expanding the Police OPR, and this year, corporate and command areas of the Service will be brought within its scope. I am confident this strong focus on performance management and review will result in many benefits and improvements.

1.6.4 Public Service Commission

The Commission Chief Executive provided the following response on 4 May 2010.

The Public Service Commission plays a key role in enhancing the capability of people and organisations across the Queensland Public Service (QPS). We have developed a number of resources in partnership with agencies to build competency in these areas, and I note that your report draws on some of these in exploring better practice in organisational performance management.

The seven better practice principles for performance review set out in your report are supported by Australian and international experience and can be readily applied in different departmental contexts. The case studies provided to support each principle will be especially useful to departments who are looking for practical guidance when implementing new or refined approaches to organisational performance management.

I support the report's recommendation that all Queensland Government departments consider the better practice principles in this report in adopting or enhancing their performance review process. Taken together, the principles will help agencies satisfy the objectives of the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework.

1.6.5 Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The Acting Director-General provided the following response on 6 May 2010.

Thank you for offering me the opportunity to comment on the findings of your performance management systems audit on 'Performance Reviews — Using performance information to improve service delivery'. I am pleased to note your positive findings with relation to the performance review systems in place in the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Department of Communities.

The individual recommendations and suggestions in your draft report relate to maturing performance review systems in these agencies, and consideration by other agencies to adopting similar systems.

While I fully support the objective of continuous improvement in performance review systems, this needs to be considered in the context of cost and service delivery priorities. Agencies' primary focus needs to be on service delivery and additional investment in performance management must deliver improved services.

For example, you have suggested in section 3.2.2 that the Department of Communities should 'consider establishing a dedicated team to coordinate both regional and output performance reviews and undertake independent analysis of performance information as the system matures'. Such consideration needs to involve robust analysis of the costs and benefits of having a dedicated team, and whether re-assigning resources to this function would enhance or detract from the department's service delivery.

Similarly, in section 1.5 you have recommended that all Queensland Government departments consider the better practice principles in the report when adopting or enhancing their performance review process. I am happy to incorporate it into future iterations of the Guide to the Queensland Performance Management Framework. However, depending on the size of the organisation, whether a dedicated team is appropriate should be subject to an analysis of costs versus expected benefits.

2 | Audit outline

2.1 Background

To achieve optimal performance, organisations often distribute responsibility for performance throughout the organisation to lower level managers. Making managers accountable for performance and its improvement requires regular monitoring and review of performance results. Performance review systems which emphasise accountability and performance improvement have been established in a number of jurisdictions internationally. An overview of some of these systems is provided in Section 5.3.

The purpose of these performance review systems is to improve performance by senior executives holding accountable those managers who have the greatest capacity to influence service delivery. A good performance review system uses performance data and qualitative information to drive robust discussion. This discussion seeks to:

- facilitate responsive decision making
- identify problem areas and explore their underlying causes
- develop and evaluate strategies for both preventing and addressing problems
- recognise and share better practice across the organisation.

Managers are generally expected to have in-depth knowledge of the areas they are responsible for, and to provide explanations of performance outcomes and trends, and suggestions for continuous improvement.

Conversations based around performance information are encouraged by the Public Service Commission in its performance management guides.³ These guides complement the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework which advises that agencies '*should continually seek to improve their performance, both in terms of service delivery and the effectiveness of their services in achieving objectives*'.⁴

The Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Department of Communities have adopted formal performance review systems based on international models. This audit sought to evaluate these systems and determine whether their principles would be relevant to other departments.

³ The Public Service Commission has developed three 'plain language', principles-based guides to inspire people to 'get involved' in performance management. There are separate guides for Executive Managers, Managers and Performance Practitioners.

⁴ The State of Queensland, *A Guide to the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework*, May 2009, pg. 31.

2.2 Audit objective

The objective was to determine whether agencies audited have adequate performance review systems in place to enable management to evaluate operational performance to achieve continual improvement in organisational processes and service delivery.

Specifically, the audit examined the Lines of Inquiry and Audit Criteria outlined in Figure 2A.

Figure 2A – Lines of Inquiry and Audit Criteria

Line of Inquiry	Audit Criteria
Is there a structured performance review system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The system is well designed. ● The system assigns accountability and responsibility for operational performance. ● The right people are involved. ● The system links with other departmental functions.
Does the system support adequate analysis of performance information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are systems to set relevant and appropriate performance measures and targets for performance review. ● Data and performance information is analysed and evaluated to enable issue identification.
Does the system enable performance improvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is a process to manage poor performance. ● Problem solving to address identified issues is encouraged and facilitated. ● There is a process to ensure follow up action occurs. ● There is a process to share information and better practice.

2.3 Audit scope

2.3.1 Entities subject to audit

Three agencies were selected based on the similarities of their performance review systems:

- Department of Communities (DOC)
- Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) – Department of Community Safety
- Queensland Police Service (QPS).

2.3.2 Exclusions from audit scope

The audit did not cover:

- data collection, including the accuracy and integrity of the data feeding into performance review systems
- performance management systems at the individual officer level
- how agencies evaluate individual projects and initiatives
- areas of the Department of Community Safety other than QAS.

2.3.3 Time period covered by the audit

Audit fieldwork was conducted from October 2009 to March 2010. The audit concluded in March 2010.

2.4 Audit procedures

The audit was undertaken using a mixture of document analysis, observation at performance review sessions, interviews conducted at agencies and a review of the evidence gathered. A phone survey of randomly selected local managers was conducted at QAS and QPS.

2.5 PMS audit approach

A Performance Management Systems (PMS) audit is an independent examination which includes determining whether an entity or part of an entity's activities have performance management systems in place to enable management to assess whether its objectives are being achieved economically, efficiently and effectively.

The legislative basis for this audit is the *Auditor-General Act 2009* (the Act). The Act prescribes that the Auditor-General may conduct an audit in the way the Auditor-General considers appropriate. While the Auditor-General takes note of the entity's perspective, the scope of a public sector audit is at the sole discretion of the Auditor-General.

The Auditor-General applies the standards of the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board to audits in the Queensland public sector to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the requirements of the Act and other legislation that prescribes the Auditor-General's work.

While a PMS audit will not review or comment on government policy, it will have regard to any relevant prescribed requirements. It may also extend to include a focus on the entity's performance measures and whether, in the Auditor-General's opinion, the performance measures are relevant, appropriate and fairly represent the entity's performance.

The intent of a PMS audit is to provide independent assurance to Parliament, and to act as a catalyst for adding value to the quality of public administration by assisting entities in the discharge of their governance obligations.

A PMS audit has a focus on ascertaining whether systems and controls used by management to monitor and measure performance, assist the entity in meeting its stewardship responsibilities.

2.6 Related PMS audits

Since 2005, a series of PMS audits on performance measurement reporting have been undertaken at individual departments. In 2006, a similar audit was conducted on government owned corporations' performance reporting. These audits informed the development of the *Better Practice Guide - Output Performance Measurement and Reporting* in 2006. These audits and the better practice guide focused on the appropriateness of data, measures and reporting which are the foundation of a performance review system.

3 | Audit findings

Summary

Background

In answering the audit objective, agencies were assessed against criteria under the following three Lines of Inquiry:

- Is there a structured performance review system?
- Does the system support adequate analysis of performance information?
- Does the system enable performance improvement?

Key findings

- All three agencies have well coordinated, formal biannual performance review systems with clear lines of accountability and strong leadership involvement.
- Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service effectively select, display and analyse performance information. Department of Communities began reviews using existing information and is in the process of putting in place better measures and data.
- Review sessions enable performance improvement through:
 - highlighting areas of poor performance and supporting problem solving in these areas
 - highlighting areas of better practice performance and capturing and sharing strategies
 - capturing and monitoring actions for follow up.
- Audit did not find any significant adverse issues at the three agencies audited that warranted reporting to Parliament. However, audit identified a number of improvement opportunities which are outlined in this section.

Conclusion

The performance review systems within all three agencies audited used performance information to promote discussion between responsible officers and executive managers, which focused on improving organisational performance and service delivery.

3.1 Overview of the systems audited

An overview of the performance review systems at each agency audited is provided in this section. These overviews provide a context for the audit findings. A comparison of key features of the systems is provided in Section 5.1.

3.1.1 Queensland Police Service – Operational Performance Reviews

The Queensland Police Service's (QPS) performance review system, the Operational Performance Review (OPR), was introduced in 2001. It began with review sessions conducted at the police district level. This level was chosen as it is where resourcing decisions are made that directly affect service delivery.

OPRs today consist of:

- **District OPRs** – this is a continuation of the original OPRs, reviewing the performance of its 30 districts through discussions with District Officers in individual sessions. Apart from 2009 when district reviews were held annually, district OPR sessions have been held every six months. The first OPR session for a district is held centrally in Brisbane with a six-monthly follow up session, to assess the effectiveness of response strategies and adjust them accordingly, held in the region. Findings in this report generally focus on the district OPR process.
- **Corporate OPRs** – reviews covering corporate and operational support areas were trialled previously and are being re-introduced in a more structured way in 2010.
- **Themed OPRs** – these are held on an as-needs basis around areas requiring a whole of department focus. Some examples of themed OPRs held to date include regional traffic policing, intelligence practice and good order policing. These reviews bring together all relevant stakeholders, including executive management, regional and district management, practitioners and sometimes external stakeholders to discuss issues and propose solutions around the theme.

All reviews are coordinated by the OPR Unit which also analyses data and prepares annotated slide presentations to inform review sessions. Review sessions are chaired by either the Commissioner or a Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Chief Executive (Resource Management) and other senior officers also participate in the sessions in a supportive and collaborative way to facilitate robust discussion.

Data is presented at each forum, initiating discussion on the effectiveness of strategies and anticipating forthcoming issues. Areas of exceptional performance, both good and poor are discussed and key actions are identified and aligned with resources as necessary.

QPS considers that the reviews foster an ongoing culture of evaluation and organisational improvement which can lead to changes in policy and administrative practice. Independent research has concluded that the introduction of the OPR process was the most significant factor impacting on reducing crime rates.⁵

The OPR process focuses on improving operational performance and service delivery. The department has other mechanisms and areas which ensure compliance with reporting requirements, conduct internal investigations and evaluate programs and initiatives.

⁵ Lorraine Mazerolle, Sacha Rombouts and James McBroom, The impact of operational performance reviews on reported crimes in Queensland, *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice*, No. 313, May 2006, pg. 251.

3.1.2 Queensland Ambulance Service – Regional Performance Reviews

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) developed its own performance review process, the Regional Performance Review (RPR), in 2008. This system is modelled on the OPR system used by QPS and is now nearing the end of the second year of implementation.

Review sessions are held six-monthly for each of seven regions, including separate questioning for each area and communications centre. The first RPR session for a region is held centrally in Brisbane and the subsequent RPR session, six months later, is held in the region. The RPR Unit coordinates the process and prepares annotated slide presentations for review sessions.

The Commissioner chairs review sessions, which are also attended by key executive decision makers across the organisation. Performance data is presented across a range of priority areas and discussion based on this information evaluates performance and strategies to address issues. Discussion allows for performance, both good and poor, to be explored. A formal system captures and communicates all follow up actions which are then discussed at the next review session.

3.1.3 Department of Communities – Regional and Output Performance Reviews

OPRs reviewing regional activity were held in the previous Departments of Communities and Child Safety. Since the 2009 machinery of government changes, the new Department of Communities (DOC) is now in the early stages of implementing a department-wide system, which is part of a new performance framework linking directly to the agency's Strategic Plan. The first round of mid-year reviews was held in February-March 2010 with end of year reviews expected to be held in September 2010.

The new system consists of:

- **Regional Performance Reviews** – similar to district OPRs/RPRs, these reviews hold regional Executive Directors responsible for performance in each of seven regions and one statewide service delivery area. The focus is on integrated service delivery and how regions are achieving organisational objectives.
- **Output Performance Reviews** – similar to Corporate OPRs, these reviews hold Deputy Directors-General responsible for performance in each of six program and corporate support areas. The focus is on policy and program development in alignment with strategic priorities.

Both processes involve a formal report generated by the area under review, a review session facilitated by a panel of executive officers and a final report including action items agreed to at the session. The Director-General chairs mid-year RPRs and end of year Output Performance Reviews. In the absence of the Director-General, an Associate Director-General will chair the review sessions.

Although there are similarities between the two processes, each has its own documentation and is coordinated by a separate team. The team coordinating RPRs also conducts some data analysis and collates reports. Oversight of the process is provided through an executive committee.

3.2 Systems and governance

Figure 3A – Line of Inquiry 1

Line of Inquiry	Audit Criteria
Is there a structured performance review system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The system is well designed. ● The system assigns accountability and responsibility for operational performance. ● The right people are involved. ● The system links with other departmental functions.

3.2.1 Findings

All three agencies have well coordinated, formal biannual performance review systems in place with clear lines of accountability and strong leadership involvement.

Regular reviews

In all agencies, each responsible officer is reviewed every six months. The agencies advised that this timeframe allows for actions to be implemented and evaluated with trends and impacts clearly identified. QPS and QAS have rolling calendars of reviews, with reviews held on average every three weeks. DOC undertakes all reviews twice a year corresponding with the budget and reporting cycle. The rolling nature of the reviews at QPS and QAS provides regular, updated performance information to the departments' accountable officers. This information then feeds into regular executive meetings.

Agency coverage

DOC has commenced reviews in all areas across the department, covering operational, strategic and corporate support functions. QPS has undertaken district reviews since 2001 and previously trialled reviews of corporate and operational support areas. In 2010 QPS is re-introducing corporate OPRs covering these areas. QPS also conducts themed OPRs which examine particular topics of interest at a departmental level. QAS currently reviews the performance within its regions. At all agencies reviews include topics covering operational, strategic and corporate support issues.

Dedicated team

Both QPS and QAS have dedicated teams of between three and five people with experience in data analysis. These teams are responsible for developing documentation, managing the logistics of review sessions, analysing data, preparing annotated presentation slides and coordinating follow up processes.

In DOC, two teams coordinate reviews however, these teams have other duties and provide only limited independent analysis of performance information. Although the responsible officers under review need a degree of analytical skills, a dedicated analytical team can work full-time to understand the data and evaluate what kind of results are being produced. Delegating responsibility to develop performance reports to business units under review could lead to subjectivity and inconsistent quality in the information available to panel members. This is something DOC should consider as the system matures.

Leadership involvement

Leadership involvement was strong at all three agencies with executive management visibly driving the process. The Director-General of DOC and the Commissioners of QPS and QAS attend and chair some, or all, review sessions. At QPS and QAS, the Commissioners have published statements of commitment on intranet sites. Review panels in all agencies consist of senior and executive managers with decision making power from across the agency. This ensures issues can be explored from a whole-of-agency perspective.

Clear accountability and expectations

All three agencies have clearly allocated accountability to responsible officers and have set clear expectations of what is required of these officers during review sessions. At QPS and QAS, these expectations are set out in 'Operational Imperatives' which are included in session presentation slides.

Review sessions

Review sessions attended by audit followed a formal but collaborative and supportive approach, facilitating two-way discussion between the chair, panel members and responsible officers. At all three agencies the chair and panel members adopted a balanced approach, highlighting both good and poor performance based on available performance information and data. Responsible officers were required to discuss and explain performance results, strategies put in place to address issues and the effectiveness of these strategies. Audit noted that all chairs enthusiastically embraced the process by asking probing questions in a supportive environment.

Room set up

At QPS and QAS, the formality of the process is supported by the set up of the room which clearly delineates the roles of the chair, panel members and responsible officers. QPS uses a specifically allocated room which is detailed in Section 5.2. At DOC, the first reviews were conducted as a round table model. Audit was advised that this more collegiate approach was designed to emphasise the collaborative tone that is intended to facilitate honest and robust discussion.

Documentation

All three agencies have documented their systems to an extent. QAS has strong overall documentation of RPR principles, priorities, operational guidelines, procedures, and roles and responsibilities. While QPS has documented OPR objectives, principles, priorities, roles and responsibilities, it had not documented operational guidelines at the time of audit. DOC is developing documentation on each review process separately as they progress. Audit considers that as the system matures, overarching documentation explaining both processes would assist in clarifying the system as a whole.

Mini-review sessions

In QPS, the OPR process is replicated locally with some regions instituting their own 'mini' OPRs to manage local performance and assist with preparation for OPR sessions. This practice is also beginning at QAS. In DOC, Practice Reviews are being implemented within regions in some program areas such as Child Safety. This local adoption of performance review processes indicates that the benefits of the process are accepted and a performance culture is being embedded.

Linkages with other functions

The performance review process is integrated with broader agency functions in all three agencies. The content of review sessions at QPS and QAS is regularly updated by performance review teams to ensure it includes current organisational priorities. In DOC, the performance review processes are an integral part of broader performance planning, monitoring and governance processes and align with strategic plan priorities. In QPS, issues raised at OPRs have led to changes in policy and administrative practices.

Review and continuous improvement

All three agencies are continuously improving their performance review systems through internal review and input from executive officers. The QPS system of OPRs has also been externally reviewed three times and continues to evolve. Examples of enhancements to the QPS system include themed and corporate OPRs and the incorporation of new and modified priorities and measures.

3.2.2 Opportunities for improvement

Queensland Police Service (QPS)

QPS should consider:

- documenting operational guidelines.

Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS)

QAS should consider:

- introducing corporate and themed reviews as the system matures
- providing additional assistance to the regions in setting up local mini-RPR processes.

Department of Communities (DOC)

DOC should consider:

- establishing a dedicated team to coordinate both regional and output performance reviews and undertake independent analysis of performance information as the system matures
- documenting the overall system at the end of the first annual review period.

3.3 Using performance information

Figure 3B – Line of Inquiry 2

Line of Inquiry	Audit Criteria
Does the system support adequate analysis of performance information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are systems to set relevant and appropriate performance measures and targets for performance review. ● Data and performance information is analysed and evaluated to enable issue identification.

3.3.1 Findings

QPS and QAS effectively select, display and analyse performance information. DOC began reviews using existing information and is in the process of putting in place better measures and data.

Priorities and measures

All three agencies have identified priority areas under which performance measures are developed. These priorities cover a range of organisational functions, including service delivery, human resources, financial management and strategic issues. Under these priority areas QPS and QAS have developed a range of measures covering quantity, quality, cost, location and timeliness. The majority of these measures are quantitative and where possible use data which is available to local managers on an ongoing basis. For its first round of reviews, DOC is using existing published measures, most of which are qualitative. However, a significant project is underway to develop and refine measures and achieve a balance of quantitative and qualitative measures.

All agencies audited have processes in place to regularly review measures to ensure they are the most appropriate measures to reflect performance. Both DOC and QAS have aligned performance review measures with publicly reported measures. Audit notes that from 2010, QPS's publicly reported measures will align with OPR measures.

Benchmarking

National benchmarking for most of DOC's program areas is currently under review. DOC is involved in this review and plans to incorporate key national measures and benchmarks, as they are developed, in the suite of measures used in performance reviews. While QAS uses measures that are consistent with national measures, some data is not benchmarked nationally due to inconsistent measurement methodologies across jurisdictions. QPS does not use national measures or benchmarking data in district OPRs for similar reasons however, it has used national benchmarking and targets in themed OPRs.

Data analysis

At QPS and QAS, performance review teams analyse data and provide annotated slide presentations that include a basis for comparison (usually trends over time and/or comparison with a state average). QAS also provides targets for some measures. At DOC, some analysis was provided for quantitative indicators, with trends over time and comparison with state averages. However, as most of DOC's information is currently qualitative, it is assessed using a traffic light system which indicates deliverables which are not on track or at risk. This assessment is made by the area under review. DOC also uses targets for most measures. It is envisaged that as DOC's measures improve, the quality of analysis in reports will also improve. This would be enhanced by independent analysis provided by a performance review team.

Analysis in review sessions

At all agencies, data analysis and interpretation is undertaken by panel members and responsible officers. The level of their expertise is reflected in the quality of questioning and responses. At QAS and QPS and in sessions at DOC where quantitative data was available, discussion focused on variances and anomalies. This provides an opportunity for good performance to be showcased and poor performance to be explored. Review sessions at all three agencies are flexible and adapt to meet the specific needs of the area under review. They also allow for discussion on emerging issues, at both local and organisational level.

3.3.2 Opportunities for improvement

Queensland Police Service

QPS should:

- investigate the feasibility of benchmarking some elements of key priority areas against other jurisdictions.

Department of Communities

DOC should:

- continue to develop further measures, improve data, and benchmark against national data where appropriate
- ensure data analysts and responsible officers have appropriate statistical and business analysis skills and experience.

3.4 Improving performance

Figure 3C – Line of Inquiry 3

Line of Inquiry	Audit Criteria
Does the system enable performance improvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is a process to manage poor performance. ● Problem solving to address identified issues is encouraged and facilitated. ● There is a process to ensure follow up action occurs. ● There is a process to share information and better practice.

3.4.1 Findings

Review sessions enable performance improvement through:

- highlighting areas of poor performance and supporting problem solving in these areas
- highlighting areas of better practice performance and capturing and sharing strategies
- capturing and monitoring actions for follow up.

Highlighting performance exceptions

Exceptional performance and poor performance is identified at QPS and QAS through trend analysis and benchmarking against state averages. During sessions attended by audit, where areas were identified as requiring attention, responsible officers were asked to explain the reasons for performance results, any strategies implemented, and the success of these strategies. Areas requiring further action are noted for follow up. If a responsible officer cannot answer these questions with sufficient detail to satisfy the chair, there is the facility for an additional, unscheduled review session to be held.

At DOC, areas for focus are highlighted through a traffic light approach. Areas identified as amber or red were discussed at review sessions and follow up actions identified. Follow up actions are then linked to individual performance agreements. It is envisaged that as the system matures, improved performance measures and data and independent analysis by a dedicated team should better enable performance exceptions to be identified and managed.

Problem solving

Performance review sessions highlight problem areas and potential solutions which are flagged for follow up action. Audit noted that many review sessions facilitated discussion on developing whole-of-department solutions. Outside the OPR process, QPS has provided its officers with a standard problem solving approach which is supported by a funding model. QPS also conducts themed OPRs which facilitate problem solving and information sharing in particular areas such as regional traffic policing and intelligence practice.

As DOC is in the early stages of implementation, the focus of the first review sessions was more on information sharing, with some problem solving occurring. It is envisaged that over time the quality and depth of problem solving will become more mature and embedded in review discussions at DOC.

Follow up

All three agencies have follow up systems which enable actions arising from reviews to be captured, assigned, communicated, monitored and reviewed. Actions are assigned and communicated through formal reports and at DOC, actions are also added to individual performance agreements of responsible officers. At QAS, actions are monitored by the performance review team. At QPS and DOC responsibility for monitoring actions is distributed to executive leaders.

At QPS and QAS, the outcomes of previously requested actions are discussed during subsequent review sessions, closing the accountability loop. At DOC, there are systems in place for each type of review to ensure follow up actions are identified, captured, communicated and monitored. However, as DOC has just completed its first round of reviews audit was not able to fully verify the follow up process. QPS and QAS capture and monitor follow up actions through purpose-built databases which capture actions as well as strategies to resolve issues. QPS plans to introduce a new web-enabled database in 2010 which makes follow up information available to all staff through the intranet.

Better practice sharing

The balanced approach adopted by all three agencies ensures that positive results are recognised and better practice strategies shared during reviews. In addition, all agencies have processes in place to identify and share better practice after review sessions. DOC captures better practice in consolidated reports and is planning to conduct briefings for all executive and senior officers at the end of each review period. QAS captures 'sharable strategies' in its follow up database however, feedback from the QAO survey suggests that regions are not aware they can access this information. QPS has a problem solving database which records projects and successful initiatives and expects its new web-enabled follow up database will also assist in sharing better practice.

3.4.2 Opportunities for improvement

Queensland Ambulance Service

QAS should consider:

- an improved process to share learnings and better practice to assist the regions and areas to implement successful strategies.

4 | Better practice principles

Summary

Purpose

One of the purposes of the audit was to identify key principles that underpin an effective performance review system which can be adopted and adapted by other departments.

Principles

Based on the audit findings, observations and research undertaken, the following seven key elements were identified:

1. Clear purpose and focus.
2. Active executive involvement.
3. Responsibility and accountability assigned.
4. Relevant and robust performance information.
5. Coordinated and documented by a dedicated team.
6. Balanced discussion at review sessions.
7. Persistent follow up process.

Audit observed many examples of these principles in action at the agencies audited. Some of these examples are provided to illustrate how the principles can be applied.

4.1 Clear purpose and focus

Figure 4A – Principle 1 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear purpose and tone are set from the top of the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent understanding across the organisation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance review sessions have clear area/s of focus and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance reviews are streamlined and effective and focus on what's important and relevant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance review priorities are aligned with strategic planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviews help ensure strategic objectives are being achieved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance review priorities are communicated across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance focus is embedded in organisational culture.

4.1.1 What is important

Performance review systems should have a clear purpose and focus. *'Managers need to start with a clear purpose: "What results are we trying to produce? What would better performance look like? How might we know if we have made some improvements?" Only after the members of the leadership team have agreed to some common answers to these questions can they adapt the [performance review system] to help them achieve these purposes'*.⁶

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- **Clear purpose and tone are set from the top of the organisation.** Having the leader of an organisation driving and promoting the performance review system highlights the importance of and enhances the effectiveness of the review system. The leader needs to communicate the purpose and importance of the performance review system. This ensures clear and consistent understanding across the organisation.
- **Performance review sessions have clear area/s of focus and priorities.** The organisation needs to determine what area/s to focus on. The focus should be expressed within performance review priorities. Having a clear focus would ensure performance reviews are streamlined and effective and focus on what is important and relevant.
- **Performance review priorities and focus are aligned with strategic planning.** There should be a clear link between the outcomes sought by government and stakeholders and performance review priorities.⁷ This creates a line of sight between operational and strategic priorities and helps ensure strategic objectives are being achieved and continuously improved.
- **Performance review priorities are communicated across the organisation.** *'Communication is a partner to involvement'*.⁸ The priorities need to be documented and communicated to all staff and emphasised at each performance review session. This ensures a performance focus is embedded in the organisation.

⁶ Robert D. Behn, The Seven Big Errors of PerformanceStat, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Policy Briefs, Feb 2008, pg. 3.

⁷ Management Advisory Committee, *Performance Management in the Australian Public Service: A Strategic Framework*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001, pg. 20.

⁸ Performance-Based Management Special Interest Group, *The Performance-Based Management Handbook*, Vol. 1, Sep 2001, pg. 2.

4.1.2 Why it is important

'A [performance review] strategy cannot improve performance until the leadership team of the agency or jurisdiction first defines the nature of the performance that they seek to improve'.⁹

A clear purpose set from the top, helps staff within the organisation understand the importance of and the reasons for implementing a performance review system. If a performance review has no clear priorities and focus, it may be ineffective and may not drive performance improvement.

Also, if the priorities and focus are not aligned with strategic planning, performance against strategic objectives may not be appropriately addressed.

4.1.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Police Service		
<p>At Queensland Police Service (QPS), the purpose and focus of the Operational Performance Review (OPR) process is clearly outlined on the intranet and is accessible by all QPS staff. The intranet outlines:</p> <p>Commissioner's message: 'I remain totally committed to this (OPR) process as it allows me the opportunity to hold regular, performance-focussed meetings to review each District's activities with Regional and District Managers and other members of the Senior Executive, in a formal but positive environment.'</p> <p>Objectives of OPR: 'Operational Performance Reviews have been established to focus attention on operational performance, and improve operational effectiveness...'</p>		
<p>OPR Guiding Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific objectives. ● Timely and accurate intelligence. ● Effective strategies and tactics. ● Rapid deployment of personnel and resources. ● Relentless follow up and assessment. 	<p>OPR Operational Imperatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Know what is happening. ● Know why it is happening. ● Identify and align resources. ● Ensure something is being done <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reactive policing – Problem solving – Preventative strategies. ● Assess the effectiveness of strategies and make adjustments. 	<p>OPR Priorities and Performance Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Safety. ● Traffic Policing. ● Property Offences. ● Client Service. ● Public Order and Safety. ● Strategic Positioning and Response. ● Human Resource Management. ● Financial Management. ● Professional Standards and Ethical Practices.
Case study – Department of Communities		
<p>In Department of Communities (DOC) both regional and output reviews are part of a Performance Framework which includes governance, planning, monitoring, review, reporting, escalation and response. Reviews are largely based on reporting against Output Plans, which link directly to the department's seven Strategic Plan priorities. Output Plans are also monitored through monthly 'dashboard' reports and quarterly reporting to the Performance and Budget Committee. This ensures reviews link to the department's strategic direction and activities.</p>		

⁹ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32 No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 208.

4.2 Active executive involvement

Figure 4B – Principle 2 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviews are driven and supported by leaders with clear and explicit authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decisions and commitments can be made to foster improvement in performance. ● Direct feedback for managers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key decision makers attend review sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership team is more aware of what is happening at the service delivery level. ● Issues can be explored from a whole of agency perspective.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The leadership team understands the business and can interpret performance data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity for leaders to mentor managers.

4.2.1 What is important

'Real performance management requires an active strategy. It requires energetic leadership. It requires a leader, or a team of leaders, to make a conscious effort to change the behaviour of the individuals who work for the organisation and its collaborators'.¹⁰

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- **Reviews are driven and supported by leaders with clear and explicit authority.** *'The CEO leadership role influences both the speed of [performance management system] introduction and its style'.¹¹* Review sessions should be chaired by a leader with clear decision making authority.¹² The active involvement of the leader as the chair provides direction for the process and demonstrates how greatly they value it. It allows the opportunity to explain decisions, give feedback and make commitments where appropriate.
- **Key decision makers attend review sessions.** *'A performance review process requires the active involvement of key decision makers across the organisation'.¹³* The establishment of a review panel comprising the chair and key members of the leadership team from across the organisation, will provide organisation-wide support and oversight of the process. It provides the opportunity for issues to be explored from the whole-of-agency perspective. The discussion should be a two-way process where the review panel shares information on strategic initiatives and decisions and provide managers with immediate feedback on their performance. Managers inform the review panel about local issues so they are more aware of what is occurring at the service delivery area. The review panel clarifies what results need to be improved, focuses attention on what is working and what is not, and motivates managers to focus their energy and creativity on achieving specific results.¹⁴

¹⁰ Robert D. Behn, The Psychological Barriers to Performance Management, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 26, No. 1, Sep 2002, pg. 19.

¹¹ Management Advisory Committee, *Performance Management in the Australian Public Service: A Strategic Framework*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001, pg. 22.

¹² Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32 No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 218.

¹³ Robert D. Behn, Performance Leadership Strategy, *Bob Behn's Performance Leadership Report*, Vol. 8. No. 3, Nov 2009.

¹⁴ Robert D. Behn, Performance Leadership Strategy, *Bob Behn's Performance Leadership Report*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Nov 2009.

- **The leadership team understands the business and can interpret performance data.** The review panel needs to have a comprehensive understanding of the department's service delivery operations, the ability to interpret performance data, and an understanding of the drivers of performance. This allows them to assess the performance data of the area under review, provide encouragement and constructive advice to the manager, such as how to deal with a particular problem, and recommend action to be undertaken.

4.2.2 Why it is important

'Without strong leadership, the [performance review process] won't succeed'.¹⁵ The involvement of the right people at an appropriate level signifies the importance of the process. Without the leader visibly driving the process staff may not understand the significance of the process and therefore not fully commit to it. The system is dependent on active leadership involvement because of their decision making authority. Without their presence the immediacy and responsiveness to resolving problems may be lost and continuous improvement jeopardised. The leadership team understands the business of the organisation and they bring a strategic perspective to review sessions. Without this strategic input, opportunities for organisation-wide improvement and direction may be lost.

4.2.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Police Service
<p>QPS has established an effective review panel consisting of senior executives from across the organisation. In the early stages the Commissioner chaired all performance review sessions however, as the process has become embedded in the organisation, he sometimes delegates the responsibility of the chair to one of his experienced Deputy Commissioners.</p> <p>QPS believes there is a benefit in managers not knowing who will question them as they need to be well prepared prior to the review session to answer questions from a variety of perspectives. However, it acknowledges that the initial drive by the Commissioner was critical to embedding the process in the organisation.</p> <p>Panel members are represented from across the organisation. They usually ask questions based on their area of responsibility. All executive leaders have a comprehensive understanding of operational policing issues and strategies, as demonstrated by their robust questioning and contribution to problem solving.</p> <p>Direct quotes from District Officers during telephone surveys undertaken by audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The Commissioner will give his direction and this is important for QPS. The Deputies are just as good to provide this information.'</i> • <i>'The Commissioner... is not adversarial. It's an opportunity to showcase as well as an opportunity to explain to the Commissioner the problems we are faced with.'</i>
Case study – Queensland Ambulance Service
<p>At Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), the Commissioner plays a strong role in the Regional Performance Review (RPR) process. The Commissioner has attended and chaired all but one review session to date, and drives questioning at the sessions. The Commissioner is very clear about his expectations of responsible officers, and is also very active in guiding the content of review presentations in terms of the measures and information included.</p>

¹⁵ Performance-Based Management Special Interest Group, *The Performance-Based Management Handbook*, Vol. 1, Sep 2001, pg. 1.

4.3 Responsibility and accountability assigned

Figure 4C – Principle 3 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsibility and accountability is set at an appropriate level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers take ownership of performance results and develop strategies to improve performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expectations are clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers know what is happening in their area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers are made aware of the benefits of the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers engage with the process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tools and training help support and enable managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers are equipped to manage effectively.

4.3.1 What is important

'The participants should include the managers who are capable of fixing the problems most likely to be identified during the meeting'.¹⁶ 'Optimal performance can be achieved by giving individuals... a sense of ownership for their actions'.¹⁷

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- **Responsibility and accountability is set at an appropriate level.** Performance reviews improve performance by holding responsible those individuals who have the greatest capacity to influence performance.¹⁸ Agencies should decide what the most appropriate level is for them when selecting the level of responsible officer. It is important that responsible officers have the delegated authority to make resourcing and operational decisions that directly affect service delivery.¹⁹ This ensures managers take ownership of performance results in their area.
- **Expectations are clear.** The review sessions should establish an environment of accountability where clear expectations are set.²⁰ This should be facilitated by the review panel's rigorous questioning based on performance data. This encourages managers to prepare for review sessions thoroughly by reviewing and analysing the performance reports, ensuring they have a comprehensive understanding of underlying causes, are implementing mitigating strategies and are effective in addressing problems.
- **Managers are made aware of the benefits of the process.** Managers should think of review sessions as a positive process that enables them to better understand their performance and gain executive officers' input to help them continuously improve performance. They should also see the process as an opportunity to showcase positive results to organisational leaders. These benefits should be constantly highlighted to managers throughout the process to ensure their continued engagement.

¹⁶ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 220.

¹⁷ Performance-Based Management Special Interest Group, *The Performance-Based Management Handbook*, Vol. 1, Sep 2001, pg. 23.

¹⁸ Crime and Misconduct Commission, *Policing Public Order: A review of the public nuisance offence*, pg. 123.

¹⁹ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 222.

²⁰ Performance-Based Management Special Interest Group, *The Performance-Based Management Handbook*, Vol. 1, Sep 2001, pg. 23.

- **Tools and training help support and enable managers.** *'Outside the meeting, [the leadership team] need to find ways to educate their subunit managers for their new tasks and obligations'*.²¹ For example, managers undertaking ongoing analysis and monitoring of performance data should be trained in data analysis and supported by experienced staff. This ensures managers are equipped to manage effectively.

4.3.2 Why it is important

If responsibility and accountability is not assigned at the right level, officers under review may have little control over the results they are responsible for, making the process ineffective. Without clear expectations, it may not be clear who is responsible for what results, and problems may escalate unaddressed. If managers are unsupported by tools and training, they may be unable to identify and address issues effectively. If the benefits of the process are not clear to managers they may not engage fully in the process and valuable improvement opportunities may be missed.

4.3.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Police Service
<p>QPS has selected the position of District Officer as the responsible officer based on their responsibility for financial and staff resourcing directly affecting service delivery. They are also the management 'face' of the organisation at the community level.</p> <p>District Officers are required to provide an explanation about performance outcomes in a formal but positive environment. All OPR sessions include information on the 'OPR Guiding Principles' and 'OPR Operational Imperatives', which clearly outline the responsibility and accountability of the District Officer. The review panel expects that District Officers are aware of the performance data in their district and employ mitigating strategies on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Tools are provided to District Officers to assist them in managing their district. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Problem Solving Funding:</i> District Officers can gain funding for projects they have developed to solve problems. These projects are recorded in a Problem Solving database and are sometimes discussed during OPR sessions. • <i>District Officer Conferences:</i> Guests such as QPS officers from other jurisdictions are invited to speak on current topics and/or strategies to improve performance. • <i>OPR Unit:</i> Managers receive assistance and advice from the OPR unit to support them through the process. <p>Direct quotes from District Officers during telephone surveys undertaken by audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'I have become more attuned to the direction we're heading in and how that's impacting on our day to day business. It helps us target what our main issues are and where we should concentrate.'</i> • <i>'I look more closely at crime statistics and crime trends. I know what areas to focus on and to invest more resources on.'</i>
Case study – Queensland Ambulance Service
<p>QAS has selected three positions of accountability – Regional Assistant Commissioners, Area Directors and Communications Managers. Each of these positions has a different level of responsibility and answers to a different set of performance information in review sessions. Review sessions for each region first question the Assistant Commissioner, followed by separate questioning of each Area Director and the Communications Manager.</p> <p>Direct quotes from Assistant Commissioners and Area Directors during telephone surveys undertaken by audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'RPR provides a legitimate structure which enables performance improvement around the KPAs. This was hard to do before.'</i> • <i>'Great, it's been a long time coming - adds a great benefit to all regions.'</i>

²¹ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 223.

4.4 Relevant and robust performance information

Figure 4D – Principle 4 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance measures are relevant and appropriate and align with externally reported measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust measures facilitate performance discussion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is accurate, reliable and is readily-accessible to managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priorities and measures become embedded management tools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is presented clearly with a basis for comparison provided for all data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and accurate picture to assess performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance measures are regularly reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More informed decision making.

4.4.1 What is important

'Providing the right amount of easy-to-understand performance information, on the right issues, promotes informed decision-making'.²²

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- Performance measures are relevant and appropriate and align with externally reported measures.** Good measures ensure a clear indication of performance to provide an opening for discussion on performance results. For measures to be meaningful, it is ideal that they are aligned with organisational units so that the managers of those units can be held accountable for their performance.²³ Additionally, they should be aligned with externally reported measures and benchmarked with other jurisdictions to provide a comprehensive picture of performance.²⁴
- Data is accurate, reliable and is readily-accessible to managers.** The agency should ensure that data is cleansed to provide an accurate picture of performance results.²⁵ Data should also be readily available to managers to facilitate ongoing monitoring of performance. Over time, the analysis of this data should become an embedded management tool.
- Information is presented clearly with a basis for comparison provided for all data.** When performance information is presented clearly, it can assist in providing a realistic picture to assess performance and promote discussion. The basis of comparison could include targets, trends and/or internal and external benchmarking. Through comparing the results, data can then be used to answer two key performance questions:
 - How has performance improved or declined over time?
 - What areas are performing better or worse than others?²⁶

²² Public Service Commission, *A guide for performance practitioners: Organisational performance management – bringing the business together*, 2009, pg. 10.

²³ Mark H. Moore & Anthony A. Braga, *Measuring and improving police performance: the lessons of Compstat and its progeny*, *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2003, pg. 446.

²⁴ Queensland Audit Office, *Better Practice Guide: Output Performance Measurement and Reporting*, Feb 2006, pg. 16-18.

²⁵ Queensland Audit Office, *Better Practice Guide: Output Performance Measurement and Reporting*, Feb 2006, pg. 18.

²⁶ Robert D. Behn, *Designing PerformanceStat*, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 210.

- **Performance measures are regularly reviewed.** Agencies should not wait to implement a performance review system until they have the right measures but should start with existing measures.²⁷ Regular review and discussion during reviews should highlight where improved measures are required. Measures should be regularly reviewed and improved to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate. This ensures measures continue to inform decision making.

4.4.2 Why it is important

*'In the absence of relevant measurement systems... executives experience difficulty motivating their managers and line-level officers to change their approach.'*²⁸ If an agency does not have relevant and robust data and measures, it will not allow meaningful comparison of performance results. Consequently, it will not allow management to evaluate the agency's performance accurately and may lead to poor decision making. In addition, it may make it difficult to identify which actions contribute most to progress, leading to a waste of resources.

4.4.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Ambulance Service
<p>QAS attributes the rapid maturing of its system to a strong set of measures and data which already existed when the system was introduced. These measures and data have been refined since the system's introduction and continue to be reviewed and improved.</p> <p>RPR measures are organised under four priorities covering operational and corporate areas:</p> <p>Priority 1: Operational and Clinical Service Delivery.</p> <p>Priority 2: Human Resource Management.</p> <p>Priority 3: Financial Management.</p> <p>Priority 4: Strategic Issues.</p> <p>The measures cover quantity, quality, cost, location and timeliness. Some measures align with national measures used in the Report on Government Services and by the Council of Ambulance Authorities.</p> <p>Targets established for measures are consistent with those reported in the Service Delivery Statement. Targets for communications centres are consistent with international standards.</p> <p>Data collated for the use at RPR sessions is cleansed, collated, analysed and represented by the RPR team in the form of tables and graphs providing comparisons with previous periods and state averages. Trends and variances are highlighted and the RPR team briefs the Commissioner prior to each review. This informs discussion at sessions where questions are asked by the Commissioner to identify the qualitative causes of anomalies and to promote discussion on strategies to improve performance.</p>
Case study – Department of Communities
<p>DOC did not delay implementing performance review processes by waiting for all the right measures and data. It used existing published measures and data as a starting point for mid-year review sessions. DOC has recognised that the quality and existence of measures is patchy across the department and there is a lack of quantitative data to support some measures. Significant work is underway to develop an improved suite of measures. DOC expects that the review sessions themselves will also contribute to refining measures. It related previous experience of improvement in the quality of information in the former Departments of Communities and Child Safety as a result of performance review processes in these agencies.</p> <p>The department is a key player in setting national measures and aims to align performance review measures with national measures as these are developed. It intends to benchmark against national measures and select the most meaningful and appropriate indicators for comparison at annual review.</p>

²⁷ Public Service Commission, *A guide for performance practitioners: Organisational performance management – bringing the business together*, 2009, pg. 9.

²⁸ Mark H. Moore & Anthony A. Braga, *Measuring and improving police performance: the lessons of Compstat and its progeny*, *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2003, pg. 439.

4.5 Coordinated and documented by a dedicated team

Figure 4E – Principle 5 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated team coordinates, documents and communicates the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well managed and clearly understood process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team provides independent analysis of performance information to help focus questioning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent analysis of performance data.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process is regularly reviewed and improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process is continually improved.

4.5.1 What is important

'A sound performance-based management program must be adequately resourced. Otherwise it can't function properly'.²⁹ In order to produce quality performance information that promotes discussion, 'it needs a few analytical people working on it full time to understand, through the use of data what kind of results are really being produced'.³⁰

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- **A dedicated team coordinates, documents and communicates the process.** The team should have appropriate leadership to ensure the system is well managed to deliver quality services. The size of the team should be appropriate for the size of the agency and complexity of the system. Their role should include developing formal documentation that describes procedures and elements of the review process, coordinating the logistics of review sessions, and recording and producing follow up action reports. This ensures the process is consistent across reviews.
- **The team provides independent analysis of performance information to help focus questioning.** *'The often-employed cliché "the data speak for themselves" is just plain wrong'.³¹* The team should be appropriately skilled and experienced in data and business analysis. They should highlight positive performance results and performance deficit through independent analysis, ensuring robust discussion can be held during review sessions. Where managers and panel members need advice or assistance, the team should be able to assist them to understand the data, the methods for obtaining the data, and the analysis and presentation. This function ensures the panel receives independent analysis to assist them target their questions.
- **The process is regularly reviewed and improved.** *'Performance management is a journey of continuous improvement. Perfect systems and data do not exist'.³²* The team should update content based on emerging issues and organisational priorities, provide assistance to regions to share solutions to local problems, and review the system on an ongoing basis to ensure continuous improvement of the review process.

²⁹ Performance-Based Management Special Interest Group, *The Performance-Based Management Handbook*, Vol. 1, Sep 2001, pg. 2.

³⁰ Robert D. Behn, The Seven Big Errors of PerformanceStat, *John F. Kennedy School of Government, Policy Briefs*, Feb 2008, pg. 5.

³¹ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 212.

³² Public Service Commission, *A guide for executive managers: Organisational performance management – is your approach working?*, 2009, pg. 12.

4.5.2 Why it is important

*'In any organisation... people quickly gauge the importance of an activity by noting the number and capabilities of the staff who have responsibility for that activity.'*³³ The level of resources devoted to this function and the duties that the performance review team undertake is vital in the success of performance review sessions. If an agency does not have a dedicated team that coordinates the review process, staff assigned to tasks may have competing priorities, which may prevent the smooth running of the review sessions. If different staff coordinate different sessions without adequate documentation and oversight, there could be a lack of consistency across the process. If the team does not undertake independent analysis, there is a risk that key issues may not be identified for the panel, reducing the accountability of managers.

4.5.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Police Service

The OPR Unit consists of five people who coordinate and support the OPR process in QPS. This team is located in the Office of the Commissioner and is aligned with areas responsible for organisational improvement. This ensures the OPR process informs organisation-wide improvement initiatives.

Unit responsibilities include:

- developing formal documentation
- coordinating the logistics of review sessions
- analysing performance data in annotated slide presentations
- recording and producing follow up action reports.

All members of the team are trained in crime trend analysis, which informs the analysis provided to the panel that accompanies slide presentations.

The team plays a central role in OPR sessions, coordinating slide presentations, communicating with panel members and recording follow up actions.

Advice and assistance is also provided to regions and districts to assist them understand the OPR process, as well as how other districts are solving similar problems. The Unit also facilitates District Officer conferences.

Other areas of the department, such as internal review, contact the OPR Unit prior to reviewing a district or area, for up-to-date information on issues raised within the OPR process.

Continuous improvement of the OPR process is ensured by regular reviews through OPR Unit meetings, input to the process by the Commissioner and Senior Executive Committee, and OPR Unit representation on key departmental steering committees. Examples of changes to the system over time include changes to the content of slides and the introduction of themed and corporate OPRs.

Case study – Queensland Ambulance Service

QAS's RPR Unit consists of three people and plays a similar role to the OPR Unit in QPS. At the commencement of reviews, the Unit visited all regions to introduce the process.

The RPR Unit has developed robust formal documentation of all aspects of the process, including a detailed RPR Manual and Policy and Practice document.

The RPR Unit also fully coordinates the follow up process, monitoring compliance with requested actions and briefing the Commissioner on outcomes before the next RPR session.

³³ Robert D. Behn, The varieties of CitiStat, *Public Administration Review*, May/June 2006, pg. 334.

4.6 Balanced discussion at review sessions

Figure 4F – Principle 6 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review sessions are formal, regular and scheduled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explicit culture of performance improvement is fostered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders create a constructive environment that encourages honest and open discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information to improve performance is shared.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The discussion focuses on both good and bad results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor performance is identified and managed. Opportunity to showcase achievements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process facilitates organisation-wide improvement and is flexible enough to address emerging issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process is responsive and fosters organisation-wide improvement.

4.6.1 What is important

'Regular informed conversation enables improved performance'.³⁴

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- Review sessions are formal, regular and scheduled.** The formality and layout of the room helps to create the tone of the meeting.³⁵ Review sessions should be scheduled on a regular basis across all relevant areas of the organisation to foster an explicit culture of performance improvement. The frequency will depend on the urgency of the problems to be fixed, the timeliness of data and the speed at which actions impact on performance results.³⁶
- Leaders create a constructive environment that encourages honest and open discussion.** An environment of accountability should be established through an approach that is non-judgemental and non-antagonistic, to create a positive environment that encourages honest, open and constructive dialogue. The panel needs to ask probing questions of managers to ensure they adequately understand and explain performance however, it is important that managers are not punished for poor performance but are supported to innovate and improve. The panel should know the business of the organisation and be able to facilitate problem solving.
- The discussion focuses on both good and bad results.** Primary objectives of review sessions include identifying areas for improvement, encouraging joint problem solving and examining strategies. The leadership team should focus more on what things are not working as opposed to those that are working, but should provide an opportunity for managers to showcase their achievements.³⁷

³⁴ Public Service Commission, *A guide for managers: Organisational performance management – making it work for you*, 2009, pg. 11.

³⁵ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 217.

³⁶ Robert D. Behn, The Seven Big Errors of PerformanceStat, *John F. Kennedy School of Government, Policy Briefs*, Feb 2008, pg. 4.

³⁷ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 217-20.

- **The process facilitates organisation-wide improvement and is flexible enough to address emerging issues.** Information and better practice identified at one session can be shared at other review sessions to encourage organisation-wide improvement.³⁸ Additionally, the process should allow organisational leaders to identify trends and issues which need resolution at the organisational level and link to other departmental functions to ensure a response. The discussion should be flexible enough to address emerging operational and strategic issues. This demonstrates that the process is responsive at both local and organisational levels.

4.6.2 Why it is important

If review sessions are not formal and regular, the perceived importance of the process can be undermined. Failure to create a balanced and positive atmosphere may provoke defensiveness and distrust in managers making managers unwilling to openly share problems for fear of criticism or punishment. If there is no link to the organisation-wide level, systemic problems may remain unaddressed.

4.6.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Police Service
<p>OPR sessions are chaired by the Commissioner or his delegate in a formal setting with clear delineation between the panel and those responsible for performance (see Section 5.2 for more detail). The environment is positive and overtly collaborative, but the leadership team do ask probing questions based on their own analysis of performance information. They also facilitate sharing of information and better practice to improve performance.</p> <p>The reviews are based on a problem-oriented approach that endeavours to look beyond crime figures to the causes that lie behind them. Questions by the chair and panellists can help determine how effective the Service is as a whole in dealing with issues and may be based around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a specific problem such as how staff are deployed to deal with an issue • collaboration with other areas of the department or other agencies • strategic or corporate matters such as determining the effectiveness of a program. <p>Matters raised at review sessions that require organisational change can be dealt with in an immediate and responsive way. The system links to other departmental functions such as policy development, strategic planning, resourcing, legislation review, and administrative practices so that matters are acted upon. An example of how the process has led to organisational action is the Stop the Violence campaign:</p> <p><i>'In February this year, a detailed analysis of assault offences and strategies to date was presented at an operational performance review of the Rockhampton QPS district. The review estimated that assault offences would rise by 22 per cent by June this year and would amount to a 46 per cent increase since 2001. As a result, QPS organised a meeting with key stakeholders to develop strategies to address the rising trend of assaults. Stop the Violence was born and subsequently implemented in March.'</i>³⁹</p>
Case study – Queensland Police Service
<p>Themed OPRs are scheduled periodically to focus on a particular problem. They bring together all relevant stakeholders including executive management, regional and district management and practitioners and external stakeholders, where appropriate, to discuss issues and propose solutions. The outcome of the discussion is documented by the OPR Unit who produces a report to the leadership team with recommendations for consideration. QPS have undertaken six themed OPRs to date with topics including traffic policing and intelligence practice.</p> <p>The Commissioner believes themed OPRs are an effective way to tap into talent and ideas, particularly from those on the ground, younger staff, and staff new to the police service. The forum establishes an environment that encourages staff to express their ideas and creates an atmosphere of potential creativity. He encourages all attendees not to leave the room without sharing ideas.</p>

³⁸ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 220.

³⁹ Hansard, *Record of Proceedings*, 5 Oct 2005, pg. 3222.

4.7 Persistent follow up process

Figure 4G – Principle 7 Key elements and benefits

Elements	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plans for all areas of the organisation are recorded and communicated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues are actioned.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions are monitored and progress is reported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions are implemented in a timely manner.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learnings and better practice are shared across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation-wide improvement.

4.7.1 What is important

To ensure performance review is effective, persistent follow up is critical. It is important to have a follow up mechanism after each performance review, *‘that reminds everyone of the problems identified, the solutions proposed, the decisions taken, and the commitments made. Then at the next meeting, they need to be sure to re-examine each of these problems, solutions, decisions, and commitments’*.⁴⁰

To drive performance improvement, it is important that:

- Action plans for all areas of the organisation are recorded and communicated.** This should be done through a formal report outlining the issues, actions to be taken and person/s responsible. An action item may relate to more than one area within the organisation. It is important to assign each action item to the relevant responsible officer/s. This ensures that all issues identified in the review session are actioned.
- Actions are monitored and progress is reported.** Responsibility should be assigned by monitoring the progress of actions. This could be through a dedicated team or unit. The responsible officer should report on the status of each action item that he/she is responsible for. The outcomes of action items should be discussed at the subsequent performance review session. This ensures all action items are satisfactorily implemented in a timely manner.
- Learnings and better practice are shared across the organisation.** After reviews, there should be a mechanism to capture and share successful local strategies and learnings. This information should be available to local managers to assist them address common issues. This ensures that improvement is optimised across the organisation.

⁴⁰ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 227.

4.7.2 Why it is important

'Follow up... is essential... If [leaders] do not follow up, either relentlessly or persistently, the [performance review] exercise – room, staff, data, and meetings – will have little impact'.⁴¹ 'In the absence of some serious follow up, a human commitment made at a [performance review session] can be easily forgotten'.⁴² Having in place a structured and persistent follow up process as part of the performance review system would ensure all actions are implemented across the organisation. Without persistent follow up, problems identified may not be addressed effectively and in a timely manner. If successful strategies are not shared, there could be a duplication of effort across the organisation to solve common issues.

4.7.3 Principle in action

Case study – Queensland Ambulance Service

QAS's structured follow up process is effective in ensuring all requests for actions are monitored and progress is reported back to the Commissioner. Within four weeks after an RPR session, the RPR Unit prepares a follow up report which includes all action items from the RPR session. This includes actions for departmental areas other than the region/area under review. A deadline is set for each follow up action item. Upon receiving the follow up reports from the RPR Unit, the responsible manager/s then prepare an 'RPR Action Report' to the RPR Unit on the status and outcomes of the action items.

The status and outcomes of the action items are then collated by the RPR Unit and reported to the Commissioner about a week prior to the next RPR for the region. The outcomes of action items are also discussed at the subsequent RPR.

A database records all RPR follow up items. Each item is recorded under the relevant Key Priority Area and includes a description of the issue, proposed action and date finalised. In the RPR follow up database, issues may be labelled:

- 'Positive Outcome'
- 'Re-present at next RPR'
- 'Sharable Strategy'.

Case study – Department of Communities

At DOC, follow up actions for all areas of the department are captured in a final report which allocates a responsible officer to each action. Actions are then added to the responsible officer's individual performance agreement and monitored under that process.

It is intended that each of the coordinating units will produce a consolidated report for the Performance and Budget Committee which highlights common issues and better practice identified during review sessions. Audit was advised that the department is also considering briefing all executive and senior officers after the mid-year reviews to highlight key action items, share learnings and better practice and ensure all managers are aware of key areas for future focus.

⁴¹ Robert D. Behn, The varieties of CitiStat, *Public Administration Review*, May/June 2006, pg. 337.

⁴² Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 226.

5 | Appendices

5.1 Comparison of systems audited

While all agencies audited generally adopted similar principles, each adapted the system to suit their agency's needs. A comparison of some of the key distinctions are outlined in Figure 5A.

Figure 5A – Comparison of systems at agencies audited

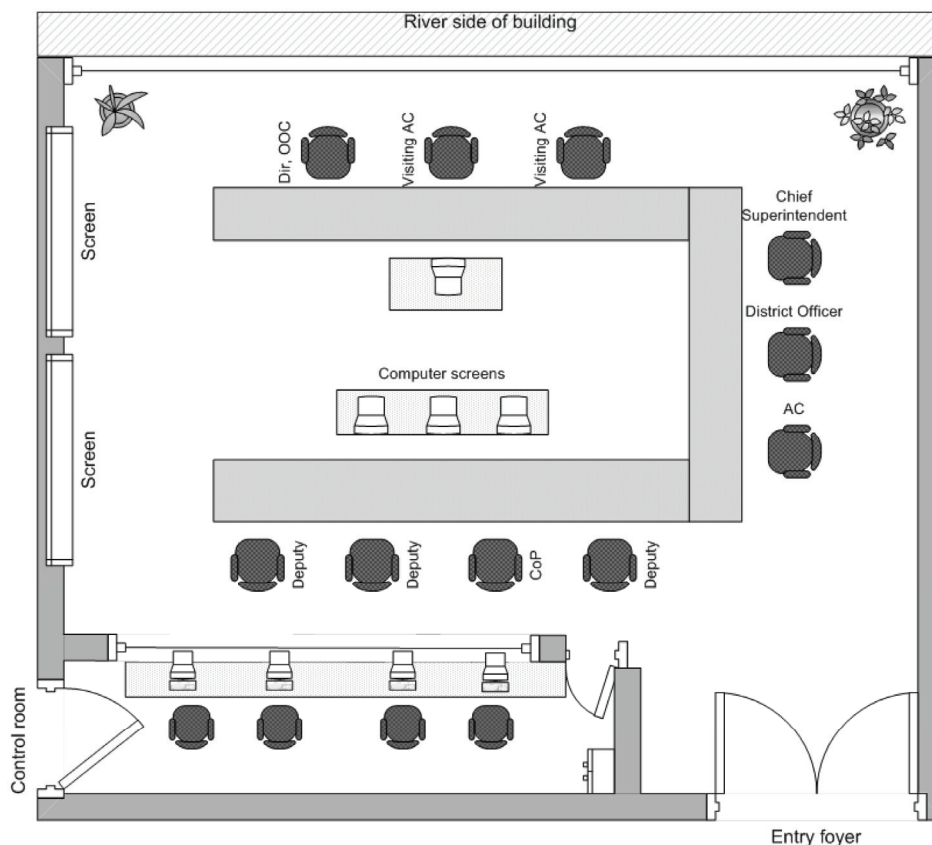
Element	Department of Communities	Queensland Ambulance Service	Queensland Police Service
Review sessions are regular and scheduled	<p>Biannual – mid year and end of year reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output reviews – six, three and a half hour sessions. Regional reviews – eight, three hour sessions. 	<p>Biannual – scheduled throughout the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional, area and communications centre reviews – seven, one to two day sessions. 	<p>Biannual district and annual corporate reviews – scheduled throughout the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District reviews – 30, three hour sessions. Corporate reviews – eight, full day sessions in 2010. Themed reviews – as needed.
Performance review sessions have clear area/s of focus and priorities	<p>Based on Strategic Plan priorities with flexibility to focus on emerging issues.</p>	<p>Four key priority areas (refer to Section 4.4.3 for detail).</p>	<p>Nine key priority areas (refer to Section 4.1.3 for detail).</p>
Key decision makers attend reviews	<p>D-G chairs mid-year Regional Reviews and end-of-year Output Reviews. Associate Directors-General chair when D-G not present.</p> <p>Panel members from across the organisation ask questions and participate in discussions.</p>	<p>The Commissioner chairs each review session.</p> <p>Panel members from across the organisation only participate when invited by the chair.</p>	<p>Commissioner chairs most review sessions. Deputy Commissioners chair in his absence.</p> <p>Panel members from across the organisation ask questions and participate in discussions.</p>
Responsibility and accountability is set at an appropriate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Director-General and Executive Directors (Output Reviews). Regional Executive Director and Directors (Regional Reviews). <p>Multiple responsible officers per session. All officers contribute to the session.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Assistant Commissioners. Area Directors. Communications Managers. <p>Multiple responsible officers per session. Officers questioned individually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Officer. <p>One responsible officer per session. Supervisors attend but only participate when invited.</p>
Expectations are clear	<p>Three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are we doing the right things? Are we doing the things right? Do we have the capability to deliver? 	<p>Five 'operational imperatives', similar to QPS.</p>	<p>Five 'operational imperatives' (refer to Section 4.1.3 for detail).</p>

5.2 Room layout

The formality and layout of the room helps to create the tone of the meeting.⁴³ As the QPS system has matured, QPS has developed a purpose-built room for central OPR sessions as pictured in Figure 5B. This room set-up clearly delineates the roles of the chair, panel members and responsible officers and allows all participants to see and focus on the same performance information.

Two screens provide the opportunity to compare information on different slides. The District Officer under review sits facing the screens, beside his or her superior officers. All other seats comprise panel members. A control room, which used by the OPR Unit to coordinate the session, is separated from the main room by one-way glass. From this room the OPR Unit controls the slide presentation at the request of the panel, records follow up actions, and communicates to panel members through computer screens and keyboards in the main room.

Figure 5B – QPS OPR room



⁴³ Robert D. Behn, Designing PerformanceStat, *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Dec 2008, pg. 217.

QPS advised that this room layout is replicated for 'remote' OPR's held within regions, with the exception that OPR Unit staff sit opposite the Commissioner inside the room and the Commissioner sits alone on his side of the U shaped table. The majority of equipment, resources and costs are provided centrally. QPS has delivered remote OPR's in almost every eastern seaboard city and town, along with a wide range of remote and rural locations.

5.3 Performance review systems in other jurisdictions

Performance review systems which emphasise accountability and performance improvement have been established in a number of international jurisdictions. An overview of some of these systems is provided below.

CompStat

In 1994, the New York City Police Department created CompStat – a leadership strategy to reduce, prevent and control crime. The system uses qualitative and quantitative data which is reviewed and discussed in regular meetings involving executive police officers and district commanders. CompStat's process consists of weekly reports and meetings using the following principles:

- accurate, and timely information is made available at all levels of the organisation
- the most effective tactics are used for specific problems
- rapid focused deployment of resources to implement those tactics
- relentless follow up and assessment to learn what happened and to make adjustments.⁴⁴

CompStat promotes accountability by linking with promotional opportunities, holding meetings frequently and by making the reviews public. The CompStat system also focuses on the processes to achieve the results and provides the ability for innovations to be spread throughout the organisation.

Performance review in Australia

Since the introduction of CompStat, a number of Australian police jurisdictions have considered and introduced similar systems.⁴⁵ The QPS system is also based on CompStat, however meetings are held less frequently than CompStat and the process is more collaborative and supportive.

⁴⁴ James Willis, Stephen Mastrofski, and David Weisburd, Making Sense of Compstat: A Theory Based Analysis of Organizational Change in Three Police Departments, *Law and Society Review*, 2007, Vol. 41, No. 1.

⁴⁵ Lorraine Mazerolle, Sacha Rombouts and James McBroom, The impact of operational performance reviews on reported crimes in Queensland, *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice*, No. 313, May 2006.

Performance review in other public agencies

Since the introduction of CompStat, numerous police departments in the United States and around the world have created their own versions of CompStat.⁴⁶ Some of these adapted the CompStat process to support a broader agenda. One example is Baltimore, which set up CitiStat to improve the performance of city agencies.

Researcher Robert Behn collectively calls these systems 'PerformanceStat' which he defines as '*an ongoing series of regular, frequent, integrated meetings during which the chief executive and/or the principal members of the chief executive's leadership team plus the director (and the top managers) of different sub-units use current data to analyse specific, previously defined aspects of each unit's past performance, to follow up on previous decisions and commitments to produce results, to examine and learn from each unit's efforts to improve performance, to solve performance-deficit problems, and to set and achieve the next performance targets*'.⁴⁷

5.4 Acronyms

DOC	Department of Communities
OPR	Operational Performance Review
PMS audit	Performance Management Systems audit
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RPR	Regional Performance Review

5.5 Glossary

Agency

Used generally to describe the various organisational units within government that deliver services. The term includes departments, commercialised business units, shared services providers, statutory bodies and government owned corporations.

Audit Criteria

A set of reasonable and acceptable standards of performance.

Audit Objective

The overall question the audit is seeking to answer.

⁴⁶ Robert D. Behn, Performance Leadership Strategy, *Bob Behn's Performance Leadership Report*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Nov 2009.

⁴⁷ Robert D. Behn, Performance Leadership Strategy, *Bob Behn's Performance Leadership Report*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Nov 2009.

CompStat

A leadership strategy created by the New York City Police Department in 1994 which aimed to reduce crime in the city by improving the performance of the department's 76 precincts.

Effectiveness

The achievement of the objectives or other intended effects of activities at a program or entity level.

Efficiency

The use of resources such that output is optimised for any given set of resource inputs, or input is minimised for any given quantity and quality of output.

Line of Inquiry

A key question which must be answered to form an opinion on the audit objective.

Performance measure

A criterion or measure for monitoring or evaluating the efficiency or effectiveness of a system or service, that may be used to demonstrate accountability and to identify areas for improvement.

Performance review

A series of regular, periodic meetings during which executive leaders use data to discuss, examine and analyse with individual unit directors past performance, future performance objectives and overall performance strategies.

Responsible officers

Officers who are responsible for answering questions posed by the panel members at performance review sessions. They are usually officers who have the authority to influence resourcing decisions at the service delivery level.

Review panel

The review panel comprises the leader of the organisation together with principal members of the leadership team who have significant decision-making powers. They attend each review session to provide organisation-wide support and oversight of the process and enable issues to be explored from a whole-of-agency perspective.

Review session

A forum that facilitates robust discussion on performance information. The forum focuses on accountability for performance at the management level.

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6

Auditor-General

Reports to Parliament

6.1 Tabled in 2010

Report No.	Subject	Date tabled in Legislative Assembly
1	<i>Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2010</i> <i>Audit of A1 Grand Prix Agreements</i> A Financial and Compliance audit	4 February 2010
2	<i>Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2010</i> <i>Follow-up of selected audits tabled in 2007</i> A Performance Management Systems audit	23 March 2010
3	<i>Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 3 for 2010</i> <i>Administration of Magistrate Court Services in Queensland</i> A Performance Management Systems audit	13 April 2010
4	<i>Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 4 for 2010</i> <i>Results of local government audits</i> Financial and Compliance audits	21 April 2010
5	<i>Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 5 for 2010</i> <i>Performance Reviews – Using performance information to improve service delivery</i> A Performance Management Systems audit	May 2010

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