

B. How we prepared this report

Queensland Audit Office reports to parliament

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) is Queensland's independent auditor of public sector entities and local governments.

QAO's independent public reporting is an important part of our mandate. It brings transparency and accountability to public sector performance and forms a vital part of the overall integrity of the system of government.

QAO provides valued assurance, insights and advice, and recommendations for improvement via the reports it tables in the Legislative Assembly, as mandated by the *Auditor-General Act 2009*. These reports to parliament may be on the results of our financial audits, on the results of our performance audits, or on our insights. Our insights reports may provide key facts or a topic overview, the insights we have identified from across our audit work, the outcomes of an investigation we conducted following a request for audit, or an update on the status of Auditor-General recommendations.

We share our planned reports to parliament in our 3-year forward work plan, which we update annually: www.qao.qld.gov.au/audit-program.

A fact sheet about how we prepare, consult on, and table our reports to parliament is available on our website: www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/fact-sheets.

About this report

QAO prepares its insights reports under the *Auditor-General Act 2009*:

- s. 63, which outlines the discretion the Auditor-General has for reporting to parliament
- s. 62, which outlines the Auditor-General may prepare interim and supplementary reports.

This report shares the insights we have identified from across our financial audit work.

What we cover

This report provides insights into audit committee practices in local governments across Queensland, and an overview of the recommendations that we have previously made to councils and the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers.

We prepared this report using information and insights we gathered through our financial audits, and through engagement with stakeholders, including chairs of committees, chief executive officers (CEOs), and mayors.

Entities included in this report

In preparing this report, we engaged the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers and reviewed the audit committee information of 10 local governments in Queensland.

Our approach

Our approach to this engagement was consistent with the requirements of the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*. Our procedures were not designed to provide assurance on audit committees or the practices of audit committees, and accordingly, we do not provide any assurance on this matter.



Interviews

We conducted interviews with stakeholders across the local government sector, including regional areas of Queensland. This included meetings with:

- 8 audit committee chairs for councils across Queensland
- the Local Government Association of Queensland
- The Local Government Managers Australia, Queensland
- the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers
- other stakeholders including councillors, council CEOs, and a partner from one of our audit service providers.

Document review

We obtained and reviewed relevant documents as part of our financial audit process. This included audit committee meeting agendas and packs, charters, annual workplans, and self-assessments. We also obtained relevant documents from the department. This included obtaining access to LG Central, and reviewing training modules for councillors, audit committee guidelines and templates, and legislation.

Data analysis

We analysed a range of data collected as part of our financial audit process from between 2022–23 and 2023–24, including on:

- audit committee meetings and membership
- internal audit reports
- council statistics including workforce numbers, water and waste, and roads.

