

Auditor-General for the Northern Territory

MEDIA STATEMENT

28 November 2025

Police Information System Replacement Project

Auditor-General's Report to the Legislative Assembly No 6: 2025-26

The Auditor-General, Mr Jara Dean, tabled his report yesterday to the Legislative Assembly on the results of a review into the Serve and Protect (SerPro) project to replace the Police Realtime Online Management Information System (PROMIS) for the Northern Territory Police Force (NT Police) by the Department of Corporate and Digital Development (the Department).

The objective of the review was to answer these two questions:

- Was the SerPro project managed to be delivered on time and on budget?
- Were the benefits of the SerPro project met?

'My review found that the answer to both questions is no, with the project taking more than 5 years to complete, cost overruns and not fully delivering expected benefits,' Mr Dean said.

Over the duration of the project from initiation through to project closure, the original go-live date of December 2021 was postponed multiple times, culminating in a total delay to the originally planned timeframe of 23 months to November 2023, and at an unaudited, increased cost of over \$60 million, or a 34% increase over the original Cabinet-approved budget.

The project fully met only four out the nine assessed objectives as outlined in the business case. The remaining five objectives were met only partially.

SerPro is a mobile system, but its mobility is currently restricted to laptops because of the mobile devices such as mobile phones and tablets used by the Northern Territory Government.

While it is important to understand that this project was not a simple like-for-like replacement and was hampered by unforeseen events, including the COVID-19 pandemic, resourcing challenges, governance issues and the lack of reliable reporting all affected the time and cost of the project.

- Project governance was not separate from organisation governance.
- Independent assurance reviews were not conducted regularly.
- Budget overruns were funded by reprioritising other projects, included Acacia.
- Time and cost were tracked in isolation and not giving a true picture of how effectively the project was being delivered.
- Ascertaining the full cost of the project during the review was a challenging exercise, raising concerns about the level of scrutiny applied to major projects.

Early project management was ineffective but has improved once critical issues were identified. The Department took decisive actions to address the risk not delivering expected benefits, which included focusing on delivering a minimum viable set of critical deliverables and deferring other functionalities to later stages after the project was closed.

The review made 10 recommendations to the Department. 'I hope that the review and its recommendations offer learnings for future projects,' Mr Dean said.

The Auditor-General is a statutory position established under the *Audit Act 1995*. The Auditor-General and the Northern Territory Auditor-General's Office assist Parliament to hold Government accountable for its use of public resources by providing independent audits.

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