

# Review and Audit of Western Australia's Overseas Trade and Investment Offices

**Dynamic and collaborative international offices are crucial to deliver a stronger, diversified economy.**

The Western Australian Government's economic framework, Diversify WA, establishes a clear plan to diversify our trade, expand our technological and knowledge-based capabilities and establish more consistent and secure economic and jobs growth.

A key element on delivering this vision is the establishment in 2017 of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation as the State's lead economic development agency.

To deliver this function, the department must have capacity to operate effectively in both domestic and offshore markets, establishing relationships, marketing the State's diverse capabilities and attracting investment.

Recognising the need for this strategic, global outlook, the State Government allocated responsibility for all eight international offices to the department. This is the first time the offices have been managed by a single agency.

This strategic change is an incredible opportunity to ensure international offices are producing the best possible economic benefits for WA, by utilising the vast amount of experience and skills of our Perth and international staff to create and implement a shared vision and plan.

Earlier this year I commissioned two independent reports on the international offices to guide the department's plans to strengthen the State's ability to attract investment and grow trade. The two reports form the most comprehensive review of the offices' operations in 20 years.

The [Western Australia's Overseas Trade and Investment Offices Review](#) analysed the purpose and function, compliance, architecture, culture and performance of all eight offices and the department.

The [Internal Audit of the International Trade and Investment Offices](#) examined expenditure over the last six years, existing controls to prevent and detect fraud, and the remuneration, entitlements and travel of all Commissioners and Agent Generals over the last ten years.

I accept these reports and the 90 recommendations they make. It is very pleasing that the Audit did not find any financial misconduct.

Very importantly, the two reports provide a wealth of analysis and best practice information. We will use this information to develop an implementation plan that reforms our international offices and department to maximise the benefits they deliver for Western Australians.

The implementation plan will be finalised in early 2020 and formally reviewed after two years.

The implementation plan will build on the strong momentum for change the department has created since its establishment in 2017. While long-lasting, effective change will take time, our reform journey is well underway and we will continue to deliver.

I thank the reviewers and the department's leadership for their work. I also thank the department's international and Perth staff and stakeholders for their important input.

It's now time to get on with the work and embrace the opportunity and future.

Rebecca Brown  
Director General, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation  
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