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# Administration of Victorian Courts

**Tabled 13 October 2021**



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## **Objective**

We looked at whether Court Services Victoria (or CSV) is providing the administrative services and facilities that Victorian courts need to efficiently and effectively perform their functions. We also examined CSV's strategic planning, governance and risk management practices.

## **Conclusion**

After operating for seven years, CSV cannot yet demonstrate if or how well its services support courts to perform their functions efficiently and effectively.

For its first six years, CSV's governing body, Courts Council, didn't adequately direct CSV's strategy, governance and risk management. This reduced CSV's ability to drive more efficient and effective service delivery.

CSV has improved its governance and risk management since 2019. It also aims to increase service efficiency.

CSV's new comprehensive strategic plan should help it, and Courts Council, drive these improvements. CSV will need to capture relevant data and measure its performance to understand its achievements against the plan.

## **Why this audit is important**

Demand on Victoria's court system has significantly increased in the past decade. The coronavirus pandemic has also disrupted services.

CSV has a key role in supporting the efficiency of the court system.

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## Why this audit is important



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### Background

Courts need fit-for-purpose facilities and efficient and effective administrative services to meet the court system's demands.

Since it was established in 2014, CSV has supported courts by providing these services. Jurisdictions can choose whether they want to use CSV's services.

CSV employs all court administrative staff and manages 75 buildings in 66 locations across Victoria.

### Issues

The Courts Services Victoria Act 2014 doesn't clearly define CSV's role in providing services to jurisdictions. CSV didn't define its role or set an adequate strategic plan for six years.

In September 2020, Courts Council approved a new strategic plan that sets out a clear role and responsibilities for CSV.

As a result, CSV has only recently started work to identify opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its services.

CSV doesn't know whether its service delivery is cost effective or efficient because it doesn't collect relevant data or have a performance reporting framework.

CSV delivers some services centrally, while others are performed by both CSV and jurisdictions. CSV could improve efficiency by reducing service delivery duplication.

For its first six years of operating, CSV didn't have an adequate governance framework. Roles and responsibilities weren't clearly defined. Courts Council and its committees lacked members with relevant operational expertise.

CSV also lacked appropriate arrangements to monitor, manage and report on risks.

In 2020, CSV made several improvements, including: documenting clear roles and responsibilities and approving its first organisational risk profile. CSV also improved its committees and developed a new strategic asset plan to improve its court facilities.

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## Background



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## Recommendations

We made 13 recommendations to CSV to:

- set performance measures, produce an action plan and divisional plans and report against their outcomes
- increase service delivery efficiency and effectiveness
- review governance arrangements and report on performance of governance groups
- strengthen risk management oversight
- and develop new Budget Paper 3 performance measures.

## More information

To learn more, you can view the audit snapshot and full report on our website [www.audit.vic.gov.au](http://www.audit.vic.gov.au).