ICT Provisioning in Schools video transcript

Audit objective

In this audit, we assessed if Victoria's government schools are equipped with the information communication technology, or ICT, necessary for ICT-facilitated teaching and learning.

Who and what we examined

We examined how the Department of Education and Training (or DET) provides ICT to government schools. We also interviewed nine schools.

What we concluded

We concluded that DET provides a base level of ICT, including internet and technical support, to over 1,500 government schools.

However, not all schools have access to the same ICT, particularly internet speed. DET also cannot be sure that the ICT infrastructure, resources and services it provides meet all schools' needs.

DET's focus has been on maintaining and enhancing the existing ICT it provides. It's also been working on a strategy to support digitally enabled education. As part of this, it recently finalised a 10-year digital roadmap. But it's too early to tell if this will meet schools' future needs.

Why this audit is important

Victoria introduced digital technologies to the school curriculum in 2017. Learning how to use ICT is important to prepare students for further education, training, life and work in a digital world.

Issue 1: Improving existing ICT

DET proactively improves the existing ICT it provides to schools, including increasing bandwidth, adjusting software licences, and replacing servers.

While the minimum resources it provides vary between schools, it's working to address these gaps.

Beyond the basic provisions from DET, schools make their own decisions about ICT. On average across all schools, they spend a total of $76 million per year on additional resources, infrastructure and support.

Issue 2: DET's guidance and oversight of schools' ICT

DET gives schools a range of systems and guidance to help them to plan for their ICT needs and improve their capability.

But DET doesn't have full visibility of all schools' ICT, including their policies, purchasing and planning. This limits its ability to understand their needs and purchasing trends to inform its future planning.

We found some potential waste, including schools purchasing software that DET provides for free.

DET also doesn't know if schools ensure all students have access to devices for learning activities, which is a requirement if a school chooses to adopt a one-to-one device policy.

While there is a statewide average of more than one device per student, we found 42 per cent of all schools have less than one device per student.

Issue 3: Planning for future school ICT

DET must engage with schools better to understand their needs and prepare for the future of digital education.

It recently developed a digital roadmap to plan for the ICT infrastructure, resources and services schools require to provide a high-quality and contemporary digital education.

This is also important to ensure that schools have equal access to ICT and there is no widening gap between them in the future.

What we recommended

We made four recommendations to DET about:

- improving ICT to meet schools' needs
- improving its guidance and support to schools
- overseeing schools' ICT
- and its roadmap for digitally enabled education.

For more information, or to read our full report, go to audit.vic.gov.au