

OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT ON CONTINUING OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE STATE IT SECURITY – 2020

DEC. 22, 2020

This management response to the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) performance audit report received December 2, 2020, is coordinated by the State’s Chief Information Officer on behalf of the audited entities.

SAO PERFORMANCE AUDIT OBJECTIVES:

The SAO sought to answer this question:

1. Can selected agencies make their IT systems more secure, and better align their IT security practices with leading practices?
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SAO Recommendations to the five selected state agencies: to help strengthen IT security programs, and to protect agency systems and the information within those systems, we recommend:

1. Further align agency IT security programs with leading practices recommended in the Center for Internet Security “CIS” Controls.
2. Identify and continue to periodically assess the agency’s IT security needs and resources, including personnel and technology, to mature and maintain sufficient security.
3. Continue remediating vulnerabilities identified during the security testing, starting with those that most significantly affect them.

STATE RESPONSE:

We agree with the opportunities for improvement identified by the SAO to help strengthen IT security and are committed to ongoing assessment and improvement. The state recognizes the importance of continuously improving security and takes that charge seriously. The organizations audited have already made improvements and continue to work carefully through the findings and recommendations. Consideration will also be given to further aligning IT security programs with the leading practices recommended in the CIS Controls. These controls are more prescriptive than the OCIO IT security standards 141.10 that agencies are required to follow. The OCIO will use the findings and observations of this and previous audits to work with all state organizations to improve the state’s security posture.

Action Steps and Time Frame

- Each audited entity will work with the appropriate governing bodies to address vulnerabilities, improvements and considerations suggested by the SAO during calendar year 2021.