

JAY INSLEE  
Governor



WILLIAM S. KEHOE  
Director &  
State Chief Information Officer

STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

1500 Jefferson Street SE • Olympia, Washington 98504-1501

August 29, 2024

The Honorable Pat McCarthy  
Washington State Auditor  
P.O. Box 40021  
Olympia, WA 98504-0021

Dear Auditor McCarthy:

On behalf of the audited participants, thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the State Auditor's Office (SAO) performance audit report "Opportunities to Improve State Information Security, FY 2024."

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) appreciates the State Auditor's Office (SAO) for conducting performance audits and highlighting areas for improvement in state agency information security. WaTech and the audited agencies recognize the importance of safeguarding the state's information assets and are committed to addressing the findings outlined in the report.

WaTech is actively working on implementing enhanced security measures across state agencies to mitigate identified risks. These initiatives include strengthening our cybersecurity framework, improving incident response protocols, and increasing security awareness and training among state employees.

In alignment with the recommendations provided by the SAO, WaTech is also enhancing its monitoring capabilities to ensure more proactive identification and management of security threats. We are committed to collaborating with all relevant parties to ensure the successful implementation of these improvements and to safeguard the integrity of our state's information systems.

Thank you again for your valuable insights, which will guide us as we continue to enhance our security posture across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William S. Kehoe".

William S. Kehoe  
Director & State Chief Information Officer  
Washington Technology Solutions

cc: Joby Shimomura, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor  
Kelly Wicker, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor  
Rob Duff, Executive Director of Policy and Outreach, Office of the Governor  
David Schumacher, Director, Office of Financial Management  
Mandeep Kaundal, Director, Results Washington, Office of the Governor  
Tammy Firkins, Performance Audit Liaison, Results Washington, Office of the Governor  
Ralph Johnson, State Chief Information Security Officer, Washington Technology Solutions  
Scott Frank, Director of Performance Audit, Office of the Washington State Auditor

## OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT ON OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE STATE INFORMATION SECURITY, FY 2024

AUG. 29, 2024

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This management response to the State Auditor's Office (SAO) performance audit report received August 9, 2024, is coordinated by the State's Chief Information Officer on behalf of the audited entities.

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### 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 selected state agencies:** to protect agency IT systems and the information contained in them, we recommended the audited agencies:

1. Continue remediating vulnerabilities identified during the security testing, starting with those most significantly affecting them.
  2. Revise IT security policies and procedures to align more closely with leading practices.
  3. To mature and maintain sufficient security, continue to identify and periodically assess the agency's IT security needs and resources, including personnel and technology.
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### STATE RESPONSE:

We agree with the opportunities for improvement identified by the SAO to help protect agency systems and data. We also recognize our responsibility to continue improving state government security and take that duty seriously. Audited agencies have already implemented improvements and will continue to remediate any remaining vulnerabilities. The agencies will also continue to assess and make improvements to IT security needs.

Washington Technology Solutions will continue using the SAO's 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 its appropriate governing bodies to address and prioritize vulnerabilities, improvements, and considerations suggested by the SAO during fiscal year 2024.