



Office of Inspector General  
4030 Esplanade Way  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
850-488-5285

**Ron DeSantis, Governor**  
Pedro Allende, Secretary

September 26, 2022

Pedro Allende, Secretary  
Department of Management Services  
4050 Esplanade Way  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0950

Re: Auditor General Report No. 2022-179, *Department of Management Services State Data Center Operations*

Dear Secretary Allende,

Section 20.055, Florida Statutes, requires the Inspector General to monitor the implementation of the agency's response to any report on the Department of Management Services (Department) issued by the Auditor General or by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The referenced statute further requires that the Inspector General provide a written response on the status of actions taken. The purpose of this letter is to provide updated information on the Department's response to the Auditor General findings and fulfill these requirements.

In March 2022, the Auditor General released Audit Report No. 2022-179 titled *Department of Management Services State Data Center Operations*. The report outlined seven audit findings and recommendations for the Department. The following pages detail the current progress of the Department to address the findings and recommendations.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Sarah Beth Hall  
Inspector General

Enclosure

cc: Sean Gellis, Chief of Staff  
Tim Brown, Assistant Vice President of Northwest Regional Data Center  
Melinda Miguel, Chief Inspector General  
Kathy DuBose, Coordinator, Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

**Department of Management Services  
Six-month Follow-up to the  
Auditor General Report No. 2022-179**

**Finding 1: Disaster Recovery Planning**

The SDC's disaster recovery plan and related business impact analysis, annual testing, and recovery processes for customer entities subscribed to SDC disaster recovery services continue to need improvement to ensure that critical SDC and customer operations are recovered and continue in the event of a disaster or other interruption in service.

---

**Recommendation:** To ensure recoverability of the critical applications maintained at the SDC in the event of a disaster or other interruption of service, we again recommend that Department management improve disaster recovery processes and related documentation. Specifically, we recommend that Department management:

- Conduct a BIA that documents the assessment of the criticality of all SDC applications for DR purposes.
- Update the SDC DRP to include RPO and RTO thresholds.
- Develop step-by-step recovery instructions for, and conduct testing of, all applications included in the DRP and ensure that CMDB records are updated, as necessary, for all critical SDC-managed applications in the DRP.
- Ensure documentation of live DR exercises is maintained.
- Establish a recovery order for subscribed customer entities in the event of a disaster affecting multiple customers and ensure that full-scale testing is performed to verify that all applications, systems, and related infrastructure can be timely restored.
- Ensure DR exercises are conducted annually for all subscribed customer entities.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

## Finding 2: Continuity of Operations Planning

As similarly noted in prior audits, most recently in our report No. 2020-149, SDC continuity of operations plan documentation did not include all essential information specified in State law.

---

**Recommendation:** To promote the continued operations of the SDC, we again recommend that Department management include in the SDC COOP, or incorporate by reference, all essential information specified in State law.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

## Finding 3: Backup Tape Reconciliations

SDC processes for reconciling backup tapes were insufficient to ensure that all backup tapes were accounted for and backup records were accurate.

---

**Recommendation:** We again recommend that Department management ensure that semiannual reconciliations of backup system tape records to tape tracking system records are performed and documented in accordance with Department procedures.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

#### **Finding 4: Periodic Review of Access Privileges**

As similarly noted in our report No. 2020-149, SDC processes for performing and documenting periodic access reviews for the network, Windows server, open systems, and Oracle database environments did not adequately ensure that assigned access privileges remained appropriate.

---

**Recommendation:** We again recommend that Department management ensure that comprehensive and documented periodic reviews of logical access privileges are conducted using system-generated lists of all user and service accounts.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

#### **Finding 5: Backup Controls**

SDC backup controls continue to need improvement to ensure that backups for all IT resources requiring backup are appropriately performed and documented.

---

**Recommendation:** We again recommend that Department management ensure that all required server backups are timely and successfully performed, and that evidence of the backups, including system-generated reports, is maintained.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

### Finding 6: Performance Metrics

The SDC's monitoring and reporting of the performance metrics for database services provided to customer entities continue to need improvement to ensure that critical incidents affecting the database services are timely detected, documented, and resolved.

---

**Recommendation:** We again recommend that Department management ensure that SDC database performance uptime metrics included in the SLAs are met and appropriate documentation for performance metrics and related uptime statistics is maintained.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open

### Finding 7: Security Controls – Logical Access, Vulnerability Management, Configuration Management, User Authentication, and Logging and Monitoring

Certain SDC security controls related to logical access, vulnerability management, configuration management, user authentication, and logging and monitoring continue to need improvement to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of SDC and customer entity data and related IT resources.

---

**Recommendation:** We again recommend that Department management improve certain security controls related to logical access, vulnerability management, configuration management, user authentication, and logging and monitoring to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of SDC and customer entity data and related IT resources.

---

**Management's Six-month Follow-up Response:** Due to Senate Bill 2518, the State Data Center (SDC) management was transitioned to Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) on July 1, 2022. Planning for the transition took precedence with the SDC staff, which impeded any progress towards mitigating any of the findings. NWRDC has met regarding the findings, with another scheduled, to formulate a mitigation plan.

---

**Status Based on the Inspector General Review:** Open