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7 April 2022

Karin Swiatnik
President
Local Government Information Technology South Australia Incorporated
c/o City of Charles Sturt
72 Woodville Road
Woodville SA 5011

Dear Karin

Independent Evaluation of the Local Government Cyber Security Toolkit Project

Powell & Co has been engaged by the Local Government Information Technology South Australia Incorporated (LGITSA) to provide an independent evaluation of the development of the Local Government Security Framework (LGSF) funded by the Local Government Research and Development Scheme, known as the Local Government Cyber Security Toolkit Project.

Scope

The scope of the independent evaluation included the following:-
- Review the findings and recommendations of the Auditor General regarding a cyber security framework
- Gain an understanding of the scope and deliverables of the LG cyber security framework
- Review the governance, including reviews and staging by the LGITSA Steering Group
- Review the deliverable and understand consistency with or departures from the SA Government Cyber Security Framework
- Survey Local Government IT specialists on their satisfaction with the draft LG cyber security framework and any suggestions for improvement
- Review the cost management for the project and fees paid to the consultants (CyberCX)
- Draft and finalise a report to the LGITSA Steering Group and the LGASA R&D Scheme

Approach

Our approach the independent Evaluation included the following:-

- Reviewed key documents including reports from the Auditor General and the application for funding to the R & D Scheme.
- Attended Project Steering meetings on the following dates
    - 18 November 2021 - Steering Meeting #1
    - 20 December 2021 – Steering Meeting #2
    - 21 January 2022 – Steering Meeting #3
    - 4 March 2022 – Steering Meeting #5
    - 31 March 2022 – Steering Meeting #6
- Provided comments on the draft framework document on 21 January 2022
- Reviewed feedback comments provided by IT professionals from
    - Mount Barker Council
    - City of Onkaparinga
    - Rural City of Murray Bridge
    - Tatiara District Council
    - City of Holdfast Bay
    - City of Tea Tree Gully
- Reviewed the final set of key deliverables dated 5 April 2022.

Findings

Our findings from the Independent Evaluation are as follows:-

Auditor General's Recommendation

The Auditor General's report to Parliament, 2 February 2021, noted that "the local government sector dies not have any mandatory security arrangements, such as ICT control frameworks. … We consider that key references and better practice guides for examining the effectiveness of cyber security are the SA Government Cyber Security Framework and the guides developed by the Commonwealth Government's Australian Signals Directorate (ASD). … South Australian councils, together with the LGA ... should consider their position moving forward regarding cyber security direction and guidance and sector ICT communications. "

The deliverables from the Local Government Security Framework project address this concern as the SA Cyber Security Framework was used as a starting point and references the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ASC) Essential Eight.

Scope and Deliverables

The work done by CyberCX and the working group sought to extend the scope beyond just Cyber security to include Information, Personnel and Facilities this incorporating the requirements of the South Australian Protective Security Framework. Hence the title became "Local Government Security Framework" as it is broader than just Cyber Security.

Governance

Appropriate governance was maintained throughout the project including six Steering Group meetings and regular meetings of the working groups during document development. It should be noted that the representative from the SA Department of Premier and Cabinet (representing the SA Cyber Security Framework (SACSF)) attended the early steering committee meetings, however was unable to attend the later meetings due to extended leave. This did not adversely affect the project as the DPC representative had sufficient input in the early stages,CyberCX had excellent knowledge of the SACSF, and another DPC representative attended working group meetings during development of the framework.

Appropriate minutes, actions and management of time and cost was appropriately addressed in the Project Steering Meetings.

Review of Deliverables

Toolkit documents including policy templates, implementation toolkit, Information Asset Inventory were also delivered as part of this project. The deliverables are as follows:-

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
01. LGITSA Local Government Security Framework v1.0.docx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Word D...	205 KB
02. Local Government Security Toolkit Diagrams v1.0.pptx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft PowerP...	175 KB
03. LGITSA Security Governance Policy v1.0.docx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Word D...	83 KB
04. LGITSA Local Government Information Security Policy Manual v1.0.docx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Word D...	100 KB
05. LGITSA End-User Security Policy 1.0.docx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Word D...	69 KB
06. LGITSA Actions and Improvements Register v1.0.xlsx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Excel W...	150 KB
07. LGITSA Information Asset Inventory v1.0.xlsx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Excel W...	42 KB
08. LGITSA Security Calendar v1.0.xlsx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Excel W...	47 KB
09. LGITSA Implementation Toolkit v1.0.xlsx	5/04/2022 12:31 PM	Microsoft Excel W...	44 KB

The documents delivered as part of this project are suitable and address the planned deliverables.

The project sought to use the SACSF as a basis and then further develop this for the Local Government sector. It appears that this was achieved.

Feedback from Local Government IT professionals

I have reviewed the feedback provided by six council IT professionals.

It ranged from minor wording corrections to philosophical differences, however the consistent theme was positive and that the LGSF would be valuable to the Local Government sector.

Comments from the IT professionals was appropriately considered by the Project Steering Group including CyberCX and addressed as necessary.

Cost Management

Costs of the project was appropriately reported and managed. As at the date of this report project costing and tracking was as follows:-

Project Costing & Tracking

Item Description	Budget $	Actual $	Committed $	Variance $	On Track Y|N
Phase 1 – Toolkit Document (framework)	39,000	26,000		13,000	Y
Phase 2 – Control Expectations	28,000	11,000		17,000	Y
Phase 3 – Supporting Guidelines & Templates	28,000	12,000		16,000	Y
Independent Evaluation	4,000	1,000		3,000	Y
Total	99,000	50,000		49,000	Y

LGITSA has just invoiced the Scheme for another $40K, so CyberCX will be able to issue further invoices shortly.

The final $9K is due to be paid by the Scheme in conjunction with the milestone for the final report and evaluation (22/4/2022).

CyberCX and Powell & Co have appropriately invoiced on completion of deliverables. It is expected that the project will finish on time and on budget.

Conclusion

Based on our observations and review of documents, we conclude that the Local Government Security Framework project was well managed and that the deliverables are expected to be a valuable resource to the Local Government sector.

Limitation on use of this report

The services provided were Independent Evaluation Services and do not constitute a financial statement audit and the extent of our procedures and services are limited exclusively for this purpose only. Our engagement cannot be relied upon to disclose irregularities including fraud, other illegal acts and errors that may exist, however, no such matters have come to our attention.

This report has been prepared at the request of LGITSA in connection with our engagement to perform an independent assessment of the Local Government Cyber Security Project. This report should be considered in its complete form. It should not be quoted or summarised without the written consent of the author.

Other than our responsibility to LGITSA and the LGASA, we do not take responsibility arising in any way from reliance placed by a third party on this report. Any reliance placed by a third party on this report is that party's responsibility.

Powell & Co

Closing

We thank you for the opportunity to be of service to LGITSA and would be pleased to discuss this report in detail or otherwise assist you further in any way. Should you have any queries, please contact me on 041 440 7171.

Yours sincerely
Powell & Co

David Powell
Managing Director