The Victoria Police Manual is issued under the authority of the Chief Commissioner of Police in s.60, Victoria Police Act 2013. Non-compliance with or a departure from the Victoria Police Manual may be subject to management or disciplinary action. Employees must use VPM Professional and ethical standards to inform the decisions they make to support compliance.

External review and Internal Audit recommendations

Context

Recommendations to enhance or modify the activities of Victoria Police arise through reviews, audits, or inquiries conducted internally or by external agencies and oversight bodies. These reviews generally result in agreed management actions aimed at addressing the risks identified in the findings and observations. External reviews are undertaken by a range of bodies including but not limited to:

- Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
- Coroners Court of Victoria
- Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission
- Royal Commissions and Parliamentary Inquiries
- Victoria Auditor-General's Office
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
- Victorian Inspectorate
- Victorian Ombudsman.

Victoria Police has an obligation to accept or reject recommendations and, subject to available funding and resourcing, implement the recommendations in an efficient and timely manner.

This policy provides the roles, rules, and procedures for management of recommendations in Victoria Police and aims to assist the organisation in its management and acquittal of recommendations.

Contents

Definitions

Contributor – is a person tasked by a Recommendation Owner or a Final Approver to contribute to the work required to manage and/or implement a recommendation.

Final Approver – is the person responsible for nomination of a Recommendation Owner and overseeing whether the implementation of a recommendation is appropriate. The Final Approver is generally a member of Command (for Internal Audits) or Executive Command (for external reviews).

Internal Audit (IA) – is an independent, objective assurance and advisory activity performed by the Risk and Assurance Division (RAD) Central Assurance Team and designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations.

RAD Central Assurance Team – is a work unit established to conduct IAs to meet the requirement of Ministerial Standing Direction 3.2.2 of the Minister for Finance 2018, pursuant to s.8, *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA). The RAD Central Assurance Team is accountable to the Chief Commissioner of Police through the Victoria Police Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

Recommendation Owner – is the person responsible for completing the implementation of a recommendation.

TeamMate+ – is the recommendation tracking system used to manage recommendations that must be recorded (refer to section 3.1 of this policy).

Scope and application

This policy applies to all employees who manage recommendations arising from external reviews and IAs.

Responsibilities and procedures

1. Receipt and allocation of recommendations

1.1 *Recommendations from external agencies*

- Reports containing recommendations from external agencies sent directly to business areas should be recorded on RecFind and forwarded to the Office of the Chief Commissioner (OCCP).
- The OCCP will seek executive direction and advice regarding the report findings and request a position from the relevant business area for accepting or rejecting recommendations.
- The report and associated recommendations will be referred to the relevant member of Executive Command by the OCCP to assume the role of Final Approver. The Final Approver will generally be the Executive Owner of the policy subject.

1.2 *Recommendations from Risk and Assurance Division Central Assurance Team*

- IAs are conducted by the RAD Central Assurance Team in accordance with the audit plan approved by the Executive Command and the ARC.
- A final audit report from an IA should contain:
  - the recommendations
  - allocation of a Recommendation Owner and a Final Approver
  - the timeframes for completion of recommendation implementation.

- Upon receipt of the final audit report, the Final Approver is responsible for ensuring the Recommendation Owner is notified of their role in relation to the recommendations. The Recommendation Owner will generally be the Policy Owner of the policy subject.

2. Acceptance and triage of recommendations

When requested to provide a position for accepting or rejecting recommendations, responsible business areas should consider factors including:

- responsibility for recommendation implementation activities (for external recommendations), including:
    - the most appropriate agency to action the recommendation
    - collaboration with other government agencies
- issue and risk assessment, including:
    - validity of report findings and the extent to which Victoria Police agrees with those findings
    - assessment of underlying risk associated to the findings (refer to Victoria Police Risk Management Framework for guidance)
- recommendation analysis, including:
    - effectiveness of the recommended action to mitigate risk
    - value for money of recommendation action
    - impact of accepting or not accepting the recommendation
    - alignment with government, legislative or organisational requirements
    - internal and/or external changes, including government policy, legislation and operational environment, that have already been achieved that might mitigate against risk
- feasibility assessment, including:
    - funding requirements
    - people and other resource requirements
    - technology requirements
    - training requirements
- timeliness and priority, including:
    - practicability of implementation timeframe (if stated)
    - conflicting or competing priorities.

3. Implementation of recommendations

3.1 *Recording of recommendations*

- Recommendations should be recorded on TeamMate+ as follows:
    - for external reviews, the OCCP will obtain advice from the relevant member of Executive Command to determine if recommendations should be recorded and direct RAD accordingly
    - for IAs, all recommendations must be recorded unless otherwise directed by Executive Command or the ARC.
- The RAD must perform annual reviews of TeamMate+ to ensure recommendations are appropriately recorded and tracked.

3.2 *Progressing of recommendations*

- IA recommendations include specified implementation timeframes agreed to by the Final Approver and RAD.
- Once recommendations have been allocated, they must be implemented in an efficient and timely manner.
- External oversight agencies often do not specify implementation timeframes for their recommendations. Where no implementation timeframes are specified for external recommendations, a default twelve month estimated implementation due date will be applied but can be extended upon request.
- Recommendation Owners can request an extension to the estimated due date from the Final Approver. Any risk associated with the extension of agreed timeframes must be documented and managed by the Recommendation Owner and the Final Approver. A request for extension must be made well in advance of the due date.
- Recommendation Owners are responsible for ensuring recommendations are implemented in accordance with the expectations of the Final Approver.

3.3 *Roles and responsibilities overview*

The following table outlines the various roles and responsibilities to effectively manage recommendations:

Implementation Responsibilities	
Role	**Description**
Final Approver	• Nominates the Recommendation Owner. • Manages agreed dates and implementation timeframes. • Approves any revision to implementation due date. • Ensures the transfer of ownership where a Recommendation Owner has left their position or taken extended leave. • Approves the implementation activities. • Ensures that evidence of recommendation implementation is documented. • Ensures the implementation action, upon completion, was appropriate and adequately addressed the relevant risk.
Recommendation Owner	• Is the action officer nominated by a Final Approver. • Has responsibility to complete a recommendation within timeframes or to advise the Final Approver where timeframes are not achievable. • Provides timely status updates and documents implemented actions on TeamMate+ and the relevant force file.
Contributor	• Nominated by a Recommendation Owner or Final Approver. • Performs recommendation related tasks at the direction of the Recommendation Owner. • Provides timely status updates and documents implemented actions on behalf of the Recommendation Owner.

3.4 *Acquittal of recommendations*

For recommendations from external agencies, the Recommendation Owner and the Final Approver must consider any requirement to report the acquittal of the recommendation. Formal written notification must be made via the Final Approver.

Implemented recommendations

- The Recommendation Owner must submit evidence of action taken (including a force file reference) when seeking to acquit a recommendation. The submission must occur with sufficient time for the Final Approver to consider the submission before the due date.
- The Final Approver must sign off completed recommendations for them to be considered as implemented.
- Partial implementation may occur when the recommendation has not been fully implemented but the Final Approver is of the opinion that actions undertaken have reduced risk to an acceptable level. The Final Approver must document the rationale for their decision.

Not implemented recommendations

- In some circumstances, although the recommendation or agreed management action has not been implemented, the Recommendation Owner may request that the Final Approver consider closing the recommendation on TeamMate+.
- The decision to close the recommendation must be made by the Final Approver and the rationale must be documented in TeamMate+ and the relevant force file.
- Recommendations that have been agreed not to be implemented should be recorded on TeamMate+ as follows:
  - 'no longer applicable' – where the recommendation is no longer relevant
  - 'management accepts risk' – where the risk associated with not implementing the recommendation is accepted by management.

3.5 *Reporting and documentation*

- At a minimum, Recommendation Owners must ensure quarterly status updates and supporting evidence are recorded on TeamMate+.
- Recommendation Owners must ensure detailed documentation of the progress and completion of a recommendation is captured on a relevant force file.

4. Oversight of recommendations

4.1 *Audit and Risk Committee*

The ARC performs an oversight role in the organisation's implementation of audit recommendations.

4.2 *External agencies or oversighting bodies*

Where an external agency requires formal confirmation of the status of a recommendation, the Final Approver is responsible for ensuring any notification requirements are met.

4.3 *Post Implementation Reviews*

- The RAD is responsible for conducting post-implementation reviews (PIRs) as directed by ARC. This generally occurs for all critical and high risk rated recommendations.
- Independent post-implementation reviews of completed recommendations are designed to provide reasonable assurance that actions taken by Recommendation Owners are appropriate.
- Where a PIR identifies that further action may be required, RAD will engage the relevant Final Approver and Recommendation Owner.

4.4 *Committee reporting*

The RAD TeamMate+ Administration Team must support ARC in fulfilling their oversighting role through the provision of status reports.

4.5 *TeamMate+*

The RAD TeamMate+ Administration Team must provide support regarding TeamMate+ to areas who are managing recommendations as per the following:

Support Responsibilities	
Role	**Description**
Implementation Coordinator, RAD	The Implementation Coordinator must: • send status update email notifications at time of reporting • provide policy and system guidance where requested • provide user support and training.
System Administrator, RAD	The System Administrator must: • maintain the recommendation tracking system • develop and maintain system process • develop system report template.

Related documents

- TeamMate+ How-To User Guide
- TeamMate+ User Guide Cheat Sheet

Further advice and information

For further advice and assistance regarding this policy, contact the Risk and Assurance Division, Investment, Governance and Assurance Department.

Update history

DATE UPDATED	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	FORCE FILE NUMBER
16/05/22	Replaces VPMP and VPMG External review or internal audit recommendations	FF-192414
13/12/22	Administrative update to reflect replacement of TeamCentral with TeamMate+.	N/A