

2011-116 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES—Department of General Services' Division of the State Architect

The audit by the Bureau of State Audits will provide independently developed and verified information related to the implementation of the Act by the Division of the State Architect (DSA), and will include, but is not limited to, the following:

Phase One: Construction Oversight and Project Close-out Functions

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. Review and evaluate the management, control, and operational structure of DSA in the areas of construction oversight and project close-out.
3. Determine the effectiveness of DSA's structure in ensuring consistent compliance throughout the State with the Field Act (Act) and the fire and safety provisions of the California building code.
4. Review and evaluate performance measures used by the DSA to measure effectiveness in performing construction oversight and project close-out functions.
5. To the extent possible, determine whether performance measures used by the DSA are consistent with standards or best practices established in the construction planning and oversight community.
6. Review and evaluate the methods used by the DSA to determine appropriate staffing levels and to ensure that staff possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform construction oversight and projection close-out functions.
7. Determine if staff shortages have occurred in the construction oversight and/or project close-out functions and how they were addressed. Further, determine the extent to which staff performing construction oversight and project close-out functions have been shifted to other functions within the DSA, and assess the reasonableness of the criteria used by the DSA to determine if those staff had the requisite knowledge, skill, and ability to perform such other functions.
8. Determine whether, and to what extent, the DSA uses contractors to perform construction oversight and project close-out functions.
9. Review and evaluate DSA processes used to ensure the competency of contractors used in construction oversight and project close-out functions.
10. Review and evaluate the ongoing training requirements for DSA staff and contractors used in construction oversight and project close-out functions.

Determine what DSA processes ensure that staff and contractors meet these training requirements.

11. Determine and assess the adequacy of the processes the DSA uses to monitor staff and contractor performance and to take appropriate action when necessary.
12. Review and evaluate the procedures used by the DSA to ensure that building safety violations are corrected prior to pupil occupancy.
13. Determine if DSA has a backlog in construction oversight or project close-out functions. If there is a backlog, determine how DSA is addressing the backlog in the short term and long term.
14. Determine if there are significant statutory, regulatory, or other impediments to the timely and judicious completion of DSA seismic safety responsibilities under the Act.
15. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the DSA's construction oversight and project close-out functions.

Phase Two: Plan Review Functions

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. Review and evaluate the management, control, and operational structure of the DSA construction plan review process. Determine whether the existing structure provides for efficient service delivery.
3. Describe the policies, procedures, and practices currently used in the plan review process.
4. Determine what processes the DSA uses to ensure its policies and practices for plan review functions are consistently applied in all its offices. Assess whether such processes are effective.
5. Assess whether, and to what extent, the DSA has backlogs in its project plan review functions. If the DSA has a backlog, review and evaluate the DSA's actions to reduce the backlog.
6. Review studies performed in the past year by DSA and the Department of Finance's (Finance) Office of State Audits and Evaluations (OSAE) on DSA's operations and determine the extent to which DSA made any changes as a result of these reviews to improve its operations, including recommendations related to the DSA's fee structure.

7. If the DSA has not done so, determine how changes in key policies and practices since January 2010 at the DSA have measurably impacted operations (e.g., more efficient management of caseload, timely communication with school districts and other stakeholders, and ensuring effective operations throughout the State).
8. Review and evaluate existing DSA performance measures for plan review processes and, to the extent possible, determine whether those performance measures align with industry standards or best practices.
9. Determine if DSA has any plans to modify key policies and practices and what its justification and projected outcomes are for these modifications.
10. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the DSA's plan review function.