

# Appendix C.

## Review of the Safety and Quality Branch

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DHS's Safety and Quality Branch (now the Statewide Quality Branch) was reviewed in 2007 following its relocation to the Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services division, and the appointment of a new director.

The review provided recommendations to DHS about the strategic directions the QSB should pursue and identified organisation resources required to support them.

### Main review findings

Key findings from the review included:

- there was no shared view of the prevailing departmental governance model as it applies to quality and safety
- there were few key performance indicators, with those that exist being process rather than outcome oriented
- there was a lack of clarity between the roles and the responsibilities of the branch and the VQC
- the QSB lacked profile within DHS and had not been closely engaged in contributing to the DHS strategic direction.

### Recommendations

A number of recommendations were made about the QSB, including:

- it be renamed (Statewide Quality and Safety Branch)
- its overarching purpose should be the principal advisor to the Minister for Health and the DHS executive team for statewide policy development, planning, resource allocation and monitoring of performance in relation to the systematic improvement of safety and quality
- the branch's structure should be changed to reflect a higher emphasis on policy, strategy and system building.

The review also recommended the Branch's objectives for the next three to five years should include:

- ensuring that a clear strategic framework for managing safety and quality is in place, is widely communicated and understood, is implemented across DHS and the health services and is influential to Victoria's private and non-government health sector
  - the strategic framework should include:
    - affirmation of the importance of safety and quality to the Victorian government and DHS
    - articulation of the respective roles and linkages between the branch and other relevant divisions, branches and units within DHS, the VQC and other relevant committees and entities and health services
    - a statewide clinical governance framework
    - a strategic plan for safety and quality, including identification of shorter-term priorities, programs and plans
    - an approach to evaluating progress
  - developing and coordinating the implementation of a comprehensive data, information and knowledge management framework for safety and quality in Victoria that is consistent with national strategic directions
  - determining key performance indicators to be included in the annual statement of priorities for public health services
  - focusing only on projects that are statewide in nature, and which can be systematically implemented
  - developing and implementing a systematic approach to engagement and communication with the branch's clinical and non-clinical key stakeholders and the sector more broadly.
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