



AUDIT ST HELENA
External Auditors

Audit St Helena

Strategy and Delivery Plan April 2026 – March 2029

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Endorsed by: Public Accounts Committee

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1. The role of the Chief Auditor and Audit St Helena

The Chief Auditor is the statutory external auditor for St Helena and Ascension and is mandated under the Constitution and applicable law to audit the accounts of government and other statutory bodies in St Helena and Ascension. These audits are undertaken as professional engagements in accordance with auditing standards and extend to:

- Financial audits of published financial statements
- Performance audits of value for money in the use of public resources

The Chief Auditor is able to perform this work through staff employed in Audit St Helena or may engage qualified accountants to perform work on their behalf. The Chief Auditor may also provide audit or accountancy services either to government or other bodies provided that the work will not interfere with their statutory duties.

The Chief Auditor will also discharge other statutory functions including providing advice to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and generally promoting accountability in the public administration in St Helena and Ascension.

2. Strategic Objectives

The work of Audit St Helena directly supports the statutory responsibilities of the Chief Auditor – these being:

- Financial audit of published financial statements under section 29(1) of the Public Finance Ordinance and other laws;
- Performance audit of whether value for money has been achieved in the use of public resources under section 29(2) of the Public Finance Ordinance;
- Advice and support to the PAC under section 111(1)(b) of the Constitution;
- Generally promoting accountability in the public administration of St Helena under section 111(1)(a) of the Constitution.

These statutory objectives directly underpin the National Goal 6: an Effective, Efficient and Accountable Public Sector.

An incremental approach to the development of the Strategic Objectives has been followed for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.1. Developing the audit practice

The previous strategic plan outlined some specific practice development priorities which had identified for implementation and an update is provided as follows:

- **Building sustainable capacity and capability in the audit team** : Development and implementation of the Learning and Development Policy : This developed and implemented in the 2025/26 financial year.
- **Update of the ASH System of Quality Management (SOQM)**: The ASH SOQM was updated in 2025/26 to reflect the requirements of ISQM 2, *Engagement Quality Reviews*.
- **Specific short-term aspect of audit law reform** : Stakeholder Engagement on this objective has begun in the 2025/26 financial year and is now included as an objective to be completed in 2026/27.
- **Embedding our performance audit methodology** : Following the external review of one of our performance audit reports in March 2026 we have identified those areas of our methodology that need improvement. The performance of this objective did start in 2025/26 and will now be completed in 2026/27.

These strategic development priorities are further explained below:

2.1.1. Audit Law Reform

To reform the current audit legislation to meet the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Founding Principles it was previously proposed that section VII of the Public Finance Ordinance be repealed and a dedicated Public Audit Ordinance be introduced for approval by Legislative Council. The proposed reform will enable St Helena to meet the INTOSAI principles and encode the best practice guidance published for the UKOTs. Consequential amendments to the statutory audit provisions in the Constitution were also proposed. The required amendments to the Interpretation Ordinance (updating the definition of an audit and reference to the International Standards of Auditing) and the Special Fund Trading Account (establishing independent financial arrangements for Audit St Helena) have been brought before responsible stakeholders as separate initiatives as part of the wider project.

The 2018 concept paper proposing reform of the audit legislation received full stakeholder support and was assigned high priority for development of an Audit Bill for consultation and implementation. This development priority has been given renewed emphasis in the

current strategic plan. Proposals from AG Chambers have indicated that only limited amendments are needed but these proposed amendments would not fulfil the objectives of the INTOSAI Founding Principles.

2.1.2. Specific short-term aspects of audit law reform

Two specific areas of audit law have been identified for the purposes of progressing amendments to existing law to meet the needs of the audit office and the wider Island:

- Legal Notice 11 of 2013 created the St Helena Audit Service (SHAS) trading account. Section 35 of the Public Finance Ordinance however specifies that revenue associated with audit (or other) services provided to entities outside of Government by SHAS should be credited to the Consolidated Fund. Section 35 of the Public Finance Ordinance is therefore somewhat contradicting the principle of a trading account which is created to collate all expenditure in one pool and finance this expenditure with externally generated revenue. The passing of legislation to amend Section 35 of the Ordinance is thus set as an achievable strategic objective for the 2026/27 financial year.
- The definition of what constitutes an audit is contained in Section 3 of the Interpretation Ordinance and refers to financial thresholds which have not been updated in line with amendments to thresholds contained in the Charities Act (UK) which were amended in 2015.

2.2. Embedding our performance audit methodology





With the recent hire of the PAM the focus will now shift to meeting those objectives in the 2024/25 financial year. Audit St Helena received a new performance audit manual from the UK Overseas Territories Project (UKOTP) in March 2022 in draft format. With the PAM now in post the performance audit manual can now be updated with relevant material from the UKOTP manual. This is set as a development objective for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.3. Update of the ASH System of Quality Management (SOQM)

An external review of the ASH SOQM identified those areas of the SOQM that require further development. The ASH SOQM will be amended and expanded to address the identified areas in need of development in the 2026/27 financial year.

3. Strategic Priorities

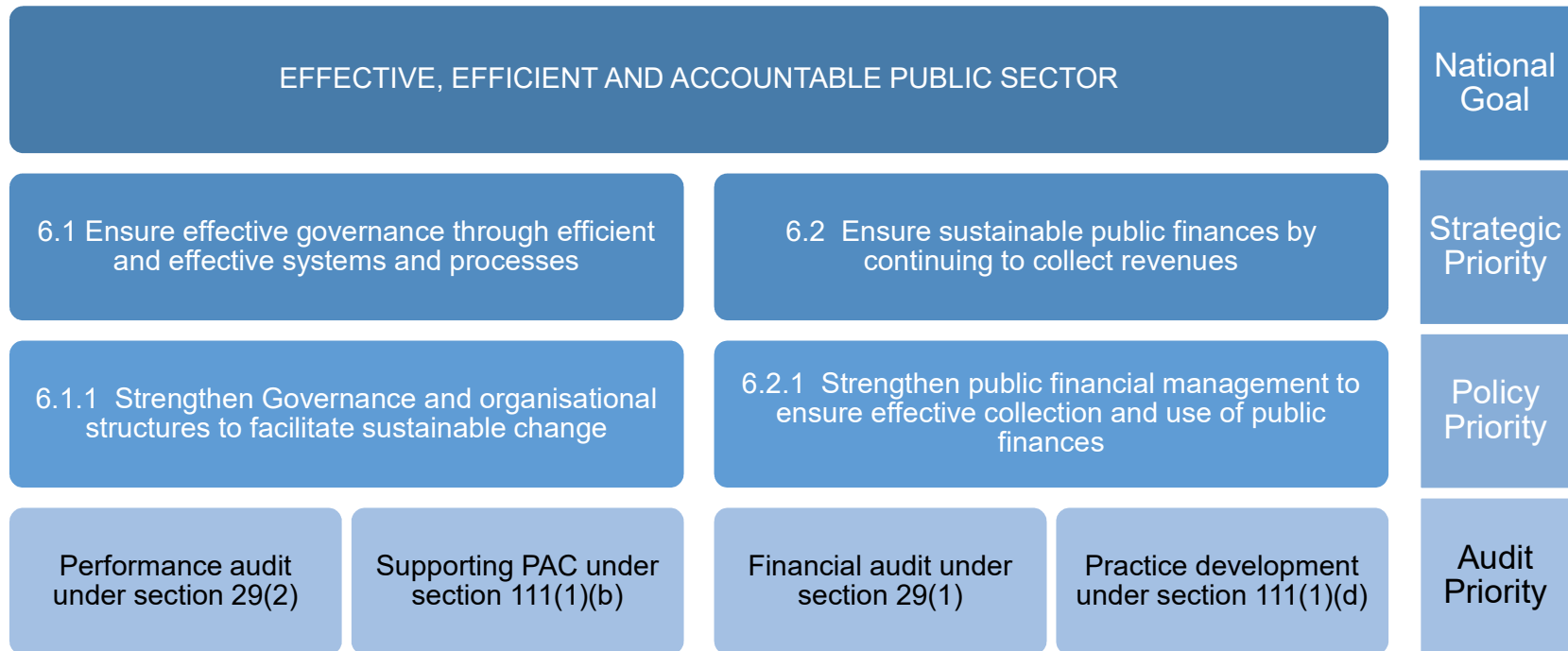
Audit St Helena has four strategic priorities which are directly aligned with the statutory objectives of the Chief Auditor and accordingly will meet the requirements of the stakeholders we serve.

	<p>PRIORITY ONE <i>Financial Audit</i></p>	<p><i>Audit of the financial statements of government and other public bodies in accordance with professional standards.</i></p>
	<p>PRIORITY TWO <i>Performance Audit</i></p>	<p><i>Audit of value for money in the use of public resources under section 29(2) of the Public Finance Ordinance.</i></p>
	<p>PRIORITY THREE <i>Advice to PAC</i></p>	<p><i>Provision of advice and assistance to the PAC under section 111(1) (b) of the Constitution.</i></p>
	<p>PRIORITY FOUR <i>Audit Practice Development</i></p>	<p><i>Institutional development and capacity building within the professional practice.</i></p>

Each of these priorities covers a range of activity by Audit St Helena which is set out in more detail in the Delivery Plan in Section 5.

Figure 1 below shows how the Audit St Helena priorities are also aligned with the Strategic Objectives and Policy Priorities of Government which in turn support the national goal of an Effective, Efficient and Accountable Public Sector.

Figure 1 Contribution of Audit St Helena to National Goals



4. Operational Delivery Plan

The Operational Delivery Plan shows the activities we will deliver across the four strategic priorities identified in section 3.

Audit Engagement	Engagement Manager	Performance Measure	Target		
			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
St Helena Government	Deputy Chief Auditor	Months from year-end to audit completion -	12 ¹	12	12
Ascension Island Government	Deputy Chief Auditor		12 ¹	12	12
Ascension Island Gratuity Trust Fund	Deputy Chief Auditor		12 ²	9	9
Equality and Human Rights Commission	Deputy Chief Auditor		9 ¹	9	9
St Helena Airport Ltd	Financial Audit Manager		6 ¹	6	6
St Helena Hotel Development Ltd	Financial Audit Manager		9 ²	6	6
Enterprise St Helena (ESH)	Deputy Chief Auditor		3		-
St Helena Bulk Fuel Installation	Financial Audit Manager		9 ¹	8	8
St Helena Currency Fund	Financial Audit Manager		9 ¹	9	9
Connect St Helena Limited	Financial Audit Manager		6	6	6

Planned improvements in time period for audit completion are directly dependent upon the timeliness with which entities can prepare draft financial statements and supporting schedules ready for audit.

¹ Audit of 2024/25 financial years.

² Audit of 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

Audit Engagement	Engagement Manager	Performance Measure	Target		
			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Major	Performance Audit Manager	Number of performance audits reported	2	2	2
Standard	Performance Audit Manager		1	1	1
Overview	Performance Audit Manager		1	1	1
Total			4	4	4

The 2025/26 target assumes that the current vacancies at Senior Analyst and Analyst/Assistant Analyst position will be filled during the 2025/26 financial year.

Priority 3: Advice to PAC					
<i>Advice and support to the PAC under section 111(1)(b) of the Constitution</i>					
Action	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Target %		
			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Prepare briefings on matters referred for PAC scrutiny	Deputy Chief Auditor	Timely briefings for each item referred to PAC	100	100	100
Attend PAC meetings and assist with transaction of routine business	Chief Auditor	Attendance by CA or representative at each Committee meeting	100	100	100
Attend PAC formal hearings and assist with PAC reporting to Legislative Council	Chief Auditor	Attendance by CA or representative at each public hearing	100	100	100
Evaluate responses of Government to PAC recommendations	Deputy Chief Auditor	Biannual evaluation prepared for PAC	100	100	100

Priority 4: Practice development					
<i>Institutional development and capacity building within the professional practice</i>					
Action	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Target		
			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Audit law reform	Chief Auditor	Completion of draft audit bill for consideration of Legislative Council	Acceptance of audit law onto legislative programme.	Draft bill in consultation with AG Chambers.	Draft bill enacted into Ordinance.
Specific short-term aspects of audit law reform.	Chief Auditor	Completion of draft audit bill for consideration of Legislative Council.	In consultation with AG Chambers draft bill completed for consideration by new Legislative Council.	Draft bill enacted into Ordinance.	N/A
Audit St Helena Performance Audit Manual updated to reflect current methodologies.	Deputy Chief Auditor with Performance Audit Manager	New methodology embedded across team and applied to audits.	Performance audit manual updated.	Applied to all audits.	Applied to all audits.
Build sustainable capacity and capability in the audit team through development and training strategy.	Deputy Chief Auditor	Implementation of Learning and Development Strategy.	Strategy - applied year 2 and update to strategy	Strategy - applied year 3 and update to strategy.	N/A
Amendment of System of Quality Management (SOQM) to reflect the requirements of ISQM2.	Chief Auditor	Published amended SOQM.	Post implementation updates – year 1.	Post implementation updates – year 2.	N/A

Amendment of SOQM to reflect external review amendments.	Chief Auditor	Amended SOQM.	SOQM Updated.	Post Implementation Updates – Year 1	Post Implementation Updates – Year 2
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5. Financial Estimates

Whilst the constitution provides that the remuneration of the Chief Auditor shall be charged upon the Consolidated Fund the operating costs of Audit St Helena are managed through the Audit St Helena Special Fund Trading Account.

The Special Fund captures the operating expenditure of Audit St Helena balanced by revenues arising from internal recharges and external fees for audit work performed. Accordingly, Audit St Helena does not require direct appropriations from the SHG Consolidated Fund. The Chief Auditor is the Accounting Officer for the Fund and oversight is provided by the Public Accounts Committee which approves the annual budget estimates.

The table below shows the gross revenues for the three-year planning period by main output which are designed to return a break-even trading performance on the Special Fund.

The supporting budgetary estimates are set out in Appendix A.

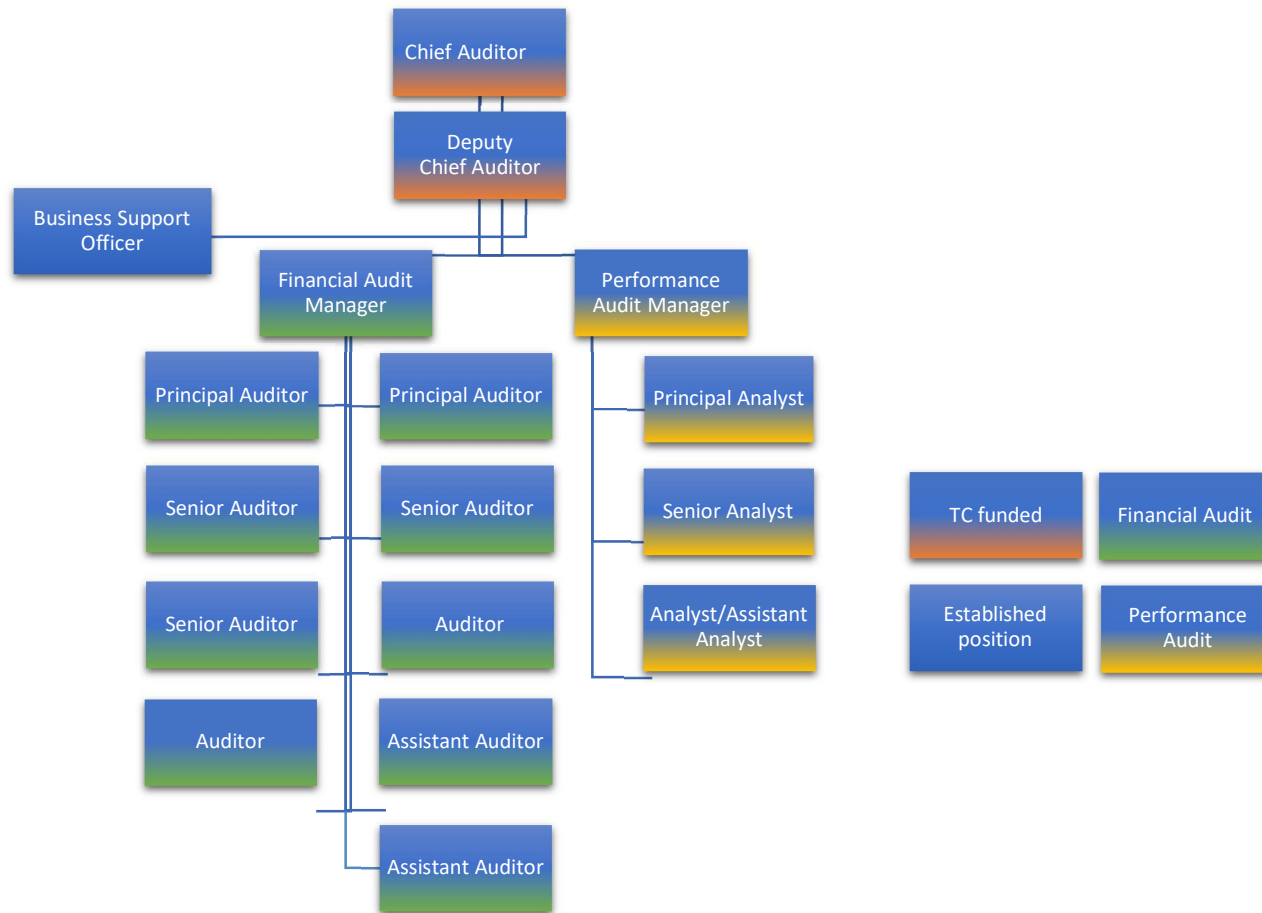
Output	Cost Centre	2024/25 Projected Actual £	2026/27 Estimate £	2027/28 Estimate £	2028/29 Estimate £
Financial Audit	6004	295,700	277,600	284,500	290,600
Performance Audit	6004	110,200	150,600	155,300	160,100
Advice and Assistance	6004	15,000	21,000	21,600	22,400
Total		420,900	449,200	461,400	473,100

6. Workforce Plan

The Chief Auditor recognises that success in delivering their statutory responsibilities, and meeting the strategic policy priorities outlined in this plan, depends on ensuring Audit St Helena has the right number of people, with the right skills, experiences, and competencies, in the right jobs, at the right time.

The team establishment below reflects the current organogram which is planned to increase by 1 post at Assistant Auditor level in the 2026/27 financial year should approval for the establishment of the post be obtained.

Figure 2 Current Audit St Helena Team Establishment



7. Risk Management and Mitigation

The Audit St Helena Risk Register is shown in Appendix B to this Strategy and Delivery Plan.

8. Approval

Estimates of revenue and expenditure for Special Funds, as trading activities, are not required to be appropriated under the Public Finance Ordinance. However, by convention of Legislative Council the forward plans for Audit St Helena and the associated Special Fund budget estimates are reviewed by the Public Accounts Committee.

At its meeting on 27 April 2026:

- 4 members of the PAC endorsed the Strategy and Delivery Plan for Audit St Helena for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29.
- 1 Member did not endorse the plan out of concerns over :
 - the allowances allocated to professionally qualified staff members may not be available to all employees. In response the Chief Auditor committed to rationalising the audit cadre to absorb these allowances into pay grades D and above (i.e. professionally qualified pay grades) to make clearer that these allocations are intended to (1) attract and retain qualified staff and (2) incentivise staff who are not yet qualified to complete the studies necessary to attain qualification. Planned actions by the Chief Auditor would however be subject to approval by Central HR prior to implementation.
- Approved the Audit Special Fund budget estimates at Appendix A to form part of the Saint Helena Government Budget Estimates for 2026/27.

With the agreement of the Chief Auditor, and in the interests of openness and transparency, the Strategy and Estimates are laid at Legislative Council.

Brendon Hunt
Chief Auditor
Audit St Helena

27 April 2026

Audit St Helena Strategic Plan FY 2027 to FY 2029
Appendix A Estimates of Expenditure and Revenue

Cost Centre Name: **Audit St Helena**
 Cost Centre Code: **6004**

Sub-Head No.	Subhead	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
	EMPLOYEE COSTS	347,200	358,200	368,700
021-01103	Salaries	316,800	329,500	341,300
021-01105	Allowances	15,000	13,300	12,000
021-01107	Staff Mileage Allowance	300	300	300
021-01205	Training Expenses	9,400	9,400	9,400
021-01206	Examination Fees	3,200	3,200	3,200
021-01304	Overtime	2,000	2,000	2,000
021-01400	Other Employee Costs	500	500	500
	PROPERTY COSTS	19,800	20,300	21,000
022-02101	Building Maintenance	200	200	200
022-02203	Electricity	5,100	5,200	5,500
022-02302	Rent of Premises	13,200	13,500	13,900
022-02401	Water	900	1,000	1,000
022-02601	Cleaning Materials	400	400	400
	TRANSPORT & PLANT COSTS	0	0	0
023-03501	Vehicle/Plant Hire Charges - Outside SHG	0	0	0
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	17,600	18,100	18,500

Sub-Head No.	Subhead	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
024-04101	Furniture and Equipment	400	400	400
024-04116	Computer Equipment	2,000	2,000	2,000
024-04120	Publicity & Promotional Activities and Materials	500	500	500
024-04301	Uniforms	100	100	100
024-04401	Library Books & materials	500	500	500
024-04403	Computer consumables	0	0	0
024-04407	IT Renewal & Licences	11,000	11,400	11,700
024-04408	Insurance	3,100	3,200	3,300
	ADMINISTRATION COSTS	4,800	4,900	4,900
025-05102	Stationery	800	800	800
025-05105	General Office expenses	400	400	400
025-05201	Postages	200	200	200
025-05202	Local Telephones, Fax and Internet Charges	2,000	2,100	2,100
025-05203	International Telecomms	600	600	600
025-05206	Advertising	400	400	400
025-05300	Bank Charges	400	400	400
	PAYMENT TO OTHER AGENCIES, BODIES OR PERSONS	5,000	5,000	5,000
026-06212	Consultancy Fee	5,000	5,000	5,000
	OTHER EXPENDITURE	4,600	4,700	4,800
027-07112	Subscription to Professional Bodies	3,900	4,000	4,100
027-07128	Accommodation & Travel	400	400	400
027-07139	Service Tax	300	300	300
	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	4,000	4,000	4,000
028-08103	Other Contracts	0	0	0
028-08104	Cleaning Contract	4,000	4,000	4,000
	RECHARGES PAID	46,200	46,200	46,200

Sub-Head No.	Subhead	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
029-09900	Transport	1,600	1,600	1,600
029-09903	IT	44,000	44,000	44,000
029-09904	Customs	600	600	600
029-09905	Other	0	0	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE		449,200	461,400	473,100
FINES & FEES RECEIVED		128,200	130,600	131,900
014-00425	Audit Fees (External Audit)	128,200	130,600	131,900
TOTAL LOCAL REVENUE		128,200	130,600	131,900
RECHARGES RECEIVED		321,000	330,800	341,200
019-00908	Audit	321,000	330,800	341,200
TOTAL REVENUE		449,200	461,400	473,100
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		0	0	0

Audit St Helena Strategic Plan 2026/27
Appendix B Strategic Risk Register

Audit Priority	Risk description	Owner	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	RAG rating	Mitigation
Financial Audit	Failure to identify material misstatements in audited accounts caused by a poor quality and ISA non-compliant audit leading to an inappropriate opinion given by the Chief Auditor.	Chief Auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational damage and a weakened public perception of the Chief Auditor, Audit Office and audited bodies • Financial statements do not present fairly the financial position leading to poor decision making by stakeholders and aid funders FCDO – this may have significant financial and economic impacts • Potential failure to identify material fraud or error across government leading to wastage and less sustainable public finances • Adverse impact on SHG’s investment credit rating leading to adverse economic impact 	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISA compliant audit manual in place, linked to CaseWare audit software requiring audit procedures to be completed and reviewed • Ongoing training of staff to ensure technical knowledge is up to date • Professionally qualified accountants employed, including Chief Auditor, Deputy Chief Auditor and Financial Audit Manager
Performance audit	External publication of poor quality reports, incorrect findings, and factual errors in reports. This in turn may lead to poor recommendations made to SHG.	Chief Auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational damage and a weakened public perception of the Chief Auditor and Audit Office • Inefficiency in SHG caused by inappropriate recommendations being issued • Potential value improvement missed through failure to identify waste and inefficiency in use of public funds 	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened performance audit team with suitably qualified Performance Audit Manager to provide expertise and quality assurance • Quality assurance process updated through the implementation of new performance audit manual,

Audit Priority	Risk description	Owner	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	RAG rating	Mitigation
							including improved engagement and clearance process
Supporting PAC	Poor advice given by the Chief Auditor to PAC, leading to ineffective oversight and scrutiny function and weakened public accountability	Chief Auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective oversight of public finances by elected members • Reduced accountability across government • Reduced overall value for money of public spending 	1	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced Chief Auditor in position supported by well qualified audit staff • Published audit reports referred for PAC scrutiny are of high quality
Practice development	Audit Office lacks capacity to undertake the statutory duties of the Chief Auditor caused by inability to recruit and retain suitable staff as well as poor on-island training facilities	Chief Auditor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public accounts remain unaudited with effects on funding and decision making for public bodies including SHG and AIG • Reduced performance audit output leading to reduced accountability and transparency • Poor quality financial audits leading to impacts outlined in risk 1 • Poor quality performance audits leading to impacts outlined in risk 2 • Practice development priorities unable to be progressed 	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable investment in capacity building and institutional development • Use of fixed-term contractors to fill vacant positions • Use of TC support to fill senior leadership positions including appointment of new Chief Auditor • Training and development of audit team members

Impact rating	Assessment
5 Critical	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities that are of critical importance to the achievement of objectives
4 Major	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities that are likely to have a relatively substantial impact on the ability to meet objectives
3 Moderate	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities that are likely to have a relatively moderate impact on the ability to meet objectives
2 Minor	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities that are likely to have a relatively low impact on the ability to meet objectives
1 Insignificant	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities that are likely to have a relatively negligible impact on the ability to meet objectives

Likelihood rating	Category definition
5 Common	The risk is already occurring, or is likely to occur more than once within the next 12 months
4 Likely	The risk could easily occur, and is likely to occur at least once within the next 12 months
3 Moderate	There is an above average chance that the risk will occur at least once in the next three years
2 Unlikely	The risk occurs infrequently and is unlikely to occur within the next three years
1 Rare	The risk is conceivable but is only likely to occur in extreme circumstances

RAG ratings

Red	15 < 20	High impact and likely to occur without mitigations in place
Amber	10 < 15	Medium impact and likely to occur without mitigations in place
Green	< 10	Low impact and/or unlikely occurrence