
1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Executive Summary

Queensland Health Scientific Services (QHSS) has the potential to play a key role in delivering the Government's Smart State Agenda. However, major reforms are required across many aspects of QHSS's operations for this to be achieved.

The Taskforce is of the view that new executive management arrangements are required to lead QHSS into the future. Change management within QHSS will be an important feature of future reforms.

QHSS does not have well developed corporate governance arrangements. Business planning, financial management, risk management, performance management, and asset management are inadequately developed and applied across the campus. Improved governance arrangements at QHSS need to be established as a priority.

The major focus of QHPSS has been on the hospital environment. Given the diversity of business at QHSS there are insufficient synergies to justify maintaining a reporting relationship with QHPSS.

The Taskforce proposes that QHSS should progress through a phased approach to establish an entity to be known as the Queensland Institute of Forensic and Scientific Services (the Institute). Phase I (to be undertaken over 3 years) would involve the immediate excision of QHSS from QHPSS to create the Institute as a separate entity within Queensland Health (QH).

During this phase, the Institute would examine the establishment of fee-for-service arrangements with government customers to underpin the business focus of the Institute. The Institute also needs to develop full cost pricing policies for all fee-for-service clients and develop clear criteria for undertaking non-core business in such a way that it is not detrimental to core business, and is otherwise of benefit to the Institute.

Also during this phase, a review would be undertaken to determine the most appropriate organisational arrangements and portfolio placement to best position the Institute to achieve the priorities for the Smart State Agenda. This review would determine whether it was more appropriate for the Institute to be placed under the auspices of a department or whether a statutory body model is more appropriate. The outcome of this review would be introduced during Phase II of the reforms.

The Taskforce proposes that a Council be established to provide strategic advice and guidance to Institute management. The Council would be formed at a senior level from Queensland Health (Chair), Queensland Police Service (QPS), Justice and Attorney-General, Premier and Cabinet and Queensland Treasury as well as the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute.

The Taskforce believes there are positive client relationships between QHSS and key clients. Relations with QPS would be strengthened by having a single Service Level Agreement covering all services provided to QPS. The Inter-Departmental Standing Committee on Forensic Sciences (IDSCFS) has demonstrated tangible benefits in terms of inter-agency communication but should have played a much stronger leadership role in addressing the issues facing forensic services across government. The role of the IDSCFS will be superseded by the Council for the Institute, and the IDSCFS abolished.

A new organisational structure is proposed for the Institute (refer Appendix 8). The Institute will be led by a Chief Executive Officer, supported by four laboratory managers, the Chief Pathologist and a Director of Business Services. A position of Chief Scientist will also be created to provide scientific leadership on the campus, including leading the Institute's research agenda, overseeing scientific quality measures, promoting links to tertiary institutions, and overseeing the professional development of Institute scientists. Given the major issues facing Forensic Biology, the area of QHSS responsible for DNA profiling, a re-organisation of the teams in this area is necessary.

The proposed structure is much flatter than the current structure, allowing supervising scientists to return to bench work, and facilitating closer management – staff communications. The structure will also allow scientists to progress to a higher classification level (PO6) before taking on a management role. Institute scientists would become part of a more fluid team who would have the opportunity to move across the Institute according to staff development needs and organisational priorities. A competency-based progression strategy would see the development of competencies, and position descriptions reviewed, for each classification level. This would address perceptions of parity with equivalent positions in other government agencies.

As part of the Government's 2004 election commitments, \$11M in funding was provided over 3 years for DNA profiling and crime scene sample backlogs in QHSS. In 2004/05, \$5M was allocated to QHSS with \$3M allocated to QPS for the ensuing 2 years. The \$3M is now recurrent. However, there is a lack of clarity about whether the funding is intended for DNA profiling only, or the provision of other forensic services. The Taskforce has concluded that QHSS is not in a position to enter into proper fee-for-service arrangements at this time and that the \$3M should be incorporated into the Institute's base funding pending the proposed review of the Institute's fee-for-service arrangements.

Based on current processes and technologies, QHSS has insufficient resources to deal with incoming DNA profiling work. The backlog of DNA profiles has continued to increase during 2004-2005. A current Business Enhancement Project aims to cost current processes and model more efficient DNA profiling processes. The Taskforce proposes that interim additional recurrent funding be urgently provided to QHSS to slow the rate of growth of the backlog, with the need for further recurrent funding to be reviewed following an assessment of the Business Enhancement Project outcomes.

QHSS does not have a clear strategy for dealing with the backlog of DNA samples. QHSS management has set aside \$1.5M from the 2004-2005 election commitment funding for the outsourcing of volume crime samples. However this does not account for the required resourcing to sub-sample exhibits prior to outsourcing (including the cost of consumables), or to manage the results of the outsourced DNA analysis (e.g. loading the results on to the national DNA data-base, checking links and advising QPS investigating officers). In addition, QHSS has no strategy to deal with the backlog of Major Crime cases.

Additional funding will be required to process the Volume Crime and Major Crime backlog. However, QHSS does not have any reliable estimates on the number of crime scene samples in the Volume Crime or Major Crime backlog that need to be processed. As such, this funding should only be provided once an urgent review of all outstanding cases is undertaken to assess the number of samples that require processing. The Taskforce has estimated the funding level that should see the backlog eliminated by mid-2007, consistent with the Government's election commitment to eliminate the backlog in 3 years. However, this will need to be closely monitored by Institute management.

Forensic exhibits are transported by QPS officers to QHSS. There have been protracted delays in QPS transporting forensic items from regional areas due to the irregular availability of transport and other policing priorities. These delays have a negative impact on workload management at QHSS. This problem could be addressed by the use of locked receptacles, and transportation by commercial operators, to deliver unescorted samples for forensic analysis, as successfully occurs in other Australian jurisdictions.

Delays in QPS authorising the destruction of forensic samples has also become a protracted problem for QHSS and created major storage problems. QPS needs to ensure that investigating officers comply with the existing policy requiring notification to QHSS to enable the destruction of samples.

The Taskforce has also made other proposals to improve procedures within QPS and the Institute, and between these agencies, in relation to the processing of crime scene samples.

The recent commencement of additional clandestine drug laboratory scientists, as a result of the election funding, will have an immediate impact on the time it will take to analyse incoming cases. (Clandestine drug laboratories are primarily used to produce methylamphetamine or 'speed'). Up

until recently, courts have been advised that it will take 2 to 2½ years to test a laboratory – this has now been reduced to approximately 12 months. This is a tangible benefit of the Government's funding commitment.

The Taskforce proposes a range of initiatives to address the backlog of clandestine drug laboratory testing and better meet future demand. These include reducing the amount of scientific analysis undertaken by QHSS through improved case management. In addition, legislative amendments are proposed to establish an offence for the possession of precursors and require the defence to state whether they will contest the fact that an illicit drug has been produced. The Taskforce also notes that national developments to restrict access to pseudoephedrine (the main precursor for methylamphetamine production) also have the potential to impact on illicit drug production.

On the assumption of the current number of clandestine drug laboratory seizures continuing, and no benefits from the proposed reforms, the current backlog should be eliminated by early 2008. The Taskforce proposes that two additional scientists be recruited to eliminate the backlog by mid-2007, consistent with the Government's election commitment to eliminate the backlog in 3 years. However, this will need to be closely monitored by Institute management.

There are serious workplace, health and safety issues for QPS and QHSS staff in the handling of clandestine drug laboratories. To better address these risks, the Taskforce proposes that a further two additional scientists be engaged in the Institute to accompany QPS officers at clandestine drug laboratory sites, and that a low-cost sampling facility be constructed at QHSS outside of the main laboratories.

The Taskforce notes that QHSS has reduced turnaround times in the Illicit Drugs and Forensic Toxicology areas, funded in part from the election funding, to a level acceptable to clients.

QHSS and QPS have significantly improved communication in recent years with the establishment of the Forensic Sciences Liaison Unit (FSLU) and the DNA & Forensic Sample Management Unit (QPS). These Units play important roles in prioritising cases for analysis. However the roles of these Units need to be clarified and a protocol developed and communicated to all relevant QPS and Institute staff. Communication between Institute scientists and QPS officers would also be improved by developing agreed terminology for use between the agencies.

Providing up-to-date information on court dates is essential to the efficient prioritisation of cases. Changes to inter-agency communication to improve this information flow are necessary, including placing Forensic Sciences at the Institute within the scope of the Integrated Justice Information Strategy (IJIS) Project.

QHSS has recently undergone two independent quality audits of their facilities. Although the audits were generally favourable, the recommendations for improvement contained in the audits need to be actioned expeditiously.

QHSS is a critical part of the Government's preparedness for a chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) emergency. To address potential workplace, health and safety issues, the Taskforce proposes that a triaging facility for CBR substances be established.

The primary laboratory information system supporting QHSS is AusLab, which was modified from the hospital pathology environment. Although many areas of QHSS are using AusLab, there is widespread concern among QHSS staff with the way in which AusLab was implemented and the loss of functionality with the system. An independent review of the AusLab system needs to be undertaken to determine its suitability to the forensic and public health sciences environments.

Skilled scientists see scientific excellence, including access to research opportunities, as an essential part of a scientific career. Applied research is also essential to on-going improvements in client service. To fully develop as a scientific campus, the Institute needs to substantially enhance its governance arrangements for research and innovation, and link this with staff attraction, development and retention strategies. The governance arrangements also need to include strategies to engage in the development of the proposed National Forensic Innovation Facility.

A competency-based professional development program across all sciences is required, including a requirement for all scientists who are required to attend court to undergo a formal training and accreditation process.

There is a widespread view among QHSS scientists that QHSS receives little or no benefit from the co-location of the National Research Centre for Environmental Toxicology (EnTox) with QHSS. The blurred accountabilities with the joint Director of QHSS and EnTox has exacerbated this problem. It is essential that any future arrangements for research tenants on the Institute campus be governed by a series of key principles ensuring full transparency and accountability, with the arrangement being of mutual benefit to all parties.

There are a range of pressing accommodation and strategic infrastructure needs for the Institute campus. High risk areas identified by the Taskforce include the power supply and air conditioning being at near capacity; deficiencies in laboratory space leading to workplace, health and safety risks; and scope for enhanced security. Professional engineering advice is required as a matter of urgency to prioritise and sequence future infrastructure needs for the Institute.

It is proposed that an Implementation Team based at the Kessels Road campus be established for up to 12 months to implement the approved recommendations. The implementation process will be overseen by the Institute Council.

The funding to implement the above reforms is estimated at \$2.4M recurrent and \$3.9M non-recurrent. Further recurrent funding of up to \$1M will be required for Forensic Biology following the completion of the Business Enhancement Project, and a further amount of up to \$2M non-recurrent will be required for outsourcing of DNA profiles. In addition, approximately \$1.2M recurrent and \$5M non-recurrent may be required to address infrastructure deficiencies once the professional engineering assessment is completed.

1.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Queensland Health:

- (i) Excises Queensland Health Scientific Services from Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services to create an Institute within Queensland Health to be known as the Queensland Institute of Forensic and Scientific Services **immediately**;
- (ii) Appoints a full time Chief Executive Officer for the Institute reporting to a Senior Executive as determined by the Director-General of Queensland Health **immediately**;
- (iii) Ensures appropriate resources from the Office of the Executive Director, Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services are transferred to the Institute by **31 January 2006**;
- (iv) Instructs the Audit and Operational Review Unit to commence an organisational review of the Office of the Executive Director, Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services to ensure the Office's remaining organisational arrangements are appropriate and functional as a consequence of (iii) by **31 January 2006**;
- (v) Establishes a Council of the Institute with the following members (or delegates) by **31 October 2005**;
 - Director-General, Queensland Health, Chair;
 - Commissioner, Queensland Police Service;
 - Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney-General;
 - Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet;
 - Under-Treasurer, Queensland Treasury; and
 - Chief Executive Officer of the Institute.
- (vi) Establishes the role of the Council by **31 October 2005** to:
 - Provide advice and guidance to the Institute Management Team;

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- Ensure inter-agency issues are addressed; and
 - Oversee the implementation of the Ministerial Taskforce's recommendations.
- (vii) In consultation with the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service, transfers the Physical Evidence Unit, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service, the incumbent staff and associated resources to the Institute by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute develops and implements:

- (i) A corporate governance framework including executive committee structures that addresses as a minimum the following by **30 April 2006**;
 - Strategic and business planning;
 - Human resource management and workforce;
 - Financial management;
 - Risk management;
 - Quality management;
 - Research;
 - Capital works and asset management; and
 - Performance management.
- (ii) A communication strategy to ensure that all staff at the Institute are aware of and receive ongoing information concerning the new corporate governance framework and Executive Committee structure by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet commissions a review to determine the most appropriate organisational arrangements and portfolio placement for the Institute having regard to the Government's strategic directions for scientific activities under the Smart State Agenda by **31 January 2007**.

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Implements the new organisational structure as detailed in Appendix 8 **immediately**;
- (ii) Establishes the Executive Management Committee comprising the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute and the seven senior managers by **31 October 2005**; and
- (iii) Develops and implements the competency based progression strategy, including the review of position descriptions by **31 January 2007**.

(Estimated recurrent costs: \$567,000 per annum)

Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Removes from the term "backlog" all cases where no further analysis or reporting requirements can be undertaken at that time by **31 October 2005**;
- (ii) Defines the term "backlog" as being the number of cases not completed within a time agreed with the client by **31 October 2005**; and
- (ii) Ensures that the systems are altered to ensure the appropriate reporting reflects the definitions determined for "backlog" by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 6:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service transfer the \$3M of recurrent election funding from the Queensland Police Service to the Institute for the periods 2005/06 and 2006/07 by **31 October 2005** pending the development of proper fee-for-service arrangements.

Recommendation 7:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute and the Superintendent, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service:

- (i) Review the role of the Forensic Sciences Liaison Unit and the DNA & Forensic Sample Management Unit to ensure they are complementary by **31 January 2006**;
- (ii) Expand the role of the DNA & Forensic Sample Management Unit and Forensic Sciences Liaison Unit to facilitate case conferences under clear guidelines with relevant parties on all major crime and Clandestine Laboratory cases by **31 January 2006**; and
- (iii) Ensure that the DNA and Forensic Sample Management Unit, in conjunction with the Forensic Sciences Liaison Unit, review all outstanding cases and cleanse all backlog data by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 8:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute ensures that when validating future equipment the validation work undertaken by other jurisdictions to introduce equipment and/or automation processes is utilised to minimise validation time whilst maintaining scientific accountability and integrity by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute in consultation with the Superintendent, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service develop standard terminology and statistical counting measures for forensic evidence by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 10:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service reviews the requirement for forensic exhibits to be entered in an Exhibit Register within designated Queensland Police Service forensic property points **immediately**.

Recommendation 11:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service:

- (i) Ensures that forensic exhibits requiring analysis are transported to Queensland Health Scientific Services as soon as possible after collection but no more than 30 days by **30 April 2006**; and
- (ii) Introduces a system for transporting unescorted forensic samples through the use of locked receptacles and commercial transport where appropriate by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 12:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute implements standardised procedures within the Central Property Point by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 13:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service ensures compliance with existing policies in relation to the notification and subsequent destruction of forensic samples by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 14:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute develops and implements a data dictionary of scientific terminology for use by Queensland Police Service staff to enable the ready interpretation of outcomes and results downloaded from AusLab to the Forensic Register by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 15:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute and the Superintendent, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service develop and implement protocols to minimise the duplication of presumptive testing by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 16:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Immediately recruit additional staff in Forensic Biology to meet ongoing service demands by **31 October 2005**;
(Estimated recurrent cost: \$1M)
- (ii) Reassess the sufficiency of (i) above in light of a costing model for DNA processing currently being developed through the Business Enhancement Project by **31 January 2006**;
- (iii) Subject to (ii) above recruit additional staff in Forensic Biology to meet ongoing service demands by **31 January 2006**;
(Estimated recurrent cost: up to \$1M, additional to the \$1M recurrent funding provided from 2005/06)
- (iv) Develop a comprehensive strategy for the processing of the Volume Crime and Major Crime backlog once the prioritisation of samples and data cleansing is completed (Recommendation 7(iii)) by **31 January 2006**; and
(Estimated non-recurrent cost: \$1M in 2005/06, up to an additional \$2M in 2006/07)
- (v) Subject to the above recommendations, develop proposals for the introduction of staggered and/or double shifts by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 17:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Review the terminology used to describe milestones in the analysis process by **31 July 2006**;
- (ii) Ensure administrative staff undertake data input into AusLab wherever this is deemed to be a more efficient and effective use of resources by **31 January 2006**; and
- (iii) Ensure data collection and reporting supports government and management needs and priorities by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 18:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute reviews the outcomes of the Business Enhancement Project and implements a new work group approach in Forensic Biology by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 19:

It is recommended that the Director-General of Queensland Health develops and progresses a paper which proposes that all jurisdictions require name and address to be supplied for the purchase of S3 pseudoephedrine-based pharmaceuticals for consideration by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 20:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, in consultation with the Superintendent, Drug Squad, Queensland Police Service, introduce a case management approach to the analysis of clandestine drug laboratories for a 6 month trial by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 21:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, in consultation with the Superintendent, Drug Squad, Queensland Police Service and the Director of Public Prosecutions, review the effectiveness of the case management arrangements by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 22:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General progress amendments to the *Drugs Misuse Act 1986* to:

- (i) Require the defence to state whether they will contest the fact that methylamphetamine had been produced with the seized equipment by **31 March 2006**;
- (ii) Insert an evidentiary aid to remove the requirement for scientific testing of sealed proprietary pharmaceuticals, unless challenged by the defence by **31 March 2006**; and
- (iii) Clarify that a certificate is admissible as evidence of the identity of the drug even if it does not contain the actual quantity of the dangerous drug analysed by **31 March 2006**.

Recommendation 23:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service introduce a committal mention process for clandestine drug laboratory cases, if this is necessary to effectively implement Recommendation 22(i), by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 24:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General:

- (i) Progress amendments to the *Drugs Misuse Act 1986* (Section 13) to increase the maximum penalty a Magistrate can impose to 3 years by **31 March 2006**; and
- (ii) Examine options for clandestine drug laboratory production offences to be heard summarily, in consultation with the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service and the Director-General, Queensland Health, and report to Cabinet on the outcomes by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 25:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General, in consultation with industry stakeholders, progress amendments to the *Drugs Misuse Regulation 1987* to expand the items listed in Schedule 6 to bring it broadly into line with Category I of the Code of Practice for Supply Diversion into Illicit Drug Manufacture, plus other items from Category II as appropriate by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 26:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General:

- (i) Progress amendments to the *Drugs Misuse Act 1986* by **31 March 2006** and *Drugs Misuse Regulation 1987* by **30 April 2006** to establish an indictable offence for the possession of precursors, and other chemicals, for the production of an illicit drug, with the precursors and other chemicals being prescribed under regulation modelled on the items in Category 1 in the national Code of Practice; and
- (ii) Progress amendments to the *Drugs Misuse Act 1986* by **31 March 2006** and *Drugs Misuse Regulation 1987* by **30 April 2006** so that the seizure of certain combinations of precursors, reagents, apparatus or end-product would be conclusive evidence that production of methylamphetamine had occurred, or was intended, unless evidence is presented to the contrary, or that the possession of such items would be an offence, with a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment.

Recommendation 27:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, in consultation with Superintendent, Drug Squad, Queensland Police Service:

- (i) Establish a team of two forensic scientist positions specialising in clandestine drug laboratory analysis to be on-call at all times to attend call-outs from the Queensland Police Service Illicit Laboratory Investigation Team by **31 July 2006**; and

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- (ii) Develop protocols to clarify which clandestine drug laboratory situations will require a forensic scientist attendance by **31 July 2006**.

(Estimated recurrent cost: \$205,000 per annum)

Recommendation 28:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Queensland Health, in consultation with the Director-General, Department of Industrial Relations, extend the current interim arrangements for payment of overtime to scientists PO4 level and above who are attending illicit clandestine drug laboratory sites **immediately**.

Recommendation 29:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute review these arrangements when the backlog of work is reduced by **31 January 2007**.

Recommendation 30:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute employ two additional staff in Forensic Chemistry to analyse clandestine drug laboratories by **31 January 2006**.

(Estimated recurrent cost: \$133,000 per annum)

Recommendation 31:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Queensland Health:

- (i) Ensures arrangements continue for Forensic Pathologists at the Institute to maintain their professional links with the Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services pathologists by **31 January 2006**;
- (ii) Ensures the continuation of the current Right of Private Practice Arrangements for Forensic Pathologists by **31 January 2006**;
- (iii) Ensures the co-ordination of training for Forensic Pathology Registrars in Anatomical and Forensic Pathology by **31 January 2006**;
- (iv) Ensures the State-wide co-ordination of relief for pathologists who undertake coronial autopsies by **31 January 2006**;
- (v) Reviews the reporting arrangements for non-metropolitan hospital mortuary staff with a view to providing an improved service to the coronial system by **31 July 2006**; and
- (vi) In consultation with the State Coroner, ensures that all persons undertaking autopsies in Queensland Health facilities enter the autopsy results in the AusLab system by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 32:

It is recommended that the Chief Pathologist/Manager, Forensic Pathology develop standards for autopsy and mortuary services in Queensland Health facilities by **31 July 2006**, including:

- Consistent autopsy practices and procedures;
- Consistent training for mortuary staff;
- Appropriate workplace health and safety procedures;
- Appropriate mortuary access and security, and facilities for the observation of autopsies and viewings;
- Mortuary building standards and policies to guide upgrades and new mortuary construction;
- Arrangements to cover for leave and major disasters; and
- Consistent Employment Assistance Service (EAS) support and stress counselling for mortuary staff.

Recommendation 33:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, review the period of retention for specimen tissue and amend the *Coroners Act 2003* accordingly by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 34:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service issue formal advice to police officers that general duties police officers are authorised under the *Coroners Act 2003* to direct a government undertaker to prepare a body for viewing for identification if necessary by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 35:

It is recommended that the Registrar of the State Coroner ensures information about the complaints mechanism in relation to government undertakers is included in its coronial information brochures when re-printed by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 36:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Addresses the shortfalls as highlighted in the existing audit and evaluation reports by **30 April 2006**;
- (ii) Establishes a dedicated Quality Management function within the responsibilities for the Chief Scientist of the Institute by **30 April 2006**;
- (iii) Ensures Opportunity for Quality Improvement processes are completed in a timely manner by appropriate officers by **30 April 2006**; and
- (iv) Ensures all Standard Operating Procedures are regularly updated by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 37:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Establishes a triaging facility for a Chemical, Biological or Radiological emergency by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ii) Provides essential equipment for the triaging function by **31 January 2006**;
(Estimated non-recurrent cost: \$161,000)

Recommendation 38:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Develops and implements a performance reporting system for the Institute by **31 January 2006**;
- (ii) Develops criteria consistent with organisational goals and objectives for non-core business by **31 July 2006**; and
- (iii) Ensures the costing analysis of all laboratory services at the Institute is finalised by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 39:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute develops a single Memorandum of Understanding with Queensland Police Service which incorporates all services provided by the Institute by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 40:

It is recommended that the Director-General of Queensland Health abolishes the Inter-Departmental Standing Committee for Forensic Sciences **immediately**.

Recommendation 41:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General:

- (i) Ensures the Institute's Forensic Sciences is within scope of the Integrated Justice Information Strategy Project by **31 October 2005**;
- (ii) Ensures the Institute is represented on the Integrated Justice Information Strategy Steering Committee by **31 October 2005**; and
- (iii) Provides Queensland-Wide Interlinked Courts System (QWIC) access to all staff members of the Forensic Sciences Liaison Unit excluding Central Property Officers by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 42:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Commissions an independent review of the AusLab system to determine its suitability to a forensic/public health sciences environment by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ii) Negotiates with Department of Justice and Attorney-General appropriate enhancements to the Queensland-Wide Interlinked Courts System (QWIC) which will enable timely access to relevant information for prioritisation of forensic analysis by **31 January 2006**.

(Estimated non-recurrent cost: \$150,000)

Recommendation 43:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Queensland Health gives consideration to realigning the management and ongoing responsibility of the AusLab System and Support Unit to the Information Directorate by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 44:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, in consultation with the Superintendent, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service, ensures that communication protocols are developed between Queensland Police Service and the Institute by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 45:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute, in consultation with the Superintendent of Forensic Services Branch, Queensland Police Service, establishes:

- (i) Information sharing/feedback processes relevant to forensic sciences and the collection of crime scene evidence by **30 April 2006**;
- (ii) Staff exchange and development opportunities by **30 April 2006**; and
- (iii) Partnering forums by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 46:

It is recommended that the Director of Public Prosecutions:

- (i) Establishes a court liaison function for the Brisbane and Ipswich courts to liaise with the Institute on court matters including listings of trial and sentence dates for a 12 month trial by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ii) Subject to the outcome of the trial, continue the court liaison function as an ongoing role by **31 January 2007**.

(Estimated recurrent cost: \$60,000 – recurrent funding subject to outcome of trial)

Recommendation 47:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General explore ways, including legislative amendment if necessary, to ensure that forensic evidence is only given in person if it is in the interests of justice by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 48:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute monitor and evaluate the demand on Institute staff to provide evidence to the Courts and the means by which it is provided by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 49:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute and Senior Executive Director, Resource Management, facilitate a series of workshops to develop a partnering relationship between Shared Service Provider – Corporate and Statewide and the Institute by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 50:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Ensures all recruitment practices are in accordance with corporate policies and procedures **immediately**; and
- (ii) Reviews the arrangements for the temporary employment of staff in the Backlog Project with a view to appointing staff to permanent positions consistent with government policies by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 51:

It is recommended that the Senior Executive Director, Resource Management ensures attention is given to the current issues facing the management of records held at Queensland Health Scientific Services with a view to preparing for the implementation of the Whole-of-Government EDRMS solution by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 52:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute ensures:

- (i) A devolved Cost Centre Financial Management system is introduced in the Institute by **31 January 2006**;
- (ii) Budget development is a consultative process with all managers to ensure budgets are understood and adequately allocated within available funding constraints by **31 January 2006**;
- (iii) Appropriate financial reports sourced from the Decision Support System (DSS) and/or FAMMIS are provided to managers on at least a monthly basis by **31 January 2006**;
- (iv) All managers are given adequate training to access and understand the abovementioned reports by **31 January 2006**; and
- (v) Budget performance is an agenda item for all monthly Executive meetings by **31 October 2005**.

Recommendation 53:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Establishes a dedicated workplace, health and safety function at the Institute by excising resources, in conjunction with Senior Executive Director, Resource Management, from Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services by **31 October 2005**; and
- (ii) Ensures the Director, Business Services takes day to day responsibility for workplace health and safety issues for the Institute, chairs the Workplace Health and Safety Committee and provide monthly reports to the Executive Management Group by **30 April 2006**;

Recommendation 54:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute by **31 January 2006** develops strategies to improve the financial performance of the Food Services with a view to achieving a cost neutral outcome.

(Estimated recurrent savings: \$80,000 per annum)

Recommendation 55:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute reviews:

- (i) The number of Queensland Government plated motor vehicles with a view to rationalisation by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ii) On an annual basis, the home garaging arrangements to ensure an improved operational effectiveness can be demonstrated by **31 January 2006**.

(Estimated recurrent saving: \$25,000 per annum)

Recommendation 56:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Ensures that any future arrangements for research tenants on the Queensland Health Scientific Services campus is governed by a series of key principles **immediately**, i.e.:
 - The arrangement must be of mutual benefit to both parties;
 - In the case of the Institute, the benefits must include genuine joint projects (ie, of mutual benefit); real opportunities to enhance the professional development of the Institute scientists; and the development of opportunities for scientific advancement in areas of interest to the Institute;
 - The terms of the agreement must be transparent with all 'in-kind' costs identified and costed;
 - The arrangements must not detract from the Institute's service provision; and
 - The agreement must align with the Institute's core business and future vision.
- (ii) Undertakes renegotiations in consultation with Queensland Health stakeholders (including Public Health Services representatives), University sector stakeholders and the National Research Centre for Environmental Toxicology (EnTox) with a view to ensuring any ongoing Service Level Agreement in relation to EnTox is compliant with the abovementioned principles by **31 January 2006**.

Recommendation 57:

It is recommended that the Chief Scientist of the Institute develops and implements governance arrangements for research and innovation at the Institute by **31 July 2006** including:

- The development of a strategic plan for research, to govern research priorities and the development of research partnerships;
- Equitable access to research opportunities for scientists across the campus;
- Access to administrative support for scientists in applying for, and managing, research grants;
- Maintenance of links to relevant academic and peer institutions on research issues, including strengthened links in the forensic sciences;
- Clear policies on costings for research applications; and
- Management of funding for all research projects.

(Estimated recurrent cost: \$500,000 per annum)

Recommendation 58:

It is recommended that the Chief Scientist of the Institute include strategies to fully engage in the development of the proposed National Forensic Innovation Facility in the strategic plan for research by **31 July 2006**.

Recommendation 59:

It is recommended that the Chief Scientist of the Institute develop and implement by **31 July 2006**:

- (i) A competency based training program across all sciences in the Institute;
- (ii) A policy for the professional development of the Institute scientists incorporating guidelines for:
 - Attendance at local, national and international conferences and other scientific forums;
 - Undergraduate and graduate work placements within the Institute; and
 - Support for further academic advancement, in line with current Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) policies.
- (iii) A formal training and accreditation process for Institute scientists to give evidence in Court.

Recommendation 60:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Commission professional engineering advice to provide a strategic framework to prioritise and sequence the current and future infrastructure needs of the campus by **31 January 2006**;
- (ii) Cease the existing management proposals to house up to 57 scientists in office/administrative space on Level 1, Block 6 **immediately**;
- (iii) Refurbish the conference room and other nearby reception areas of Level 1, Block 6 as office space for up to 25 scientists from Forensic Biology by **31 January 2006**;
- (iv) Move Forensic Biology scientists from the main DNA laboratory on Level 1, Block 6 to the administration area created above and re-commission the freed up DNA laboratory space for DNA processing as required into the future by **31 January 2006**;
- (v) Re-locate administrative and student areas for EnTox from Level 2, Block 2 to temporary accommodation such as a demountable in the grounds of the campus to free up critical laboratory space by **31 January 2006** ;
- (vi) Move the Information Technology Support Unit on Level 2, Block 2 to an alternative location on the Kessels Road campus by **31 January 2006**;
- (vii) Refurbish the half floor vacated by the movement of the administrative and student clerical areas of EnTox and the Information Technology Support Unit as a laboratory for additional clandestine drug laboratory work and the Analytical Services Unit scientists, Queensland Police Services by **31 January 2006**;
- (viii) Establish a demountable laboratory adjacent to the Kessels Road Police Annex to address Workplace Health & Safety issues with the sampling of Clandestine Drug Laboratories by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ix) Construct an office for the Director of EnTox on Level 2, Block 3 by **31 January 2006**.

(Estimated non-recurrent costs for (ii) – (ix): \$2,427,000. Possible additional recurrent cost: \$1.2M per annum. Possible additional non-recurrent cost: \$5M)

Recommendation 61:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute incorporates best practice strategies into the strategic planning processes for the next 3 – 5 years by **30 April 2006**.

Recommendation 62:

It is recommended that the Director-General of Queensland Health establish an Implementation Team to be based at the Kessels Road campus for up to 12 months **immediately** to:

- (i) Support the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute in implementing recommendations for which the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute is responsible;
- (ii) Proactively monitor the implementation of all recommendations;
- (iii) Co-ordinate all reporting on the Implementation Plan; and
- (iv) Communicate progress in the implementation of the Taskforce's recommendations to Institute staff and key stakeholders.

Recommendation 63:

It is recommended that the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service **immediately**:

- (i) Appoint a senior officer to lead the implementation of the recommendations within the Queensland Police Service and provide reports to the Director of the Implementation Team; and
- (ii) Provide sufficient resourcing for the process of implementing the recommendations pertaining to the Queensland Police Service.

Recommendation 64:

It is recommended that the Director-General, Justice and Attorney-General **immediately**:

- (i) Appoint a senior officer to lead the implementation of the recommendations within Department of Justice and Attorney-General and provide reports to the Director of the Implementation Team; and
- (ii) Provide sufficient resourcing for the process of implementing the recommendations pertaining to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

Recommendation 65:

It is recommended that the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

- (i) Develop and implement a communication strategy to promote the full title of the Kessels Road campus to be known as the "Queensland Institute of Forensic and Scientific Services" with a short title of the "Institute" as deemed necessary by **31 January 2006**; and
- (ii) Re-visit the naming convention for the Kessels Road campus once Knowledge-Based Research and Business buildings are established by **31 December 2007**.