



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For immediate release**

August 28, 2024

#### **Auditor general finds no evidence of a conflict of interest in CleanBC grant program**

VICTORIA – After an independent examination, the Office of the Auditor General has found no evidence of a conflict of interest involving professional services firm MNP’s administration of the Advanced Research and Commercialization (ARC) grant program.

“Our examination was guided by three questions about MNP’s actions. After extensive work, we found no evidence of a conflict of interest in any of the areas that we examined,” Auditor General Michael Pickup said.

The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution on April 8, 2024, directing the auditor general to conduct the examination, with a final report due by Sept. 1.

The resolution followed conflict of interest allegations made by an applicant to the ARC grant program, which includes the Commercial Vehicle Innovation Challenge (CVIC). The allegations suggested MNP was offering to write grant applications in exchange for a “success fee” while also deciding who received grant funding.

MNP has administered the program since 2018, under contract with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation.

The examination found no evidence MNP:

- wrote applications for ARC or CVIC grants;
- influenced ARC or CVIC application evaluations to benefit its clients; or
- used ARC or CVIC information to recruit clients for its other services.

The examination also found the ministry worked to identify conflicts of interest once the allegations arose.

The examination team reviewed and analyzed a significant amount of information from MNP and the ministry. It also reached out to all 99 ARC and CVIC grant applicants.

In its CleanBC plan, the province has committed \$50 million to the ARC program to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and support the zero-emission vehicle sector.

#### **Related links**

[Final Report on the Examination of MNP’s Administration of the Advanced Research and Commercialization Grant Program](#)

[Examination-at-a-glance](#)

[Auditor general’s summary](#) (video)

#### **Photo files**

High-resolution images of Auditor General Michael Pickup: <https://www.oag.bc.ca/media>

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**General questions**

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