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Backgrounder

2005/2006 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General

What does the Office's Annual Report tell you?

The Annual Report explains what the Office achieved during the last fiscal year. These achievements are measured against the performance expectations previously set out in February 2005 (contained in the 2005/06 Service Plan).

Why is this report important?

Our Annual Report provides a primary means of holding the Office accountable. It is a report tabled in the Legislative Assembly and is available to the public either through our website at www.bcauditor.com or by contacting our Office for a printed copy.

We expect that government ministries and organizations report comprehensively on their performance. And, our Office is not an exception to this expectation.

Comprehensive reporting covers a broader expanse than financial information alone. It is a fulsome description that outlines what was spent, and what tangible results were achieved with these dollars, compared to what was planned.

Highlights

Mission

“To serve the people of British Columbia and their elected representatives by providing independent assessments and advice that enhance accountability and performance across the provincial public sector.”

Organization and Budget

- Staffing levels during the year ranged between 80-90 people.

- Audit staff was organized into four sectors: Education, Finance, Health and Social Services and Natural Resources, Environment and Transportation. Corporate Services staff provided Office-wide support e.g. financial management and human resources.
- The Office's 2005/06 actual expenditures were \$10.26 million - funded through \$7.67 million in voted appropriation made by the Legislative Assembly and \$2.59 million in recoveries made by specific government organizations audited.

Performance Information

Financial statement audits

- The Office provided its opinion on the Province's 2004/05 Summary Financial Statements in less than 3 months after fiscal year-end – a major accomplishment given that these are one of the most complex sets of government financial statements in Canada.
- The Office also directly audited 19 government ministries, 29 government organizations and was significantly involved the audits of another 22 government organizations.
- 100% of the legislators surveyed believed in the value of our financial statement audits.

Risk audits

- The Office's recommendations to government organizations for improving performance, resulting from our risk audits, were reviewed and fully endorsed by the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee.
- Three major risk audits were completed that focused on government's corporate accounting system, gaming integrity risks in casinos and management of the Pharmacare program. However, some planned risk audit work was delayed in order to manage priority assignments for the Office that emerged during the year.
- 100% of the legislators surveyed believed in the value of our risk audits.

Performance reporting

- The Office assessed how well government and its organizations had reported on its performance within their Annual Service Plan Reports. However, we did not meet the targets related to how many organizations met the standard of "Fundamentals in Place."
- The Office produced its second review opinion of a public-private sector partnership value-for-money report on the Seas to Sky Highway Improvement Project.
- While 64% of the legislators surveyed believed in the value of our performance management and reporting efforts, we did not meet our target of 93%.

Management of key risks (credibility, independence, relevance, capacity and work environment support)

- At 82%, the Office was very close to meeting its 85% on-time target for completing projects. However, the result of 46% did not meet the 85% on-budget target for projects.

- Audited organizations were generally satisfied with the way audits were conducted.
- 96% of legislators surveyed believed that the Office’s audit opinions/reports were presented in an objective and unbiased manner and 100% believed the topics chosen for risk audits were relevant.
- The Office’s employee engagement score indicated that staff generally believed the Office was a good place to work.

External Audit

- For the first time the Annual Report was audited by an independent external auditor. The audit indicates that the Office’s Annual Report met or exceeded the standard of “Fundamentals in Place” for seven BC Performance Reporting Principles. Only one principle was assessed below that standard and we will working to ensure this standard is reached next year (see External Audit Opinion on p.5).