



News Release

Provincial Auditor

New Provincial Auditor Issues Report

For immediate release

REGINA, JUNE 2, 2011 – Recently appointed Provincial Auditor Bonnie Lysyk today released the first volume of her 2011 Report. The Report highlights recommendations with a focus on the protection of people and the protection of infrastructure.

This report covers work performed on 137 government agencies. “While we have identified a number of areas where improvements are needed, overall we found adequate controls were in place to protect public resources,” said Lysyk.

A few areas where improvements are needed include the following:

- ◆ The Prairie North Regional Health Authority did not have adequate processes to grant medical privileges to physicians working in hospitals. Before physicians can admit patients to hospitals, they must receive medical privileges that specify exactly what medical procedures they are permitted to perform.

The Prairie North Regional Health Authority did not clarify responsibility within the Region for granting medical privileges. It did not obtain all required documents (such as copies of current medical licenses and criminal record checks) before granting medical privileges and it did not conduct appropriate reference checks. The Authority also did not set requirements for physicians doing special procedures or practicing as specialists.

“Although no situations were found where patients were harmed,” Lysyk said, “following accepted protocols for the granting of medical privileges to physicians will help ensure patient care and safety.”

- ◆ While the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing has designed appropriate policies and processes to use in rehabilitating adult offenders in the community, it needs to improve its compliance with such policies and processes. For instance, Lysyk noted that “while frequent contact with skilled probation officers reduces re-offending, we found that a high percentage of offenders did not receive the required amount of contact with their probation officer or alternate.” Lysyk also noted that “the Ministry did not complete offender risk assessments and rehabilitation case plans in a timely way and did not prepare progress reports on adult offenders as often as required.”

Over the last 10 years, about half of sentenced offenders in Saskatchewan were either readmitted to a correctional facility or were given a community service sentence within 24 months.

- ◆ The Ministry of Highways maintains about 800 bridges across Saskatchewan. According to the report, the Ministry needs to set long-term service objectives for bridges and then use those objectives to prioritize maintenance. Lysyk indicated that “doing the right maintenance

at the right time contributes to safety and potentially could reduce long-term costs.” The audit recommends that the Ministry document its bridge maintenance planning processes and overall maintenance plan. The Ministry also needs to keep its computerized bridge management system up-to-date.

- ◆ The Ministry of Government Services provides accommodation to many government agencies. It owns or leases space in buildings in 166 communities across the province. Lysyk’s report found that the Ministry had processes in place to plan accommodation on a building-by-building basis, but it needs to plan for the long-term combined needs of its clients. The Ministry also has more work to do to implement past recommendations on maintaining its buildings.

This report contains the first chapter issued by the office on school divisions. *The Education Act, 1995* was changed effective April 1, 2009 and the Provincial Auditor became responsible to audit school divisions. “School divisions deserve a pat on the back for improvements made in their financial reporting,” said Lysyk. “However, we encourage all school divisions to compare their operations to the recommendations on practices and accountability in this chapter.”

Where the Auditor had identified problems in the past, this report concluded that government agencies were doing a good job of addressing them. Of 46 past recommendations followed-up in this report, 37 have been fully or partially implemented.

This report focuses on government agencies with August 31 and December 31 year ends. Volume 2, to be published later this year, focuses on agencies with March 31 years ends.

The Provincial Audit Office is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Office serves the people of Saskatchewan through the Legislative Assembly by fostering excellence in public sector management and accountability.

-30-

The *2011 Report – Volume 1* is available on the Internet at www.auditor.sk.ca.

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