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News Release

Auditor: Ministry of Justice needs long-term plan to address inmate capacity issues in adult correctional facilities

REGINA, Sask., December 8, 2016 – The Ministry of Justice needs a sustainable long-term plan and strategies to help ensure it provides adequate housing and rehabilitation programming to Saskatchewan's growing inmate population, says Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson in her *2016 Report – Volume 2*, tabled today. In her Report, Ferguson notes that poor facility capacity planning in Saskatchewan's 12 provincial correctional facilities could lead to inefficient use of taxpayers' dollars and overcrowding of the correctional facilities.

Since 2006, Saskatchewan's adult inmate population has grown by 51%, mainly due to a 104% increase in the number of inmates on remand (i.e., inmates awaiting a trial or sentencing by the courts). Holding an inmate on remand is expensive, on average costing nearly double that of a sentenced inmate (each inmate costs an average of \$166 per day). To handle the increased remand population, the Ministry is using, in part, short-term housing measures such as converting rehabilitation program space and visiting areas into living space for inmates. Conversion of rehabilitation program space to living space for inmates on remand shrinks rehabilitation programming available to sentenced inmates. The Ministry risks not having sufficient or suitable rehabilitation space to provide effective rehabilitation programming.

The Ministry was starting to use its recent remand analysis to develop strategies to reduce the inmate on remand population. It recognized that reducing the number of inmates on remand could make more living and programming space available for sentenced inmates. "It is important for the Ministry to look at options that do not involve major construction or renovation of existing facilities, such as diverting lower-risk inmates to community supervision" says Ferguson. "This is a key step in developing a long-term plan."

Having a long-term plan to manage inmate capacity in its correctional facilities would help the Ministry to better plan for the future and ensure it has the right amount of space to provide housing and rehabilitation programming to the province's adult inmates. "Better planning for the future will also help the Ministry to avoid unnecessary construction or operational costs," says Ferguson. "Adequate housing and rehabilitation programming benefits inmates, correctional officers, and ultimately the taxpayers."

Additional issues highlighted in the Provincial Auditor's Report include:

- › Delivering accessible and responsive ambulance services in Cypress Regional Health Authority
- › Delivering English as an Additional Language programming in Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81
- › Providing special needs equipment to persons with disabilities at the Ministry of Health
- › Securing personal information at the Public Employees Benefits Agency
- › Removing historical artifacts at the Western Development Museum

Further details regarding the key topics covered in Volume 2 of the 2016 Report can be found in the accompanying [Backgrounder](#). The full Provincial Auditor's *2016 Report – Volume 2* is available online at www.auditor.sk.ca.



PROVINCIAL AUDITOR
of Saskatchewan

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