



# **News Release**

## **Provincial Auditor**

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### **Auditor's report focuses on protecting people, property, and infrastructure**

For immediate release

REGINA, December 15, 2009—Provincial Auditor Fred Wendel called for improvements in how the Government manages risks to people, property, and infrastructure in the province. The recommendations were included in the Auditor's 2009 Report—Volume 3, released today.

"I continue to be concerned with the protection of children in the care of the Minister of Social Services," said Wendel. The Ministry has introduced some changes, but its processes are still not adequate. "The Ministry continues to not be able to tell us how many children are in care, who they are, and where they live."

Managing environmental risk is crucial for protecting the well-being of citizens and the economic well-being of the province. The Ministry of Environment needs to improve its processes to regulate air emissions and contaminated sites. "We examined these areas in earlier reports and much work remains to be done" said Wendel.

The Auditor's Report describes how public money is at risk because of poor financial controls. "I am very concerned that a number of Government agencies do not follow basic financial controls to safeguard public money," said Wendel. For example, the Ministry of Environment still does not segregate the duties of its employees to reduce the opportunity to commit or conceal fraud. The Ministry has lost significant amounts in past years due to this control deficiency. The Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority still does not promptly reconcile transactions with automated teller machines to its bank accounts. Although an earlier Auditor report had warned of this control issue, SIGA lost \$1.2 million in 2009 because it had not been corrected. According to the Auditor, "These are basic control deficiencies that should be quickly addressed."

The Government uses its infrastructure—including capital assets such as roads, buildings, and equipment—to deliver services. Having the right infrastructure is essential for effective and efficient service delivery. The Ministry of Health uses capital assets worth over \$1 billion to deliver health care. The Ministry needs to have a capital asset plan to help make sure it can deliver the services citizens require. The Ministry also needs a strategic plan and an operational plan to guide its investment in electronic health records.

The Government's information technology infrastructure presents many challenges. "Almost every chapter in my report contains some control deficiency with respect to the computer systems and networks that government agencies use to provide services," said the Auditor. Government agencies did not make sure that:

- Personal information is secure
- Disaster recovery plans are in place
- Information contained in computer systems is accurate
- Access to computer systems and data is properly controlled

The Auditor's 2009 Report—Volume 3 covers 130 government agencies. The rest of the Government's approximately 265 agencies are covered in Volume 1 of the Report, released May 29, 2009. Volume 2, released September 22, 2009, describes the state of the Government's finances.

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The *2009 Report—Volume 3* is available on the Internet at [www.auditor.sk.ca](http://www.auditor.sk.ca).

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