

Main points 278

Introduction 279

 Background 279

Audit conclusion and findings 280

 Monitoring information technology (IT) systems and data 280

**Status of a previous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Public
Accounts** 280

Main points

The Office of the Executive Council (Office) needs to follow its processes for removing unneeded user access to its information technology systems and data.

We also provide an update on the status of an outstanding recommendation made by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) in its 2007 report. The Office should complete the development of systems to measure work performed and results achieved for its key performance measures. The Office has not made any progress on this recommendation.

Introduction

In this chapter, we provide a brief overview of the mandate and spending of the Office of the Executive Council (Office) and set out the results of our March 31, 2010 audit of the Office.

As well, the chapter provides an update on the status of a previous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC).

Background

The Office facilitates and communicates decisions of the Executive Council (Cabinet). The Office:

- ◆ provides research, analysis, and policy advice to Cabinet and its committees
- ◆ coordinates policy development and government communications and manages Cabinet records
- ◆ coordinates, under the direction of the President of the Executive Council (the Premier), all matters involving relationships with other governments

The Office provides support to the Premier in his roles as Head of Government, Chair of Cabinet, and Head of the political party with a mandate to govern.

The Office received appropriations totalling \$13.1 million¹ from the General Revenue Fund in 2009-10 and spent this money on its programs. The Ministry's expenses by major program are as follows:

	<u>Original Estimates</u>	<u>Actual</u>
	(Millions of dollars)	
Central Management and Services	\$ 5.8	\$ 5.1
Premier's Office	0.5	0.5
Cabinet Secretariat and Cabinet Planning	1.5	1.5
Communications Office	1.5	1.4
House Business and Research	0.5	0.4
Members of the Executive Council	0.2	0.2
Intergovernmental Relations	3.1	2.7
	<u>\$ 13.1</u>	<u>\$ 11.8</u>

¹ Appropriations received were for Executive Council and for the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs which was transferred to Executive Council in May 2009.

Audit conclusion and findings

In our opinion, for the year ended March 31, 2010:

- ◆ the Office had adequate rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except for the matter described below
- ◆ the Office complied with authorities governing its activities relating to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing

Monitoring information technology (IT) systems and data

The Office did not follow its established processes for removing unneeded user access to its IT systems and data on a timely basis. The Office removes user access by sending a service request to the Information Technology Office (ITO). The Office has adequate processes for removing user access for individuals who no longer work for the Office or who have changed roles and do not require such access.

However, employees did not always follow the established process. We noted instances where access to the network was not removed promptly. Delays in removing unneeded access increases the risk of inappropriate access and unauthorized changes to the Office's systems and data.

1. **We recommend that the Office of the Executive Council follow its processes for removing unneeded user access to its information technology systems and data promptly.**

Status of a previous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The following exhibit provides an update on a recommendation previously made by PAC that is not yet implemented and is not discussed earlier in this chapter.²

² For the definitions of the key terms used in the exhibit, see Chapter 24 – Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

PAC REPORT YEAR ³	OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
Office of the Executive Council		
2007	PAC concurs: 18-2 that the Office of the Executive Council should complete the development of systems to measure work performed and results achieved for its key performance measures.	Not implemented (as at March 31, 2010). No progress in year.

³ PAC Report Year refers to the year that PAC first made the recommendation in its report to the Legislative Assembly.

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