



News Release

Provincial Auditor

Auditor's Report highlights needed improvements

For release after the Report has been tabled.

REGINA, December 8, 2011 – “The results of our work indicate that Government has more work to do to address issues and improve public services,” noted Provincial Auditor Bonnie Lysyk. The Auditor’s comments accompanied the release of the second volume of her 2011 Report on government agencies. The Report covers 145 government agencies and highlights areas where the Government needs to make improvements.

These areas include:

- ◆ **Ensuring that Legislation, Standards and Policies are Enforced Effectively to Protect the Public**—The Auditor’s Report describes needed improvements in the oversight of municipal policing, caring for children, protecting workers, gas and electrical inspections and regulating the environment. “More attention must be paid to ensuring that the policies, standards and regulations in place to protect Saskatchewan citizens are followed and enforced,” said Lysyk.
- ◆ **Protecting Data and Information**—The Auditor found that many government agencies had security weaknesses or could not be sure that their systems and data would be available in an emergency. The Information Technology Office (ITO), an IT service provider for ministries, has had control weaknesses since the Auditor’s security examinations began in 2006. “The ITO and all government agencies must work more quickly to resolve IT weaknesses,” said Lysyk. The Auditor also reported on risks that need to be considered as a result of the *USA Patriot Act*.
- ◆ **Ensuring there is Transparency in Awarding Contracts**—The Saskatoon Regional Health Authority entered into a sole-sourced agreement to build and operate a healthcare facility at an estimated capital cost of \$27 million. “Neither the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority nor the Ministry of Health could tell us what criteria was used to award the contract or what process was used to determine if other healthcare providers were interested in bidding for the opportunity,” noted Lysyk. The Auditor was also unable to obtain either a cost-benefit analysis or detailed analysis supporting the payments to be made to the private sector company to cover both operating and capital costs.

- ◆ **Planning for and Maintaining Capital Assets**—The Auditor's Report notes that the healthcare system uses over \$1.2 billion of capital assets to deliver care. However, the Ministry of Health does not have a long-term capital asset plan. The Ministry of Health and the regional health authorities need a long-term capital asset plan to reduce the risk that they will not have the capital assets (equipment and buildings) they need to deliver the health care services that citizens require, and to ensure that existing assets are effectively used. As well, the Auditor's Report highlighted that the Ministry of Agriculture needs more information about the condition of its irrigation infrastructure to maintain this infrastructure in good working order.

The Auditor notes that her office did not find significant issues for most of the 145 government agencies it examined. The Auditor also found that many agencies had made progress in implementing past audit recommendations.

-30-

The Office of the Provincial Auditor 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.

Information regarding the Office of the Provincial Auditor, its mandate, work and reports can be found on the Internet at www.auditor.sk.ca.

For more information, contact:

Ms Bonnie Lysyk, MBA, CA
Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan
1500-1920 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3V2

Telephone: (306) 787-6361
Fax: (306) 787-6383
Email: info@auditor.sk.ca