

Chapter 38

Information Technology Office—Measuring Benefits of IT Consolidation

1.0 MAIN POINTS

The Information Technology Office (ITO) of the Ministry of Central Services¹ (Central Services) provides information technology (IT) services to 26 government ministries and agencies (clients). ITO has an agreement with a third-party service provider to operate and maintain a network and data centre on its behalf.

In this chapter, we report that Central Services has addressed both of our recommendations outstanding from our 2009 audit of whether ITO improved IT services through consolidation and provided those services at a lower cost. Central Services has now set out targets for measuring performance of delivering services to its clients and reports monthly on whether those targets have been achieved. Central Services has surveyed its clients to determine levels of satisfaction and has developed some action plans to address the results of the surveys. It has developed processes to track its action plans to ensure that all items have been carried out to improve the services to its clients.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Our *2009 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 7, concluded that due to the absence of reliable performance measures and costs relating to IT services for periods before and after consolidation, we were not able to determine whether ITO had improved IT services through consolidation and provided those services at a lower cost. We made five recommendations.

This is our second follow-up to assess ITO's progress in addressing our recommendations. Our first follow-up was reported in our *2011 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 7, where we found that ITO had met three of the five recommendations but still had work to do on the other two.

To conduct this review, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate Central Services' progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. ITO agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation, Central Services' actions up to August 31, 2013, and the status of the recommendations. We found that Central Services has addressed both recommendations.

¹ Effective May 25, 2012, the Information Technology Office became part of the Ministry of Central Services.



3.1 Ministry Satisfaction Measured

We recommended that the Ministry of Central Services (formerly the Information Technology Office) work with ministries to prepare joint action plans to address issues identified in satisfaction surveys, as required by its service level agreements. (2009 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 1, 2009)

Status – Implemented

To assess its performance, Central Services conducts satisfaction surveys with its clients. After each significant project, it requests its clients to provide feedback by completing a form with several questions. Through the use of this form, any required actions are documented. Central Services also conducts yearly surveys with its clients. The results of the surveys are summarized and presented to management. Central Services has developed processes to ensure that the planned actions are carried out to address the issues identified.

3.2 Service Delivery Measures and Targets Set

We recommended that the Ministry of Central Services (formerly the Information Technology Office) seek mutual agreement with ministries on relevant service delivery measures and targets. (2009 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 1, 2009)

Status – Implemented

The Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that Central Services signs with its clients set out targets related to the level of availability of service that it agrees to provide for all of its clients. The MOUs also set out specific measures for each of its clients based on the individual client's needs. It calls these metrics. The MOUs do not set targets for those client-specific metrics. However, the MOUs refer to a separate document that outlines the services that Central Services can provide to its clients (Service Catalog). This Service Catalog specifies target completion times for services, such as password resets, the addition of new users, and equipment installation. Central Services reports monthly to its clients on how Central Services did in achieving the targets specified in the Service Catalog and in the MOUs.