

Chapter 26

Highways and Infrastructure – Maintaining Highways

1.0 MAIN POINTS

This chapter reports the results of our third follow-up of the one outstanding recommendation we made to the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure (Ministry) related to highways maintenance. By January 31, 2016, the Ministry had addressed the recommendation. The Ministry gives senior management sufficient reports on the results of its maintenance activities.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Highways and Transportation Act, 1997 makes the Ministry responsible for all matters related to highways including the maintenance of provincial highways. The mission of the Ministry is “to provide a safe, reliable transportation system that supports Saskatchewan’s growth economy and quality of life.”¹ Saskatchewan’s road networks consist of about 26,000 kilometres of highways, including about 11,000 kilometres of asphalt concrete pavements, 4,000 kilometres of granular pavements, 5,000 kilometres of thin membrane surface highways, 6,000 kilometres of gravel highways, and 300 kilometres of ice roads.²

In 2010, we assessed the Ministry’s processes to maintain highways. Our *2010 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 7 concluded that the Ministry had adequate processes to maintain highways except for the areas reflected in our four recommendations. By September 2014, the Ministry had implemented three recommendations. One recommendation remained outstanding.

To conduct this review engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the Ministry’s progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the 2010 audit. The Ministry’s management agreed with the criteria in the 2010 audit.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION

This section sets out the recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at January 31, 2016, and the Ministry’s actions up to that date. We found that the Ministry had implemented the outstanding recommendation.

¹ Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, *Annual Report for 2014-15*, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 3.



3.1 Results Monitored

We recommended that senior management of the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure receive a report on the results of the maintenance activities at the end of the maintenance season, as required. (2010 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement November 25, 2010)

Status – Implemented

In the spring of 2015, senior management received reports on the results of maintenance activities carried out in the maintenance season. The maintenance season typically runs from May to October. Those reports included information related to achieving its targets, including status of planned work, and comparison of actual surface conditions to expected conditions.

In addition, each month, relevant senior management discusses the expected maintenance work and any major work changes. Annually, senior management receives a presentation and verbal updates of key differences between annual actual results-to-date and targets.