

ANNUAL INTEGRATED AUDITS

Chapter 1 **Advanced Education**

This chapter reports the results of the 2017-18 annual audits of the Ministry of Advanced Education and its agencies. Advanced Education and its agencies had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except Advanced Education needs to follow Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for the public sector to record, in its financial records, funding under the Strategic Investment Fund. Advanced Education and its agencies complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting and safeguarding public resources. The 2017-18 financial statements of each of the Ministry's agencies are reliable.

Chapter 2 **Carlton Trail College**

Carlton Trail College had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources other than it did not require staff to independently review and approve journal entries. Lack of independent review and approval increases the risk of unauthorized or inaccurate entries made into the accounting records, which could result in decision makers using inaccurate financial information.

In 2017-18, Carlton Trail had reliable financial statements. It also complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting and safeguarding public resources.

Chapter 3 **eHealth Saskatchewan**

Other than in the following areas, eHealth Saskatchewan had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources. eHealth Saskatchewan needs an adequate service-level agreement for the IT services it provides to the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Also, eHealth Saskatchewan needs to continue to work towards having an approved and tested IT disaster recovery plan. Without tested systems, eHealth Saskatchewan may not be able to restore critical systems in the event of a disaster. The health sector relies on these systems to deliver and pay for health services in Saskatchewan.

eHealth Saskatchewan's 2017-18 financial statements were reliable. In addition, eHealth Saskatchewan complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing and investing.

Chapter 4 **Executive Council**

During 2017-18, Executive Council had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources and it complied with authorities governing its activities other than in the following areas.

Executive Council did not sufficiently review its periodic financial reports resulting in a significant error in its financial records. Not detecting and correcting errors in financial records within a



reasonable time may result in management making decisions based on inaccurate financial information.

In addition, Cabinet set remuneration rates for legislative secretaries inconsistent with Board of Internal Economy directives. *The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007* gives the Board of Internal Economy clear authority to set remuneration rates of legislative secretaries through directives, and the Board has done so. Executive Council needs to work with the Board to make sure remuneration rates align with the Board's approved rates. Not operating within laws and directives increases the risk of decreasing public confidence in government.

Chapter 5

Finance

The Ministry of Finance and six of its agencies with March 31 year-ends had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except for the matters related to the Ministry as noted in this chapter and in Chapter 6 for the Public Employees Benefits Agency.

Finance administers resource surcharge revenues. In order to ensure it records these revenues in the proper period, Finance needs to continue developing and implementing models to estimate these revenues reliably.

In addition, to better protect its IT systems and data, Finance needs to:

- Perform regular reviews of its user accounts for its key tax revenue IT system
- Follow its processes to promptly remove unneeded user access to its IT systems and data
- Confirm with one of its IT service providers the expected frequency of disaster recovery testing of Finance's systems and sharing the results of such tests with Finance

We found that Finance provided sufficient public information on the performance of its sinking fund investments. In addition, to facilitate consistent public reporting of losses of public money, Finance amended its directive regarding public reporting of those losses for ministries and Treasury Board Crown Corporations. It communicated its revised directive to other agencies responsible for public reporting of losses (e.g., Ministry of Education).

Finance and six of its agencies with March 31 year-ends complied with financial-related authorities. The six agencies' March 31, 2018 financial statements were reliable.

Chapter 6

Finance – Public Employees Benefits Agency

This chapter reports on a matter identified during our audits of certain pension and benefit plans that the Ministry of Finance—Public Employees Benefits Agency (PEBA) administers.

During 2017-18, PEBA did not have written procedures for verifying the completeness and accuracy of plan participants' data before providing the data to the actuaries.

Providing incomplete or inaccurate plan participant information increases the risk of inaccurate estimates of pension or benefit obligations, which may in turn impact decisions about the funding status of a plan, and accuracy of its financial statements

Chapter 7 Health

The Ministry of Health, six of its agencies, and nine benefit plans reported in this chapter complied with authorities governing their activities. Each of these agencies and benefit plans' 2017-18 financial statements are reliable. The Ministry and the six agencies had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except for the matters related to the Ministry.

The Ministry needs to follow its established procedures for promptly removing unneeded user access to its computer systems and data. Not following the established procedures increases the risk of inappropriate access.

Chapter 8 Highways and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except that Ministry staff did not always ensure unneeded access of former employees to its computer systems was removed promptly. This makes the Ministry's IT data and systems vulnerable to inappropriate access.

During 2017-18, the Ministry and the Transportation Partnerships Fund complied with the authorities governing their activities relating to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

The 2017-18 financial statements of the Transportation Partnerships Fund are reliable.

Chapter 9 Justice and Attorney General – Victim's Fund

In 2017-18, the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General – Victims' Fund did not submit claims for its federal cost-sharing agreements within the deadline dates set out in agreements. Not submitting claims promptly for allowable expenditures incurred under federal cost-sharing agreements results in poor cash management.

In 2017-18, the Fund had reliable financial statements. The Ministry also complied with the authorities governing the Fund's activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

Chapter 10 Justice and Attorney General, and Corrections and Policing

The Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, and their agencies had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except that staff did not always ensure unneeded access of former employees to its computer systems was removed



promptly. Not following these established processes makes the ministries' data and systems vulnerable to inappropriate access.

During 2017-18, the ministries, their agencies, and their special purpose funds complied, in all significant respects, with the authorities governing their activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, spending, revenue raising, borrowing, and investing.

The 2017-18 financial statements of the ministries' agencies and special purpose funds are reliable.

Chapter 11 Northern Municipal Trust Account

Other than the following, the Ministry of Government Relations had effective rules and procedures to safeguard the Northern Municipal Trust Account's public resources. With respect to the Trust Account, the Ministry did not adequately segregate duties of employees responsible for key accounting functions, supervise staff responsible for recording financial information, or prepare timely and accurate bank reconciliations.

Without adequate segregation of duties or supervision of staff, the Ministry faces a higher risk of fraud occurring and of undetected errors in the Trust Account's financial information. In addition, the Ministry risks using inaccurate or incomplete financial information to make decisions and monitor the Trust Account's operations.

The Ministry gave the Legislative Assembly the Trust Account's 2015, 2016, and 2017 annual reports later than timeframes set in *The Executive Government Administration Act*. This was due, in part, to the accounting issues identified above. Not tabling the Trust Account's annual report within the timeframes set in legislation increases the risk that legislators do not have sufficient information to monitor the Trust Account's operations.

The Trust Account's 2017 financial statements are reliable.

Chapter 12 Public Service Commission

In 2017-18, the Public Service Commission had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources and complied with authorities governing its activities other than it needs to consistently and promptly remove unneeded user access to its IT systems.

Chapter 13 Saskatchewan Arts Board

Saskatchewan Arts Board's 2017-18 financial statements are reliable. In 2017-18, Saskatchewan Arts Board complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting and safeguarding public resources.

The Arts Board had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except that it did not have written management-approved guidance for staff to follow for accounting for and payment of grants. Not having written guidance for accounting for grants increases the risk of accounting for grants incorrectly or inconsistently.

In addition, the Arts Board improved its processes to make grant payments. During 2017-18, management received approval for grant payments from the Board of Directors before making grant payments.

Chapter 14 Saskatchewan Health Authority

This chapter reports the results of the first annual audit of Saskatchewan Health Authority.

During 2017-18, the Saskatchewan Health Authority was established pursuant to *The Provincial Health Authority Act*. All assets, liabilities, rights, and obligations of the 12 former regional health authorities were assumed, through the amalgamation, by the Saskatchewan Health Authority. The Saskatchewan Health Authority is responsible for the planning, organization, delivery, and evaluation of the health services system for the entire province.

In 2017-18, the Authority signed an interim operating agreement with its IT service provider, eHealth Saskatchewan. The agreement does not outline what type of services must be provided and when, or include security and disaster requirements. Without an adequate service-level agreement, there is a risk that eHealth is not meeting the Authority's IT needs.

The 2017-18 financial statements of the Saskatchewan Health Authority were reliable. In addition, the Authority complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

Chapter 15 Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc.

During 2017-18, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc. (SIGA) had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources other than it needs to better protect its IT systems and data by periodically reviewing user access to them. Lack of regular and timely reviews of IT user access increases the risk of unauthorized access to and inappropriate modifications of systems and data.

SIGA complied with the authorities governing its financial-related activities and its 2017-18 financial statements are reliable.

Chapter 16 Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

During 2017-18, the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources other than management needs to review, in detail, quarterly and year-end financial information.

The Authority did not adequately review detailed support for financial transactions. As a result, the draft financial statements and supporting information presented for audit contained numerous inaccuracies. For example, the draft financial statements did not always match supporting documentation, and incorrectly accounted for certain transactions.

The Authority implemented, in 2017-18, two of our prior recommendations. It prepared and approved monthly bank reconciliations timely and accurately. The Authority also completed its procedures for responding to IT security incidents.



The 2017-18 financial statements of the Authority and its wholly owned subsidiary, SLGA Retail Inc., are reliable. Also, the Authority and SLGA Retail Inc. complied with the authorities governing their activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

Chapter 17 Social Services

This chapter reports the results of our annual audit of the Ministry of Social Services and its three special purpose funds for the year ended March 31, 2018.

The Ministry complied with authorities governing its activities and had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources other than it needs to:

- Have an effective process to identify and disclose contractual obligations it expects to pay in the future
- Properly support and approve social assistance payments to ensure eligible clients receive the correct amount of assistance
- Receive and review performance reports from third-party service providers timely

Each fund complied with authorities governing their activities and their 2017-18 financial statements are reliable.

Chapter 18 Teacher's Superannuation Commission – Teacher's Dental Plan

This chapter reports the results of the annual audit of the Teachers' Dental Plan for the year ended June 30, 2018.

The Teachers' Superannuation Commission had effective rules and procedures to safeguard the Plan's public resources other than it needs to reconcile dental claims approved to dental claims paid, and to prepare financial statements for the Plan.

During the year, the Commission complied with authorities governing the Plan's activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

Chapter 19 Water Security Agency

Other than the need for a complete and tested business continuity plan, the Water Security Agency had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources as at March 31, 2018. The Agency's 2017-18 financial statements are reliable; it complied with authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.

Without a complete and tested business continuity plan, the Agency may not be able to effectively monitor water quality or water levels throughout the province if its IT systems and data are unavailable.

Chapter 20

Summary of Implemented Recommendations

This chapter provides an update on recommendations related to our annual integrated audits or IT audits that were implemented and are not discussed elsewhere in the Integrated Audits Section of this Report.

PERFORMANCE AUDITS

Chapter 21

Carlton Trail College – Equipping the Board with Competencies to Govern

In order for a board to be effective, it needs to possess or obtain a collective set of competencies.

Carlton Trail College had effective processes, other than the three following areas, to equip its Board with the necessary competencies to govern. The Board of the College needs to decide how often to reassess desired and existing board competencies and evaluate the effectiveness of its board governance. It needs to identify when other methods such as training and using external expertise would assist in addressing these competency gaps. Carlton Trail College also needs to develop guidance on making timely recommendations of potential board members to the Ministry of Advanced Education. This would enable the Ministry to recommend members for vacant positions to Cabinet whose expertise would fill identified gaps sooner.

Not being aware of gaps in board competencies and not addressing them increases the risk of weakened or ineffective board governance.

Chapter 22

Saskatchewan Arts Board – Awarding Grants Impartially and Transparently

One way the Saskatchewan Arts Board supports the arts in Saskatchewan is through awarding grants to professional artists, professional arts organizations, and communities. It awards between \$6 million and \$8 million in grants each year.

The Arts Board had, other than the following areas, effective processes to award grants impartially and transparently for the 18-month period ended June 30, 2018.

To improve impartiality, the Arts Board needs to obtain signed agreements from peer evaluators before it gives them grant application packages, and record the time of conflict of interest absences in its meeting minutes. This decreases the risk of potential disclosure of confidential information, and better shows appropriate handling of declared conflicts.

To improve transparency, the Arts Board needs to:

- Set the frequency of its formal reviews of major grant programs, and track the receipt and resolution of complaints. Tracking of complaints enables identifying common themes to consider when reviewing and updating grant programs.



- Document how its uses and selects independent assessors (type of peer evaluators used for unique genres of art), and develop detailed written guidance on scoring grant applications. This promotes openness of the Arts Board processes to award grants and assists in scoring applications equitably and transparently.

Chapter 23

Saskatchewan Health Authority – Analyzing Surgical Biopsies in Regina and Saskatoon Labs Efficiently

This chapter sets out the results of our audit of the processes that the Saskatchewan Health Authority had to analyze surgical biopsies efficiently at the Regina and Saskatoon labs. A surgical biopsy analysis request from a healthcare provider is considered one patient case, which can comprise multiple specimens. The labs located in Saskatoon and Regina each analyze over 150,000 specimens, or about 45,000 cases, per year. Saskatoon took an average 12.1 days in 2017-18 to provide a surgical biopsy diagnosis report; Regina took an average 18.7 days in 2017-18.

For the 12-month period ended July 15, 2018, the Saskatchewan Health Authority had, other than in the following areas, effective processes to analyze surgical biopsies efficiently in laboratories located in Regina and Saskatoon. The Authority needs to:

- Have a consistent approach for prioritizing surgical biopsy specimens, and have consistent turnaround times for issuing diagnosis reports. Not being consistent across the province could lead to some patients and healthcare providers having to wait longer for their diagnosis than others, and delayed care for patients.
- Assess whether each lab should continue to be accredited under different accreditation bodies. Using different accreditation bodies may result in unnecessary costs and variations in lab operating practices.
- Establish an agreement with the Office of the Chief Coroner regarding the services the labs provide for forensic autopsies. Not having an agreement can create confusion for staff when prioritizing workloads.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of electronically tracking specimens to better understand potential delays in the biopsy analysis process. The labs track a specimen through a manual process, which increases the risk of the labs losing or misidentifying a specimen.
- Educate healthcare providers about how to properly complete a surgical biopsy requisition. Incomplete requisitions can create delays in the lab reporting diagnosis results, and thus delay treatment for the patient.
- Regularly document preventative maintenance completed on surgical biopsy equipment.

Lack of effective processes for performing timely analysis of biopsies affects the Authority's ability to provide timely diagnosis and treatment options. Delayed treatment may result in loss of public confidence in the healthcare system, and reduced quality of life and/or the probability of survival for the patient.

Chapter 24**Saskatchewan Health Authority – Preventing and Controlling Hospital acquired Infections in the Regina General Hospital and Pasqua Hospital**

This chapter sets out the results of our audit of the processes that the Saskatchewan Health Authority used to prevent and control hospital-acquired infections in the Regina General Hospital and Pasqua Hospital.

Infections acquired in hospitals can extend a patient's hospital stay and may lead to increased complications and costs for treatments. The Saskatchewan Health Authority is responsible for keeping patients safe.

For the 12-month period ended August 31, 2018, the Saskatchewan Health Authority had, other than the following, effective processes to prevent and control hospital-acquired infections in the Regina General Hospital and Pasqua Hospital. The Authority needs to:

- Use external observers to conduct regular blind hand hygiene compliance audits and actively monitor the patient-care units with lower than acceptable hand hygiene compliance rates. This would give the Authority better information about the use of hand hygiene practices. It would also help the Authority take sufficient and timely action to improve hand hygiene practices of staff, and in turn reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections.
- Provide staff responsible for patient care with formal periodic refresher training on infection prevention and control practices. Periodic training would reinforce to staff the importance of strong infection prevention and control practices. This, in turn, can help reduce inappropriate practices that increase the risk of transmitting an infection to patients or staff.
- Regularly give senior management a written analysis of emerging risks and causes based on trends of hospital-acquired infections. This would help the Authority identify hospitals and units therein with higher-than-normal rates of hospital-acquired infections and help them improve their practices.

Chapter 25**SaskPower – Maintaining Above-Ground Distribution Assets**

Both industry and households rely on the availability of power. Power helps us communicate, heat our homes, cook our food, and enjoy technology. Power is also critical to economic growth and security.

SaskPower maintains one of the largest electricity transmission and distribution systems in Canada. Effective maintenance is key to providing customers with a safe, reliable source of power. It reduces the risk of unplanned power outages, higher costs of supplying power, or power blackouts during peak times.

This chapter reports on the results of our audit of SaskPower's processes to maintain above-ground assets used to distribute electricity. Above-ground assets used to distribute electricity include wood poles, power line conductors, voltage regulators, reclosers, overhead switches,



poletop transformers, and capacitor banks.¹ In this report, we refer to these assets as above-ground distribution assets.

SaskPower's processes to maintain its most significant above-ground distribution asset, wood poles, were more mature than its processes for its other above-ground distribution assets. This experience may help it to improve processes for maintaining its other above-ground distribution assets. To improve its maintenance processes for those other assets, SaskPower needs to:

- Complete formal risk assessments to support its strategies for inspections and preventative maintenance. Formal evidence-based risk assessments would help SaskPower determine the optimal type and timing of maintenance.
- Gather complete information about asset condition needed for risk-informed asset planning. Such information would help SaskPower focus its resources on assets with the highest risk of significant failure, or posing the greatest safety risks.
- Formally prioritize maintenance to support a risk-informed allocation of resources over the longer term. Prioritizing would help SaskPower use its maintenance resources wisely by scheduling the right maintenance at the optimal time.
- Formally determine the consequences of not maintaining assets as planned, and report them regularly to senior management. Knowing the consequences of deferring maintenance would help SaskPower assess the risks of asset failure and safety incidents, and anticipate increased costs.

Chapter 26

Social Services – Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect

This chapter sets out the results of our audit of whether the Ministry of Social Services had effective processes to investigate, within a reasonable timeframe, allegations of child abuse and neglect.

Child abuse and neglect refers to circumstances that may be harmful to a child's physical, emotional, or psychological health (e.g., physical abuse, sexual abuse). Neglect is also failing to provide a child with enough food, proper clothing, shelter, health care, or supervision.² In 2017-18, the Ministry received about 15,300 reports of alleged child abuse and neglect. Over 6,000 of these reports resulted in investigations. Timely investigation of allegations of child abuse and neglect is critical to protect the safety of children.

For the 12-month period ended June 30, 2018, the Ministry had, other than the following, effective processes to investigate, within a reasonable timeframe, allegations of child abuse and neglect. The Ministry needs to:

- Undertake timely independent reviews of screening decisions when it decides not to investigate a reported child abuse and neglect allegation. This would help the Ministry confirm that appropriate and objective decisions were made and it takes timely action.
- Complete safety and family risk assessments within required timeframes. Timely safety assessments reduce the risk of a child remaining in an unsafe environment. Timely family risk assessments reduce the risk of the family not receiving ongoing

¹ Above-ground assets to distribute electricity do not include power substations or streetlights and related assets that SaskPower is responsible for maintaining.

² www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/justice-crime-and-the-law/child-protection/child-abuse-and-neglect (25 April 2018).

child protection services when there is a high likelihood that the family will maltreat their child in the future.

- Finalize investigation decisions within required timeframes (45 days) to allow for timely supervisor review. Timely supervisor review results in timely ongoing child protection services to children and their families, when needed.

AUDIT FOLLOW UPS

Chapter 27 Advanced Education – Approving Capital Projects

By August 2018, the Ministry of Advanced Education implemented a recommendation we made in 2016 related to its processes to approve capital projects. In August 2018, the Ministry gave post-secondary institutions feedback about unapproved requests for funding for capital projects related to the 2018-19 budget cycle. In addition, the Ministry drafted a process to provide post-secondary institutions with annual feedback as part of its infrastructure planning cycle.

Chapter 28 Central Services – Web Application Security Requirements

Web applications may allow attackers to access and corrupt confidential government information or interrupt government services if not appropriately secured.

By June 2018, the Ministry of Central Services had made some improvements to better support the development and operation of secure government ministry web applications. It had addressed two of four recommendations we made in our 2016 audit related to web application security requirements. It was making progress on the other two recommendations.

Central Services was tracking key information about ministry web applications and had begun to assess web applications for security vulnerabilities. While it had started updating security-focused web application procedures and guidelines, further guidance was needed for prioritizing work to address identified high-risk vulnerabilities on a timely basis.

Addressing high-risk vulnerabilities in web applications helps minimize the risk of a breach of government information in the web applications, as well as in other applications and data that Central Services hosts in the data centre.

Chapter 29 Corrections and Policing – Planning for Inmate Capacity in Correctional Facilities

By July 2018, the Ministry of Corrections and Policing implemented three of the six recommendations we made in our 2016 audit of its processes to plan for inmate capacity of its adult correctional facilities. It partially implemented another recommendation and did not implement the other two recommendations.

The Ministry established written guidance for use in planning capacity, completed an analysis of alternatives to meet the needs for facility space, and updated written contingency plans to meet unexpected changes in capacity.



The Ministry continues to work to define how it will determine the facilities' inmate capacity, forecast demand for rehabilitation program space, and develop a written long-term plan to manage inmate capacity.

Having strong processes for facility capacity planning is key to correctional facilities having safe or humane conditions for inmates and correctional officers, and effective rehabilitation of inmates. It also helps avoid inefficient use of public funds or operating over the capacity of the correctional facilities.

Chapter 30

Corrections and Policing – Rehabilitating Adults Inmates

By October 2018, the Ministry made little progress towards implementing the three remaining recommendations we first made in our 2008 audit regarding rehabilitating adult inmates.

The Ministry did not effectively monitor the proportion of inmates accessing planned rehabilitation programs, or the re-offence rates in relation to rehabilitation programs. The Ministry also did not consistently follow its policy surrounding assessment of inmates' needs, and did not always provide inmates with relevant rehabilitation programs consistent with those assessments. For almost one-quarter of the inmate case files we tested, correctional facilities did not provide inmates with relevant rehabilitation programming before their release into the community.

At October 2018, the Ministry was evaluating changes to its risk assessment and case management processes, with a goal towards improving how it addresses inmates' needs.

Research indicates that inmates receiving treatment in rehabilitation programs have lower re-offending rates than offenders who do not receive treatment.³ Rehabilitated inmates have more opportunities to return to work and contribute to their community.

Chapter 31

Environment – Preventing the Entry and Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species in Saskatchewan

By June 2018, the Ministry of Environment had implemented one of the five recommendations made in our 2016 audit related to the processes to prevent entry or spread of aquatic invasive species (other than aquatic invasive plants) in Saskatchewan. It, along with key partners, developed a long-term aquatic invasive species strategy to prevent the entry and spread of aquatic invasive species in Saskatchewan. In addition, it developed a communications strategy.

The Ministry's development of these strategies is a foundational step towards implementing the remaining four recommendations. The strategies will help Environment to formalize risk-based watercraft inspection strategies and for sampling waterbodies, complete and test a rapid response plan designed to reduce the impact and spread of identified aquatic invasive species (if any), and assess the effectiveness of its aquatic invasive species public education and awareness campaign.

³ www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/prnpls-rhbltn/index-en.aspx (9 October 2018).

Chapter 32

Finance – Public Employees Benefits Agency – Securing Personal Information

The Ministry of Finance, through its Public Employees Benefits Agency (PEBA), implemented the two outstanding recommendations from our 2016 audit related to its processes to secure personal information.

It made procedures used to secure personal information readily accessible to its staff and implemented a policy requiring periodic update of its non-IT policies used to secure personal information.

Chapter 33

Global Transportation Hub Authority – Acquiring Land from the Private Sector

By June 2018, the Global Transportation Hub Authority improved its processes to acquire land from the private sector by implementing both recommendations we made in 2016.

The Authority implemented a policy to establish a structured approach when conducting due diligence for deciding whether to buy land and other significant new initiatives. Management prepared business cases to support decisions concerning significant new initiatives, and established processes to review and assess land appraisals when acquiring land from the private sector.

Chapter 34

Gradworks Inc. – Achieving Intern Development Program Goals

Gradworks Inc., a non-profit corporation established by the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan (CIC), was responsible for the Gradworks Intern Development Program. The Intern Program provided recent post-secondary graduates with employment experiences through paid internships with CIC, CIC Crown corporations, and their subsidiaries. CIC discontinued the Gradworks Intern Development Program in 2017, and formally dissolved Gradworks Inc. on March 31, 2018.

In 2015, we audited Gradworks’ processes to achieve the Intern Program goals. We concluded it had effective processes except for the areas of our four recommendations as described in **Figure 1**.

Due to CIC discontinuing the Intern Program and dissolving Gradworks Inc., we determined that the recommendations described in **Figure 1** are no longer relevant.

Figure 1 – Prior Recommendations Related to Gradworks Inc. as Reported in Our 2016 Report – Volume 1, Chapter 9

Past Recommendation (Initial PAS Report, Date of Agreement of CCAC) ^A	Current Status
We recommended that Gradworks Inc. communicate, in writing, to partner employers its expectations related to achievement of diversity targets for the Gradworks Intern Development Program. (2016 Report – Volume 1; Crown and Central Agencies Committee agreement December 1, 2016)	No Longer Relevant (as of March 31, 2018)
We recommended that Gradworks Inc. verify the educational eligibility criteria of applicants for its Gradworks Intern Development Program prior	



Past Recommendation (Initial PAS Report, Date of Agreement of CCAC) ^A	Current Status
to the internship start date. (2016 Report – Volume 1; Crown and Central Agencies Committee agreement December 1, 2016)	
We recommended that Gradworks Inc., at least annually, publish information on key actual results compared to planned (i.e., targets) for the Gradworks Intern Development Program. (2016 Report – Volume 1; Crown and Central Agencies Committee agreement December 1, 2016)	
We recommended that Gradworks Inc., at least annually, provide partner employers with information on key performance measures, targets, and actual results for the Gradworks Intern Development Program. (2016 Report – Volume 1; Crown and Central Agencies Committee agreement December 1, 2016)	

^APAS = Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan
 CCAC = Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Chapter 35 Highways and Infrastructure – Acquiring Land for the Regina Bypass

From time to time, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure acquires land for the construction of public improvement projects as part of its responsibility for highways, public improvements, transportation, and transportation systems.^{4, 5}

By August 2018, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure improved its processes to acquire land for public improvement projects by implementing all eight recommendations we made in 2016.

The Ministry acquired all land necessary for the Regina Bypass by January 1, 2017. For this audit work, we examined land acquisitions after January 1, 2017, made for other public improvement projects.

The Ministry adjusted its planning processes to determine planned routes for projects in a timelier manner, enabling it to identify land requirements earlier during the projects. We found the Ministry used a land protection technique to protect land it required for projects from being developed. The Ministry also developed a model to assist in determining the appropriate time for the Ministry to acquire land, including the consideration of changes to future land values.

In addition, Ministry staff responsible for acquiring land periodically documented conflicts of interest. The Ministry clearly documented its review of appraisal reports used to acquire land. It consistently followed its policy of paying permanent damages for partial takings of agricultural land, and kept sufficient supporting documentation for amounts paid. Also, it followed its delegation of authority for reviewing draft land purchase offers, and executing land purchase agreements.

Furthermore, the Ministry gave landowners additional information to help them understand their property rights and how it determines compensation when acquiring land.

⁴ *The Highways and Transportation Act, 1997*, s. 3.

⁵ Public improvements include public highways, ditches, and land required for securing material in connection with road works (e.g., land used to obtain dirt for road construction).

Chapter 36**Justice and Attorney General – Enforcing Maintenance Payments**

Under *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1997*, the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General is responsible for enforcing court-ordered agreed-upon payments for child or spousal support.

By August 2018, the Ministry made progress towards implementing the two remaining recommendations we made in our 2012 audit of this area. The Ministry developed reports to help it better monitor maintenance payers defaulting on support payments. In addition, these reports can be useful in identifying those payers for which the Ministry may have inaccurate or outdated information.

However, the Ministry staff was not always reviewing these reports. Not consistently reviewing reports increases the risk of the Ministry not taking appropriate enforcement actions, and not determining whether it has accurate and up-to-date information for maintenance payers.

Chapter 37**Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 – English as an Additional Language Programming**

By May 2018, the Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 had implemented one of the three recommendations made in our 2016 audit of its processes to provide English as an Additional Language (EAL) programming. Regina Catholic had rationalized the number of Kindergarten to Grade 8 EAL teachers required for its EAL program.

In addition, Regina Catholic partially implemented another recommendation and made no progress on another one due to technology limitations. While Regina Catholic provided its Board of Education with better reports about its EAL programming, it continues to need to periodically analyze the results of the EAL program and provide its Board with periodic reports on the success of the EAL program.

Without the ability to track students' English-language proficiency progress, the Division cannot assess the overall success of the EAL program and make adjustments as needed.

To succeed in school, EAL students need support in adapting to a Canadian curriculum, school environment, and culture. Supports help students learn and graduate on time.

Chapter 38**Saskatchewan Cancer Agency – Delivering the Screening Program for Breast Cancer**

Screening and early detection is critical in helping to reduce deaths from breast cancer. By August 2018, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency had made some progress in improving its processes to deliver its screening program for breast cancer. The Agency implemented two of five recommendations first made in 2016 and partially implemented the remaining three recommendations.

The Agency developed strategies to engage physicians in initiatives to increase awareness of its screening program for breast cancer. In addition, it analyzed information on difficult-to-screen populations to ensure strategies sufficiently reach these individuals for screening.



The Agency also developed tools to begin evaluating its promotional activities but was not using them consistently. In addition, it began tracking and reporting on some additional key quality indicators related to its breast cancer screening program. At August 2018, it was in the process of replacing an IT system that it hopes to use to track and report more key quality indicators.

Chapter 39

Saskatchewan Health Authority (Sunrise) – Preventing and Controlling Infections in Long Term Care Homes

Infections in long-term care homes pose health and safety risks to residents, staff, and visitors.

By June 2018, the Saskatchewan Health Authority had implemented the remaining four recommendations from our 2014 audit at the former Sunrise health region related to preventing and controlling infections in long-term care homes.

It communicated its prevention and control practices to the public (e.g., hand hygiene and outbreak signage), supervisors reviewed the adequacy of resident room cleaning, and management analyzed its infection rates and trends.

Chapter 40

Saskatchewan Health Authority – Triage Emergency Department Patients in Saskatoon Hospitals

Emergency departments must prioritize (triage) patients quickly and appropriately to provide immediate care to patients experiencing life-threatening medical conditions and timely care to other patients.

By August 2018, the Saskatchewan Health Authority had implemented two of the five remaining recommendations we first made in 2013. These recommendations related to the effectiveness of the former Saskatoon Regional Health Authority's processes to triage patients in its three City of Saskatoon hospital emergency departments.

Monthly, the Authority assesses its triage process to confirm it is appropriately prioritizing patients. It also improved signage in each of its emergency departments so patients can more easily find assessment and waiting areas.

The Authority needed to do further work when it comes to triaging patients in its Saskatoon hospital emergency departments. It needs to:

- Continue to develop alternate care models for consultants (specialist physicians) to meet with non-emergent patients outside of the emergency department to avoid overcrowding in emergency departments
- Document the reassessment of the medical condition of patients in emergency waiting rooms, and implement plans to support physicians seeing patients within required timeframes to reduce the risk of patients sitting in waiting rooms without being seen for a significant length of time and their condition deteriorating

Chapter 41

Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission – Providing Legal Aid Services

Legal Aid involves providing publicly funded legal services to persons who otherwise cannot afford them.

By August 2018, the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission had made some progress in improving its processes to provide legal aid services. It implemented one of the five recommendations from our 2016 audit of its processes to provide legal aid services and was working on implementing the remaining four recommendations.

The Commission updated and approved its policies and procedures. It also began using a standard form to evaluate the performance of newly hired/promoted lawyers and plans to create evaluation forms for the rest of its lawyers. Commission staff still need to keep data in the electronic case management system accurate to support effective caseload assignment and monitoring. The Commission has further work planned around setting expectations and reporting on the quality of legal aid services provided.

Chapter 42

Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority – Managing Projects with Significant IT Components

By August 2018, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority had made some progress on improving its project management processes for projects with significant IT components. The Authority implemented one of five recommendations initially made in our 2015 audit.

Effective September 2017, the Authority required staff to complete and submit monthly project status reports using a project status report template. Use of this template improved the completeness and consistency of project information reported.

The Authority needs to:

- Give staff guidance on determining required skills, and setting quality control requirements for projects, and
- Formally approve project status reports, monitor whether its projects achieved objectives as set out in approved business cases, and periodically report to senior management and the Board

Guidance on determining required skill sets and setting quality control requirements for projects would help prevent inappropriate staffing of projects, and inconsistent estimation of costs. Formal approval of project status reports along with better monitoring of outcomes achieved would improve accuracy and completeness of reporting to senior management and the Board.

Chapter 43

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division No. 119 – Maintaining Facilities

By August 2018, Saskatchewan Rivers School Division No. 119 implemented the four recommendations we made in our 2014 audit of its processes to maintain its facilities.

Saskatchewan Rivers had established and was using written processes for:

- Gathering and recording reliable information about facilities and components
- Determining its facility maintenance priorities and developing its maintenance plan
- Monitoring the timely completion of maintenance of its facilities



Saskatchewan Rivers had also set performance measures and targets related to its facility maintenance and was using them to monitor the effectiveness of its facility maintenance strategies.

Effective maintenance processes help enhance the future viability and safety of schools, improve the quality of space, protect against loss of facility value or service life (i.e., replacing a facility earlier than intended), and limit repair costs in the future.

Chapter 44

Saskatoon School Division No. 13 – Procuring Goods and Services

Saskatoon School Division No. 13 buys goods and services as part of its mandate to educate students. To manage its risks, Saskatoon Public requires effective processes to procure goods and services with due regard for obtaining best value for the school division and in a way that is fair and transparent.

By August 2018, Saskatoon Public improved its procurement processes by implementing four of the five remaining recommendations we made in our 2014 audit of this area. The Board approved a purchasing policy that sets out the Division's procurement processes and delegation of authority for procuring goods and services. The Division restricted those users who can change supplier information within the financial system, and established processes to appropriately document the receipt of goods and services.

However, Saskatoon Public continued to not consistently assess the validity of new suppliers, as it expects. Not following its established procedures to check the validity of new suppliers increases the risk of having inappropriate suppliers within the financial IT system. Use of inappropriate suppliers increases the risk of making fraudulent payments.

Chapter 45

SaskPower – Buying Power from Independent Power Producers

SaskPower improved its processes to buy power from independent power producers by implementing all four recommendations from our 2015 audit, and a related recommendation in the *Crown Investments Corporation SaskPower Smart Meter Procurement and Contract Management Review*.

Since 2015, SaskPower updated its procurement procedures related to buying power from independent power producers. The updated procedures more clearly guide the use of fairness advisors to help ensure SaskPower follows a fair and transparent procurement process. The procedures also require written evaluations of the technical merit of proposals, and the abilities of independent power producers submitting proposals. These evaluations give SaskPower insight as to whether a producer can successfully develop, own, operate, and maintain a proposed project. SaskPower also documented and assessed key risks when determining what information it requires in proposals from power producers and how to verify it.

For unsolicited power proposals, SaskPower communicated its evaluation process and criteria to power producers submitting them. Also, it consistently evaluated unsolicited proposals received using processes similar to those for solicited proposals.

Chapter 46 Social Services – Protecting Children in Care

By August 2018, the Ministry of Social Services had improved its processes to protect children in care. The Ministry implemented four of five remaining recommendations and partially implemented one recommendation.

The Ministry adequately monitored whether its staff and First Nation Child and Family Services agencies who provide child protection services complied with the Ministry's child protection standards. Monitoring compliance with standards helps the Ministry protect children in care.

While the Ministry has robust agreements with First Nations agencies who provide child protection services, it needs to receive timely and accurate reports from them. This would enable the Ministry to monitor the well-being of children in care throughout the year.

Chapter 47 Social Services – Protecting Children in Care Information in the Linkin System

The Ministry uses an electronic case management system, Linkin, to support the delivery of its programs and services for children in care. Linkin contains confidential information about children in care (and their families). Accurate and secure information in Linkin helps ensure children who are in the care of the Minister are properly protected and cared for.

As of August 2018, while the Ministry of Social Services made progress in better protecting information in its Linkin system about children in care, it has further work to do to protect information in Linkin from known security vulnerabilities.

Since 2016, the Ministry implemented three of the four recommendations made in our 2016 audit regarding protecting information about children in care. The Ministry established a checklist and timeframes for removing user access to Linkin. It followed its processes for verifying the completeness of childcare provider information in Linkin. Also, the Ministry consistently documented its review and approval of Linkin payment reports used to identify unusual payments.

However, it needs to upgrade the Linkin system, and develop a long-term plan for keeping Linkin up-to-date. Not updating systems in a timely manner makes them susceptible to compromise and failure.

Chapter 48 Western Development Museum – Removing Historical Artifacts Permanently

By August 2018, the Western Development Museum had implemented four of the eight recommendations made in our 2016 audit of its process to permanently remove historical artifacts. It partially implemented three and did not implement one of the recommendations.

The Museum's Board of Directors had revised its delegation of authority to permit the Chief Executive Officer to approve changes to operational policies. The Museum had updated curatorial staff job descriptions to clarify expectations for the identification of potential artifacts for deaccessioning and disposal.⁶ It used its database to run reports to analyze its collections.

⁶ Deaccessioning is the process of removing an artifact from a museum collection prior to disposing.



Management disposed of deaccessioned artifacts that were no longer significant to the Museum's collection and annually reported disposals to its Board.

The Museum continues to work on updating its *Collections Management Policy* to set out:

- Expectations for staff to actively identify artifacts for removal
- Guidance to staff about artifact removal
- Expectations for timely disposals
- A systematic review of its collections to identify artifacts to remove

Having strong processes for determining which artifacts to remove from a museum collection and when is the key to effectively maintaining and managing museum collections. Reviewing collections and removing artifacts helps the preservation of artifacts, relieves storage pressures and helps control costs.

Chapter 50

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Through its work and recommendations, the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies helps the Legislative Assembly hold the Government accountable for its management of the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan (CIC) and its subsidiary corporations. The Committee does this, in part, by reviewing chapters in our Reports, and the annual reports including related financial statements of agencies within its subject area.

At September 2018, the Committee was relatively current in its review of chapters in our Reports related to CIC and its subsidiary corporations. Also, the Committee had already reviewed half of the 2017-18 annual reports of CIC and its subsidiaries.

In addition, CIC and its subsidiary corporations' implementation of the Committee's recommendations related to our audit work remains strong. As of September 2018, the Government had fully implemented 98% of the Committee's 66 recommendations, and partially implemented the remaining recommendation.

Chapter 51

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The work of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is crucial for a well-managed parliamentary system of government. It provides a vital link in the chain of accountability over public resources; it contributes to the public's confidence in the Government.

The Committee's discussions and recommendations to the Legislative Assembly promote a more open and accountable government and better management of government operations. By reviewing chapters in our Reports, questioning government officials, requesting information, and making recommendations in its reports to the Assembly, the Committee acts as an agent of change for the management practices of government.

The implementation of the Committee's recommendations by the Government and its agencies remains strong. As of September 2018, the Government has fully implemented 76% of

recommendations the Committee has made during the previous five years. It has partially implemented 59% of the remaining recommendations.

Also, as of mid-October 2018, the Committee had not yet reviewed 11 chapters from our 2015 Report (Volume 2) and 2016 Report (Volumes 1 and 2).