

Chapter 18

Water Security Agency

1.0 MAIN POINTS

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, 2019. The Agency's 2018–19 financial statements are reliable and it complied with authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing and investing.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Agency is responsible for managing the water supply; protecting water quality and ensuring safe drinking water; managing dams and water supply channels; reducing flood and drought damage; and providing information on water. The Agency works to integrate all aspects of provincial water management to ensure water supplies support economic growth, quality of life and environmental well-being.¹

At March 31, 2019, the Agency held financial assets (e.g., cash, amounts owed from others) of \$135.1 million, tangible capital assets of \$382.1 million, and liabilities of \$39.2 million.

In 2018–19, the Agency generated an annual operating surplus of \$61 million comprised of revenue of \$115 million and expenses of \$54 million.² This included \$35 million in revenue including the transfer of five water management structures (dams, canals, associated infrastructure land, headworks and building) with a carrying value of \$0.4 million from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)—an allotment of \$20 million for the future operation, maintenance and upgrade of those five structures while the remaining \$14.6 million relates to unanticipated risks associated with Reservoir Lands and other related infrastructure (20 water management structures in total) transferred from the AAFC to the Agency in 2017.

3.0 AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

Our Office worked with MNP LLP, the appointed auditor, to carry out the audit of the Agency. We followed the framework in the *Report of the Task Force on Roles, Responsibilities and Duties of Auditors*.³

¹ *Water Security Agency 2018–19 Annual Report*, p. 4.

² Find the 2018–19 annual report of the Water Security Agency at www.wsask.ca/About-WSA/Publications/Water-Security-Agency-Annual-Reports/.

³ See our website at www.auditor.sk.ca.



In our opinion, for the year ended March 31, 2019:

- **The Water Security Agency had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except for the need for a complete and tested business continuity plan**
- **The Water Security Agency complied with the following authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing:**

The Water Security Agency Act
The Water Security Agency Regulations
The Water Power Act
The Water Power Regulations
The Crown Employment Contracts Act
The Executive Government Administration Act
The Financial Administration Act, 1993
Orders in Council issued pursuant to the above legislation

- **The Water Security Agency had reliable financial statements**

We used standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook—Assurance* (including CSAE 3001 and 3531) to conduct our audit. We used the control framework included in COSO's *Internal Control—Integrated Framework* to make our judgments about the effectiveness of the Agency's controls.

4.0 KEY FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Business Continuity Plan Not Complete

We recommended the Water Security Agency implement and test a business continuity plan. (2010 Report – Volume 2, p. 296, Recommendation 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 20, 2011)

Status—Partially Implemented

In 2018–19, the Agency made limited progress on implementing this recommendation.

The Agency uses IT systems to monitor water quality and inspection data, provide real-time information on water levels throughout the province, manage financial information, and track key information about its capital assets (e.g., asset condition, inspection results, maintenance).

An IT disaster recovery plan is a part of a business continuity plan. By March 31, 2019, the Agency's business continuity plan remained incomplete and untested. Without a complete and tested plan, the Agency risks the availability of its IT systems and data in the event of a disaster. The Agency plans to engage a consultant to assist with developing and testing a sufficient IT disaster recovery plan.