

## Performance Audit of Trade and Export Development: Monitoring International Trade Office Performance

### Why It Matters

Saskatchewan's total provincial export value reached over \$45 billion in 2024. Monitoring and reporting on international trade and investment office performance helps Saskatchewan residents to understand the role, impact, and economic benefits of trade offices and whether these investments achieve expected results of economic growth.

### Why We Did This Audit

Since 2020, the Ministry of Trade and Export Development established nine international trade and investment offices (trade office) in various countries to attract foreign direct investment and promote trade efforts to grow Saskatchewan's exports and economy.



Effective processes to monitor trade offices promote accountability and transparency of foreign operations to help ensure Saskatchewan obtains the expected value from its spending on trade offices.

### Key Facts and Figures

- The Ministry budgeted \$9.4 million directly related to trade office operations in 2024–25
- 31 staff directly involved in the trade offices
- 80% of trade office expenses related to salaries and accommodations in 2023–24; testing found expenses in accordance with policies
- Market priorities for trade offices include attracting trade and investment, and recruiting educated talent
- Regions where trade offices operate showed significant increases in the value of provincial trade exports

### What We Found

The audit found the Ministry of Trade and Export Development needs to strengthen how it evaluates trade office achievements by establishing targets for its key performance indicators and by measuring satisfaction (e.g., via surveys) of all parties working with its trade offices. For example, the Ministry should convey annual expectations to trade offices for new foreign investments or expansions.



### We Made Four Recommendations

The Ministry of Trade and Export Development needs to:

- Establish targets for key performance indicators.
- Measure satisfaction of parties (e.g., foreign companies) who worked with trade offices.
- Document how it evaluates trade offices' key performance indicators (KPIs) to facilitate consistent measurement.
- Enhance its public reporting of trade office performance. Good practice expects public reporting on results of achieving key performance indicators that outline targeted and actual results.

Trade Office	Region/ Country Supported	Market Priorities Examples
New Delhi, India	India, Bangladesh	Agricultural products (e.g., peas, lentils), potash, uranium, and advanced research sectors
Tokyo, Japan	Japan, South Korea	Emerging technologies, agricultural products, energy
Singapore	Southeast Asia	Agricultural products (e.g., canola, pork), potash
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	Southeast Asia	Agricultural products, energy, recruiting educated talent
Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Middle East and North Africa	Agricultural products and technology, research sectors, energy, critical minerals
Mexico City, Mexico	Mexico, South America	Agricultural technology and products, livestock, potash, mining, recruiting educated talent
London, United Kingdom	UK, EU	Mining, minerals, energy
Berlin, Germany	EU	Agricultural technology, manufacturing, mining
Shanghai, China	China	Agricultural products (e.g., canola, wheat, peas), potash, energy, advanced education