

Provincial Update on the Auditor General Recommendations

Legislative Services

November 2011

Legislative Services is pleased to advise that they have fully responded and completed all of the nine recommendations from the Auditor General's Office. In addition, Legislative Services would like to advise that many other initiatives to improve transparency, processes and controls have been implemented over the past year. The Auditor General has been appointed as auditor of the accounts of the House of Assembly and Legislative Services is pleased that we will be working together to improve efficiencies. Legislative Services would like to acknowledge the work of the Auditor General and his team.

Recommendations assigned to Legislative Services:

Legislative Services	Complete	Work In Progress	Action no Longer Required	Do not Intend to Implement	Total Recommendations
February 2010					
Chapter 4: Members' Constituency and Other Expenses	9	-	-	-	9
Total	9	-	-	-	9
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Recommendations in Detail:

Month & Year	Chapter	Recommendation	Status	Brief summary of actions taken
February 2010	4	1	Complete	A comprehensive review of the Members regulations and expenses was carried out, which resulted in a new House of Assembly Management Commission and Act (replacing the Internal Economy Board). Regulations were revised. All non-receiptable allowances were eliminated. A new Members Manual was issued. New Members claim forms and processes were implemented. Internal controls strengthened. A detailed list of Improved Processes and Controls has been documented.
February 2010	4	2	Complete	Payments made to Members for items deemed to be inappropriate by the Office of

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				the Auditor General were recovered in all cases. All non-receiptable allowances were eliminated. All claims for reimbursement must be accompanied by an original invoice and proof of payment.
February 2010	4	3	Complete	The advertising regulations were reviewed and revised to add clarity. An advertising limit was added (10% of constituency allowance). It is not a requirement, but most ads are sent to the Office of the Speaker for review prior to finalizing. A communications regulation was added which permits messaging beneficial to constituents (non-partisan websites, newsletters, articles). The cost must come from a Members constituency allowance. No donations or gifts or sponsorships are permitted.
February 2010	4	4	Complete	Assets purchased by Members after October 27, 2009 are assets of the Province and are inventoried using the government's system called Archibus. This system is updated and maintained by the Administrative unit of The Office of the Speaker.
February 2010	4	5	Complete	An original invoice outlining the service or item purchased along with the proof of payment is required for reimbursement. Store receipts are photocopied prior to filing with the claim, as these receipts lose their ink and readability after a period of time. Claims that are not properly supported are not reimbursed.

Provincial Update on the Auditor General Recommendations
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Recommendations in Detail:

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February 2010	4	6	Complete	All MLA payroll (contract and casual staff) must be approved by the Office of the Speaker and then are processed by the province's HR CSU and Payroll Client Relations. Constituency Assistant's (CAs) contracts were reviewed and revised to clarify policies. The CAs job descriptions were classified on the EC scale by the PSC and all CAs moved to this scale. CAs are not entitled to overtime pay or any other additional pay.
February 2010	4	7	Complete	All additional salary payments made to staff in 2009 were properly T4A'd.
February 2010	4	8	Complete	Per diems are paid in the following circumstances: 1) to all Members when the House is sitting, 2) to outside members when commuting to Halifax for caucus or committee meetings, 3) while attending a conference when meals are not provided, 4) for out of town caucus. In certain cases noted in the regulations, Members can submit either for per diems or actual receipts.
February 2010	4	9	Complete	Late fees and interest charges on overdue accounts are not eligible for reimbursement to the Members.