

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

December 6, 2001

MINUTE NO. 23

9:00 a.m. - Room 10

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Krawetz in the Chair and Members Atkinson*, Bakken*, Gantefoer, Hamilton*, Harper, Jones, Junor, Kwiatkowski, Wakefield and Yates*.

Substituting Members

Ms. Atkinson for Ms. Junor (afternoon only)

Ms. Bakken for Mr. Stewart

Ms. Hamilton for Mr. Wartman

Mr. Yates for Ms. Higgins

Other Members

Mr. Wall

Provincial Auditor's Office

Fred Wendel, Acting Provincial Auditor

Brian Atkinson, Acting Assistant Provincial Auditor

Mobashar Ahmad, Executive Director

Angèle Borys, Principal – Support Services

Victor Schwab, Manager

Heather Tomlin, Assistant to the Manager - Administration

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Terry Paton, Provincial Comptroller

Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

Lori Taylor, Manager, Financial Management Branch

Lisa Healy, Senior Financial Analyst, Financial Management Branch

2. The Committee considered its agenda. It was moved by Mr. Yates:

That the agenda for today be amended to include a discussion of the Information Services Corporation.

The question being put, the motion was adopted and the agenda amended accordingly.

3. The Committee heard a presentation from Mr. Wall on his request for the Provincial Auditor to perform an investigation on the spending of the Information Services Corporation. Mr. Wall's correspondence with the Chair of the Committee was tabled.

PAC 20/24 – Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Correspondence from Brad Wall, MLA Swift Current to Ken Krawetz, Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts, re: Information Services Corporation, dated November 29, 2001

A discussion ensued and Mr. Wakefield moved:

Pursuant to Section 16(1) of *The Provincial Auditor Act*, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts requests the Provincial Auditor to perform a full investigation of the spending of the Information Services Corporation with a view to answering the following questions:

- 1) Why has ISC's debt increased to \$55 million?

- 2) What is the total projected cost for the land titles automation project and how does this cost compare with its original budget:
- 3) Is ISC meeting its stated objectives in terms of cost, implementation timelines, marketing of the land titles system, etc.?

A debate arising and the question being put, the motion was defeated.

4. It was then moved by Mr. Yates:

That the correspondence from Mr. Wall be referred to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations for consideration on Tuesday, December 11, 2001.

The question being put, the motion was adopted.

5. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 7 (Workers' Compensation Board) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. Mr. Ahmad of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Workers' Compensation Board officials appeared before the Committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

John Solomon, Chairman

Peter Federko, Chief Executive Officer

John Aitken, Deloitte & Touche

Mr. Solomon tabled the following document:

PAC 21/24 – Workers' Compensation Board: Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity – Executive Overview, December 2001

6. The Committee recessed from 10:20 a.m. until 10:50 a.m.
7. The Committee concurred with recommendation 7-1 made at page 135 of Chapter 7 (Workers' Compensation Board) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor* that the Workers' Compensation Board should prepare an adequate disaster recovery plan and that it should test that plan to ensure it works. The Committee noted that the Department is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
8. The Committee next considered recommendation 7-2 made at page 136 of Chapter 7 (Workers' Compensation Board) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. It was moved by Mr. Gantefer:

That the Standing Committee on Public Accounts recommends that the Workers' Compensation Board should publish a list of persons, other than injured workers, who received money from it and the amounts received following the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' current minimum disclosure amounts.

Mr. Yates then moved a superceding motion:

That the previous motion be deferred until the Committee hears from the Provincial Comptroller's Office later this day during consideration of the Chapter 14 (Executive Council) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor*.

The question being put on the superceding motion, it was agreed to.

9. The Committee next considered the Business and Financial Plan of the Office of the Provincial Auditor for the year ended March 31, 2003. Mr. Wendel provided an overview of the plan and answered questions.

10. It was moved by Mr. Kwiatkowski:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Office of the Provincial Auditor (Vote 28, subvote PA01 – Provincial Auditor) be approved, as submitted, in the amount of \$5,379,000, and that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

11. It was moved by Mr. Harper:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Office of the Provincial Auditor (Vote 28, subvote PA02 – Contingency) be approved, as submitted, in the amount of \$348,000, and that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

12. The Committee recessed from 11:50 a.m. until 1:20 p.m.

13. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 14 (Executive Council) of the *Fall 2000 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Mr. Jersak of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter. Mr. Paton made a statement on behalf of the Office of the Provincial Comptroller.

The following Department of Executive Council officials appeared before the Committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Dan Perrins, Deputy Minister

Bonita Cairns, Director of Administration and Information Systems

14. The Committee noted that the two recommendations contained in this chapter did not need to be reviewed in light of the changes that have taken place since the *Fall 200 Report* was released.

15. The Committee resumed its consideration of recommendation 7-2 made at page 136 of Chapter 7 (Workers' Compensation Board) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor* and the motion moved by Mr. Gantefoer:

That the Standing Committee on Public Accounts recommends that the Workers' Compensation Board should publish a list of persons, other than injured workers, who received money from it and the amounts received following the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' current minimum disclosure amounts.

A debate arising and the question being put, the motion was defeated.

It was then moved by Ms. Hamilton:

That the Workers' Compensation Board be exempt from having to provide a list of its payees.

A debate arising and the question being put, the motion was agreed to.

16. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 10 (Standing Committee on Public Accounts) of the *Spring 2001 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. Mr. Jersak of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.
17. The Committee recessed from 2:55 p.m. until 3:15 p.m.
18. The Committee agreed to meet *in camera* to discuss the selection process of a Provincial Auditor.
19. The Committee adjourned at 4:15 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, January 14th.

Margaret A. Woods
Committee Clerk

Ken Krawetz
Committee Chair