

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

March 27, 2007

MINUTE NO. 45

10:30 a.m. - Room 8

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Hermanson in the Chair and Members Borgerson, Cheveldayoff, Chisholm, Harper*, Hart*, Heppner*, Iwanchuk and Trew.

Substituting Members

Mr. Harper for Ms. Crofford

Mr. Hart for Mr. Cheveldayoff (for consideration of Labour chapter)

Ms. Heppner for Mr. Cheveldayoff (for consideration of Environment chapter)

Other Members

Mr. Hart, Ms. Heppner

Provincial Auditor's Office

Fred Wendel, Provincial Auditor

Bashar Ahmad, Deputy Provincial Auditor

Mark Anderson, Principal

Jeff Kress, Principal

Kim Lowe, Principal

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

Larry Boys, Manager, Financial Management Branch

2. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 5 (Environment) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Mr. Ahmad of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Department of Environment officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Alan Parkinson, Deputy Minister

Joe Muldoon, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Management Division

Dave Phillips, Assistant Deputy Minister, Conservation Division

Donna Johnson, Executive Director, Finance & Administration Branch

Bob Wynes, Acting Executive Director, Forest Service Branch

Rob Spelliscy, Director, Financial Management Section

3. The committee concurred with recommendation 5-1 made at page 192 of Chapter 5 (Environment) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Environment should verify and collect forestry fees promptly.
4. The committee concurred with recommendation 5-2 made at page 196 of Chapter 5 (Environment) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Environment should identify its future human resource needs and develop strategies to address any competency gaps. The committee noted that the Department of Environment is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

5. The committee concurred with recommendation 5-3 made at page 198 of Chapter 5 (Environment) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Environment should prepare a complete business continuity plan. The committee noted that the Department of Environment is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
6. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 22 (Labour) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Mr. Anderson of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Department of Labour officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Jim Nicol, Assistant Deputy Minister

Margaret Halifax, Director, Office of the Worker's Advocate

7. The committee adjourned at 11:37 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 3, 2007.

Margaret A. Woods
Committee Clerk

Elwin Hermanson
Committee Chair