

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

May 8, 2007

MINUTE NO. 49

10:30 a.m. - Room 8

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Hermanson in the Chair and Members Borgerson, Cheveldayoff, Chisholm, Crofford, Iwanchuk and Yates*.

Substituting Member

Mr. Yates substituting for Mr. Trew

Other Members

Mr. Bjornerud, Mr. Toth

Provincial Auditor's Office

Fred Wendel, Provincial Auditor

Rod Grabarczyk, Principal

Jane Knox, Principal

Kim Lowe, Principal

Andrew Martens, Principal

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Terry Paton, Provincial Comptroller

Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

2. The following document was tabled:

PAC 57/25 Department of Finance: Reporting of public losses for the period from January 1, 2007 to March 31, 2007, dated May 4, 2007.

3. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Mr. Martens of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

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

Witnesses

Harvey Brooks, Deputy Minister

Hal Cushon, Associate Deputy Minister

Jacquie Gibney, Assistant Deputy Minister

Stan Benjamin, General Manager, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

Terry Dingle, Executive Manager, Information Technology, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

Al Syhlonyk, Director, Lands Branch

Karen Aulie, Director, Corporate Services Branch

4. The committee concurred with recommendation 11-1 made at page 299 of Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that Saskatchewan Crop Insurance should establish a process to correctly record and verify all changes to insured crops. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance has complied with the recommendation.

5. The committee concurred with recommendation 11-2 made at page 299 of Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that Saskatchewan Crop Insurance should establish a process to investigate claims that exceed their expected losses before paying them. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance has complied with the recommendation.
6. The committee concurred with recommendation 11-3 made at page 301 of Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Agriculture and Food should follow its established processes for preparing accurate and timely internal financial reports and year-end financial statements. The committee noted that the Department of Agriculture and Food has complied with the recommendation.
7. The committee concurred with recommendation 11-4 made at page 302 of Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Agriculture and Food should prepare and provide the Legislative Assembly with the Saskatchewan Agricultural Stabilization Fund's annual report and the audited financial statements by the date required by the law. The committee noted that the Department of Agriculture and Food is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
8. The committee concurred with recommendation 11-5 made at page 306 of Chapter 11 (Agriculture and Food) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department of Agriculture and Food should analyze the impact of anticipated workforce competency gaps on its capacity to achieve its objectives. The committee noted that the Department of Agriculture and Food is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
9. The committee adjourned at 11:46 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 15th.

Margaret A. Woods
Committee Clerk

Elwin Hermanson
Committee Chair