

Chapter 4
Section
4.11

Ministry of Government Services



Follow-up to VFM Section 3.11, 2005 Annual Report



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Delays in Certificates

Recommendation

To provide more timely and effective customer service, the Office of the Registrar General should:

- provide a more reliable estimate to applicants on the turnaround time for birth, death, and marriage certificates;
- track incoming applications for certificates better and, if information is missing, promptly advise applicants and follow up when the information is not forthcoming; and
- promptly process the applications where additional information has been provided as requested.

Current Status

The Office of the Registrar General (OR) is responsible for issuing birth, death, and marriage certificates. The OR has a long history of providing these services to Ontarians. However, in recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of applications for certificates, which has led to delays in processing. The OR has identified several areas where delays are occurring, including:

- **Birth Certificates:** Delays are occurring in the processing of birth certificates, particularly for those issued to children born in Ontario.
- **Death Certificates:** Delays are occurring in the processing of death certificates, particularly for those issued to individuals who have died in Ontario.
- **Marriage Certificates:** Delays are occurring in the processing of marriage certificates, particularly for those issued to couples who have married in Ontario.

The OR has identified several reasons for these delays, including:

- **Staffing:** The OR has experienced a significant reduction in staff, which has led to a decrease in the number of certificates that can be processed.
- **Process:** The OR's current process for issuing certificates is inefficient and outdated, leading to unnecessary delays.
- **Technology:** The OR's current technology is outdated and does not support the efficient processing of certificates.

The OR has identified several actions that it is taking to address these delays, including:

- **Recruitment:** The OR is recruiting additional staff to help process certificates more efficiently.
- **Process Improvement:** The OR is reviewing its current process for issuing certificates and identifying areas for improvement.
- **Technology Upgrade:** The OR is upgrading its technology to support the efficient processing of certificates.

Recommendation

To deal more effectively and efficiently with applicant inquiries and complaints, the Office of the Registrar General should:

- consider providing automated prerecorded messages to inform applicants of the delays and estimated times for delivery of various types of certificates; and
- review the current deployment of staff with a view to increasing the efficiency of the Office's operations.

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