Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General of Ontario

# Reflections

## Introduction

This Annual Report is the third one I have issued as the Auditor General of Ontario. As the report indicates, our work has delved into a wide variety of programs and services that affect Ontarians in every corner of the province. I am sure it will come as no surprise when I say that there are numerous areas where improvements are needed to enhance the quality and cost-effectiveness of government services. It might, however, come as a surprise when I say that we also noted things that the government does get right. But auditors' reports, by their nature, tend to focus on areas requiring improvements, and this report is no exception.

I am fortunate to have the support of the hard-working members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Committee). I would also like to take this opportunity to salute the staff of my office for their excellent work and contributions to this report. As well, my office appreciates the ongoing co-operation of deputy ministers and their staff and that of the boards and senior management across the broader public sector.

As an independent Office of the Legislative Assembly, it is our job to report the results of our work to the Assembly, including the Committee, and to the citizens of Ontario. Our reports examine areas where the public sector and the broader public sector can make improvements to benefit Ontarians. We take considerable care in the conduct of our work, the drafting of recommendations, and the writing of fair, evidence-based reports.

The Committee, which includes MPPs from all parties in the Legislature, enjoys the respect of its peers across Canada for its work to ensure that issues in our reports are discussed and that the related recommendations are implemented, and for generating its own reports and recommendations to help ensure that Ontarians receive value for money and benefit from government initiatives, programs and spending.

This section of our report provides a high-level commentary about our audits this year and some of our key messages.

## Public Accounts and Ontario's Growing Debt Burden

We provide some insight into the Public Accounts of Ontario in **Chapter 2**. I am pleased to report that for the 22$^{nd}$ year, the government of Ontario has obtained a "clean" audit opinion from the Auditor General on the province's consolidated financial statements.

As with last year's Annual Report, our key commentary in **Chapter 2** this year focuses again on

Ontario's growing debt burden, with a closer look at the implications of the debt on the province's finances. Although the debt has been growing at a somewhat lower rate than last year's estimates, it continues to rise. It will likely continue to rise even after a balanced budget is achieved, because of continuing infrastructure expenditures.

The negative impacts of a large debt burden include debt-servicing costs that divert funding from other programs, greater vulnerability to the impact of interest-rate increases, and potential credit-rating downgrades and changes in investor sentiment, which could make it more expensive for Ontario to borrow.

Consistent with our commentary last year, we take the view that the government should provide legislators and the public with long-term targets for addressing the current and projected debt, and we again recommend that the government develop a long-term debt-reduction plan outlining how it will achieve its own target of reducing net debt to GDP from its current 39.5% to the pre-recession ratio of 27%.

# Value-for-money Audits

The 14 value-for-money audits in this year's Annual Report examine a variety of diverse subjects and fall into one of four broad thematic categories. These are:

- maximizing the value of programs that help vulnerable people;
- ensuring public safety;
- stewardship of spending and public resources; and
- delivering an essential service.

## Maximizing the Value of Programs That Help Vulnerable People

As is the case with most developed modern societies, this province devotes substantial resources to the care of its most vulnerable citizens, an area that we focused on in this year's audits. Seven of our 14 value-for-money audits examine programs that directly assist children in need of protection, people receiving medical care and people on social assistance.

I believe it is fair to conclude that Ontario really does strive to help its most vulnerable, but our audits have also identified a number of areas that need improvement. In addition, our findings suggest that we don't necessarily have to spend more to do better; sufficient resources may already be in place, but governance, processes and operational challenges need to be addressed if we are to maximize the value we get from the dollars we are spending.

While all government services help people in one way or another, I want to highlight our audits of those programs and services directed at some of Ontario's most vulnerable: **Child Protection Services—Children's Aid Societies**; **Child Protection Services Program—Ministry; Student Transportation**; **Community Care Access Centres—Home Care Program**; **Local Health Integration Networks**; **Long-term-care Home Quality Inspection Program**; and the **Social Assistance Management System**.

### Children's Services

#### Child Protection Services—Children's Aid Societies

Children suffering mistreatment and abuse in their own homes are a vital priority for any society; in Ontario, the law says each eligible child must receive all mandatory child-protection services, and waiting lists are not an option.

In 2014/15, the province transferred $1.47 billion to 46 not-for-profit Children's Aid Societies (Societies) across Ontario (47 effective April 1, 2015). About 43% of this funding provided services for children who had been removed from their homes and placed in the care of Societies, such as in foster, group or relatives' homes. Over the last five years, the number of children in care has dropped by more than 10%.

Societies initiate a child-protection investigation any time there is a report of reasonable and probable grounds that a child is being abused or mistreated. We found that Societies did not investigate child protection cases on a timely basis and did not always complete all required investigative steps. None of the child protection investigations we reviewed at the Societies we visited were completed within the required 30 days of the Society receiving a report of child protection concerns. On average, the investigations were completed more than seven months after the Societies' receipt of the report. We also noted that in many cases involving children still in the care of their families, caseworkers visited the children and their families at home only once every three months, instead of once a month as required by protection standards.

Our audit found that Societies may be closing cases too soon. We reviewed closed files that had subsequently been reopened, and found that in more than half, the circumstances and risk factors that led to the reopening of the case were present when the case was closed.

We further noted that service levels also varied at the Societies, and the average number of family service cases that a case worker was responsible for each month  ranged from eight to 32.

## Child Protection Services Program

The Child Protection Services Program of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (Ministry) is responsible for overseeing the Societies discussed above. However, we found that the Ministry cannot provide effective oversight because it lacks sufficient information about the quality of care provided by the Societies. The Ministry recently put in place new performance indicators, but had not established targets so that Societies could know what was expected of them and could then manage their resources accordingly.  Having targets would allow them to determine whether performance was getting better and achieving expected results.

Ministry inspections of children's residences found repeated concerns that remained unresolved from one year to the next.

We also found that the Ministry needs to act on data showing that children in the care of Societies face challenges in the transition to independent living. For example, one survey found that in 2013, only 46% of youth in the care of Societies earned high school diplomas, compared to the Ontario average of 83%. As well, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has identified that an estimated 43% of homeless youth have previous child protection services involvement, and that youth leaving the care of Societies are over-represented in youth justice, mental health and shelter systems.

We also noted problems with the implementation of a new centralized information system and that government funding to Societies was still not based on each Society's actual needs.

## Student Transportation

The transportation of children to and from school requires close attention to ensure the highest levels of safety. Each day, 830,000 Ontario students travel to school and back on approximately 19,000 vehicles, at an estimated cost of $880 million for the 2014/15 school year. The organizations involved in providing these services are the ministries of Education and Transportation, the province's school boards, 33 transportation consortia formed by the school boards to plan and oversee services, and school bus operators contracted by the consortia to provide services.

We found the consortia need to do a better job of overseeing and monitoring driver competence, and the consortia and the Ministry of Transportation should improve the way they ensure that school vehicles are in good condition. We noted, for example, that there was little oversight of school bus operators, who were allowed to certify their own buses for mechanical fitness.

The government has not set guidelines for the reporting of school vehicle collisions and incidents, and few consortia were collecting this information to identify the causes of collisions and develop strategies to reduce them. Only limited information is being tracked by consortia on incidents that impact students, such as late buses and mechanical breakdowns of vehicles. This information could also be used to identify causes of such incidents and develop strategies to prevent them. With the limited comparative information available to us during our audit, we noted a 67% increase in such incidents between 2012/13 and 2013/14, from almost 35,000 incidents to nearly 58,000 incidents.

The Ministry of Education does not require bus safety training for students, and only about half of the consortia members had mandatory student school bus safety training.

## Health Care Services

### Community Care Access Centres—Home Care Program

Fourteen Community Care Access Centres (CCACs), each responsible for a distinct region of Ontario, spent $2.5 billion in the year ended March 31, 2015, to provide home-care services to 713,500 people who might otherwise have had to stay in hospitals longer or in long-term-care homes. About 60% of the CCACs' home-care clients were aged 65 or older in 2014/15.

We noted that issues raised in our 2010 audit of CCACs still exist today, including long wait times for some clients, and the fact that clients with similar conditions receive different levels of service depending where in Ontario they live.

Geography also played a role in determining how much service clients received, or even whether they received any service at all. We found that people with similar needs might be deemed qualified to receive services by one CCAC but not by others. Reasons for this include a lack of provincial standards to specify what level of service is warranted for different levels of client needs, and that per-client funding varies significantly among CCACs. Another issue related to the fact that CCACs are not allowed to run deficits, meaning that if a client needs services near the end of a CCAC's budget year, there may simply not be enough money to provide the service.

### Local Health Integration Networks

Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) are not-for-profit Crown agencies that each manage local health services in a distinct region of the province. LHINs provide $25 billion a year in funding to hospitals, long-term-care homes, CCACs and a variety of other community-based health organizations.

Our audit found that eight years after LHINs assumed their role in managing local health services, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Ministry) has not developed ways to measure how effectively LHINs are performing as planners, funders and integrators of health care.

The Ministry did establish a set of 15 indicators for LHINs that measure performance over time, but these produced disappointing results: province-wide, nine of the indicators show performance has stayed the same or deteriorated since 2010 or earlier, while improvements were recorded only in the remaining six indicators. For example, one indicator showed that patients who no longer needed acute care in hospital nonetheless used a higher percentage of hospital days in the past fiscal year than in 2007.

Other issues included a widening performance gap between individual LHINs between 2012 and 2015 in 10 of the 15 performance areas. For example, patients in the worst-performing LHIN waited 194 days to receive semi-urgent cataract surgery in 2012, which was five times longer than the wait time at the best-performing LHIN. The gap increased to 31 times by 2015.

### Long-term-care Home Quality Inspection Program

Ontario has 630 long-term-care homes that provide accommodation and care to about 77,600 people unable to live independently and/or who require round-the-clock nursing care in a secure setting. Most residents are over 65 years old, and many may be unable to advocate for themselves. Funding to these homes, through the LHINs, totalled $3.6 billion for the year ending March 31, 2015.

While the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Ministry) made good on its commitment to do comprehensive inspections of all 630 homes (completed in January 2015), the backlog of inspections triggered by complaints and critical incidents more than doubled between December 2013 and March 2015. We also noted that 40% of high-risk complaints and critical incidents that should have triggered immediate inspections took longer than three days to initiate. Over a quarter of these cases took between one and nine months to be followed up on.

The Ministry also lacked an effective process for monitoring compliance orders that require follow-up. About 380 compliance orders, or two-thirds of those due to be completed in 2014, had not been followed up within the Ministry's own informal 30-day target.

We noted the Ministry took insufficient action against homes that repeatedly failed to comply with orders to fix deficiencies. For instance, in one region, homes failed to comply with almost 40% of the compliance orders issued by the Ministry in 2014.

## Social Assistance

### Social Assistance Management System

About 900,000 Ontarians receive social assistance because they are unemployed and/or have disabilities. Social assistance provides financial aid, health benefits, access to basic education, and job counselling and training to some of society's most vulnerable people to help them become as self-sufficient as possible. About 11,000 provincial and municipal employees rely on computerized systems to administer and deliver $6.6 billion a year in social assistance benefits.

In 2009, the province decided to replace its old social assistance information system with a new one, called the Social Assistance Management System, or SAMS. The new system became operational in November 2014, a year later than planned and about $40 million over budget, with more costs expected to be incurred. At its launch, SAMS had about 2,400 serious defects that caused numerous errors and required caseworkers to do significant extra and time-consuming work to address problems. This left them with less time to provide the full range of case-management services to clients.

SAMS has thus far generated about $140 million in benefit calculation errors—$89 million in potential overpayments and $51 million in potential underpayments. SAMS also issued many letters and tax slips containing incorrect information, some of which may never be corrected. The impact of this on social-assistance recipients was often dramatic, with people having to repay overpayments or having benefits incorrectly reduced.

While the Executive Committee responsible for overseeing the SAMS project knowingly assumed some risks by launching SAMS when it did not meet all of the pre-established launch criteria, it was not made aware of key information indicating there were more serious defects than reported, and that some crucial tests had produced results poorer than reported. We also found that SAMS was not piloted with any data converted from the previous system. According to the Office of the Provincial Controller, SAMS is the only computer system ever connected to the government's accounting system without first passing government-mandated payment testing. The Ministry does not anticipate SAMS becoming fully stable until spring 2016. Until then, the final cost of SAMS remains unknown.

# Ensuring Public Safety

One of the fundamental duties of any government is to ensure public safety by overseeing the water supply, inspecting food, and enforcing safety laws and regulations covering everything from construction to transportation to law enforcement.

In this area, mistakes or inattention can mean injury or death, so there is little choice but to get it right the first time.

This year, we examined public safety from an environmental perspective by auditing the government's **Management of Contaminated Sites**.

### Management of Contaminated Sites

The province has the legal responsibility under the *Environmental Protection Act* to clean up sites on property under its responsibility that have been contaminated by chemicals or other substances that are hazardous to human health or the environment. In Ontario, several ministries share this responsibility.

In order to carry out such work successfully, governments need robust systems for identifying contaminated sites, assessing the nature and extent of contamination, implementing measures to mitigate the risks posed to the public and the environment, and remediating these sites for future use.

Our audit found weaknesses in the government's processes for identifying, measuring and reporting on its contaminated sites. We found, for example, there was no centralized oversight of the various ministries' processes for managing their contaminated sites and estimating their liabilities in this area.

We also noted the province lacks a government-wide process for prioritizing high-risk sites in need of remediation; nor does it have an overall long-term plan or funding strategy in place for addressing the estimated $1.8 billion needed to remediate/clean up its contaminated sites.

## Stewardship of Spending and Public Resources

Ontarians entrust two critical responsibilities to their provincial government: the authority to cost-effectively spend more than $100 billion a year, and the stewardship of natural resources in a way that generates appropriate revenues but remains environmentally sound.

In an effort to stimulate economic development and sustain employment, the government dispenses billions in grants and loans to businesses and universities, and it spends billions more to build and maintain public infrastructure. With respect to natural resources, it also oversees Canada's largest mining sector.

Our Annual Report this year examined these critical areas with audits of **Economic Development and Employment Programs**, **Infrastructure Planning**, **University Intellectual Property**, and **Mines and Minerals Program**.

### Economic Development and Employment Programs

The Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure (Ministry) provides multi-year grants and interest-free loans to businesses to help support economic development and employment. Over the last 11 years, it has committed $2.36 billion in support to 374 projects of varying size, and has thus far disbursed $1.45 billion of the commitment.

We noted, however, that the Ministry has not attempted to measure whether the $1.45 billion it has provided to Ontario businesses since 2004 actually strengthened the economy or made recipients more competitive. The Ministry's new Strategic Investment Framework, as well, does not include a plan for measuring outcomes from future economic development and employment supports, including for its new Jobs and Prosperity Fund.

Our audit also determined that since 2010, about 80% of approved funding was made through unadvertised processes in which only selected businesses were invited to apply. The Ministry could not provide us with the criteria it used to identify those businesses it invited to apply.

Over the last 10 years, the government publicly re-announced almost $1 billion of economic-development and employment support funding projects that had already been announced under different funding programs.

## Infrastructure Planning

Ontario is served by a vast portfolio of public infrastructure—everything from bridges to hospitals to government buildings to universities—with a replacement value of close to $500 billion. The government oversees about 40% of these assets either directly or through broader-public-sector organizations. Many of these assets are aging, with the average Ontario hospital being 45 years old and the average school 38 years old. Proper planning is required to ensure existing infrastructure is adequately maintained and new assets built as required.

We found that the government plans to devote two-thirds of its infrastructure spending over the next 10 years to building new assets, and one-third to maintaining and renewing existing properties—even though its own analysis indicated that it should be the other way around.

The province has no guidelines in place that specify the desired condition at which facilities should be maintained, and there is no consistency among ministries on how to measure the condition of assets such as highways, bridges, schools and hospitals.

Total provincial funding for the maintenance of all hospitals in the past fiscal year was $125 million, although an independent assessment identified annual funding needs of $392 million. Annual funding to maintain schools has ranged in the last five years between $150 million and $500 million, although another independent assessment said the province's schools need $1.4 billion a year to be kept in a state of good repair.

We also found that the government does not always allocate funding based on the current most urgent needs in the province, but tends to allocate it instead on a historical basis—that is, based on what a ministry or organization received in the past.

## University Intellectual Property

In the last five years, the provincial government has invested an estimated $1.9 billion in university research programs, including funding to commercialize, or bring to market, intellectual property developed by universities.

Our audit found that the Ministry of Research and Innovation does not co-ordinate or track the province's total investments in research and innovation; nor has it measured the value created from these investments to determine whether value for money has been achieved. In addition, the province has virtually no rights to any of the intellectual property whose development it funds.

We also noted that while the government has, and follows, a comprehensive selection process for awarding university grants, it does not confirm that research outcomes align with those identified in the original grant proposals.

We further noted that while universities' technology transfer offices had experience assessing the commercialization potential of inventions, they could make improvements in measuring what value was achieved from the money invested in research.

## Mines and Minerals Program

Ontario is Canada's largest producer of minerals, accounting for one-quarter of all production in this country.

Our audit found that the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (Ministry) has not been effective in encouraging mineral development in the province, with a 2014 Fraser Institute survey ranking Ontario ninth among all Canadian provinces and territories in investment attractiveness for mineral exploration. The Ministry's marketing strategies may be ineffective, and the Ministry is slow to make geosciences information available to the mining industry.

The Ring of Fire mineral find in a remote region of northern Ontario was identified in 2008 as North America's richest deposit of chromite, a mineral essential to the manufacture of stainless steel. Chromite and nickel deposits in the Ring of Fire have an estimated potential value of $60 billion.

We also noted that while the Ring of Fire deposits represent one of the province's greatest mining opportunities, particularly when mineral prices rebound, the area is still not close to having the basic infrastructure to encourage mining investments; nor are there detailed plans or timelines in place for developing the region.

Our audit also found that the Ministry lacks adequate processes to manage mine closure plans and the rehabilitation of 4,400 abandoned mines.

## Delivering an Essential Service

At the end of the 19th century, Ontario began building what would become one of the world's leading electricity supply and transmission systems. However, today that system faces serious challenges.

It takes a great deal of expertise and financial resources to maintain an electricity system as big and as complex as Ontario's, and significant expertise and information to plan for its future well-being.

We examine two areas this year with audits of **Hydro One—Management of Electricity Transmission and Distribution Assets** and **Electricity Power System Planning**.

### Hydro One—Management of Electricity Transmission and Distribution Assets

Hydro One Inc., one of the largest electricity delivery systems in North America, supplies power to most of Ontario's local distribution companies and large industrial customers, as well as to 1.4 million residential and business customers directly.

Hydro One's mandate is to be a safe, reliable and cost-effective transmitter and distributor of electricity. Instead, its customers have had to deal with worsening reliability and higher prices. Customers are experiencing more frequent power outages, largely due to an asset-management program that has not been effective or timely in maintaining assets or replacing aging equipment, and due to an untimely vegetation management program that has not been effectively reducing the number of outages caused by trees near power lines.

We noted, for example, that in the five years from 2010 to 2014, transmission system outages have been lasting 30% longer and occurring 24% more often. Hydro One's overall transmission-system reliability compares favourably to other Canadian transmitters, but has worsened in comparison to U.S. transmitters. Hydro One's distribution system has consistently been one of the least reliable among large Canadian electricity distributors between 2010 and 2014. In a scorecard published by the Ontario Energy Board in 2014, Hydro One was ranked the worst of all distributors in Ontario for duration of outages and second-worst for frequency of outages in 2013.

Hydro One's backlog of preventive maintenance orders on its transmission system equipment increased 47% between 2012 and 2014, which has contributed to an increased number of equipment failures.

The government passed the *Building Ontario Up Act* in June 2015 to permit the sale of up to 60% of the province's common shares in Hydro One, with the province retaining at least 40%. This legislation also removed the authority of the Office of the Auditor General to conduct value-for-money audits at Hydro One. As a result, this year's audit, which commenced prior to the tabling of the *Building Ontario Up Act*, will be the last on Hydro One to be done by this Office.

### Electricity Power System Planning

An enormous amount of ongoing technical planning is required for Ontario to determine how it will meet its future electricity demands. This planning involves managing the long-term demand for electricity, and determining how to meet that demand through generation, transmission, distribution, exporting, importing and conservation of electricity.

Entities involved in Ontario's power system planning include the Ministry of Energy (Ministry), the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Hydro One, four other small licensed transmitters and approximately 70 local distribution companies. (The Ontario Power Authority, or OPA, was responsible for conducting independent planning for electricity generation, conservation and transmission in Ontario until its merger in 2015 with the IESO.)

Given the current comparatively high prices that consumers pay for electricity in Ontario, it is especially critical that Ontario determine how it will meet its future electricity demand in the most cost-effective manner. Ontario's residential and small-business electricity consumers have already had an 80% increase in the electricity portion of their bills, including Global Adjustment fees, between 2004 and 2014. In particular, Global Adjustment fees, which are the excess payments to generators over the market price, amounted to $37 billion from 2006 to 2014, and these payments are projected to cost electricity consumers another $133 billion from 2015 to 2032.

We found that the planning process had essentially broken down over the past decade, and Ontario's electricity power system did not have an overall technical plan in place for the last 10 years that was reviewed by the OEB, as required by legislation. In the absence of a technical plan, the Ministry has made a number of decisions about power generation that went against the OPA's technical advice and did not fully consider the state of the electricity market or the long-term effects. These decisions have resulted in significant costs to electricity consumers. For example, we calculated that electricity consumers have had to pay $9.2 billion more (the IESO calculates this amount to be closer to $5.3 billion in order to reflect the time value of money) for power from renewable energy electricity projects over the 20-year contract terms under the Ministry's current guaranteed-price renewable program than they would have paid under the previous procurement program.

## Recurring Issues in This Year's Audits

Some of the 14 value-for money audits in this year's Annual Report also touch on issues that we have discussed in previous years. Two such issues this year are:

- access to equitable service regardless of location of residence; and
- better information needed to support decision-making

### Access to Equitable Service Regardless of Residence Location

Ontarians likely assume they have a fundamental right to access equitable provincial government services regardless of where in Ontario they live. However, in this year's audits, we once again found repeated instances where a person's address can affect the quality and quantity of services they receive.

As noted in the earlier discussion of health-care services, geography affected the quality and the quantity of service provided by the province's Community Care Access Centres—Home Care Program and by the Local Health Integration Networks.

We also observed the standard of service offered by Ontario's Children's Aid Societies varied depending on the region being served and that there are differences in eligibility for Student Transportation services across the province.

This issue often arises when the government funds a program based on previous, or historical, levels rather than on a current assessment of actual need. Where appropriate, we recommend that ministries base funding decisions on actual measured needs.

## Better Information Needed

It has been a long-standing contention of this Office that good decisions require reliable, objective and pertinent information underlying the decision-making process. We make the same observation this year, and we further note that some critical information does not even exist.

As noted earlier, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services lacks sufficient information about the quality of care provided by Children's Aid Societies to properly carry out its mandated oversight of the Societies.

We also found that Treasury Board Secretariat, responsible for Infrastructure Planning, generally evaluated infrastructure funding requests from each ministry on a stand-alone basis, and did little comparison at an overall provincial level to ensure the most pressing needs receive top priority for funding. The province also has no reliable estimate of its infrastructure deficit—the investment needed to rehabilitate existing assets to an "acceptable" condition—to better inform where spending should be directed.

Contaminated sites can pose a threat to public health and to the environment—but the government maintains no centralized list of such sites in its Management of Contaminated Sites. In addition, the government has not designated a central lead ministry to take responsibility for the clean-up of these sites and to advise the public of threats.

# Follow-ups on the Value-for-money Audits of 2013

A key part of our Office's work is following up on the implementation of recommendations in our past audit reports. This year, we followed up on the implementation status of 61 recommendations, requiring 158 actions, from the value-for-money audits we conducted in 2013. We found that 76% of these actions have been either fully implemented or are in the process of being implemented. While the goal is full implementation, we noted positive intent by the various stakeholders to finish implementing the recommendations that are still in process. In particular, the following stand out as having fully implemented a significant portion of their recommendations from audits two years ago: the Ministry of Education with respect to our audit on Private Schools; Ontario Power Generation; ServiceOntario; and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the subject hospitals in our audit of Rehabilitation Services. Follow-up reports are discussed and presented in **Chapter 4**.

This year, we began to publish follow-ups to reports issued by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and have included these in **Chapter 7**. We followed up on the recommendations made in the following three Committee reports:

- Violence Against Women;
- Ontario Power Generation Human Resources; and
- Health Human Resources.

In total, the three reports contained 24 recommendations involving 45 actions. We found that 91% of these recommended actions had either been fully implemented or were in the process of being implemented.

# Chapter 5—Toward Better Accountability

This year marks the introduction of a new section in our Annual Report that will highlight subjects related to accountability, governance and/or transparency, in addition to items raised in our value-for-money audits. We are using this section this year to highlight our examination of the timeliness of provincial agencies in publicly reporting on their activities through their annual reports.

Most provincial agencies are required to produce annual reports and submit them to their responsible minister within a specified time period. Ministers are then to review the reports and make them public, either by tabling them in the Legislature or by approving them for posting on an agency or government website. Based on our review of a sample of annual reports for 2014, we noted that timelines in legislation or memorandums of understanding for tabling annual reports varied and were seldom met.

As well, over the last three years, only a small proportion of provincial agencies' annual reports were tabled in the Legislature in accordance with the timetables specified in the Management Board directive in effect at the time. We reviewed the timeliness of such reporting for a sample of 57 agencies, and found that only 5% were tabled within six months after the agencies' fiscal year-end, while 68% were tabled more than 12 months after year-end, and 6% had not been tabled at all.

Our work further showed that the major delays were often in the ministers' offices. A new Management Board directive that became effective this year increased the content requirement for annual reports, but no longer requires a minister to table a report in the Legislature within 60 days of receiving it when the Legislature is in session, or file a report with the Clerk of the Legislature within 60 days of receiving it when the Legislature is not sitting.

## Acknowledgments

I want to thank the many people in the public sector and the broader public sector who were involved in our work for their assistance and co-operation in the completion of this year's audits. We look forward to continuing to serve the Legislative Assembly and, through it, the citizens of Ontario.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General of Ontario

# Our Team

It takes a massive effort by many people to perform the research, audit, writing and administrative-support work required to produce an Annual Report of this scope and substance. The following is a list of the people with our Office who worked to produce this Report:

Ahmed, Fatima
Ali, Shams
Ali, Syed Zain
Allan, Walter
Amerski, Bartosz
Amodeo, Paul
Aro, Kevin
Balakrishnan, Arujunan
Beben, Izabela
Bell, Laura
Bordenca, Koreena
Bove, Tino
Budihadjo, Audelyn
Carello, Teresa
Chagani, Gus
Chan, Ariane
Chan, Sandy
Chang, Sally
Chatzidimos, Tom
Cheung, Anita
Cheung, Loretta
Chiu, Rudolph
Cho, Kim
Chu, Mary
Cumbo, Wendy
De Sousa, Constantino
DeSouza, Marcia
Dimitrov, Dimitar
Dufour, Jesse
Dupuis, Vanessa
Exaltacion, Katrina
Fitzmaurice, Gerard
Fletcher, Kandy
Ganatra, Neil
Gill, Rashmeet
Goel, Ash
Gotsis, Vanna
Gravenor, Evan
Green, Mariana
Hanna, Lauren
Herberg, Naomi
Ho, Veronica
Klein, Susan
Koh, Li-Lian
Lee, Jennifer
Lee, Peter
Leung, Benjamin
Lew, Taylor
Lozinsky, Arie
Malik, Mohak
Marume, Kundai
May, Kristy
Mazzone, Vince
MacDonald, Cindy
McDowell, John
McGibbon, Shirley
Muhammad, Shuaib
Munroe, Roger
Myers, Sohani
Ng, Wendy
Nowak, Alice
Parmar, Gurinder
Pedias, Christine
Pellerin, Louise
Pelow, Bill
Persaud, Shanta
Premachandran, Subran
Qazi, Osman
Randoja, Tiina
Rodriguez, Oscar
Rogers, Fraser
Romano, Mary
Saeed, Shariq
Shah, Aaqib
Shah, Shreya
Siddiqui, Mohammed
Sidhu, Pasha
Sim, Megan
Sin, Vivian
Stavropoulos, Nick
Stekovic, Zhenya
Tanudjaja, Georgegiana
Tepelenas, Ellen
Thomas, Zachary
Truong, Alexander
Tsikritsis, Emanuel
Tso, Cynthia
Ulisse, Dora
Volodina, Alla
Wan, Janet
Wanchuk, Brian
Wang, Jing
Whalen, Claire
Wilson, Robyn
Wu Sak Wing, Christine
Yarmolinsky, Michael
Yeung, Celia
Yip, Gigi
Yosipovich, Rebecca
Young, Denise