



News Release

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Government Decision-Making and Transparency Hampered by Inconsistent and Incomplete Performance Measurement, Program Evaluation and Reporting: Auditor General

(Toronto) Ontario needs to significantly improve how it measures its own performance, evaluates programs, and reports that information internally and to the public, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk said in a report delivered to the Legislature today. Effectively assessing performance and progress on strategic outcomes over time is essential if government decision-makers are to maximize the benefits Ontarians receive from the taxes they pay.

“Regularly measuring performance and evaluating programs can give the government a clearer picture of whether projects are on track, or if prompt corrective action is needed,” Lysyk says in the report, *What Gets Measured Gets Managed: Ministries’ Performance Measurement, Program Evaluation and Annual Reporting*. “Timely public reporting on performance also plays a significant role in government accountability to the Legislature and the people of Ontario.”

This review assessed whether the Province was effectively and efficiently measuring, evaluating and reporting on performance from a ministry-wide perspective. Among the findings, the Auditor General noted that the Treasury Board Secretariat was not providing fulsome leadership and advice to support evidence-based decision-making due to a lack of oversight and critical assessment of key performance indicators (KPIs) and program evaluations. For their part, ministries did not always use complete, consistent or the most useful KPIs to make decisions about programs and services.

The review also noted that ministries’ published plans and annual reports were missing important information needed for the public and other stakeholders to understand ministries’ performance.

“Major publicly traded corporations not only have to report on their finances, they also report quarterly on what they have achieved using specific operational performance metrics,” Lysyk says. “The question to be asked is why shouldn’t government have to do this as well for programs they operate given that taxpayers are, in essence, the shareholders of the government.”

“The importance of performance measurement, program evaluation and public reporting should not be understated, or dismissed as ‘red tape,’” Lysyk says. “Over time, the people of Ontario will be better served by the public services they pay for if government performance and progress against desired outcomes are effectively assessed and publicly reported on.”

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Read the report at www.auditor.on.ca

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