



Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government
Services

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BUDGETS OF STATUTORY OFFICES

February 2021



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

First Session, 42nd Parliament



February 26, 2021

To the Honourable
Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia

Honourable Members:

I have the honour to present herewith the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for the First Session of the 42nd Parliament titled, *Annual Review of the Budgets of the Statutory Offices*. This report covers the Committee's review of the 2021-22 statutory office budgets, as unanimously approved by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Janet Routledge, MLA
Chair

CONTENTS

Contents	
Composition of the Committee	4
Terms of Reference	5
Oversight of Statutory Office Budgets	7
Office of the Auditor General	9
Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner	13
Elections BC	15
Office of the Human Rights Commissioner	19
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists	22
Office of the Merit Commissioner	25
Office of the Ombudsperson	28
Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner	31
Office of the Representative for Children and Youth	36
Case Tracker System Replacement Project	39
Appendix 1: Documents Submitted-Review of Statutory Office Budgets 2021-22	42
Appendix 2: Supplementary Funding Requests-5 th Session, 41 st Parliament	44



COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

Janet Routledge, MLA, [Chair](#)
Burnaby North

Ben Stewart, MLA, [Deputy Chair](#)
Kelowna West

Pam Alexis, MLA
Abbotsford-Mission

Lorne Doerkson, MLA
Cariboo-Chilchotin

Megan Dykeman, MLA
Langley East

Greg Kylo, MLA
Shuswap

Grace Lore, MLA
Victoria-Beacon Hill

Harwinder Sandhu, MLA
Vernon-Monashee

Mike Starchuk, MLA
Surrey-Cloverdale

COMMITTEE STAFF

Jennifer Arril, Clerk of Committees

Karan Riarh, Senior Research Analyst

Natalie Beaton, Committee Researcher



TERMS OF REFERENCE

On December 9, 2020, the Legislative Assembly agreed that the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services be empowered to:

1. Examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to the budget consultation paper prepared by the Minister of Finance in accordance with section 2 of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* (S.B.C. 2000, c. 23) and, in particular, to:
 - a. conduct public consultations across British Columbia on proposals and recommendations regarding the provincial budget and fiscal policy for the coming fiscal year by any means the Committee considers appropriate; and
 - b. prepare a report no later than November 15, 2021, on the results of those consultations.
2. Consider and make recommendations on the annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and budgets of the statutory officers, namely, the:
 - I. Auditor General
 - II. Chief Electoral Officer
 - III. Conflict of Interest Commissioner
 - IV. Human Rights Commissioner

V. Information and Privacy Commissioner

VI. Merit Commissioner

VII. Ombudsperson

VIII. Police Complaint Commissioner

IX. Representative for Children and Youth

3. Inquire into and make recommendations with respect to other matters brought to the Committee's attention by any of the aforementioned statutory officers.

That the Committee be designated as the Committee referred to in sections 19, 20, 21 and 23 of the *Auditor General Act* (S.B.C. 2003, c. 2) and that the report in section 22 of the *Auditor General Act* (S.B.C. 2003, c. 2) be referred to the Committee.

That, in addition to the powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committees of the House, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services be empowered to:

- a. appoint of its number one or more subcommittees and to refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee and to delegate to the subcommittees all or any of its powers except the power to report directly to the House;

- b. sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, during the recess after prorogation until the next following Session and during any sitting of the House;
- c. adjourn from place to place as may be convenient; and
- d. retain personnel as required to assist the Committee;

and shall report to the House as soon as possible, or following any adjournment, or at the next following Session, as the case may be; to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment, and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.



OVERSIGHT OF STATUTORY OFFICE BUDGETS

Since 2001, the Legislative Assembly has assigned the work of reviewing the budgets of statutory offices to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the “Committee”). The Committee is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations with respect to the budgets, service plans and annual reports of statutory offices. The Committee meets with each statutory officer in the fall to review budgetary proposals and again in the spring to receive financial and operational updates; supplementary funding requests are also considered on an as-needed basis throughout the year. This process supports legislative oversight and accountability, and provides for ongoing dialogue between legislators and statutory officers on the mandate and work of each office. Due to the provincial general election in fall 2020, the annual review of budgetary proposals for 2021-22 took place in February 2021.

BC’s statutory officers are: the Auditor General, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Human Rights Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists, the Merit Commissioner, the Ombudsperson, the Police Complaint Commissioner, and the Representative for Children and Youth. Each of these independent officers reports to the Legislative Assembly.

BUDGET 2021 REVIEW

The Committee recognizes that statutory officers play a critical role in our democracy and undertake important work on behalf of Members of the Legislative Assembly. Committee Members extend their sincere appreciation to all officers and their staff for the dedication and work on behalf of British Columbians. They also thank all officers and their staff for their ongoing dialogue and engagement with Committee Members during this budget review process.

Committee Members continued their practice of scrutinizing and supporting necessary increases to address non-discretionary pressures, such as inflationary costs. The Committee was impressed and appreciative of the efforts undertaken by offices to find innovations and efficiencies to work within their budget allocations. Committee Members encourage and expect all statutory officers to engage in ongoing reviews of their operations and budgets to find these opportunities to ensure fiscal responsibility and prudence.

They also carefully reviewed requests for additional funding to address a range of pressures within the context of supporting offices to fulfill their legislated mandates while also examining risks and acknowledging the particular challenges of the last year. The Committee noted that many of the factors driving these pressures relate to their mandates and generally agreed to support requests for additional funding while also

emphasizing the importance of receiving regular updates on how work is progressing. They look forward to receiving these updates on progress, workload, and corresponding budgetary implications at the spring update meetings.

The Committee also reflected on the impacts of COVID-19 on each office, particularly with respect to staffing arrangements. It was noted that the shift to remote work over the last year presents an opportunity to examine current leases, building footprints, and staffing arrangements with a view to identifying and implementing creative solutions in how each office and its staff work, and finding additional efficiencies.

MEETINGS SCHEDULE

The Committee's review of budget submissions for the 2021-22 to 2023-24 fiscal years took place during the following meetings:

First Session, 42nd Parliament

December 17, 2020

- Organizational Meeting

February 1, 2021 (AM)

- 2021-22 Budget Requests:
 - Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists
 - Office of the Merit Commissioner
 - Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

February 1, 2021 (PM)

- 2021-22 Budget Requests:
 - Joint Presentation: Case Tracker System Replacement Project
 - Office of the Ombudsperson
 - Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

February 2, 2021

- 2021-22 Budget Requests:
 - Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner
 - Elections BC
 - Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

February 3, 2021

- 2021-22 Budget Requests:
 - Office of the Auditor General
- Deliberations

February 8, 2021

- 2021-22 Budget Requests – Follow-Up:
 - Office of the Auditor General
- Deliberations

February 9, 2021

- 2021-22 Budget Requests – Follow-Up:
 - Office of the Ombudsperson
- Deliberations

February 11, 2021

- 2021-22 Budget Requests – Follow-Up:
 - Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner
 - Office of the Human Rights Commissioner
- Deliberations

February 17, 2021

- Deliberations

February 18, 2021

- Deliberations

February 22, 2021

- Deliberations
- Adoption of Report

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATUTORY OFFICE BUDGETS

The Committee concluded its deliberations on statutory office budget submissions by making budget recommendations for the nine statutory offices, which are outlined in this report. The report provides a summary of each office's budget proposal along with a separate section on the Case Tracker System replacement project, which is a joint initiative of four offices. Appendix 2 provides a summary of supplementary funding recommended by the previous Committee in the 41st Parliament since the last annual review of statutory office budgets in 2019.

Further information on the work of the Committee is available at: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/finance>



OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

The *Auditor General Act* establishes the position of Auditor General as an officer of the Legislature and provides a statutory mandate to undertake audits of the financial statements of the government reporting entity. The Auditor General may also undertake performance audits on the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of government programs, services and resources, and issue other information reports. The office's audit reports are tabled in the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts with the exception of reports examining the administration and management of the Legislative Assembly which are referred to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. Vote 2 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating expenses and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

The Committee considered the Office of the Auditor General's budget proposal for 2021-22 to 2023-24 on February 3, 2021. In attendance were: Michael Pickup, Auditor General; Russ Jones, Deputy Auditor General; Sheila Dodds, Assistant Auditor General; and John McNeill, Manager, Finance and Administration. The Committee also held a follow-up meeting with the office on February 8, 2021 to discuss the budget proposal in more detail.

In presenting his office's budget proposal, the Auditor General explained that his office is seeking an increase of \$1.5 million to their operating budget for 2021-22 to address several areas. One area is information technology (IT) systems that require \$376,000 to move from an in-house and onsite network to subscription and cloud-based services. The Auditor General noted that many of their internal IT systems have reached their end of life and the transition will enable the office to move to a more optimized, secure, and affordable cloud-based system.

In addition to funding for IT systems, the office also sought \$200,000 for two IT staff to support the upgrades. This is part of a requested \$1 million increase for staff salaries and benefits that also includes two additional communications staff and four more performance audit staff, as well as \$300,000 for inflationary increases. With respect to the performance audit staff, the Auditor General explained that additional staff will enable the office to meet a goal of releasing 12 performance audit reports annually, noting that the office tabled eight reports last year. He further discussed the importance of performance audits within the context of increased government expenditures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and demands for performance audit-related work in these areas.

Other aspects to the budget proposal include: an increase in office rental costs by \$180,000; an increase in professional services by \$151,000 for specialized IT services and the creation of an external thought leaders group; and a decrease in travel

expenditures of \$309,000 primarily related to the pandemic as an emphasis on remote work is expected to continue into the next fiscal year. As it relates to the external thought leaders, the Auditor General explained that this will be a group that brings their lived experiences to the office to help inform strategic issues, such as how performance audits are selected.

Overall, the Auditor General requested operational funding in the amount of \$20.082 million for 2021-22, \$20.603 million for 2022-23, and \$21.053 million for 2023-24. With respect to capital funding, the Auditor General requested \$200,000 in 2021-22, \$140,000 in 2022-23, and \$316,000 in 2023-24.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Auditor General provided further clarity on the Committee's questions regarding staffing resources, office space and usage, previous audits, and COVID-19 related audits. He also provided further detail on the external thought leaders group and the office's collaboration with government. In the follow-up meeting, the Committee heard more about the office's audit management system, travel expenses, and remote working arrangements.

Staffing Resources

The Committee sought further information on staffing resources. The Auditor General explained that the request for eight additional staff includes IT staff to assist with system updates and performance audit staff to support the office in reaching its goal of 12 performance audits per year. He noted that the office currently has a total staff complement of 120. In the follow-up meeting, the Auditor General explained that the additional FTEs will restore the office's staffing to levels seen in previous years. He also noted that the size of the executive team was reduced by two in order to create a more efficient structure.

With respect to the \$300,000 in inflationary increases to staff salaries and benefits, the Auditor General and Manager, Finance and Administration, explained that while staff are not part of a collective agreement, salary increases are aligned with increases for similarly classified positions within the public

service, with a majority of staff falling within the management band.

Office Occupancy and Lease

Committee Members had several questions related to the current level of building occupancy as well as the lease agreement for the office space. With respect to the amount of staff currently on site, the Auditor General explained that due to the pandemic, on a given day, no more than 15 percent of staff are in the office. It was also noted that eight staff work from home in Vancouver and are assisting with the audits on BC Hydro and the University of British Columbia. As it relates to the lease agreement, the Manager, Finance and Administration, explained that this is a 20-year lease that was signed five years ago so there are still 15 years remaining. The Auditor General noted that the office provides space for the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner at no cost and suggested that the office could lease out their space to others as a potential revenue source.

In the follow-up meeting, the Auditor General advised that he expects staff to return to the office once it is safe to do so. He explained that although the office has been able to shift to remote working during the pandemic, there have been challenges with respect to training and mentoring new employees virtually and collaborating efficiently. In terms of costs and savings associated with remote working, the Auditor General shared that the largest area of savings is the travel budget as financial audits are currently largely being completed remotely; at the same time, increased demand on IT and COVID-19 safety measures created additional costs.

Performance Audits

In response to Committee Members' questions about performance audit activity, the Assistant Auditor General shared that the office delivered eight audits in 2019-20, 11 in 2018-19, noting that the office was doing a number of smaller pieces of audit work that year, and seven in 2017-18. The Auditor General shared that the office's annual reports reflect a more fulsome picture of the work that is completed within a fiscal year than the number of audits completed. He also informed the Committee that in increasing the number of

performance audits, the office plans to focus on smaller audits. He explained that smaller audits can be completed more quickly and bring attention to issues sooner and that it could include a series of smaller audits on one area rather than one large audit that would take a longer time to complete.

COVID-19 Audits

Committee Members sought information on the office's possible audits in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Auditor General explained that the office is waiting for their budget to be finalized before they can determine their performance audit coverage plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Some potential areas for audit that the Auditor General provided were: remote working and its impact on cybersecurity; vaccine planning; and personal protective equipment. He noted that the office tabled an information report in September 2020 on the government's COVID-19 spending and programs. He stated that the office is currently in the process of reaching out to Members for feedback on potential performance audits.

External Thought Leaders Group

The Committee inquired further about the external thought leaders group proposed by the office. The Auditor General shared that it is a common practice for Auditors General in Canada to have a panel of senior advisors and that the external thought leaders group will include people with diverse backgrounds within the province. He noted that they will not be employees of the office but rather people he will consult, and that the selection process will be internally driven.

Role in Policy Development

The Committee asked if the office collaborates with government on policy development; for example, by helping government to ensure that the appropriate checks and balances are in place. The Auditor General expressed his appreciation for the level of collaboration between government and his office while recognizing the office's independence. In particular,

he highlighted the partnership between his office and the Comptroller General's team and how they have worked together on COVID-19 related spending and programs.

Audit Management System

The Committee inquired about the office's case management system and asked if they considered centralizing their system with other statutory officers instead of upgrading their system separately. The Auditor General explained that they use audit software and IT tools that would not be comparable to a case management system used by many of the other offices.

Travel Expenses

In regard to travel expense savings, the Manager, Finance and Administration, explained that the budget proposal features a conservative estimate for upcoming travel expenses, taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on the office's ability to travel. The Auditor General stated that they are estimating a \$309,000 decrease in the office's travel budget for 2021-22.

RECOMMENDATIONS

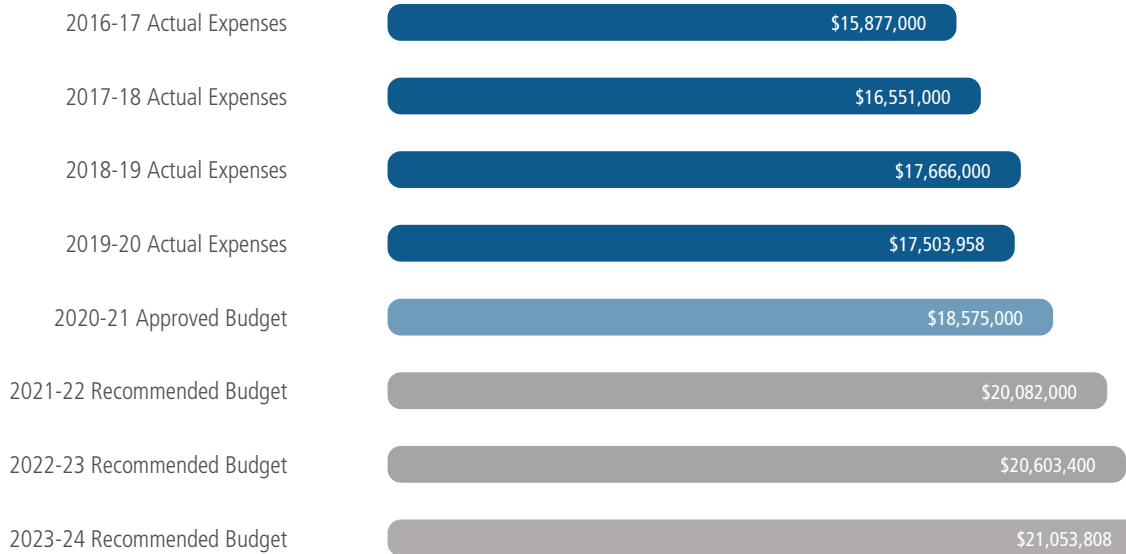
Committee Members congratulated the Auditor General on his appointment and expressed their appreciation for his enthusiasm and innovation, particularly with respect to making the office more dynamic, accessible, and transparent. In reviewing the budget proposal, Committee Members noted that it contemplates a significant lift over the previous fiscal year. They reflected on the important work of the office with respect to holding government accountable and how the proposed budget enables the office to address goals related to performance audits and public communication. The Committee also encouraged opportunities to examine the office's building requirements to find opportunities for savings or alternative arrangements. Overall, the Committee supported the Auditor General's vision and approach, and as such, agreed to recommend the proposed operating and capital budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

1. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Auditor General be \$20,082,000 in 2021-22; \$20,603,400 in 2022-23; and \$21,053,808 in 2023-24;
2. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Auditor General be \$200,000 in 2021-22; \$140,000 in 2022-23; and \$316,000 in 2023-24.

Office of the Auditor General Operating Expenses





OFFICE OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST COMMISSIONER

Pursuant to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly responsible for ensuring that Members of the Legislative Assembly fulfill their obligations under the Act which provides a statutory framework with respect to standards of conduct, financial interest disclosures, and conflicts of interest for Members. The Commissioner's role includes: advising Members on their obligations; meeting with each Member at least annually to review disclosure statements and general obligations under the Act; and investigating allegations of non-compliance. Vote 3 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

The Committee reviewed the 2021-22 to 2023-24 budget submission for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner on February 1, 2021. In attendance were: Victoria Gray, Q.C., Conflict of Interest Commissioner; and Carol Hoyer, Executive Coordinator.

The Commissioner, who started her role in January 2020, began her presentation by providing an overview of the office, noting that it has the smallest operating budget of all statutory offices. She explained that she works on a 75 percent basis and

the office includes three staff — two who are full-time and one who works on a 60 percent basis.

In her submission, the Commissioner proposed an operational budget of \$738,000 for 2021-22, an increase of 0.5 percent above 2020-21, \$743,000 for 2022-23, and \$753,000 for 2023-24. The 2021-22 budget request reflects a salary increase of two percent for all staff and a decrease of \$10,000 in travel expenses. The Commissioner noted that the work of the office is largely complaints driven, and if there were a high volume of complaints or requests for inquiries and opinions, the office may return to the Committee to request additional resources.

The proposed capital budget remained at \$25,000 for each of the next three fiscal years.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

In response to questions about risk and the potential need for supplementary funding due to the complaint driven nature of the office, the Commissioner explained that in the recent history of the office, this had not been an issue. She noted that it is hard to predict if there will be a need for more funding as it depends on the nature of complaints being investigated. She explained that most issues and complaints can be handled by existing staff and resources as it is a matter of analyzing basic information. For other cases, such as complaints requiring a judicial review, the office would need additional resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee Members expressed their appreciation to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and her staff for their professionalism and assistance in support of Members of the Legislative Assembly. They acknowledged her budget proposal as a status quo request while noting that the Commissioner may return to the Committee should there be a high volume of complaints or inquiries, and agreed to recommend the proposed operating and capital budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

3. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be \$738,000 in 2021-22; \$743,000 in 2022-23; and \$753,000 in 2023-24;
4. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be \$25,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner Operating Expenses



*Increase attributed to a life insurance benefit payment to the estate of former Commissioner, Paul D.K. Fraser, Q.C.

**Reflects a vacancy in Commissioner position (and therefore no salary payments) for approximately 2.5 months.



ELECTIONS BC

Elections BC, led by the Chief Electoral Officer, is an independent, non-partisan office with responsibility for administering electoral events, including provincial general elections, by-elections, referenda, recall initiatives, and initiative petitions, as provided by the *Election Act*, the *Recall and Initiative Act*, and the *Referendum Act*. The Office is also responsible for overseeing local election campaign financing and advertising requirements, pursuant to the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. The office's operating and capital expenditures are provided for in Vote 4 of the annual provincial *Estimates*.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

On February 2, 2021, the Committee considered the 2021-22 to 2023-24 budget proposal for Elections BC. Present at the meeting were: Anton Boegman, Chief Electoral Officer; Charles Porter, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Finance and Operations; Yvonne Koehn, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Corporate Services; and Tanya Ackinclose, Director, Finance.

To begin his presentation, the Chief Electoral Officer discussed Elections BC's priorities for 2021-22. He stated that their immediate priority is the October 24, 2020 provincial general election close-out and reporting activities. Elections BC will also continue to implement the legislative changes enacted in the *Election Amendment Act, 2019*. These changes included

amendments to establish a list of future voters (16- and 17-year-olds) in BC, as well as the modernization of voting processes through the use of tabulators to count paper ballots and electronic voting books to strike off voters in real time. He explained that this work was paused as the office focused on pandemic election readiness. The Chief Electoral Officer also noted that due to the unscheduled nature of the provincial general election, Elections BC used its statutory spending authority to administer the election, and as such, their budget request did not include the majority of funding necessary to administer the election. A report on the election will be tabled in the spring.

The office identified four parts to their budget submission request: core operating expenditures; event spending requirements; capital expenditures; and the administration of the statutory public financing requirements.

Core Operating Expenditures

Election BC's core operating budget covers day-to-day operational requirements. This includes permanent staff salaries, building occupancy, and corporate information systems. The Chief Electoral Officer requested \$11.627 million for the 2021-22 fiscal year, an increase of 2.7 percent over the previous fiscal year, followed by \$11.773 million and \$12.015 million in 2022-23 and 2023-24 respectively. The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Corporate Services, noted that the budget includes a scheduled increase of \$307,000 for

building occupancy and increases to staff salaries and benefits for the 2021-22 fiscal year and that the increase is required for Elections BC to meet mandatory goals and responsibilities such as voters list maintenance, political entity reporting, and voter education.

Event Spending Requirements

The Chief Electoral Officer explained that Elections BC's event spending requirements are dependent upon the four-year election cycle, the number of electoral events, and whether new legislation has resulted in any changes to their mandate. Event spending requirements are provided for one fiscal year only and are based on known and scheduled events.

For the 2021-22 fiscal year, Elections BC proposed a total \$2.749 million for three events: \$1.255 million for activities necessary to complete the administration of the 42nd provincial general election; \$1.406 million for costs required to complete the implementation of the *Election Amendment Act, 2019*; and \$88,000 for preparations to administer the campaign financing and advertising rules for the 2022 general local elections. The office noted that the bulk of the expenditures for the 2022 general local elections will occur in fiscal 2022-23.

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Finance and Operations, shared that the proposed \$1.255 million for post-election work includes funding to close out the election; this funding covers the costs of information systems, office expenses, professional services, and salaries for temporary staff. He explained that election event close out activities include: reviewing and auditing election financing reports; consolidating and repackaging returned election supplies; processing voter registrations and updates; producing the final event voters list of participation statistics; and ongoing investigative and reporting work related to the event.

Capital Expenditures

The proposed capital budget expenditures for Elections BC is \$700,000 for each of the next three fiscal years. The Chief Electoral Officer explained that these expenditures are for the office's two key projects: updating the existing electoral management systems to integrate them with the new technologies of voting modernization, and continuing to

develop an online portal for candidates to electronically file nomination documents and financial reports.

Statutory Public Financing Requirements

For the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Chief Electoral Officer requested a total of \$6.750 million for the administration of the public funding provisions of the *Election Act*. This includes \$3.5 million for eligible election expense reimbursements and \$3.25 million to fund the annual allowances for political parties based on an allocation of \$1.75 per vote paid in two installments – July 1, 2021 and January 1, 2022.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

Committee Members had a number of questions related to the 2020 provincial general election, including potential benefits or lessons learned from changes in practices due to the pandemic. The Chief Electoral Officer referenced the flexibility afforded by the *Election Act* with respect to providing different voting options and how this was important for ensuring voter accessibility in light of the pandemic. He shared that his office is examining interest in vote by mail and assessing whether this interest can be expected to continue, noting that there was a 7,200 percent increase in vote by mail in 2020 over the 2017 provincial general election. He also stated that the office is getting feedback on their practices from political parties, and district electoral officers and deputies.

Committee Members also sought information on the cost of the election. The Chief Electoral Officer explained that anticipated overall costs of the election will be around \$54 million. This amount includes costs related to elections staff, supplies, technology, and the funding for the upcoming fiscal year for close-out activities; however, this does not include public funding for election expense reimbursements.

With respect to questions about the comparison between the costs of the 2017 and the 2020 provincial general elections, the Chief Electoral Officer stated that the 2017 election cost around \$40 million and highlighted that the 2020 provincial general election included unique costs associated with the pandemic such as protective gear, acrylic screens, the need

for larger office spaces, and the increased number of people voting by mail.

Looking ahead to upcoming electoral events, the Committee inquired about the 2022 general local elections. The Chief Electoral Officer explained that Elections BC is responsible for campaign finance oversight and election advertising compliance activities, and that the proposed budget for 2021-22 will enable the office to begin preparatory work. Additional funding to support this work is required and will be part of the event spending proposal for the following fiscal year.

Lastly, the Committee Members asked about the Electoral Boundaries Commission. The Chief Electoral Officer explained that the Commission is independent of Elections BC and that it typically puts forward its own budget to the Attorney General for consideration. He noted that previous commissions have

used a model whereby Elections BC provides secretariat support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee thanked the Chief Electoral Officer, Elections BC, and all elections staff for their work and service in administering the provincial general election last fall and adapting to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Committee Members also expressed their appreciation for the office's comprehensive budget proposal and noted that core operating and capital expenditures are in alignment with previous budget submissions. They agreed to recommend the requested appropriations as well as the proposed budgets for event-related expenditures and the public financing requirements pursuant to the *Election Act*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

5. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of Elections BC be \$11,627,000 in 2021-22; \$11,773,000 in 2022-23; and \$12,015,000 in 2023-24;
6. The appropriation for event-related operating expenditures for Elections BC be \$2,749,000 in 2021-22;
7. Elections BC be granted \$3,500,000 in 2021-22 to fund election expense reimbursements and \$3,250,000 to fund the annual allowances for political parties;
8. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of Elections BC be \$700,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Elections BC Operating Expenses*



*Core operating expenses only; event-related expenses and public financing requirements not included.



OFFICE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER

The *Human Rights Code* provides the statutory framework for the Human Rights Commissioner as an independent officer of the Legislature. The Commissioner is responsible for: promoting and protecting human rights, including by promoting the elimination of discriminatory practices, policies, and programs; developing and delivering public information and education about human rights; undertaking and supporting research respecting human rights; examining the human rights implications of any policy, program, or legislation; and promoting compliance with international human rights obligations. Vote 5 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating expenses and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

The Committee met with the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner on February 1, 2021 to review the office's budget proposal for 2021-22 to 2023-24. In attendance were: Kasari Govender, Human Rights Commissioner; Stephanie Garrett, Deputy Commissioner; and Dianne Buljat, Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Representative for Children and Youth. The Committee held a follow-up meeting with the office to inquire further about the budget proposal on February 11, 2021.

The Commissioner provided an overview of the office's brief history and described the role of the office with respect to

providing oversight for human rights, including a focus on systemic issues (the office is distinct from the Human Rights Tribunal which adjudicates disputes). She noted that the power to conduct inquiries came into force last fall and that the office expects to conduct its first inquiry this coming year and that funding for this part of the mandate is a critical component of the budget request.

In discussing the office's first full year of operations, the Commissioner highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on discrimination and inequality, particularly with respect to racial tensions and hate crimes against marginalized communities and harassment and isolation experienced by persons with disabilities. Since March 2020, the Commissioner has issued a number of recommendations related to the pandemic, balancing health and safety concerns with human rights, and provided guidance for duty-bearers. The Commissioner has also made broader law and policy reform recommendations, including potential amendments to the *Human Rights Code*.

Other activity this past year has focused on engagement and research. In addition to community engagement, youth engagement, and general direct outreach and communications, the office held its first public awareness campaign, "Am I racist?", in 24 communities across the province. The next round of community engagement will involve workshops for duty-bearers and rights-holders to better understand human

rights law in BC. The office published its first major research report, *Disaggregated Demographic Data Collection in British Columbia: The Grandmother Perspective*. The Commissioner noted that data collection will be key to their human rights baseline project, which will provide an understanding of the state of human rights in BC. As it relates to the Commissioner's inquiry powers, the legal team has been developing inquiry procedures and a framework that ensures access to justice for marginalized groups.

With respect to the budget proposal, the Commissioner outlined a request of \$6.815 million in operating expenditures for 2021-22, explaining that these figures represent the resources necessary for growing the office to fulfill her legislative mandate, followed by \$6.703 million in 2022-23 and \$6.720 million in 2023-24. The requested capital budget is \$35,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

The Commissioner noted that the office has a corporate shared services arrangement for human resources, finance and IT services with the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth as well as an arrangement with the Office of the Auditor General for use of its Victoria facilities at no cost. The Commissioner also shared that multi-use space is available to other statutory officers in her office's facilities in Vancouver, and that she is looking to extend a presence to other regions of the province.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee asked about the office's mandate and activities, the impact of COVID-19, how the budget compares to other jurisdictions, and operationalization.

Education

The Committee inquired about the office's education activities and the role of the office with respect to prevention, particularly as it relates to hate crimes and white supremacy. The Commissioner acknowledged challenges with a reluctance to confront these issues and highlighted the role of communication and addressing shame and guilt so individuals can acknowledge and dismantle stereotypes. She also emphasized the importance of disaggregated data for

informing change as well as the need for access to justice and relationship-building.

At the follow-up meeting, the Commissioner additionally described plans for another public awareness campaign, and the development of public legal information and workshops for rights-holders and duty-bearers.

Complaints

Committee Members sought clarity on the office's role with respect to complaints. The Commissioner informed the Committee that the office's functions are distinct from those of the Tribunal and the Human Rights Clinic and that it does not have a role with respect to adjudication, mediation, or enforcement. The office may intervene in cases, and is currently building capacity to do so, and can work with the Tribunal to identify patterns among cases.

COVID-19 Impacts

At the follow-up meeting, the Commissioner outlined how human rights issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic will have long-lasting implications for her office and for the province. She also described operational impacts with respect to increased public requests for information, the shift to virtual engagements, and delays in hiring.

Comparison to Other Jurisdictions

In response to questions about how the budget compares to other offices in Canada, the Commissioner noted that the BC office is unique in being set up as an independent office and having a systemic mandate. Ontario is the only other office with a systemic mandate; however, it falls within the Ministry of Justice. Other commissions also have roles with respect to managing individual complaints. The Commissioner indicated that when controlling for differences, the budget of the BC office is similar to other jurisdictions. She also shared that when building the office, comparisons were done across the country and across international organizations to incorporate best practices.

Performance Indicators

The Committee asked about potential performance indicators and how the office defines success. The Commissioner acknowledged the challenge of measuring societal change over time. She pointed to the human rights baseline project which will identify areas of success and areas for improvement and measure progress year over year as initiatives are rolled out. An outside evaluator has also been hired to provide guidance about specific projects.

Operationalization

In response to questions regarding the operationalization of the office and the need for the requested budget allocation, the Commissioner described how the organization has been structured in anticipation of growth to fulfill her legislative mandate. She stated that the proposed budget enables the office to hire remaining positions in the engagement, policy, and legal teams which support functions such as public engagement and communication, special programs, and inquiries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

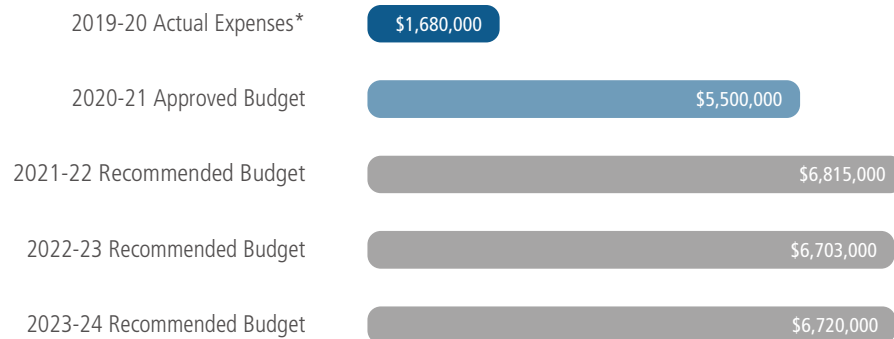
The Committee appreciated the Commissioner’s continued engagement and work to date in starting up this relatively new office. In reviewing the budget proposal, Committee Members reflected on ongoing concerns with respect to the scale and pace of operationalization and capacity building, noting that the office faced some delays with respect to hiring in the current fiscal year and is forecasting an underspend; they also recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging human rights issues have affected the office over the last year. The Committee acknowledged the important work of the office and expressed their support for the Commissioner’s overall vision. As such, the Committee agreed to recommend the proposed operating and capital budgets with a view to ensuring the office has the resources necessary to fulfill the mandate while expressing an interest in receiving ongoing updates on progress as the office achieves full operationalization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

9. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner be \$6,815,000 in 2021-22; \$6,703,000 in 2022-23; and \$6,720,000 in 2023-24;
10. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner be \$35,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Office of the Human Rights Commissioner Operating Expenses



*Transition funding for start-up of the office.



OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER AND REGISTRAR OF LOBBYISTS

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is an officer of the Legislature responsible for enforcing compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* by public bodies in BC and compliance with the *Personal Information Protection Act* by private sector organizations in BC. The Commissioner conducts reviews of access to information requests, investigates complaints, initiates investigations or audits in the public interest, comments on the access and privacy implications of proposed legislation or policy, and promotes freedom of information and protection of privacy principles through public education and outreach. The Commissioner is also designated as the Registrar of Lobbyists with responsibility for enforcing the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* and overseeing BC's Registry of Lobbyists. Vote 6 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

The Committee considered the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists' budget proposal for 2021-22 to 2023-24 on February 1, 2021. In attendance were: Michael McEvoy, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of

Lobbyists; oline Twiss, Deputy Commissioner; Jeanette Van Den Bulk, Deputy Commissioner; Michelle Mitchell, Senior Manager, Communications; and Dave Van Swieten, Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services.

The Commissioner began by providing an overview of the recent activities of both offices under his mandate. In regard to the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists, the Commissioner noted that changes to the *Lobbyists Transparency Act*, which were enacted in May 2020, set out new requirements for lobbying activity reporting. As a result of these changes, the office transitioned to a new Registry of Lobbyists and has experienced an increased volume of work, including increased demand for services. To manage this, the office temporarily reallocated resources from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner; however, the Commissioner informed the Committee that this is not sustainable. As such, he requested an increase of \$284,000 in operational expenditures and \$12,000 in capital expenditures for two FTEs to scale-up front-line resources, education and awareness, and for ongoing information system updates for the new registry.

With respect to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Commissioner discussed recent investigations undertaken by the office including the LifeLabs privacy breach, Tim Hortons and its parent company,

Restaurant Brands International, and a joint investigation with other jurisdictions of Clearview AI. Additionally, the office independently initiated a review of BC's licensed private liquor and cannabis retailers' privacy management practices. He explained that for these recent investigations, the office has been reliant on other jurisdictions for security and technical assessments. He reflected on the changing nature of technology and the need for additional expertise in this area. Based on an assessment of their needs, the office determined that it is more cost-efficient to contract out this expertise on a case-by-case basis rather than add a position internally. Therefore, he requested an additional \$100,000 in the 2021-22 budget for contracting technical experts to support privacy investigations.

Overall, the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Registrar of Lobbyists requested an operating budget of \$7.589 million in 2021-22, \$7.924 million in 2022-23 and \$7.639 million in 2023-24. In addition to the resources for the Registry and contracting technical experts, the proposal includes inflationary costs in the amount of \$191,000 and the case tracker system replacement project (see page 39) costs in the amount of \$72,000 for the 2021-22 fiscal year. The capital budget requested for the next three years is \$83,000, \$333,000, and \$60,000, respectively. The Commissioner noted that increases in capital and operating expenditures in 2022-23 reflect when his office is converting to the new case tracker system.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee's questions focused on privacy breaches, the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* amendments, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on technology use, and technical experts.

Privacy Breaches

The Committee had questions regarding the lack of a requirement to report privacy breaches in BC. The Commissioner explained that while there is no mandatory requirement to report breaches, some companies will do so voluntarily. He also shared that the office has the power to order organizations to take the necessary security measures to secure information; however, the Commissioner does not

have the ability to administer any kind of monetary penalty on organizations. The Commissioner stressed the need to update BC's privacy legislation, noting that special committees are currently undertaking work to review the *Personal Information Protection Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Lobbyists Transparency Act

With respect to questions about the need for additional resources related to the *Lobbyists Transparency Act*, the Commissioner confirmed that additional resources had been provided in advance of the changes; however, now that the new requirements and the new Registry has been in place for a number of months, it has been determined that more support is needed. He shared that the legislation requires more frequent reporting and broadens the scope of who is covered, and additional resources will help the office educate and support lobbyists on their obligations and ensure compliance.

COVID-19 and Technology

The Committee sought information on the anticipated impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the usage of technology. The Commissioner noted that the use of technology has accelerated, especially in the health and education sectors, and that the demand for these technologies as well as awareness and society's concerns are expected to increase. He described how his office, and other offices across the country, are working to provide guidance and emphasized the importance of ensuring platforms are privacy-protected and secure.

Technical Experts

In response to questions regarding the request for additional funding for contracting technical experts to support privacy investigations, the Commissioner explained that the office came to that sum based on the costs for previous technical experts and anticipated investigations. The Commissioner noted that the office takes the opportunity to gather knowledge from contracted experts with each investigation which helps to build capacity within the office; however, as technology continues to evolve, the office will continue to need outside expertise.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing the Commissioner’s budget proposal, the Committee noted that the requested increases are related to a need for additional resources to carry out key functions related to oversight of lobbying and privacy investigations, along with funding for the case tracker system replacement

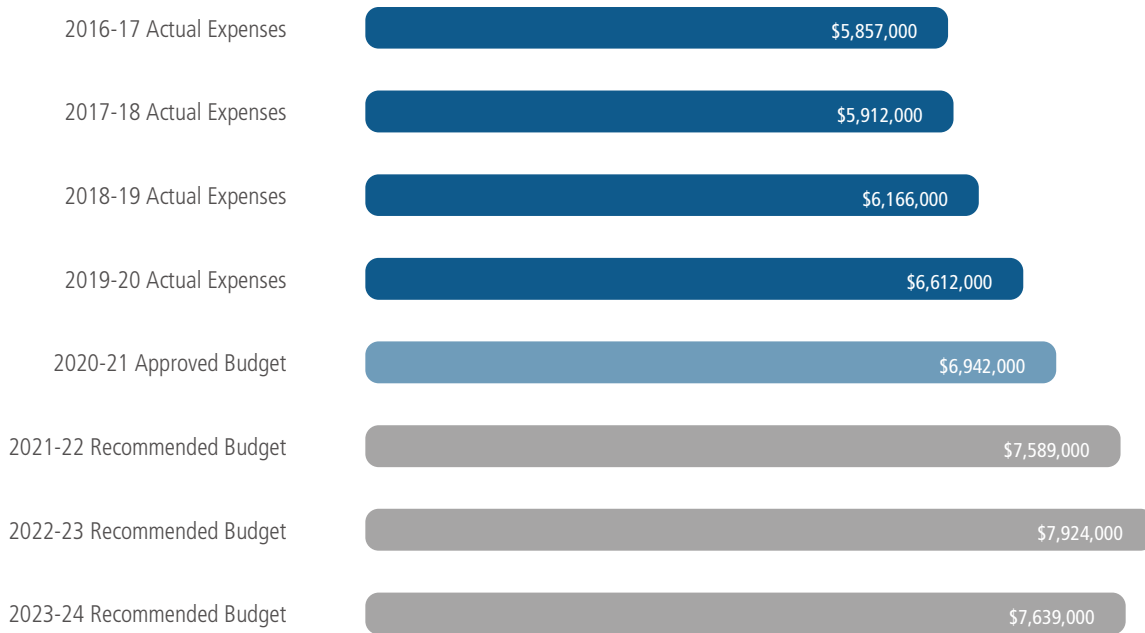
project and inflationary increases. They particularly recognized emerging challenges in the privacy field and appreciated the Commissioner’s approach of contracting technical experts. They therefore agreed to recommend his proposed budgets for operating and capital expenditures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

- 11. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Registrar of Lobbyists be \$7,589,000 in 2021-22; \$7,924,000 in 2022-23; and \$7,639,000 in 2023-24;
- 12. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Registrar of Lobbyists be \$83,000 in 2021-22; \$333,000 in 2022-23; and \$60,000 in 2023-24.

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists Operating Expenses





OFFICE OF THE MERIT COMMISSIONER

The *Public Service Act* establishes the Merit Commissioner as an officer of the Legislature responsible for providing independent oversight of merit-based hiring in the BC public service. The Commissioner is also responsible for monitoring and conducting reviews of government practices, policies, and standards of just cause dismissals. The office's operating expenses and capital expenditures are provided for in Vote 7 of the annual *Estimates*.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

On February 1, 2021, the Committee reviewed the 2021-22 to 2023-24 budget proposal for the Office of the Merit Commissioner. In attendance were: Maureen Baird, Q.C., Merit Commissioner; and Dave Van Swieten, Executive Director of Corporate Shared Services.

The Commissioner first provided the Committee with an overview of the office's two-part mandate and the history of merit-based hiring within the public service. To fulfill this mandate, the office consists of four full-time and two part-time employees plus the position of Merit Commissioner as a part-time appointment, and is further supplemented by the use of contracted resources.

With respect to recent activity, the Commissioner shared that the office received 22 staffing review requests in 2019-20, two of which she issued a reconsideration of the appointment, and has so far received ten staffing review requests in 2020-21. In regard to merit audits, the Commissioner stated that in 2019-20, the office audited 267 appointments. Of these audits, the office found that the majority of appointments were merit-based. The office did find some weaknesses within the hiring process with the most common errors related to the short-listing of candidates, interviewing and testing stages of the competition, including criteria used to assess candidates, and some administrative issues.

With respect to the office's budget submission, the Commissioner requested an operating budget of \$1.377 million in 2021-22, which represents less than a one percent increase from 2020-21, \$1.685 million in 2022-23, and \$1.451 million in 2023-24. As it relates to the capital budget, the Commissioner requested \$27,000 for 2021-22, \$237,000 for 2022-23, and \$22,000 for 2023-24.

The Commissioner explained that funding that had been provided for the current fiscal year for a new position to support work related to reviewing dismissal processes was not required as the office was able to address the additional workload through increasing the hours of part-time employees and the use of contracted resources. This resulted in a net decrease of \$29,000 in salaries and benefits in the proposed

2021-22 operating budget when offset with increases for inflation and additional hours for part-time staff. The budget proposal also incorporates additional inflationary costs as well as funding for the case tracker system replacement project for which an increase in the capital budget is also requested. The Commissioner noted that the costs of the case tracker system replacement project (see page 39) drive increases in fiscal 2022-23 for both capital and operating expenditures as this is when her office will be converted to the new system.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee probed further into each part of the office's mandate, staffing resources, and the travel budget.

Merit-Based Hiring

The Committee inquired about the process for reviewing merit-based hiring. The Commissioner explained that auditors review the entire hiring process to determine whether or not merit was applied and if there were identifiable errors in the process based on the public service's hiring process standards and the definition of merit within the *Public Service Act*.

In regard to a question about the use of eligibility lists in the hiring process, the Commissioner explained eligibility lists are increasingly being used as a hiring tool and the office has identified some concerns about this including possible risk to merit-based hiring as a result of errors within the process by which the lists are created.

The Committee also requested information on the practice of short-listing candidates and the criteria for the candidates to be short-listed. The Commissioner explained that there are guides and criteria for short-listing candidates which are set by hiring managers. The office does not interfere with the criteria unless it could be demonstrated that it resulted in unfairness.

Another area of interest for Committee Members was the staffing review process. The Commissioner explained that candidates must first go to the hiring manager for a review and then to the Deputy Minister who conducts an inquiry. After having gone through these steps, the complainant may request a staffing review from her office if there are still concerns.

The Commissioner also noted that while cases are being reviewed by her office, the position is held open. If she orders a reconsideration, the matter is returned to the Deputy Minister who determines the process for that reconsideration. The Commissioner added that Deputy Ministers are not required to report back to her office on the results of that process.

Dismissals

In response to questions regarding the office's role with respect to dismissals, the Commissioner explained that her office does not determine whether a just cause dismissal was proper; rather, her mandate is to examine if these dismissals are being done in accordance with established standards, procedures, and practices. She also noted that by the time a case is received by her office, all other avenues of review, including arbitration or a lawsuit, must be exhausted. As it relates to which cases her office reviews, the Commissioner informed the Committee that the legislation provides that all cases will be brought to the office's attention. From there, the Commissioner determines which ones will be examined and to date, she has chosen to examine all cases and anticipates this will continue.

Staffing Resources

The Committee sought further details on how the office came to the decision to not use the funds allocated for a new position to undertake work related to reviewing just cause dismissal processes. The Commissioner explained when they originally requested the funding for the additional staff, there was uncertainty as to how much additional work would be required of the office. The office has since found that they could manage the additional workload through adjustments to the hours for part-time staff and additional use of contracted resources.

Travel Budget

In response to a question about the travel budget remaining the same as in previous years, the Commissioner explained that the office's travel budget was kept consistent with the expectation that the office may be able to travel in 2021-22; however, she may not use the full allocation depending on the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee appreciated how the Merit Commissioner was able to find savings and efficiencies through adjustments to the use of existing staff and contracted resources. They acknowledged that absent the costs associated with the

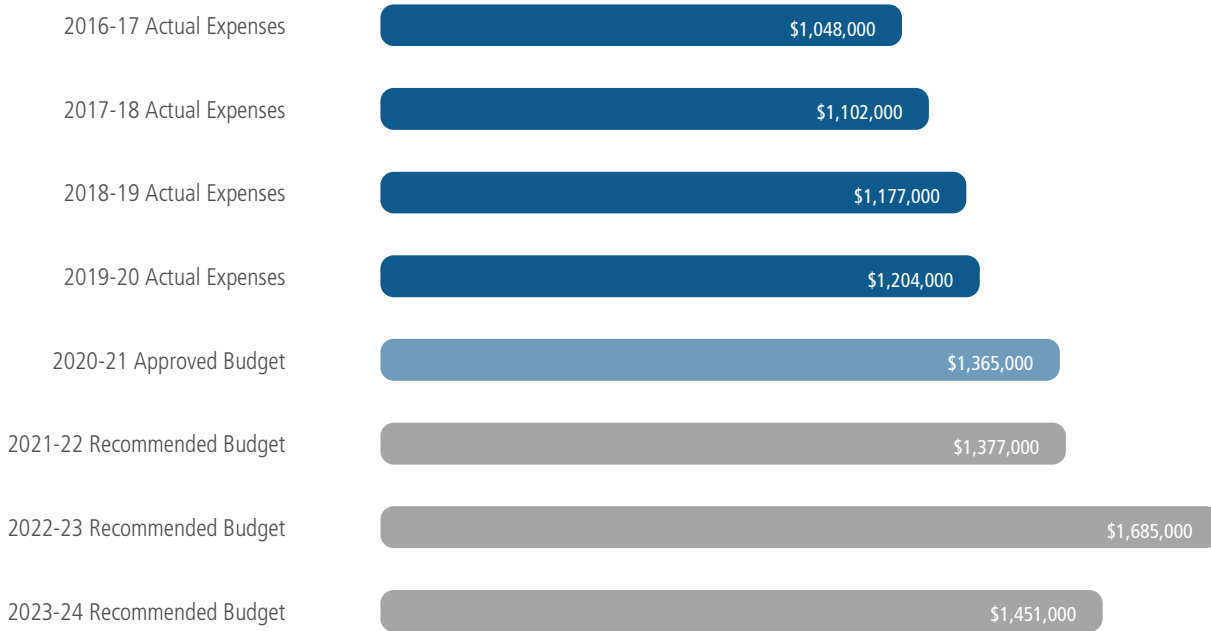
case tracker system replacement project, the Commissioner put forward a status quo budget request that incorporates inflationary pressures, and agreed to recommend the budget as proposed for each of the next three fiscal years.


RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

- 13. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Merit Commissioner be \$1,377,000 in 2021-22; \$1,685,000 in 2022-23; and \$1,451,000 in 2023-24;
- 14. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Merit Commissioner be \$27,000 in 2021-22; \$237,000 in 2022-23; and \$22,000 in 2023-24.

Office of the Merit Commissioner Operating Expenses





OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON

The Ombudsperson, as established by the *Ombudsperson Act*, is an independent officer of the Legislature responsible for responding to individual concerns and complaints about administrative unfairness with respect to BC's provincial and local public authorities. Pursuant to the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (PIDA), the Ombudsperson is also responsible for providing advice, and receiving and investigating disclosures and allegations of reprisals. Vote 8 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating expenses and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

The Office of the Ombudsperson presented their 2021-22 to 2023-24 budget submission on February 1, 2021. In attendance were: Jay Chalke, Ombudsperson; David Paradiso, Deputy Ombudsperson; John Greschner, Deputy Ombudsperson; and Dave Van Swieten, Executive Director of Corporate Shared Services. The Committee held a follow-up meeting with the Ombudsperson on February 9, 2021 to further inquire into the budget submission.

The Ombudsperson began his presentation by sharing that the office has tabled five reports since appearing before the Committee last spring, including annual reports for both statutory functions (under the *Ombudsperson Act* and PIDA)

and three special reports about issues of public administration. He further described his office's ongoing work with respect to PIDA, the development of an Indigenous community service plan, and ongoing proactive engagement with public authorities on fairness. He noted workload pressures from more complex complaints and investigations as well as the expected extension of PIDA to additional public bodies in the coming years.

Challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic were also highlighted. The Ombudsperson explained that public bodies at the heart of the pandemic response, such as the health authorities, have been the subject of complaints and inquiries to the office. As well, the office has also been monitoring changes and adaptations to services in response to the pandemic, and responding to complaints and inquiries about many of these changes.

The Ombudsperson proposed an increase of \$1.437 million or 15.3 percent to the office's operating budget for 2021-22. He explained that 60 percent of the lift is related to inflation and annualizing prior year approvals as well as the case tracker system replacement costs (see page 39). The remainder relates to staffing resources for PIDA and two temporary items. With respect to PIDA, the Ombudsperson requested \$327,000 for 2.5 staff (annualized to 3 FTEs) to support additional capacity in this area. He stated that government has advised that the office will need to allocate resources for the expansion of

coverage of PIDA; the exact timing and bodies PIDA will be expanded to is controlled by government. He noted that in the four months ending on March 31, 2020, the office received 57 related matters including inquiries and requests for advice, and 16 formal disclosures.

With respect to the two temporary items, the Ombudsperson proposed: one-time funding of \$150,000 for non-salary resources to conduct consultations in relation to the Indigenous community service plan; and \$129,000 per year for two years for a staffing resource to support investigations related to the new motor vehicle accident compensation system where disputes are decided by public officials (rather than the courts) which are under his jurisdiction.

Overall, the Ombudsperson proposed an operating budget of \$10.802 million in 2021-22, \$10.436 million in 2022-23, and \$10.206 million in 2023-24; and a capital budget of \$402,000 in 2021-22, and \$57,000 in each of the subsequent two fiscal years.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee had a number of questions with respect to potential pressures from the new motor vehicle accident compensation system, workload related to PIDA, staffing resources, and building occupancy requirements.

Motor Vehicle Accident Compensation System

The Committee asked how the office would handle any additional pressures related to potential complaints for the new motor vehicle accident compensation system. The Ombudsperson stated that the new system comes into force gradually based on accident date so it will take some time for the full effect to be experienced. His office will be tracking and monitoring the impact and will be in a better position to report on how things are working in the fall. He indicated that the office would seek to manage within the proposed budget but could return with a supplementary request if resources are not sufficient.

PIDA

In the follow-up meeting, the Ombudsperson responded to the Committee's questions regarding workload related to PIDA and the need for additional staff. He explained that BC is phasing in the implementation of the legislation. It currently applies to approximately 30,000 employees in the provincial public service and statutory offices and is expected to be expanded to another 350,000 employees in the broader public sector (e.g., health authorities and Crown corporations) over the next four years. He also described the key functions his office has with respect to providing information, and receiving, assessing, and investigating disclosures of wrongdoing and allegations of reprisal.

The Ombudsperson informed the Committee that since PIDA came into force in December 2019, the office has averaged approximately 10 new matters per month, including requests for advice, general inquiries, disclosures, reprisal complaints, and inquiries from public bodies. He shared that the current team is at full capacity with investigations and other responsibilities as set out in the Act. He further clarified that the request for funding for more staff is related to government's written indication that PIDA will be expanded to additional public bodies.

Staffing Resources

The Committee sought clarification with respect to the office's new staffing resources in recent years. The Ombudsperson explained that the new staffing resources are largely related to two program areas: the public authorities consultation and training team, which conducts proactive outreach with public bodies on administrative fairness and does not deal with complaints; and PIDA.

In response to questions about the Indigenous liaison officer, the Ombudsperson stated that this position is currently funded as a two-year, temporary position to support the development of an Indigenous community service plan and that the position is filled. The office is seeking additional non-salary resources, such as honoraria and meeting support, to facilitate consultations with Indigenous communities.

Building Occupancy

In their follow-up, Committee Members inquired about building occupancy and space utilization, particularly in the context of the pandemic. The Ombudsperson shared that the majority of staff are working from home, as per public health advice, and that the office has been looking ahead to a post-pandemic work-at-home policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

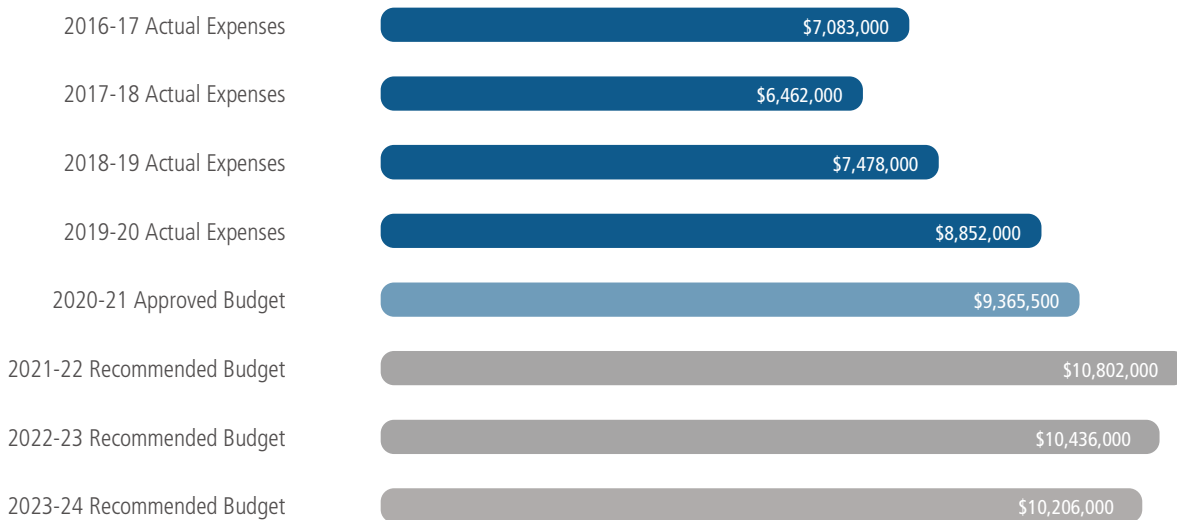
Committee Members examined the Ombudsperson’s requested budgetary increases in detail and had extensive discussions about the need for additional staffing and other resources. They acknowledged that beyond the funding requested for the case tracker system replacement project, the budgetary increases largely reflected workload pressures related to the expected expansion of the Ombudsperson’s oversight responsibilities, particularly with respect to PIDA. As such, they agreed to recommend the budget as proposed for each of the next three fiscal years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

15. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Ombudsperson be \$10,802,000 in 2021-22; \$10,436,000 in 2022-23; and \$10,206,000 in 2023-24;
16. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Ombudsperson be \$402,000 in 2021-22; \$57,000 in 2022-23; and \$57,000 in 2023-24.

Office of the Ombudsperson Operating Expenses





OFFICE OF THE POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSIONER

The *Police Act* establishes the Police Complaint Commissioner as an officer of the Legislature responsible for providing civilian oversight and monitoring of complaints and investigations involving municipal police in British Columbia, as well as the administration of discipline and proceedings. The office's operating expenses and capital expenditures are provided for in Vote 9 of the annual provincial *Estimates*.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

On February 2, 2021, the Committee reviewed the 2021-22 to 2023-24 budget submission for the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner. Present at the meeting were: Clayton Pecknold, Police Complaint Commissioner; Andrea Spindler, Deputy Commissioner; Dave Van Swieten, Executive Director Corporate Shared Services; and Amie Foster, Executive Director, Business Operations. The Committee also held a follow-up meeting with the office on February 11, 2021.

The Commissioner provided an overview of the work of his office in administering a discipline regime with respect to the conduct of municipal police officers (this does not include the RCMP which are overseen by the federal Civil Review and Complaints Commission). He noted that the office is not an investigative agency and does not make specific decisions about whether misconduct has occurred; rather, the office oversees

and monitors a process of investigations and adjudications. He also emphasized the broad obligations to inform, advise and educate the public and assist parties through the processes, and that the overall purpose of the administrative regime is to educate and prevent police misconduct.

With respect to his budget submission, the Commissioner highlighted a number of drivers that have resulted in a significant budget request. These include: recommendations from the Special Committee to Review the Police Complaints Process in 2019 which were directed at the office, particularly as it relates to accessibility of the complaint process and cultural competency; mandatory obligations under the *Police Act* with respect to adjudicative reviews; and the City of Surrey's transition to a municipal police service which places that service under his jurisdiction.

As it relates to the Surrey municipal police service, the Commissioner shared that the office has been engaged in a comprehensive planning exercise to determine future workload and used the Vancouver Police Department as a guide; as such, the office is estimating a significant increase in workload over the next three years. While acknowledging that the roll-out of the service is a moving target, the Commissioner emphasized that the office requires ramp-up time to ensure they are able to meet demand and further noted that timeliness was an area that was identified in the Special Committee's report as an area to work on.

As such, the Commissioner submitted a request for an increase of \$1.8 million in operating expenditures and \$390,000 in capital expenditures for 2021-22. The increase is inclusive of: \$1.46 million in operating and \$112,000 in capital for additional resources related to the Surrey municipal police department; \$113,000 in operating and \$4,000 in capital related to inflationary pressures; \$234,000 in operating and \$274,000 in capital for the case tracker system replacement (see page 39); and \$35,000 in operating for outreach and education.

The Commissioner also requested supplementary funding of \$400,000 for adjudicative expenses for the current fiscal year. He explained that adjudicative expenses have exceeded initial approved funding in all but two years and are non-discretionary, and referenced previous Committee decisions to receive supplementary funding requests when statutory obligations require additional funding in this regard.

Challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with respect to arranging suitable facilities for publicly accessible proceedings and hearings, were also highlighted. The Commissioner indicated that health and safety guidelines and public health orders added complexity, cost, and delays. He also noted that the office is exploring the establishment of a physical presence in the Lower Mainland to support outreach as well as to have dedicated space for adjudications given the largest police services reside within the Lower Mainland; the office expects to return with a business case for the Committee next year.

Overall, the Commissioner requested \$5.934 million in 2021-22, \$7.611 million in 2022-23, and \$8.128 million in 2023-24 for operating expenditures; and \$418,000 in 2021-22, \$55,000 in 2022-23, and \$42,000 in 2023-24 for capital expenditures.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee inquired further into several areas, with particular attention to the Surrey municipal police service, staffing and the implications for the office's budget and operations.

Surrey Municipal Police Service

The Committee had a number of questions with respect to the Surrey municipal police service and the impact on the office, noting that the requested budgetary lift is significant. The Commissioner explained that the office conducted an analysis of anticipated workload by examining a municipal model and Surrey's population, and assuming a similar structure, model, and size to Vancouver. He noted that statistics on an RCMP detachment versus a municipal department are not always comparable as the RCMP has centralized services. The Deputy Commissioner shared that the Vancouver Police Department is a large driver of cases, with 310 of 537 complaints last year coming from that department, and that the office anticipates Surrey will be a similar driver.

Committee Members asked about the complaint process during the transition if an interaction involves both the RCMP and the Surrey police service. The Commissioner noted that similar issues come up from time to time already as the Lower Mainland has integrated units of municipal police and RCMP. The incident would be examined to determine if the complaint involves a municipal police officer in which case the office has jurisdiction.

The Committee also inquired whether there are any mechanisms to recover costs from municipalities. The Commissioner stated that the process places obligations on the police service itself with respect to investigating matters and as such, municipalities would likely be of the view that they already bear a significant burden of the cost. He noted that the Act does require a municipality to bear the cost of mediation; however, there are no other mechanisms to recover costs.

Staffing

In response to questions about the uncertainty of how and when the Surrey police service will roll-out, the Commissioner acknowledged this challenge and explained that the hiring and onboarding process for new analysts can take upwards of two years because of the complexity of and timelines set out in the Act. As such, the office's plan for resourcing is designed to ensure the office is ready for when the bulk of the Surrey police service officers are anticipated to be hired. The

Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner also described how the resourcing plan incorporates phased hiring stages to reflect the unlikelihood that a lot of on-the-ground resources will be in place in the next fiscal year as well as ensure capacity internally to carry out training for new staff while also pushing out other programs and initiatives. At the follow-up meeting, the Deputy Commissioner provided an overview of the work of analysts and the training process, and noted that much of an analyst's development comes from on-the-job experience.

The Committee also asked about other considerations or requirements for staffing within the context of increased public attention on police accountability. The Commissioner discussed the need to reduce barriers to the police complaint system and described how the office has reviewed their hiring processes with a view to increasing diversity, as well as training to include trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, mental health training, and gender-based analysis plus training.

Caseload

In response to questions about the office's caseload, the Commissioner shared that analysts are currently at full capacity. He explained that the Act requires complaints to have been made within 12 months of the occurrence with the ability to waive that requirement should a complaint be very serious or in the public interest. He further noted that investigations are required to be completed in six months; although this may be extended if additional time is needed for a fulsome investigation. He noted that analysts spend a significant amount of time at the front end to determine admissibility of a complaint and that awareness of the office's processes has been heightened with the public attention on police accountability.

Building Occupancy

The Committee sought additional detail about pressures and plans related to building occupancy. The Commissioner stated that the office has been aware of the need for expansion for some time and that the Surrey transition and the impact of the pandemic on finding space for adjudicative hearings has advanced that need; at the same time, the pandemic has created some uncertainty with respect to how remote work will

continue in the future. He also discussed the need to improve outreach capacity and the value in having a physical presence in the Lower Mainland.

Outreach and Education

Committee Members commented that the budget request related to outreach and education seems low given the range of communities the office is trying to engage with. The Commissioner indicated that the immediate priority is the Surrey transition and the need to increase capacity in that regard so the office is able to meet its mandatory obligations; as such, additional outreach and education activities have been pushed to outer years. He explained that the office is small and hiring and training analysts while maintaining operations will take up significant resources.

The Committee also inquired about potential downstream impacts of effective outreach. The Commissioner acknowledged that as the office reduces barriers to access, there is the potential for an increase in complaints. He noted that part of their growth plan includes improving data and analytics capacity so the office is better able to understand who is and is not accessing their services.

Planning

At the follow-up meeting, the Commissioner provided additional detail with respect to the planning work undertaken to develop the budget. This included: a needs and gap analysis of the mandate, and review of reports and information about the transition to the Surrey police service; the Special Committee's recommendations; and organizational considerations related to the potential growth of the office. He explained that the budget proposal takes an iterative approach, bringing on resources in phases, and noted opportunities to adjust in the fall should there be changes.

In response to a request for potential alternative approaches given the level of uncertainty with respect to the Surrey police service, the Commissioner provided a revised operating budget proposal of \$5.460 million in 2021-22, \$5.811 million in 2022-23, and \$5.775 million in 2023-24, and a revised capital budget proposal of \$394,000 in 2021-22, \$22,000 in 2022-23 and

\$30,000 in 2023-24. The Commissioner noted that the revised proposal retains requests related to inflationary increases and the case tracker system replacement project, and considers a more gradual implementation as it relates to the Surrey police service over the upcoming three fiscal years. He further indicated that his office will return to the Committee in fall 2021 with further projections and may identify supplementary requests should circumstances change in the upcoming fiscal year.

Adjudicative and Judicial Reviews

Committee Members sought more information about adjudicative and judicial reviews. At the follow-up meeting, the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner explained that adjudicative processes are independent, arm's-length processes that are initiated in statute and require legal support or legal representation. They also noted that judicial reviews may be initiated by individuals and that there are legal costs in responding to those reviews. They shared that the number and costs of adjudicative and judicial reviews vary and can be difficult to predict.

RECOMMENDATIONS

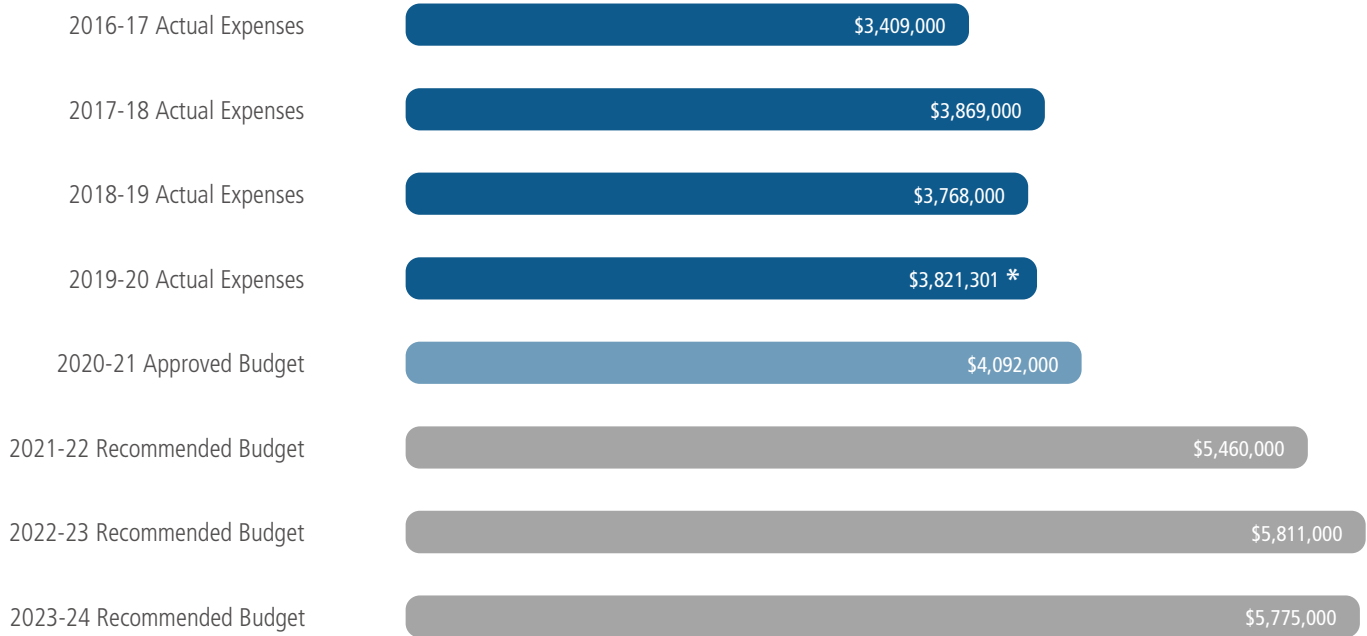
The Committee noted that Surrey's shift to a municipal police service will have a significant impact on the Police Complaint Commissioner's office. Committee Members recognized and appreciated the risks this poses to the office; however, they also expressed concerns about the level of uncertainty associated with the roll-out of the police service. They appreciated the Commissioner's willingness, cooperation, and thoughtfulness in putting forward an alternative budgetary proposal. The Committee concluded that this alternative proposal appropriately balances the risks and uncertainty with respect to Surrey and as such, agreed to recommend an operating budget of \$5.460 million in 2021-22, \$5.811 million in 2022-23, and \$5.775 million in 2023-24, and a capital budget of \$394,000 in 2021-22, \$22,000 in 2022-23, and \$30,000 in 2023-24. They noted opportunities for the Commissioner to return to the Committee should circumstances change as well as ongoing opportunities for engagement and dialogue at the spring and fall meetings; accordingly, Committee Members expect to receive regular updates on the roll-out of the Surrey police service and corresponding impacts on the office. The Committee also agreed to recommend the supplementary funding requested for fiscal 2020-21 to cover adjudicative expenses, noting that this is considered a non-discretionary activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

17. The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner be granted supplementary funding up to \$400,000 for operating expenditures in 2020-21 for adjudicative expenses;
18. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner be \$5,460,000 in 2021-22; \$5,811,000 in 2022-23; and \$5,775,000 in 2023-24;
19. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner be \$394,000 in 2021-22; \$22,000 in 2022-23; and \$30,000 in 2023-24.

Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner Operating Expenses





OFFICE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Representative for Children and Youth is an officer of the Legislature appointed under the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. The Representative is responsible for providing advocacy services on behalf of children, youth, and young adults, and reviewing, investigating, and reporting on the critical injuries and deaths of children. The Representative is also responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and auditing the effectiveness of designated services. Vote 10 of the annual provincial *Estimates* provides for the office's operating expenses and capital expenditures.

BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 TO 2023-24

On February 2, 2021, the Committee reviewed the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth's budget submission for 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. In attendance were: Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth, Representative of Children and Youth; Samantha Cocker, Deputy Representative; Alan Markwart, Deputy Representative; Dianne Buljat, Chief Financial Officer; and Jeff Rud, Executive Director, Communications.

In her presentation, the Representative highlighted how the office responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. In recognition of the pressures and priorities ministries and public bodies were facing with respect to the pandemic, the office committed to not releasing any public reports with recommendations until

the fall of 2020. The office also established a specialized internal team to monitor and gather information about pandemic-related issues and concerns impacting children and youth, and their families, and engaged regularly with ministries and public bodies to flag concerns, as well as issued two public reports on child and youth mental health and the pandemic.

The Representative also discussed the operational impact on her office with remote work arrangements put in place for all staff. While the arrangements were temporary at first, the office has since implemented these on a permanent and voluntary basis for all staff given positive experiences. This has also led to the closure of the Burnaby office at the end of February 2021.

As it relates to their legislated mandate, the Representative provided an overview of key activity. She noted that the office has experienced a significant increase in reports of critical injuries and death of children and youth, with an increase of 34 percent in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20. She indicated that the number of reports is anticipated to continue to increase as the office will soon be receiving reports from health authorities.

With respect to her budget proposal, the Representative sought operational expenditures of \$10.641 million in 2021-22, an increase of \$158,000 or 1.6 percent from 2020-21, \$10.649 million in 2022-23, and \$10.649 million in 2023-24. The \$158,000 increase reflects inflationary costs related to salaries and benefits and incorporates a reallocation of funding from

the Burnaby office closure to staffing resources and alternative staffing arrangements to address service pressures. The Representative requested \$50,000 for capital expenditures for each of the next three fiscal years, consistent with the previous year's budget submission.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Committee Members sought further information on critical injury and death reporting, the closure of the Burnaby office space, and the office's case management database.

Critical Injury and Death Reporting

With respect to reporting by health authorities on critical injuries and death, the Representative explained that health authorities are required by statute to report such incidents; however, this has not been enforced. In the last couple of years, the office has been working with health authorities on a process for reporting. The office noted that health authorities have their own critical incident definitions and reporting mechanisms which are different from those set out in the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*; as such, part of the work is determining which incidents fall within the mandate of the office.

The Committee inquired further about the process and work related to critical injury or death reports. The Representative shared that if a report is determined to be within their mandate, her office will review to determine if it requires further action. This could include raising it with the relevant ministry or public body, referring it to the office's advocacy team, or undertaking a comprehensive review or investigation.

Burnaby Office Space

The Committee sought clarity on the decision to close the Burnaby office. The Representative explained that there had been concerns about the Burnaby office prior to the pandemic due to issues of accessibility for children, youth, and families. She described how the shift to remote work has been positively received with staff remaining engaged and connected without the physical space, and highlighted how the office has shifted to alternative means of engaging with children, youth, and families by holding sessions and clinics in the community, such as at Foundry centres and youth hubs.

Case Management Database

In response to questions about the office's case management system, the Representative explained that they have an in-house system that has been tailored to the needs of the office and that it is used by both the reviews and investigations team and the advocacy team.

RECOMMENDATIONS

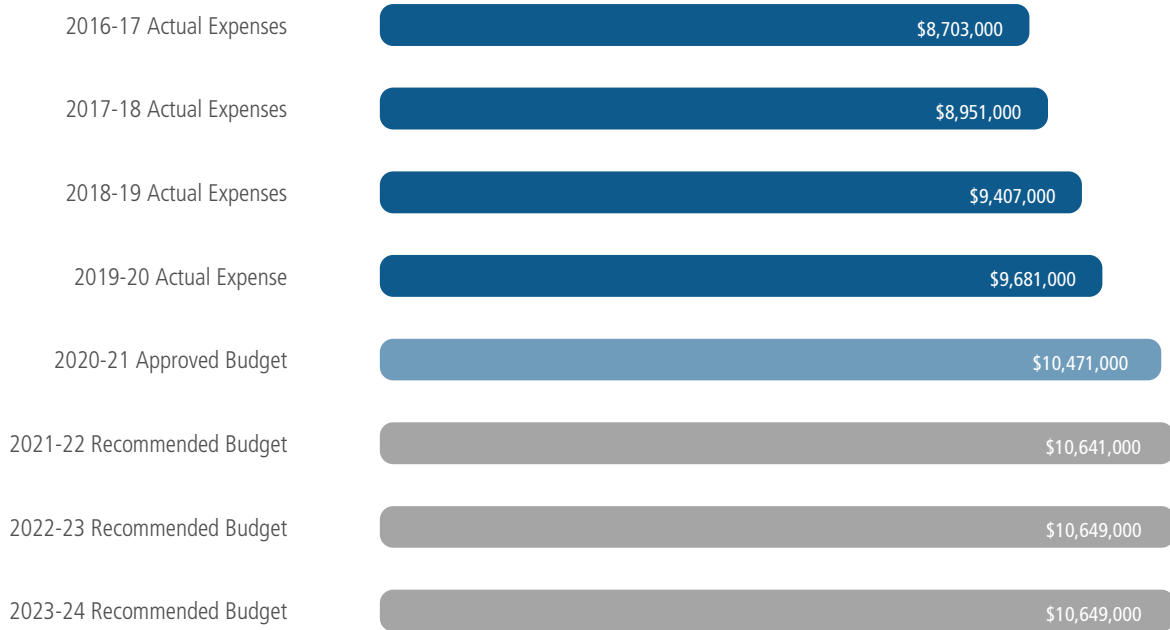
The Committee commended the Representative for her innovation and creativity in identifying alternative approaches with respect to staffing arrangements and how this has been positively received by staffing while also resulting in efficiencies. They acknowledged that the Representative presented a status quo budget request, incorporating inflationary increases, and agreed to recommend the proposed operating and capital budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that:

20. The appropriation for the operating expenditures of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth be \$10,641,000 in 2021-22; \$10,649,000 in 2022-23; and \$10,649,000 in 2023-24;
21. The appropriation for the capital expenditures of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth be \$50,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Office of the Representative for Children and Youth Operating Expenses





CASE TRACKER SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Four independent offices – the Office of the Ombudsperson, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists, the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner, and the Office of the Merit Commissioner – have a corporate shared services arrangement for financial and human resources, IT, facilities, and administrative services. This arrangement goes back 18 years and is housed within the Office of the Ombudsperson and funded on a chargeback basis from the other three offices based on the number of supported positions.

On February 1, 2021, Jay Chalke, Ombudsperson; Michael McEvoy, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists; Clayton Pecknold, Police Complaint Commissioner; Maureen Baird, Merit Commissioner; and Dave Van Swieten, Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services jointly presented a joint proposal for a case tracker system replacement project, the costs of which have been incorporated within the individual budget submissions for each office. The project is expected to be implemented over two years with the Office of the Ombudsperson and the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner phased in in the 2021-22 fiscal year, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists and the Office of the Merit Commissioner converted in 2022-23. The Committee held a follow-up meeting about the proposal with the Ombudsperson and Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services on February 9, 2021.

PRESENTATION

The Ombudsperson explained that the case tracker system is an IT infrastructure platform built in-house for the Office of the Ombudsperson 27 years ago and was expanded to include other offices supported in the corporate shared services model. The current system no longer meets business needs due to changes in the information landscape with a greater focus on digital technology and electronic records. The underlying technology of the current system is aging and difficult to support and that the staff person who has been supporting the system is scheduled for retirement in two years.

Each officer shared how they use the current system for managing their respective files, whether tracking cases, complaints, audits, or other reports and data. They also described gaps and challenges with the current system, and opportunities to improve processes, reporting and other efficiencies with a new system.

The offices approached the project as a group and carried out a joint request for proposals last summer to ensure competitive pricing and to confirm the availability of products able to support the needs of all four offices. The budget for the project represents the minimum needed to proceed with the prospective vendor from this process and totals \$2.592 million in operating expenditures over three years and \$1.138

in capital expenditures over two years; each office's share is outlined in their budget submissions.

In the follow-up meeting, the Ombudsperson provided additional background about the project. He shared that a joint threat and risk assessment in 2016 identified vulnerabilities in the case tracker system. In 2019, the offices commissioned an external review to identify options and alternatives, and decided to move to a customizable, off-the-shelf solution from a commercial vendor. A request for proposals was subsequently issued in August 2020.

The Ombudsperson also further discussed potential risks associated with not replacing the existing system. The age of the current system creates vulnerabilities as well as delays in implementing business improvements. In addition, the lone business analyst who supports the system is retiring in two years, and if the project does not move forward now, this individual will not be available to provide their expertise during the transition and extra support will be required which will add to project costs.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

Request for Proposals

The Committee sought additional information about the request for proposals process and how software options were examined. The Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services, explained that they conducted a market analysis of different solutions and reviewed systems and software used by other independent offices and government. In reviewing the potential commercial solutions and the anticipated cost of a new system, the offices followed established public service procurement practices in issuing a request for proposals which was posted on BC Bid and open to anyone who met the criteria.

In response to questions about how the budget was determined, the Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services clarified that the budget uses the estimates submitted by the lead proponent with contingencies added.

Risk Management

Committee Members inquired about risks with data migration and how that has been built into the project. The Ombudsperson acknowledged the risks and noted that the risk is mitigated as data is being migrated from only one system to another and is further mitigated by having the business analyst who supports the current system available to assist and support the process over the next two years. The Executive Director, Corporate Shared Services, pointed to the response of the lead proponent and their data migration experience as well as plans to have a significant proportion of this work done by internal staff to help keep costs down. The Information and Privacy Commissioner further highlighted the opportunity to reflect on record retention and securely disposing of records that have no historical or archival value.

Another area of interest to the Committee was the need for certain positions to be backfilled while the project is implemented and potential impacts on capacity. The offices noted that the project is being phased in which helps mitigate this risk. They highlighted how the backfilling is reflective of the relatively small size of the offices and the need to minimize disruption to front-line business while also ensuring appropriate user testing. The offices indicated their satisfaction with the attention to project management processes and appropriate milestones in the request for proposals and the lead proponent's associated experience.

Efficiencies

Committee Members sought more detail about potential efficiencies with respect to staff time, service, or budgeting. The offices described opportunities related to better reporting, interaction and interoperability with other systems, and improved workflows, noting that the full extent of efficiencies will be realized following implementation. At the follow-up meeting, the Ombudsperson referenced anticipated efficiencies related to streamlining work, and increasing automation of input and generation of reports.

Costs

The Committee inquired about various costs and licensing related to the current and proposed system. Committee

Members were informed that the current licensing fee is \$30,000 per year (proportionately shared by all four offices) and the salaries and benefits for the business analyst is approximately \$130,000. It was noted that the licensing costs for the current system are only for the basic infrastructure for Oracle forms and reports and that the actual software was built in-house so there is no associated licensing fee. The new system will involve paying a vendor for licensing their product based on the number of concurrent users (approximately \$2,000 per user annually with an estimated 120 users); as such, licensing costs will increase.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Committee had extensive discussions about the benefits and risks of the case tracker system replacement project. Committee Members recognized the need to ensure the offices have the tools and supports necessary to support their operations while also expressing some concerns about how the project will unfold. They concluded that the project was necessary at this time and agreed to support the required funding allocations as outlined in each office's budget proposal and requested regular updates on progress, including key milestones and any changes or impacts on the project budget.



APPENDIX 1: DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED-REVIEW OF STATUTORY OFFICE BUDGETS 2021-22

Office of the Auditor General

2021/22 Estimate of Resources (February 2021)

2021-2022 Budget Increase Request

Annual Report 2019-2020

Service Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23

Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Budget Proposal Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2023/24

2019 Annual Report

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Elections BC

Budget Proposal, Fiscal Years 2021/22-2023/24

Modern Elections for Modern Times, 2019-2020 Annual Report and 2020/21 – 2022/23 Service Plan

Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

Budget Submission 2021/22 – 2023/24

Statutory Officer Cover Memo to Summarize Funding Requests by the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

Annual Report 2019/20 and Service Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Registrar of Lobbyists

Budget Submission, Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2023/24

Cover Memo to Summarize Annual Incremental or Supplementary Funding Requests

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Annual Report 2019-2020

Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists, Annual Report 2019-20

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Office of the Merit Commissioner

Budget Submission 2021/22 – 2023/24

Cover Memo to Summarize Annual Incremental or Supplementary Funding Requests

2019-2020 Annual Report

Service Plan Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2023/24

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Office of the Ombudsperson

Budget Submission, 2021/22 – 2023/24

Summary of Annual Incremental and Supplementary Funding Requests

Annual Report 2019 – 2020

Service Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner

Budget Submission, Fiscal Years 2021/22-2023/24

Cover Memo to Summarize Annual Incremental or Supplementary Funding Requests

Annual Report 2019-2020

Service Plan Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2023/24

2020/2021 Q1 – Q3 OPCC Statistics

Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

Budget Submission, Fiscal Years 2021/22-2023/24

Cover Memo to Summarize Annual Incremental or Supplementary Funding Requests

Annual Report 2019/2020 and Service Plan 2020/21 to 2022/23

Financial Statements 2019/20

Budget Submission Supplementary Tables

Joint Submission: Case Tracker System Replacement Project



APPENDIX 2: SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING REQUESTS-5TH SESSION, 41ST PARLIAMENT

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

Bob D'Eith, MLA, Chair (*Maple Ridge-Mission*)

Doug Clovechok, MLA, Deputy Chair (*Columbia River-Revelstoke*)

Donna Barnett, MLA (*Cariboo-Chilcotin*)

Rich Coleman, MLA (*Langley East*)

Mitzi Dean, MLA (*Esquimalt-Metchosin*)

Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA (*Courtenay-Comox*)

Nicholas Simons, MLA (*Powell River-Sunshine Coast*)

SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING REQUESTS

Elections BC: Amendments to the *Election Act* (April 8, 2020)

Elections BC requested supplementary funding to implement amendments to the *Election Act* which were passed in November 2019 and changed how voting is administered. The Chief Electoral Officer requested operational funding of \$3.597

million - \$1.924 million to effect the transition to the new voting model and \$1.673 million for necessary election preparations that were required to be completed in the 2020-21 fiscal year. The Committee agreed that Elections BC be granted access to the requested funding to implement amendments to the *Election Act*.

Elections BC: COVID-19 Preparedness – Provincial General Election (September 18, 2020)

The Committee met with the Elections BC to consider supplementary funding with respect to preparedness for a provincial general election during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chief Electoral Officer requested one-time funding of \$5.7 million for the pre-purchase of supplies and services necessary for a provincial general election taking place during the pandemic. The Committee considered this request, and agreed to recommend that Elections BC be provided access to the proposed supplementary funding.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

April 8, 2020: The Committee recommended that Elections BC be granted access to supplementary funding up to \$3,597,000 for operating expenditures in 2020-21 to implement amendments to the *Election Act*.

September 18, 2020: The Committee recommended that Elections BC be granted access to supplementary funding up to \$5,700,000 for operating expenditures in 2020-21 for pandemic election preparedness.

