

Action Plan and Progress Assessment (APPA) for the implementation of audit recommendations from the OAG- Prepared for the Select Standing Committee of Public Accounts
Attention: Mike Bernier, Chair and Rick Glumac, Deputy Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts

An Audit of B.C. Public Service Ethics Management Released [03/17]

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PAC Meeting Plan ¹	[17/01/18]	Prepared by: Angela Weltz, Director Policy and Research	Reviewed by: Lori Halls, Deputy Minister
1 st APPA Update	[17/01/18]	Prepared by: Angela, Weltz Director Policy and Research	Reviewed by: Lori Halls, Deputy Minister
2 nd APPA Update	[26/02/19]	Prepared by: Angela Weltz, Director Policy and Research	Reviewed by: Okenge Yuma-Morisho, Deputy Minister
3 rd APPA Update	[11/02/20]	Prepared by: Jill Inget, Director, Corporate Ethics Program	Reviewed by: Okenge Yuma Morisho, Deputy Minister
4 th APPA Update	[24/02/21]	Prepared by: Jill Inget, Director, Corporate Ethics Program	Reviewed by: Bobbi Sadler, Deputy Minister

Rec. # Accepted? Yes / No ²	OAG Recommendations	Actions Planned & Target Date(s) ³	Assessment of Progress to date ⁴ and Actions Taken ⁵ (APPA update)
1 Yes	Ensure that all public servants regularly review and sign off that they understand both the Oath of Employment and the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees.	Effective July 1, 2018 an annual Oath and Standards of Conduct review requirement was implemented for all employees. Target date: July 1, 2018	Fully or substantially implemented Effective June 1, 2018, business processes and a new system to track completion and sign-off of the Oath and Standards of Conduct (SoC) for all new hires was launched. Effective July 1, 2018 an annual Oath and SoC review requirement was implemented for all employees with a due date of May 31, 2019. As of June 30, 2020, 27,010 public servants had completed the annual review. This represents 83.9% of all eligible employees.

¹ The audited organization will be required to present their initial action plan at this meeting (i.e. First three columns completed for each OAG recommendation included in the audit report)

² For each recommendation, the audited organization should state whether or not they have accepted the recommendation and plan to implement it fully by typing either “Yes” or “No” under the number of the recommendation.

³ Target date is the date that audited organization expects to have “fully or substantially implemented” the recommendation. If several actions are planned to implement one recommendation, indicate target dates for each if they are different.

⁴The Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) will request that the audited organization provide a yearly update (i.e completed “Assessment of Progress and Actions Taken” column) until all recommendations are fully implemented or otherwise addressed to the satisfaction of the PAC. This is for the APPA update.

⁵ This action plan and the subsequent updates have not been audited by the OAG. However, at a future date that Office may undertake work to determine whether the entity has implemented the recommendations. The results of that work will be reported in a separate report prepared by the OAG.

Please provide your email response to:

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Cc email to: the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia actionplans@bcauditor.com

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Rec. # Accepted? Yes / No ²	OAG Recommendations	Actions Planned & Target Date(s) ³	Assessment of Progress to date ⁴ and Actions Taken ⁵ (APPA update)
2. Yes	Implement an ethics training plan to ensure that all levels of staff are receiving appropriate and timely ethics training.	<p>Develop a corporate ethics training plan to consolidate existing corporate ethics training and align with the policy and legislation changes that are being developed in the context of work underway to address the Ombudsperson's 2017 Misfire Report (April 2017) recommendations.</p> <p>Target date: March 15, 2019 [Note: target date for full implementation has been revised from initial PAC meeting date of March 31, 2018.]</p>	<p>Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>An integrated ethics training plan was developed in 2018 and updated February 2019. There is now a training plan for ministry ethics advisors, as well.</p> <p>An online course entitled, Ethics for Everyone, was launched as part of the overall training plan for the BC Public Service. This course is an online interactive course/resource that provides an in-depth look at the application of the Standards of Conduct and other HR policies in relation to ethics in the BC public service. It builds employees' knowledge and skills by creating awareness and fostering understanding of ways to mitigate issues, respond appropriately, and know when and how to seek the advice of others.</p> <p>Ethics and PIDA-related content was and continues to be incorporated into all corporate learning offered through the BC Public Service Agency to build awareness and encourage conversations about ethic and the Standards of Conduct across the public service.</p>
3. Yes	Ensure that ministries clearly formalize and communicate the role and responsibilities of ethics advisors to act as a point of contact and advise public servants on matters related to the standards of conduct.	<p>Updates to the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees to define the role of ministry ethics advisors was implemented April 2018.</p>	<p>Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>The Standards of Conduct was updated in 2019 to reflect the introduction of the Public Interest Disclosure Act. The roles and responsibilities of the ministry ethics were updated to reflect their new duties. Ministry ethics advisors sign an agreement to acknowledge their roles and responsibilities, and they receive ongoing training and support. A contact list of ministry ethics advisors is available on government's corporate website.</p>
4. Yes	Formally evaluate ethics risks as part of their regular risk reviews.	<p>Plans are in development for an ethics risk assessment exercise as part of corporate ethics management.</p> <p>Target Date: Spring 2022 [Note: target date for full implementation has been revised from initial PAC meeting date of March 31, 2018.]</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>There was a delay on the implementation of this recommendation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The BC Public Service Agency and Ministry of Finance continue to work on implementation of this recommendation for spring 2022.</p>

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Rec. # Accepted? Yes / No ²	OAG Recommendations	Actions Planned & Target Date(s) ³	Assessment of Progress to date ⁴ and Actions Taken ⁵ (APPA update)
5. Yes	Provide employees with a way to report perceived unethical conduct where the process and protections are transparent and easy to understand, address the barriers to reporting, and where the individual who comes forward to report is informed of the outcome as far as appropriate.	Changes to government’s corporate website, internal communications and training for employees and supervisors have been made available.	<p>Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>In April 2018, new information was posted on the government corporate website for employees who may want to bring forward ethical concerns. These webpages are resources for ongoing customer service, included in responses to relevant employee queries, and referenced in corporate communications campaign and training materials.</p> <p>The information available to employees and supervisors was enhanced with the implementation of PIDA in December 2019. Employees have access to comprehensive information about the avenues available to them if they have concerns of wrongdoing, how to report wrongdoing, and the protections against reprisal.</p> <p>Engagement sessions on ethics and PIDA have been delivered across the public service for 5,444 employees as of February 6, 2020. Training offered corporately has been updated to reflect the changes to the Standards of Conduct, PIDA, and the importance of speaking up when there are ethical concerns.</p>
6. Yes	Share with staff information on the types of allegations of misconduct raised, and action taken to address them.	Changes to government’s corporate website have been made available.	<p>Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>In April 2018, information was posted on the government corporate website regarding sharing the results of misconduct investigations. This webpage is a resource for ongoing customer service and is included in responses to relevant employee queries.</p> <p>The information available to employees and supervisors was enhanced with the implementation of PIDA in December 2019. Employees have access to comprehensive information about the avenues available to them if they have concerns of wrongdoing, how to report wrongdoing, and the protections against reprisal. Further, annual reporting is publicly available under PIDA, detailing the number of disclosures, investigations, findings of wrongdoing as well as any recommendations made by the Agency Designated Officer or Ombudsperson. Progress on the recommendations will also be published.</p>

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7. Yes	Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of controls to prevent, detect and correct misconduct, and address any gaps identified.	Plans in development for regular ethics monitoring and reporting Target Date: Spring 2021 [Note: target date for full implementation changed from March 31, 2018 as proposed at initial PAC meeting.]	Fully or substantially implemented The first ethics reporting for the BC Public Service, which will include the annual PIDA report and information, will be published in spring 2021.
8. Yes	Clearly designate the lead role for coordinated ethics management across the public service.		Fully or substantially implemented Effective April 2018, the Deputy Minister responsible for the BC Public Service Agency has been assigned role of Corporate Ethics Lead across the public service.

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