



Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

# Office of the Auditor General of Ontario Operations Report



*December 2021*



# Office of the Auditor General of Ontario Operations Report

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (Office) serves the Legislative Assembly and the citizens of Ontario by conducting value-for-money, financial, information technology, governance and special audits, reviews and investigations, and reporting on them. In so doing, the Office helps the Legislative Assembly hold the government, its administrators, government agencies and Crown-controlled corporations and grant recipients accountable for how prudently they spend public funds, and for the value they obtain for the money spent on behalf of Ontario taxpayers.

The work of the Office is performed under the authority of the *Auditor General Act*. In addition, under the amended *Government Advertising Act, 2004*, the Auditor General is responsible for reviewing and approving certain types of proposed government advertising for compliance with this act. Also, we have a requirement to report on certain government reporting under the *Fiscal Sustainability, Transparency, and Accountability Act, 2019*, and in a year in which a regularly scheduled election is held, the Auditor General is required to review and deliver an opinion on the reasonableness of the government's pre-election report on its expectations for the financial performance of the province over the next three fiscal years. In 2022, the Office will be required to complete this work on the *2022 Pre-election Report*.

On April 1, 2019, the *Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act, 2018* transferred many of the responsibilities of the former Office of the

Environmental Commissioner of Ontario to the Auditor General's Office. A Commissioner of the Environment, appointed by the Auditor General, works as an Assistant Auditor General reporting directly to the Auditor General. The Office conducts audits of government programs that impact the environment under the same processes as the Office's value-for-money audits and has additional reporting responsibilities with respect to the operation of the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993*. The Office is also able to report on energy conservation, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and any other environmental subjects that the Auditor General considers appropriate to conduct work on and report on to the Legislative Assembly.

All four acts can be found at [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca).

## General Overview

### Value-for-Money Audits

About 75% of the Office's work relates to value-for-money auditing, which assesses how well a given "auditee" (the entity that we audit) manages and administers its programs or activities. Value-for-money audits delve into the auditee's underlying operations to assess the level of service being delivered to the public and the relative cost-effectiveness of the service. The Office has the authority to conduct value-for-money audits of the following entities:

- Ontario government ministries;
- Crown agencies;

- Crown-controlled corporations;
  - designated administrative authorities; and
  - organizations in the broader public sector that receive government grants (for example, agencies that provide mental-health services, children’s aid societies, community colleges, hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards and universities).
- The *Auditor General Act* (Act) [in subclauses 12(2)(f)(iv) and (v)] identifies the criteria to be considered in a value-for-money audit:

- Money should be spent with due regard for economy.
- Money should be spent with due regard for efficiency.
- Appropriate procedures should be in place to measure and report on the effectiveness of programs.

The Act requires that the Auditor General report on any instances she may have observed where these three value-for-money criteria have not been met. More specific criteria that relate directly to the operations of the particular ministry, program or organization being audited are developed for each value-for-money audit.

The Act also requires that the Auditor General report on instances where the following was observed:

- Accounts were not properly kept or public money was not fully accounted for.
- Essential records were not maintained or the rules and procedures applied were not sufficient to:
  - safeguard and control public property;
  - effectively check the assessment, collection and proper allocation of revenue; or
  - ensure that expenditures were made only as authorized.
- Money was expended for purposes other than the ones for which it was appropriated.

Assessing the extent to which the auditee complies with the requirement to protect against these risks is generally incorporated into both value-for-money audits and “attest” audits (discussed in a later section). Other compliance work that is also typically included in value-for-money audits

includes determining whether the auditee adheres to key provisions in legislation and the authorities that govern the auditee or the auditee’s programs and activities.

Government programs and activities are the result of government policy decisions. Thus, our value-for-money audits focus on how well management is administering and executing government policy decisions. It is important to note, however, that in doing so we do not comment on the merits of government policy. Rather, it is the Legislative Assembly that holds the government accountable for policy matters by continually monitoring and challenging government policies through questions during legislative sessions and through reviews of legislation and expenditure estimates.

In planning, performing and reporting on our value-for-money work, we follow the relevant professional standards established by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada. These standards require that we have processes for ensuring the quality, integrity and value of our work. Some of the processes we use are described in the following sections.

## Selecting What to Audit

The Office audits significant ministry programs and activities, organizations in the broader public sector, Crown agencies, Crown-controlled corporations and designated authorities. Audits are selected using a risk-based approach. Since our mandate expanded in 2004 to allow us to examine organizations in the broader public sector, our audits have covered a wide range of topics in sectors such as health (hospitals, long-term-care homes, Community Care Access Centres, and mental-health service providers), education (school boards, universities and colleges), and social services (children’s aid societies and social-service agencies), as well as several large Crown-controlled corporations.

In selecting what program, activity or organization to audit each year, we consider how great the risk is that an auditee is not meeting the three value-for-money criteria, plus environmental

considerations, resulting in potential negative consequences for the public it serves. Some of the factors we consider include the following:

- the impact of the program, activity or organization on the public;
- the total revenues or expenditures involved;
- the complexity and diversity of the auditee's operations;
- the results of previous audits and related follow-ups;
- recent significant changes in the auditee's operations; and
- the impact of the program, activity or organization on the environment.

We also consider work that has been done by the auditee's internal auditors, and may rely on, or reference, that work in the conduct of our audit. Depending on what that work consists of, we may defer an audit or change our audit's scope to avoid duplication of effort. In cases where we do not reduce the scope of our audit, we still use and reference the results of internal audit work in our audit report.

### Setting Audit Objectives, Audit Criteria and Assurance Levels

When we begin an audit, we set an objective for what the audit is to achieve. We then develop suitable audit criteria to evaluate the design and operating effectiveness of key systems, policies and procedures to address identified risks. Developing criteria involves: extensive research on work done by recognized bodies of experts; other organizations or jurisdictions delivering similar programs and services; management's own policies and procedures; applicable criteria used in other audits; and applicable laws, regulations and other authorities. To further ensure their suitability, the criteria we develop are discussed with the auditee's senior management at the planning stage of the audit.

The next step is to design and conduct tests so that we can reach a conclusion regarding our audit

objective, and make relevant and meaningful observations and recommendations. Each audit report has a section titled "Audit Objective and Scope," in which the audit objective is stated and the scope of our work is explained. As required under our Act, we also report on circumstances where information was either difficult to obtain or not available for our review.

We plan our work to be able to obtain and provide assurance at an "audit level"—the highest reasonable level of assurance that we can obtain. Specifically, an audit level of assurance is obtained by interviewing management and analyzing information that management provides; examining and testing systems, procedures and transactions; confirming facts with independent sources; and, where necessary because we are examining a highly technical area, obtaining independent expert assistance and advice. We also use professional judgment in much of our work.

Standard audit procedures are designed to provide a reasonable level of assurance that the audit will identify significant matters and material deviations. Certain factors make it difficult for audit tests to identify all deviations. For example, we may conclude that the auditee had a control system in place for a process or procedure that was working effectively to prevent a particular problem from occurring, but that auditee management or staff might be able to circumvent such control systems, so we cannot guarantee that the problem will never arise.

With respect to the information that management provides, under the Act we are entitled to access all information and records necessary to perform our duties.

Infrequently, the Office will perform a review rather than an audit. A review provides a moderate level of assurance, obtained primarily through inquiries and discussions with management; analyses of information provided by management; and only limited examination and testing of systems, procedures and transactions. We perform reviews when:

- it would be prohibitively expensive or unnecessary to provide a higher level of assurance; or

- other factors relating to the nature of the program or activity make it more appropriate to conduct a review instead of an audit.

## Communicating with Management

To help ensure the factual accuracy of our observations and conclusions, staff from our Office communicate with the auditee's senior management throughout the value-for-money audit or review. Early in the process, our staff meet with management to discuss the objective, criteria and focus of our work in general terms. During the audit or review, our staff meet with management to update them on our progress and ensure open lines of communication.

At the conclusion of on-site work, management is briefed on our preliminary results. A conditional draft report is then prepared and provided to and discussed with the auditee's senior management, who provide written responses to our recommendations. These are discussed and incorporated into the draft report, which the Auditor General finalizes with the deputy minister or head of the agency, corporation or grant-recipient organization, after which the report is published as part of the Auditor General's Annual Report. In compliance with Chartered Professional Accountants Canada Standards, letters of representation are signed by senior management confirming that they have provided and disclosed to our Office all relevant information pertaining to the audit.

## Special Reports

As required by the Act, the Office reports on its audits in an Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly. In addition, under section 12(1), the Office may make a special report to the Legislature at any time, on any matter that, in the opinion of the Auditor General, should not be deferred until the Annual Report.

Last year and this year, the Office completed several audits on the province's response to COVID-19. This year on April 28, 2021 our special report on Pandemic Readiness and Response in Long-Term Care was tabled

in the Legislative Assembly. On May 12, 2021 our special report on the Management of Health Related COVID-19 Expenditures was also tabled. Our special report on COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Supply is included in our 2021 Annual Report.

Two other sections of the Act authorize the Auditor General to undertake additional special work. Under section 16, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Committee) may resolve that the Auditor General examine and report on any matter respecting the Public Accounts. Under section 17, the Legislative Assembly, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts or a minister of the Crown may request that the Auditor General undertake a special assignment. However, these special assignments are not to take precedence over the Auditor General's other duties, and the Auditor General can decline such an assignment requested by a minister if she believes that it conflicts with other duties.

On April 28, 2021, the Committee passed a motion for our Office to "conduct a value for money audit on Laurentian University's operations from the period 2010 to 2021." However, our Office has been denied access by Laurentian to information we consider necessary to conduct this work and to fully satisfy the Committee's request. Specifically, Laurentian University has refused to provide our Office information that it has decided is subject to solicitor-client privilege, litigation privilege, or settlement privilege. In some instances, the university has also declined to provide non-privileged information on the basis that to review these documents for privilege is too resource intensive.

Subsections 10(1) and (2) of the *Auditor General Act* (Act) impose a duty on auditees to provide documents and information that the Auditor General believes to be necessary to perform his or her duties under this Act. Under subsection 10(3), a disclosure to the Auditor General under subsection (1) or (2) does not constitute a waiver of solicitor-client privilege, litigation privilege or settlement privilege.

The difficulties in obtaining information from Laurentian have resulted in significant time and effort as well as the incurring of significant unanticipated

legal costs. We anticipate tabling the special report early in 2022. Refer to the report Update on the Special Audit of Laurentian University in our *2021 Annual Report* for more information on this work.

## Attest Audits

Attest audits are examinations of an auditee's financial statements. In such audits, the auditor expresses his or her opinion on whether the financial statements present information on the auditee's operations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Compliance audit work is also often incorporated into attest audit work. Specifically, we assess the controls for managing risks relating to improperly kept accounts; unaccounted-for public money; lack of record keeping; inadequate safeguarding of public property; deficient procedures for assessing, collecting and properly allocating revenue; and unauthorized expenditures.

## The Auditees

Every year, we audit the consolidated financial statements of the province and the financial statements of many agencies of the Crown. Specifically, the Act [in subsections 9(1), (2), and (3)] requires that:

- the Auditor General audit the accounts and records of the receipt and disbursement of public money forming part of the province's Consolidated Revenue Fund, whether held in trust or otherwise;
- the Auditor General audit the financial statements of those agencies of the Crown that are not audited by another auditor;
- public accounting firms appointed as auditors of certain agencies of the Crown perform their audits under the direction of the Auditor General and report their results to the Auditor General; and
- public accounting firms auditing Crown-controlled corporations deliver to the Auditor General a copy of the audited financial statements of the corporation and a copy of the accounting firm's report of its findings and recommendations to management (typically contained in a management letter).

Our Annual Report chapter on the Public Accounts of Ontario discusses this year's attest audit of the province's consolidated financial statements. See *The Public Accounts of the Province of Ontario*.

We do not typically discuss the results of attest audits of agencies and Crown-controlled corporations in this report unless a significant issue arises and it would be appropriate for all Members of Provincial Parliament to be aware of this issue. Agency legislation normally stipulates that the Auditor General's reporting responsibilities are to the agency's board and the minister(s) responsible for the agency. Our Office also provides copies of our independent auditors' reports and of the related agency financial statements to the deputy minister of the associated ministry, as well as to the Secretary of the Treasury Board.

We identify areas for improvement during the course of an attest audit of an agency and provide our recommendations to agency senior management in an audit findings report. We then discuss our recommendations with management and update the report to reflect the results of our discussions. After the draft report is cleared and the agency's senior management have responded to it in writing, we prepare a final report, which is discussed with the agency's audit committee (if one exists). We bring significant matters to the attention of the Legislature by including them in our Annual Report.

Part 1 of **Exhibit 1** lists the agencies that were audited during the 2020/21 audit year. The Office also contracts with public accounting firms to serve as our agents in auditing a number of these agencies. Part 2 of **Exhibit 1** and **Exhibit 2** list the agencies of the Crown and the Crown-controlled corporations, respectively, that were audited by public accounting firms during the 2020/21 audit year. **Exhibit 3** lists significant organizations in the broader public sector whose accounts are also audited by public accounting firms and included in the province's consolidated financial statements.

## Independence

The Auditor General and staff of the Office are independent of the government and its administration. This independence is an essential safeguard that enables the Office to fulfill its auditing and reporting responsibilities objectively and fairly.

The Auditor General is appointed to a 10-year, non-renewable term, and can be dismissed only for cause by the Legislative Assembly. Consequently, the Auditor General maintains an arm's-length distance from the government and the political parties in the Legislative Assembly and is thus free to fulfill the Office's legislated mandate without political pressure.

The Board of Internal Economy, an all-party legislative committee that is independent of the government's administrative process, reviews and approves the Office's budget, which is subsequently laid before the Legislative Assembly. As required by the Act, the Office's expenditures in the 2020/21 fiscal year have been audited by a firm of chartered professional accountants, and the audited financial statements of the Office were submitted to the Board and must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The audited statements and related discussion of expenditures for the year are presented at the end of this section.

## Confidentiality of Working Papers

In the course of our reporting activities, we prepare draft audit reports and findings reports that are considered an integral part of our audit working papers. Under section 19 of the Act, these working papers shall not be laid before the Legislative Assembly or any of its committees. As well, our Office is exempt from the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). This means that our draft reports and audit working papers, including all information obtained from an auditee during the course of an audit, are privileged, and cannot be accessed by anyone under FIPPA, thus further ensuring confidentiality.

## Code of Professional Conduct

The Office has a Code of Professional Conduct to ensure that staff maintain high professional standards and keep up a professional work environment. The Code is intended to be a general statement of philosophy, principles and rules regarding conduct for employees of the Office. Our employees have a duty to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and to strive to achieve in their work the highest standards of behaviour, competence and integrity.

The Code explains why these expectations exist, and further describes the Office's responsibilities to the Legislative Assembly, the public and our auditees. The Code also provides guidance on disclosure requirements and the steps to be taken to avoid conflicts of interest. All employees are required to complete an annual conflict-of-interest declaration and undergo a police security check upon being hired and every five years thereafter.

## Office Organization and Personnel

The Office is organized into portfolio teams to align with related audit entities and to foster expertise in the various areas of audit activity. The portfolios, somewhat based on the government's own ministry organization, are each headed by a Director, who oversees and is responsible for the audits within the assigned portfolio. Directors report to Assistant Auditors General, who report to the Auditor General. Reporting to the Directors and rounding out the teams are Audit Managers and various other audit staff, as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

The Auditor General and the Assistant Auditors General make up the Office's Executive Committee. The Auditor General, the Assistant Auditors General, the Audit Directors, the Director of Human Resources and Office Services, the Director of Communications and Government Advertising Review, the Director of Information



Technology, and the Strategic and Operations Advisor to the Auditor General make up the Office's Senior Management Committee.

## The Auditor General's Panel of Senior External Advisors

The Auditor General's Panel of Senior External Advisors (Panel) was established in early 2017 to provide strategic advice to the Auditor General on her Office's work. The Panel is governed by Terms of Reference that outline the Panel's mandate, objective, membership, scope of work, and other terms and conditions. The members of the Panel meet at least twice per year and may meet on other occasions when necessary. During 2021, the Panel met three times, reviewing material prior to those meetings.

The Panel comprises a broad cross-section of professionals and experts outside of the Office. Members are selected by the Auditor General based on their capacity to provide the Auditor General with the highest-quality advice in matters pertaining to the Panel's mandate. Members of the Panel are appointed for a term of three years and are eligible for reappointment at the discretion of the Auditor General. There are currently 11 members on the Panel:

- Tim Beauchamp, Former Director, Public Sector Accounting Board
- Ann Cavoukian, Executive Director, Global Privacy and Security by Design Centre and Former Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
- Deborah Deller, Former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
- Burkard Eberlein, Professor, Public Policy, York University (Schulich)
- Julie Gelfand, Former Federal Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Office of the Auditor General of Canada
- Peter Mansbridge, Former Chief Correspondent for CBC News and Anchor of *The National*

- David Marshall, Former President, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board
- William Robson, Chief Executive Officer, C.D. Howe Institute
- Carmen Rossiter, Program Director, Centre for Governance, Risk Management and Control, York University (Schulich)
- Wayne Strelieff, Former Auditor General of British Columbia and Former Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan
- Christopher Wirth, Lawyer, Keel Cottrelle LLP

## Quality Assurance Review Process

Professional standards require that auditors establish and maintain a system of quality controls to help ensure that professional and legal standards are met and that audit reports are appropriate in the circumstances. Quality assurance reviews form an essential component of this system by providing a basis for determining whether quality control policies are appropriately designed and applied. The Office has implemented a system of internal quality assurance reviews and is also subject to external quality assurance reviews both by the Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA) of Ontario and by the Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors.

The internal quality assurance review process consists of reviews of completed audit files on a cyclical basis by individuals within the Office. Individuals chosen for this role are conversant with and have up-to-date knowledge of the application of professional accounting and assurance standards and have no other involvement with the audit. The selection of audit files for quality assurance review is based on criteria designed to provide the Office with reasonable confidence that professional standards and Office policies are being met. The selection criteria include, but are not limited to, the risk associated with the engagement (such as complexity

or public sensitivity) and the results of previous quality assurance reviews.

In addition to internal file reviews, audit challenge teams are established for each value-for-money audit conducted and include the Auditor General, all Assistant Auditors General, and a Director and Manager from a separate audit portfolio. They review and question audit teams' audit planning reports and final reports.

The Office is also subject to review by CPA Ontario, which conducts a triennial practice inspection of our Office to assess whether, as practitioners of public accounting, we are adhering to the professional standards set out in the CPA Canada Handbook and CPA Ontario's *Member's Handbook*. Practice inspection involves an assessment of the Office's quality controls and a review of a sample of completed audit files selected by CPA Ontario.

As well, through our participation in the Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors, our Office undergoes external quality assurance reviews on a regular basis. These reviews are conducted by experienced professional auditors from other jurisdictions across Canada. In addition to providing assurance that quality control systems are well designed and effective, this process also facilitates the sharing and exchange of information and experience, and encourages and supports continued development of auditing methodology, practices and professional development.

## Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors

The Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors (CCOLA) shares information and supports the continued development of auditing methodology, practices and professional development among legislative audit offices at the federal and provincial levels. Its membership consists of the federal Auditor General and Auditors General of each of the 10 Canadian provinces. Legislative auditors from outside

of Canada can have either "Associate Member" status with full voting rights, or "Observer Member" status, which does not afford voting rights. The CCOLA currently has one associate member—the Auditor General of Bermuda, and one observer member—the Auditor General of the Cayman Islands.

An annual conference is held jointly with the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC). CCPAC consists of delegates from federal, provincial and territorial public accounts committees across Canada. The conference brings together legislative auditors and members of the Standing Committees on Public Accounts from the federal government, provinces and territories, and provides an excellent opportunity for sharing ideas, exchanging information and learning about best practices for Standing Committees on Public Accounts in Canada. This year, the 42nd annual conference was hosted virtually by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta from September 8 to 9, 2021. Next year, the 43rd annual conference is planned to be held in Ottawa, Ontario.

## Inquiries from the Public and Members of Provincial Parliament

The Office of the Auditor General receives inquiries from the public, Members of Provincial Parliament and the civil service through letter, fax, email and phone. Each inquiry is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and is logged to ensure that the information is recorded, and that we can track inquiries received and responses provided. In April 2021, the Office launched a new web form to make it easier for the public to contact our Office and improve the tracking and analysis of public inquiries. The Office also established a whistleblower hotline where the general public, those who work in the Ontario public sector, and anyone doing business with the public sector can confidentially report suspected wrongdoing or misconduct.

During the 2020/21 fiscal year, the Office received 1,774 public inquiries (up from 810 in 2019/20). Included in these were 13 inquiries from 13 MPPs from the Progressive Conservative Party, Liberal Party and New Democrat Party. The Office conducts an annual overall review of public inquiries to assess trends and recurring issues and for consideration as part of the audit selection process.

## Activities and Results Produced by the Office This Year

Despite the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, our Office had another productive year, effectively utilizing technology and project management, and benefiting from great teamwork. Refer to

**Figure 2** for an at-a-glance view of our Office's activities this year and the results that were produced.

While operating within our budget, during the 2021 calendar year we completed 22 value-for-money audits, including four environmental value-for-money audits; three special reports on the province's response to COVID-19; 18 follow-up reports on previous value-for-money audit reports, one follow-up report on a previous special report, and six follow-up reports on reports issued by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. We also expanded our tracking of the status of previous recommendations made by following up on the 1,756 actions we recommended in our Annual Reports of 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

As mentioned in the Attest Audits section, we are responsible for auditing the province's consolidated financial statements, as well as the statements of 37 Crown agencies and completed

**Figure 2: Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, Activities and Results—At a Glance**

Prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario



- 37 agency financial audits completed during the audit cycle
- 12 external financial statement filing reviews completed
- Provided clean opinion on the 2020/21 Public Accounts
- Reviewed provincial debt filing documentation
- Follow-ups on 18 value-for-money audits (VFMs), one special report, six PAC reports
- 22 VFMs
- Special report on COVID-19 containing three chapters
- *2021 Annual Report of Environmental Value-for-Money Audits and the Operation of the Environmental Bill of Rights* containing five reports including our work on the *Environmental Bill of Rights*
- Report on compliance with the *Government Advertising Act*

1. Figures reported for fiscal 2020/21.

2. Figures reported on activities since our last Annual Report (Nov 1, 2020–Oct 31, 2021).

12 external financial statement filing reviews. We met all of our key financial statement audit deadlines while continuing to invest in training to ensure adherence to accounting and assurance standards and methodology for conducting attest audits. We provided a clean audit opinion on the 2020/21 Public Accounts released August 27, 2021. Our report on the Public Accounts of the Province includes a discussion of accounting issues identified during that audit.

We also met our review responsibilities under the *Government Advertising Act, 2004* (see Review of Government Advertising in this *2021 Annual Report*), and met our responsibility under the *Environmental Bill of Rights* (EBR) through the issuance of our *2021 Annual Report of Environmental Value-for-Money Audits and the Operation of the Environmental Bill of Rights* on November 22, 2021, which contained five reports including prescribed ministries' compliance with the EBR and one follow-up report.

According to Hansard, the official transcript of House and committee proceedings, there were 481 mentions of the Auditor General in the House and 2,355 mentions in eight Standing Committees and two Select Committees in 2020/21. Further details on our activities with the Standing Committee on Public Accounts are outlined in our report *The Standing Committee on Public Accounts* from our *2021 Annual Report*.

We connected with members of the public through our website, Twitter, phone, email and letters. In 2020/21 we had over 91,340 visitors to our website (up from 85,000 in 2019/20) and 2,341 Twitter followers (up from 1,858 in 2019/20). As mentioned earlier in this section, we also received 1,774 public inquiries (up from 810 in 2019/2020) through email, phone, letters and fax.

Our activities and results produced by the Office this year would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, as well as of our agent auditors, contract staff and our Panel of Senior Advisors.

## Strategic Plan 2020–2024

Last year our Office developed a new Strategic Plan for the five-year period 2020–24. **Figure 3** includes the key goals and objectives in the Plan.

## Financial Accountability

The following discussion and our financial statements present the Office's financial results for the 2020/21 fiscal year. Our financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian Public-Sector Accounting Standards. In accordance with these standards, we have presented a breakdown of our expenses in terms of the main activities our Office is responsible for: value-for-money and special audits, financial-statement audits, pre-election report and the review of government advertising. This break-down is provided in Note 8 to the financial statements and indicates that 77% of our time was used to perform value-for-money and special audits, a stated priority of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and 22% to complete the audits of the annual financial statements of the province and 37 of its agencies. The remaining time was devoted to our statutory responsibilities under the *Government Advertising Act*, and the *Fiscal Sustainability, Transparency, and Accountability Act, 2019*.

**Figure 4** provides a comparison of our approved budget and expenditures over the last five years. **Figure 5** presents the major components of our spending during the 2020/21 fiscal year, and shows that salary and benefit costs for staff accounted for just over 77% of spending, while professional and other services, along with rent, comprised most of the remainder. These proportions have been relatively stable in recent years. **Figure 6** presents the year-over-year percentage change of actual expenditures between 2019/20 and 2020/21. Overall, our expenses increased only slightly in 2020/21 from the previous year.

Figure 3: 2020–2024 Strategic Plan at a Glance

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Reporting</b> <b>Provide accurate and objective information through timely and relevant reports (including recommendations) and audit opinions.</b>
	<b>Objectives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure our stakeholders continue to value our assurance and advice on the reliability of financial statements.</li> <li>2. Our value-for-money (VFM) audits, including environmental VFM audits, are accurate and objective and are valued by our stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Stakeholders continue to refer to our work and request our services.</li> <li>4. Provide appropriate information to assist the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) in performing its mandate.</li> <li>5. The government implements changes that address the issues raised in our reports.</li> <li>6. Comment on legislation that impacts our mandate.</li> <li>7. Effectively fulfill our limited responsibilities under the <i>Government Advertising Act, 2004</i> (GAA).</li> <li>8. Effectively fulfill our responsibilities under the <i>Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993</i> (EBR).</li> <li>9. Effectively fulfill our mandate to review and comment on the <i>Pre-Election Report on Ontario's Finances</i> when it is issued.</li> <li>10. Respond to public inquiries in a timely manner and continue to be accessible to the public.</li> <li>11. Expand the Office's role in assessing public-sector governance and promote best practices.</li> </ol>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>People, Learning and Development</b> <b>Provide a high-performing, diverse and inclusive team environment with ongoing professional training and development.</b>
	<b>Objectives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct strategic human-resources (HR) planning that is dynamic and reflects both the current and future needs of the Office.</li> <li>2. Human-resources (HR) policies are aligned with the Office's values and are clearly and consistently communicated and applied.</li> <li>3. Attract and recruit diverse, highly skilled and motivated professionals.</li> <li>4. Train and retain a diverse, highly skilled and motivated team of professionals.</li> <li>5. Promote career development and proactively manage succession in a way that provides opportunities for staff across the organization.</li> <li>6. Promote a sense of community within the Office through strong professional relationships.</li> <li>7. Attract and engage credible contractors, agent auditors and subject-matter expert advisors to provide specialized expertise and support our work.</li> </ol>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Operations</b> <b>Allocate resources efficiently and effectively and measure results.</b>
	<b>Objectives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Audit operations incorporate best practices in processes, methods and tools.</li> <li>2. Optimize resources to ensure the capacity of the Office to respond to the requirements of our stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Continuously improve the efficiency of the Office through the effective and consistent use of technology.</li> <li>4. Reduce the environmental footprint of the Office to demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability.</li> <li>5. Continuously improve the effectiveness of Communications practices.</li> <li>6. Ensure that Office accommodations and equipment are properly managed and maintained.</li> </ol>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Engagement</b> <b>Engage Members of Provincial Parliament and the public in our work. Establish and maintain relationships with professional organizations, private-sector accounting firms, academic institutions and other independent Officers of the Legislature.</b>
	<b>Objectives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage with citizens to raise awareness of the Office's mandate and reports.</li> <li>2. Our reports are available, accessible and engaging for stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Develop a social media plan for the Office that expands our communication capabilities, while effectively managing the image of the Office.</li> <li>4. Advance our professional relationships with public-sector organizations, academic institutions, private-sector accounting firms, professional organizations and relevant stakeholders.</li> </ol>

**Figure 4: Five-Year Comparison of Spending (Accrual Basis) (\$ 000)**

Prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

Category	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<b>Approved budget</b>	<b>18,566</b>	<b>19,547</b>	<b>20,613</b>	<b>26,318</b>	<b>26,084</b>
<b>Actual expenses</b>					
Salaries and benefits	12,830	13,568	14,269	18,329	19,187
Professional and other services	2,538	2,683	2,510	2,812	2,644
Rent	1,090	1,097	1,080	1,444 <sup>1</sup>	1,166 <sup>1</sup>
Training, supplies, equipment and other <sup>2</sup>	856	875	945	1,115	1,189
Travel and communications	312	374	337	549	177
Statutory expenses	472	661	630	509	407
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,098</b>	<b>19,258</b>	<b>19,771</b>	<b>24,758</b>	<b>24,770</b>
<b>Unused appropriations<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>42</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>1,092</b>

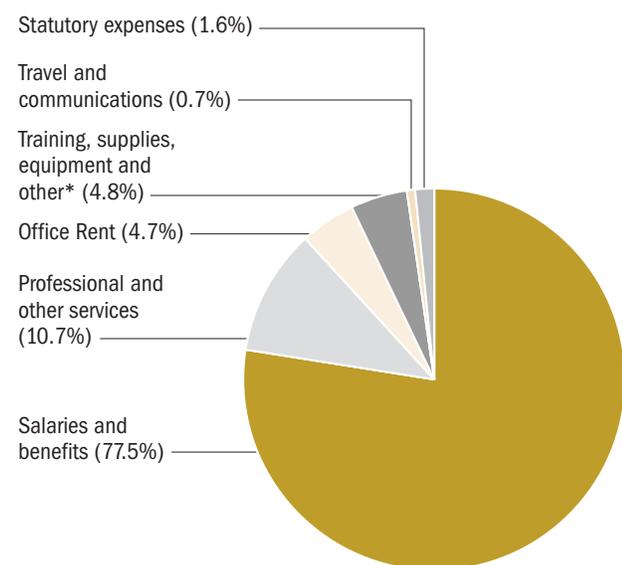
1. Includes rent for former Environmental Commission of Ontario space that was sublet effective April 1, 2020.

2. "Other" includes amortization of capital assets.

3. These amounts are typically slightly different than the excess of appropriation over expenses as a result of non-cash expenses (such as amortization of capital assets, deferred lease inducements and employee future benefit accruals).

4. Expanded duties resulting from the *Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act, 2018***Figure 5: Spending by Major Expenditure Category, 2020/21**

Prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario



\* "Other" includes amortization of capital assets.

**Figure 6: Actual Expenses for 2020/21 and 2019/20 (\$ 000)**

Prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

Actual Expenses	2020/21	2019/20	% Change
Salaries and Benefits	19,187	18,329	5
Professional and other services	2,644	2,812	(6)
Rent	1,166	1,444	(19)
Training, supplies, equipment and amortization	1,189	1,115	7
Travel and communication	177	549	(68)
Statutory expenses	407	509	(20)
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,770</b>	<b>24,758</b>	<b>-</b>

In November 2018, the Board of Internal Economy of the Legislature approved our request to increase our staffing complement from 116 to 129. In April 2019, the Board also approved an increase in our staffing complement by 16 to enable us to hire staff from the former Office of the Environmental Commissioner and a new Assistant Auditor General and Commissioner of the Environment, which brought our approved complement to 145. By the end of the 2020/21 fiscal year, due to some staff turnover and maternity leaves throughout the year, our Office's full-time equivalents (FTEs) totalled 137 as shown in **Figure 7**. Staff turnover was due mainly to the market for professional accountants becoming more robust.

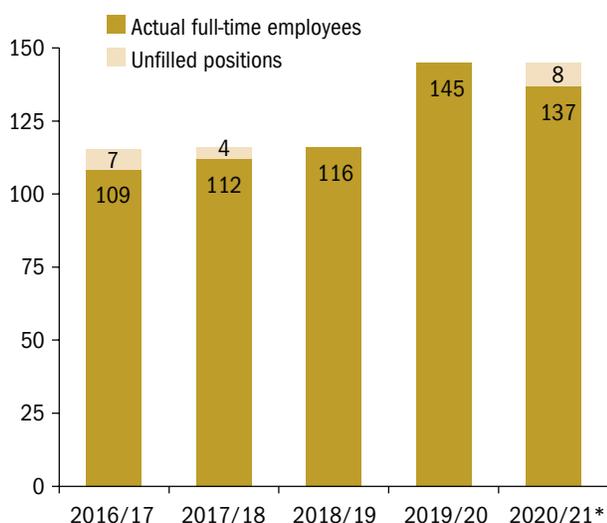
A more detailed discussion of the changes in our expenses and some of the challenges we face follows.

## Salaries and Benefits

Our salary and benefit costs were 5% higher than in 2019/20. The increase was a result of the annualized cost of promotions and changes to staff compensation to align with increases to those working in the Ontario government. The growing complexity of our audits requires highly qualified, experienced staff. Most students who earned their professional accounting designation during the year also remained with the Office and were promoted to Senior Auditor positions. Benefit costs increased accordingly.

**Figure 7: Staffing, 2016/17–2020/21**

Prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario



## Professional and Other Services

These services include both contracted CPA firms and contract specialists that assisted in our value-for-money audits, and financial statement audits of Crown agencies and the province. These services account for just under 11% of total expenses and decreased by 6% compared to the previous year, due mainly to increased usage of internal resources and reduced reliance on external consultants.

## Rent

Our costs for accommodation decreased by 19% compared with last year. The decrease was due mainly to the sublet of the office lease of the previous Environmental Commissioner. The sublet is from March 2020 to the end of the lease, February 2023.

## Travel and Communications

Our travel and communications costs decreased by 68%, due to travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Training, Supplies and Equipment (Including Amortization)

Our training, supplies and equipment costs increased by 7% compared with the prior year, due mainly to higher amortization expense as a result of past information technology expenditures and an increase in costs for COVID-19-related supplies.

The Office's training program enables staff to progress and meet their professional obligations to maintain and enhance their competencies. The program consists of a combination of in-house and external courses.

## Statutory Expenses

These expenses include the Auditor General's salary and fees for contracted experts. Statutory expenses were 20% lower this year, as fewer specialized advisory services for special reports were required in 2020/21.

## Financial Statements

### **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The accompanying financial statements of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario are the responsibility of management of the Office. Management has prepared the financial statements to comply with the *Auditor General Act* and with Canadian public sector accounting principles.

Management maintains a system of internal controls that provides reasonable assurance that transactions are appropriately authorized, assets are adequately safeguarded, appropriations are not exceeded, and the financial information contained in these financial statements is reliable and accurate.

The financial statements have been audited by the firm of Adams& Miles LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants. Their report to the Board of Internal Economy, stating the scope of their examination and opinion on the financial statements, appears on the following page.



Bonnie Lysyk, MBA, FCPA, FCA, LPA  
Auditor General  
November 2, 2021



Gus Chagani, CPA, CA  
Assistant Auditor General  
November 2, 2021



501-2550 Victoria Park Ave.  
Toronto, ON M2J 5A9  
Tel 416 502.2201  
Fax 416 502.2210

5-600 Matheson Blvd. W.  
Mississauga, ON L5R 4C1  
Tel 905 459.5605  
Fax 416 502.2210

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Internal Economy of  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario

### *Opinion*

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (the Office), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the statement of operations and accumulated deficit, changes in net financial debt, and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario as at March 31, 2021, and the results of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Office in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

*Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*  
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Office's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Auditor General Act is repealed, the government intends to cease operations, or the government has no realistic alternative to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Office's financial reporting process.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT – cont'd

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Office's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Office's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Office to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Adams & Miles LLP*

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

Toronto, Canada  
November 2, 2021

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**Office of the Auditor General of Ontario**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at March 31, 2021**

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	2021	2020
	\$	\$
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Cash	3,961,823	2,434,359
Harmonized sales taxes recoverable	134,604	306,376
Prepaid expenses	534,445	-
Lease inducement receivable	-	686,525
	<hr/> 4,630,872	<hr/> 3,427,260
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities [Notes 4 and 5(B)]	3,191,865	3,300,395
Accrued employee benefits obligation [Note 5(B)]	1,444,000	1,568,000
Due to Consolidated Revenue Fund (Note 10)	1,308,706	217,009
Deferred lease inducement (Note 9)	705,322	737,544
	<hr/> 6,649,893	<hr/> 5,822,948
<b>Net financial debt</b>	(2,019,021)	(2,395,688)
<b>Non-financial assets</b>		
Tangible capital assets (Note 3)	<hr/> 2,695,433	<hr/> 2,850,321
<b>Accumulated surplus</b>	<hr/> 676,412	<hr/> 454,633

**Commitments** (Note 6)

**Measurement uncertainty** [Note 2(F)]

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

Approved by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario:

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bonnie Lysyk, MBA, FCPA, FCA, LPA  
 Auditor General

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gus Chagani, CPA, CA  
 Assistant Auditor General

---

**Office of the Auditor General of Ontario**  
**Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus**  
**For the Year Ended March 31, 2021**

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	2021 Budget (Note 11) \$	2021 Actual \$	2020 Actual \$
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries and wages	16,310,600	15,288,852	14,849,914
Employee benefits (Note 5)	4,430,400	3,897,911	3,478,813
Professional and other services	2,608,800	2,643,830	2,812,350
Office rent (Note 6)	1,200,000	1,166,462	1,444,034
Amortization of tangible capital assets	-	728,979	664,513
Travel and communication	471,600	177,356	548,747
Training and development	155,500	192,395	211,439
Supplies and equipment	384,800	267,852	239,081
Statutory	522,100	406,687	509,071
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenses (Notes 7and8)	26,083,800	24,770,324	24,757,962
<b>Revenue</b>			
Consolidated Revenue Fund – Voted appropriations [Note 2(B)]	26,083,800	26,083,800	26,318,100
Net assets transferred to the Office (Note 1)	-	-	56,517
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	26,083,800	26,083,800	26,374,617
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>		1,313,476	1,616,655
<b>Less: returned to the Province</b> [Notes 2(B) and 10]		<hr/> 1,091,697	<hr/> 217,009
<b>Net operations surplus</b>		221,779	1,399,646
<b>Accumulated surplus (deficit), beginning of year</b>		<hr/> 454,633	<hr/> (945,013)
<b>Accumulated surplus, end of year</b>		<hr/> <hr/> 676,412	<hr/> <hr/> 454,633

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Statement of Changes in Net Financial Debt For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

	2021 Budget (Note 11) \$	2021 Actual \$	2020 Actual \$
Net operations surplus	-	221,779	1,399,646
Purchase of tangible capital assets	-	(574,091)	(1,852,420)
Tangible capital assets transferred to the Office (Note 1)	-	-	(56,517)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	-	728,979	664,513
<b>Decrease in net financial debt</b>	-	376,667	155,222
<b>Net financial debt, beginning of year</b>	(2,395,688)	(2,395,688)	(2,550,910)
<b>Net financial debt, end of year</b>	(2,395,688)	(2,019,021)	(2,395,688)

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Operating transactions</b>		
Net operations surplus	221,779	1,399,646
Amortization of tangible capital assets	728,979	664,513
Tangible capital assets transferred to the Office (Note 1)	-	(56,517)
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	(32,222)	(32,222)
Accrued employee benefits obligation [Note 5(B)]	190,000	(123,000)
	<u>1,108,536</u>	<u>1,852,420</u>
<b>Changes in working capital</b>		
Decrease (increase) in harmonized sales taxes recoverable	171,772	(112,081)
Decrease (increase) in lease inducement receivable	686,525	(686,525)
Increase in prepaid expenses	(534,445)	-
Increase (decrease) in due to Consolidated Revenue Fund	1,091,697	(603,951)
(Decrease) increase in accounts payable and accrued salaries (Note 4)	(422,530)	1,203,234
Increase in deferred lease inducement	-	686,525
	<u>993,019</u>	<u>487,202</u>
<b>Cash provided by operating transactions</b>	<u>2,101,555</u>	<u>2,339,622</u>
<b>Capital transactions</b>		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(574,091)	(1,852,420)
<b>Increase in cash</b>	1,527,464	487,202
<b>Cash, beginning of year</b>	<u>2,434,359</u>	<u>1,947,157</u>
<b>Cash, end of year</b>	<u>3,961,823</u>	<u>2,434,359</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

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## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

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#### 1. Nature of Operations

In accordance with the provisions of the *Auditor General Act* and various other statutes and authorities, the Auditor General, through the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (the Office), conducts independent audits of government programs, of institutions in the broader public sector that receive government grants, and of the fairness of the financial statements of the Province and numerous agencies of the Crown. In doing so, the Office promotes accountability and value-for-money in government operations and in broader public sector organizations.

Additionally, under the *Government Advertising Act, 2004*, the Office is required to review specified types of advertising, printed matter or reviewable messages proposed by government offices to determine whether they meet the standards required by the Act.

Under both Acts, the Auditor General reports directly to the Legislative Assembly.

Under the *Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act, 2004*, in an election year the Office is also required to report on the reasonableness of a Pre-Election Report prepared by the Ministry of Finance.

On April 1, 2019, the *Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act* (the “Act”) transferred, for no compensation, the rights, obligations, assets and liabilities of the former Office of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO), as they existed immediately before April 1, 2019 to the Office, except for any rights, obligations, assets, or liabilities relating to former ECO employees for service immediately before April 1, 2019. As a result, net tangible capital assets in the amount of \$56,517 were transferred to the Office on April 1, 2019.

The Act also transferred many of the responsibilities of the former ECO to the Office. The Office conducts audits of government programs that impacts the environment under the same processes as the Office’s value-for money audits and has additional reporting responsibilities with respect to the operations of the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993*.

#### 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The significant accounting policies are as follows:

##### (A) ACCRUAL BASIS

These financial statements are prepared on an accrual basis whereby expenses are recognized in the fiscal year that the events giving rise to the expense occur and resources are consumed.

##### (B) VOTED APPROPRIATIONS

The Office is funded through annual voted appropriations from the Province of Ontario. Unspent appropriations are to be returned to the Province’s Consolidated Revenue Fund. As the voted appropriation is prepared on a modified cash basis, an excess or deficiency of revenue over expenses arises from the application of accrual accounting, including the capitalization and amortization of capital assets, the deferral and amortization of the lease inducement and the recognition of employee benefits expenses earned to date but that will be funded from future appropriations.

The voted appropriation for statutory expenses is intended to cover the salary of the Auditor General as well as the costs of any expert advice or assistance required to help the Office meet its responsibilities under the *Government Advertising Act* and the *Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act*, or to conduct special assignments under Section 17 of the *Auditor General Act*.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

##### (C) TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

Tangible capital assets are recorded at historical cost less accumulated amortization. Amortization of tangible capital assets is recorded on the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Computer hardware	3 years
Computer software	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Leasehold improvements	The remaining term of the lease

##### (D) FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Office's financial assets and financial liabilities are accounted for as follows:

- Cash is subject to an insignificant risk of change in value so carrying value approximates fair value.
- Due to Consolidated Revenue Fund is recorded at cost.
- Accounts payable and accrued liabilities are recorded at cost.
- Accrued employee benefits are recorded at fair value based on the entitlements earned by employees up to March 31, 2021 and the Office's expectation of long-term experience and short-term forecasts. The Office's fair value estimate does not differ significantly from cost.

The Office is not exposed to any interest rate, currency, liquidity or credit risk arising from its financial instruments due to their nature.

##### (E) DEFERRED LEASE INDUCEMENT

The deferred lease inducement is amortized as a reduction of rent expense on a straight-line basis over the terms of the respective leases.

##### (F) MEASUREMENT UNCERTAINTY

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Items requiring the use of significant estimates include: useful life of capital assets and accrued employee benefits obligation [Note 5(B)]. The key assumptions used to estimate accrued employee benefits obligation include discount rate, salary escalation rate and expected remaining service life of employees.

Estimates are based on the best information available at the time of preparation of the financial statements and are reviewed annually to reflect new information as it becomes available. Measurement uncertainty exists in these financial statements. Actual results could differ from these estimates. These estimates and assumptions are reviewed periodically, and adjustments are reported in the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus in the year in which they become known.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 3. Tangible Capital Assets

	Computer hardware \$	Computer software \$	Furniture and fixtures \$	Leasehold improvements \$	2021 Total \$
<b>Cost</b>					
Balance, beginning of year	1,707,066	547,154	1,103,965	2,037,637	5,395,822
Additions	456,701	117,390	-	-	574,091
Disposals	(18,787)	(164,634)	-	-	(183,421)
Balance, end of year	2,144,980	499,910	1,103,965	2,037,637	5,786,492
<b>Accumulated amortization</b>					
Balance, beginning of year	1,104,534	392,878	309,574	738,515	2,545,501
Amortization	335,631	103,618	121,840	167,890	728,979
Disposals	(18,787)	(164,634)	-	-	(183,421)
Balance, end of year	1,421,378	331,862	431,414	906,405	3,091,059
<b>Net Book Value, March 31, 2021</b>	<b>723,602</b>	<b>168,048</b>	<b>672,551</b>	<b>1,131,232</b>	<b>2,695,433</b>
<b>2020</b>					
	Computer hardware \$	Computer software \$	Furniture and fixtures \$	Leasehold improvements \$	2020 Total \$
<b>Cost</b>					
Balance, beginning of year	1,584,338	475,717	506,536	1,076,863	3,643,454
Additions	171,350	71,437	582,533	1,027,100	1,852,420
Transfer to the Office (Note 1)	8,196	-	48,321	-	56,517
Disposals	(56,818)	-	(33,425)	(66,326)	(156,569)
Balance, end of year	1,707,066	547,154	1,103,965	2,037,637	5,395,822
<b>Accumulated amortization</b>					
Balance, beginning of year	848,427	260,650	265,710	662,770	2,037,557
Amortization	312,925	132,228	77,289	142,071	664,513
Disposals	(56,818)	-	(33,425)	(66,326)	(156,569)
Balance, end of year	1,104,534	392,878	309,574	738,515	2,545,501
<b>Net Book Value, March 31, 2020</b>	<b>602,532</b>	<b>154,276</b>	<b>794,391</b>	<b>1,299,122</b>	<b>2,850,321</b>

Assets under construction or not yet in service are not amortized and have been included within the various asset categories presented above. The total value of these assets as at March 31, 2021 is \$205,593 (2020- \$1,805,435).

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## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

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#### 4. Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Accounts payable	240,065	760,090
Accrued salaries and benefits	1,808,800	1,711,305
Accrued employee benefits obligation	1,143,000	829,000
	<u>3,191,865</u>	<u>3,300,395</u>

Accounts payable relates largely to normal business transactions with third-party vendors and is subject to standard commercial terms. Accruals for salaries and benefits and employee benefits obligation are recorded based on employment arrangements and legislated entitlements.

#### 5. Obligation for Employee Future Benefits

Although the Office's employees are not members of the Ontario Public Service, under provisions in the *Auditor General Act*, the Office's employees are entitled to the same benefits as Ontario Public Service employees. The future liability for benefits earned by the Office's employees is included in the estimated liability for all provincial employees that have earned these benefits and is recognized in the Province's consolidated financial statements. In the Office's financial statements, these benefits are accounted for as follows:

##### (A) PENSION BENEFITS

The Office's employees participate in the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF) which is a defined benefit pension plan for employees of the Province and many provincial agencies. The Province of Ontario, which is the sole sponsor of the PSPF, determines the Office's annual payments to the fund. As the sponsor is responsible for ensuring that the pension funds are financially viable, any surpluses or unfunded liabilities arising from statutory actuarial funding valuations are not assets or obligations of the Office. The Office's required annual payment of \$1,385,867 (2020-\$1,355,494), is included in employee benefits expense in the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus.

##### (B) ACCRUED EMPLOYEE BENEFITS OBLIGATION

The costs of legislated severance, compensated absences and unused vacation entitlements earned by employees during the year amounted to \$692,000 (2020-\$391,000) and are included in employee benefits in the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus. The total liability for these costs is reflected in the accrued employee benefits obligation, less any amounts payable within one year, which are included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities, as follows:

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 5. Obligation for Future Employee Benefits (Continued)

##### (B) ACCRUED EMPLOYEE BENEFITS OBLIGATION

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Total liability for severance and vacation credits	2,587,000	2,397,000
Less: Due within one year and included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,143,000	829,000
Accrued employee benefits obligation	<u>1,444,000</u>	<u>1,568,000</u>

\$346,400 (2020 - \$257,239) of severance benefits was paid during 2021.

##### (C) OTHER NON-PENSION POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The cost of other non-pension post-retirement benefits is determined and funded on an ongoing basis by the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and accordingly is not included in these financial statements.

#### 6. Commitments

The Office has operating leases to rent premises which expire on February 28, 2023 and October 31, 2031. The minimum rental commitment is as follows:

	\$
2021/22	771,800
2022/23	882,200
2023/24	724,200
2024/25	724,200
2025/26	724,200
2026/27 and beyond	4,244,800

The Office is also committed to pay its proportionate share of realty taxes and operating expenses for the premises amounting to approximately \$833,000 during 2021 (2020- \$795,000).

The lease for the former Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's original premises expires on February 28, 2023. Effective April 1, 2020, the Office subleased the ECO premises on approximately the same terms and conditions as the head lease. Sublease revenue of \$315,202 in 2020-21 has been recorded as a reduction of office rent expense in the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 7. Reconciliation to Public Accounts Volume 1 Basis of Presentation

The Office's Statement of Expenses presented in Volume 1 of the Public Accounts of Ontario was prepared on a basis consistent with the accounting policies followed for the preparation of the Estimates submitted for approval to the Board of Internal Economy, under which purchases of tangible capital assets are expensed in the year of acquisition rather than being capitalized and amortized over their useful lives. Volume 1 also excludes the accrued obligation for employee future benefits, prepaid expenses and deferred lease inducement recognized in these financial statements. A reconciliation of total expenses reported in Volume 1 to the total expenses reported in these financial statements is as follows:

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Total expenses per Public Accounts Volume 1	24,992,103	26,101,091
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(574,091)	(1,852,420)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	728,979	664,513
Change in accrued employee benefits obligation	190,000	(123,000)
Prepaid expenses	(534,445)	-
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	(32,222)	(32,222)
	(221,779)	(1,343,129)
Total expenses per the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus	24,770,324	24,757,962

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 8. Expenses by Activity

	2021				%
	Salaries and benefits	Other operating expenses	Statutory expenses	Total	
Value for money, environmental and special audits	15,253,476	3,459,983	341,539	19,054,998	77.0
Financial statement audits	3,818,166	1,695,382	45,987	5,559,535	22.4
Government advertising	115,121	21,509	19,161	155,791	0.6
	<u>19,186,763</u>	<u>5,176,874</u>	<u>406,687</u>	<u>24,770,324</u>	<u>100.0</u>
%	77.5	20.9	1.6	100.0	

	2020				%
	Salaries and benefits	Other operating Expenses	Statutory expenses	Total	
Value for money, environmental and special audits	14,516,352	3,812,274	436,828	18,765,454	75.8
Financial statement audits	3,684,074	2,085,570	50,995	5,820,639	23.5
Government advertising	128,301	22,320	21,248	171,869	0.7
	<u>18,328,727</u>	<u>5,920,164</u>	<u>509,071</u>	<u>24,757,962</u>	<u>100.0</u>
%	74.0	23.9	2.1	100.0	

Expenses have been allocated to the Office's three (2020 – three) main activities based primarily on the hours charged to each activity as recorded by staff in the Office's time accounting system, including administrative time and overhead costs that could not otherwise be identified with a specific activity. Expenses incurred for only one activity, such as most travel costs and professional services, are allocated to that activity based on actual costs.

## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

### Notes to Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2021

#### 9. Deferred Lease Inducement

The deferred lease inducement is composed of the following:

Lease term	Deferred lease inducement - gross \$	Accumulated amortization \$	Balance 2021 \$	Balance 2020 \$
November 1, 2011 to October 31, 2021	322,225	303,428	18,797	51,019
November 1, 2021 to October 31, 2031	686,525	-	686,525	686,525
	<u>1,008,750</u>	<u>303,428</u>	<u>705,322</u>	<u>737,544</u>

#### 10. Unused Appropriations

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Consolidated Revenue Fund – Voted appropriations [Note 2(B)]	26,083,800	26,318,100
Less: Appropriations used (Note 7)	<u>24,992,103</u>	<u>26,101,091</u>
Unused appropriations for the year	1,091,697	217,009
Due to Consolidated Revenue Fund – beginning of year	<u>217,009</u>	<u>-</u>
Due to Consolidated Revenue Fund – end of year	<u>1,308,706</u>	<u>217,009</u>

#### 11. Budgeted Figures

The budget as presented in the financial statements was prepared on the Public Accounts Volume 1 basis of accounting as described in Note 7. Following are the adjustments required to restate the budget using Canadian public sector accounting standards:

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Total budgeted expenses per the budget approved by the Board of Internal Economy	<u>26,083,800</u>	<u>26,318,100</u>
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(249,050)	(1,319,050)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	701,214	712,612
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	<u>(32,222)</u>	<u>(32,222)</u>
	<u>419,942</u>	<u>(638,660)</u>
Total budgeted expenses restated using Canadian public sector accounting standards	<u>26,503,742</u>	<u>25,679,440</u>



## Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

20 Dundas Street West, Suite 1530  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5G 2C2  
[www.auditor.on.ca](http://www.auditor.on.ca)

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