



# News Release

For Immediate Release

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## **FEWER ERRORS, LOWER COSTS AND IMPROVED SERVICE NEEDED AT SERVICEONTARIO, AUDITOR GENERAL SAYS**

(TORONTO) More than 40% of ServiceOntario's in-person service centres have transaction error rates that are unacceptably high, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her *2013 Annual Report*.

"ServiceOntario's own Audit Oversight Unit has rated 43% of its centres as high risk because of the number of significant processing errors uncovered in its own audits," Lysyk said today after release of the Report. "ServiceOntario has accomplished a lot in terms of centralizing services, but it needs to further reduce service delivery costs, more effectively monitor service levels and customer satisfaction and reduce its risks in issuing and managing licences, certifications, registrations and permits," she added.

ServiceOntario, part of the Ministry of Government Services, provides services related to vital events, such as birth, marriage and death certificates; business services, such as company registrations; personal property security registrations; and land registration. ServiceOntario also processes, for 14 other provincial ministries, high-volume, routine transactions, most significantly driver licensing renewals, vehicle registrations and health-card renewals and registrations.

Following are some of the Auditor General's other significant findings:

- In 2012/13, only 30% of ServiceOntario transactions were done online, well short of its 2008 forecast of 55% to 60% of transactions by 2012. ServiceOntario could save a significant amount of money if it had an effective strategy to persuade people to switch to doing business online instead of in person.
- There was no reporting on customer wait at peak times in service centres, which often far exceeded the target time of 15 minutes. None of ServiceOntario's seven telephone contact centres met its service standards for answering calls.
- Eighteen years have passed since the government announced its plan to reduce the risk of fraud by replacing the red-and-white health card, which has no expiry date, with the more secure, renewable photo health card. However, as of August 1, 2013, there were still 3.1 million red-and-white cards in circulation. That represents 23% of the total of 13.4 million health cards issued in Ontario.
- As of March 31, 2013, approximately 1,500 people in Ontario had been issued duplicate health cards, increasing the risk of misuse. As well, more than 15,000 active health cards and 1,400 driver's licences were circulating in the names of people who were reported to ServiceOntario as deceased.
- Weak processes exist for: issuing and controlling accessible parking permits to ensure they are not being misused by people who do not require them; and for verifying that people who register large commercial farm vehicles are indeed farmers. The latter may be costing about \$5 million annually in lost commercial vehicle registration fees.

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