



FIRST REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Second Session
Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly
of the
Province of New Brunswick

June 29, 2005

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Branch, Chair
Mr. Sherwood, Vice-Chair
Mr. Betts
Mr. Carr
Mr. MacDonald
Mr. Malley

Mr. C. LeBlanc
Mr. Williams
Mr. Allaby
Mr. Haché
Mr. Jamieson
Ms. Weir

June 29, 2005

To The Honourable
The Legislative Assembly of
The Province of New Brunswick

Mr. Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts begs leave to submit this, their First Report.

The report outlines the activities of the Committee during the First Session of the Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly.

Pursuant to Standing Rule 99, the clerk convened a meeting of the Committee on Wednesday August 6, 2003, and presided over the election of a Chair and Vice Chair.

On motion of Mr. Allaby, seconded by Mr. Haché, Mr. Branch was elected Chair of the Committee.

On motion of Mr. Carr, seconded by Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Sherwood was elected Vice-Chair.

The Committee held an organizational meeting on September 30, 2003, to set dates for future meetings and discuss an agenda.

On October 9, 2003, the Office of the Auditor General held an orientation session for members of the Committee. Topics included: Comments on Accountability; the Role of the Office of the Auditor General; the Government's Annual Report Policy; and Making Use of Annual Reports.

The Committee met in the Legislative Council Chamber on October 9, 10 and November 14, 2003, to review the activities and financial statements of various government departments for the year ending March 31, 2002. Officials of the following departments and offices of government appeared before the Committee:

Department of Intergovernmental Affairs
Department of Supply and Services
Department of Transportation
Office of the Auditor General
Office of the Comptroller

On December 9, 2003, the Committee met in a joint session with the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations to receive and review the *Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick Volume I, 2003*. The Auditor General briefed Members on the nature of the work undertaken during the year and on the contents and findings of the Report.

The Committee met on January 6 and 7, 2004, to continue its consideration of departmental reports for the year ending March 31, 2002. Officials of the following departments and offices of government appeared before the Committee:

Department of Business New Brunswick
Department of Justice
Department of Tourism and Parks
Office of Human Resources.

The Committee met in the Legislative Council Chamber on January 13, 14, 20, 21, 27 and 28, 2004, to consider departmental reports and to review the Public Accounts of the Province of New Brunswick for the year ending March 31, 2003 (including the year ending March 31, 2002, where necessary). Officials of the following departments and offices of government appeared before the Committee:

Department of Education
Department of Family and Community Services
Department of Finance (including Service of the Public Debt)
Department of Health and Wellness
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Public Safety
Department of Supply and Services
Department of Training and Employment Development
Office of the Auditor General
Office of the Comptroller
Office of Human Resources

The following motion, moved by Mr. Betts on January 21, 2004, was adopted by the Committee and is recommended to the House:

Whereas it is the responsibility of the Government of New Brunswick to provide all citizens who need it with access to nursing homes;

Whereas it is also the responsibility of the Government of New Brunswick to ensure that all services to its citizens are fiscally managed in an appropriate manner;

And whereas it was noted in this government's platform entitled "Reaching Higher, Going Further" that the government "will reduce the burden on seniors requiring nursing home care and their families by allowing seniors to keep more of their savings for themselves, their spouses, and their children by raising the cash exemptions".

Be it therefore resolved that this committee recommend to the Legislative Assembly that it continue to provide support to the government and the Minister of Family and Community Services to bring about a balanced plan that will meet the fiscal needs of the Province of New Brunswick while addressing the financial needs of seniors.

The Committee met in the Legislative Council Chamber on February 17, 2004, with respect to the release of the *Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick Volume 2, 2003*. The Auditor General, Daryl Wilson, outlined the contents of the Report and answered questions with respect to same.

The Committee met in the Legislative Council Chamber on March 23 and 24, 2004. Officials of the following government departments appeared before the Committee and answered questions with respect to the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003:

Department of Business New Brunswick
 Department of Intergovernmental and International Relations
 Department of Tourism and Parks
 Department of Transportation

The Committee met on September 15, 2004. The following motion, moved by Mr. Allaby and seconded by Mr. Betts, was adopted by the Committee:

That the Chairman express to the Clerk and staff of the Legislative Assembly the sincere appreciation of the Public Accounts Committee for the excellent work done in hosting the Canadian Conference of Public Accounts Committees here in Fredericton, August 29 to 31, 2004.

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The Committee met in the Legislative Council Chamber on September 28, 29, 30, October

8, 26, and November 9, 2004, to continue its review of the activities and financial statements of government for the year ending March 31, 2003 (including the year ending March 31, 2002, where necessary). Officials of the following departments and offices appeared before the Committee:

Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat
Advisory Council on the Status of Woman
Culture and Sport Secretariat
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Department of Environment and Local Government
Department of Justice
Executive Council Office
Labour and Employment Board
Legislative Assembly
Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
New Brunswick Police Commission
Office of the Premier
Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons
Youth Council of New Brunswick

Officials of the Office of the Auditor General appeared on October 26, 2004, with respect to the *Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick Volume 1, 2004 "New Brunswick Salmon Aquaculture"*.

On December 14, 2004, the Committee met in a joint session with the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations to receive and review the *Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick Volume 2, 2004*. The Auditor General briefed Members on the nature of the work undertaken during the year and on the contents and findings of the Report.

Your Committee wishes to thank the many government officials who appeared during the public sessions and wishes to acknowledge their cooperation in providing follow-up information.

And your Committee begs leave to make a further report.

Frank Branch, MLA
Chairman