

Upkeep of the Provincial Roads Network by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Released: [November 2010](#)

1st Follow-up: [October 2011](#)

Discussed by the Public Accounts Committee: [February 2011 Transcript](#)

Self-assessment conducted by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The ministry would once again like to thank the Auditor for identifying opportunities for improvements in our maintenance and preservation programs. As continual improvement is part of our ministry's culture, the Auditor's recommendations provide our organization an opportunity to reflect on these areas of our program.

The Ministry has prepared an action plan in response to the Auditor's recommendations to move us forward into the future and respond to the noted opportunities for improvement.

In the area of highway maintenance, the ministry's action plan has been developed to ensure a broad collaborative effort with our highway maintenance contracting partners and ministry staff and incorporate the information gained from that effort into the upcoming highway maintenance contract tendering process. The collaborative process is underway now and will conclude by the spring and early summer of 2012.

In the area of highway preservation the ministry has identified a team of experts in various fields to assist in determining factors that could impede our success in maintaining the infrastructure's current condition. We are also in the process of reviewing models used in other jurisdictions that may assist in promoting enhanced life cycle asset management processes.

The ministry is also considering various performance measures that may be useful in informing ministry staff, executive, legislators and the public with regard to both safety and how the ministry itself contributes to the success of our maintenance programs.

The ministry is confident that significant progress will be made during the coming fall and winter period on these initiatives.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY OF PROGRESS	SELF-ASSESSED STATUS
<p>Recommendation 1: Identify the factors that could impede its success in meeting its road network condition standard. In addition, the ministry should periodically monitor the likely impact of such factors and determine when a comprehensive needs assessment is required to enable adjustments in condition standards, actions or funding.</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>
<p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p>	
<p>The ministry has established a project team of experts in various fields, such as pavements and structures, who are currently identifying factors contributing to the success of our infrastructure rehabilitation programs. The project team will then determine the frequency of monitoring of these factors to enable adjustments in condition standards or required actions.</p>	
<p>The ministry anticipates this work to be completed by December 2011.</p>	

SELF-ASSESSED PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (Cont.)

<p>Recommendation 2: Set firm but attainable timelines for each highway district to have the Central Highway Resource Information System (CHRIS) fully functional and updated with the inventory of road and bridge assets.</p>	Fully or substantially implemented
<p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p>The ministry has completed an in-depth review of the Corporate Highway Resource Information System (CHRIS) resulting in a rationalization of how and what information we maintain about both the highway network and highway fixtures located along that network.</p> <p>Information on these requirements has been communicated to all District Offices within the Ministry with the expectation that network updates will be submitted to Headquarters staff by November 2011. This will ensure system updates are completed by March 2012.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 3: Make it a priority to complete the development of a network level life-cycle costing model to improve the estimating process used in planning for network upkeep.</p>	Partially implemented
<p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p>The ministry is reviewing life-cycle costing models that are in use by other jurisdictions. At the completion of the review a team of ministry experts will then determine if any of these models can be applied to the ministry's business to further optimize network life cycle modelling and cost estimating.</p> <p>Work is anticipated to be completed by the Fall of 2012.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 4: Collaborate with the wider road-building industry to assess whether or not the performance incentives are effective in encouraging excellence and, if they are not, modify the system appropriately.</p>	Partially implemented
<p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with the Roadbuilding industry on this topic, and will continue through September of this year. This industry input will be incorporated as part of the assessment and design for the next round of Highway Maintenance Contracts.</p> <p>The ministry anticipates this work will be completed by the Spring of 2012.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 5: Revise the stakeholder consultation part of its contractor assessment program to ensure that judging of contractor performance by ministry staff is done in a way that is clearly fair and objective.</p>	Partially implemented
<p>Actions taken, results and/or actions planned</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with the Roadbuilding industry on this topic with further, more detailed discussions to occur in September of this year. This industry input will be considered as an important part of the assessment and design for the next round of Highway Maintenance Contracts.</p> <p>The ministry will complete this work by the early Fall of 2012.</p>	

SELF-ASSESSED PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (Cont.)

Recommendation 6: Reassess its current service area configuration to determine if there are opportunities to improve efficiency. **Partially implemented**

Actions taken, results and/or actions planned

The ministry has canvassed its District and Regional Offices for input that should be considered in this review and is also currently developing terms of reference and will be engaging an independent firm to review the current and future economic influences which may impact the effectiveness or efficiency of the current configuration of service areas. This work will be completed by the Fall of 2012.

Recommendation 7: Set safety-related performance objectives and measures for its road upkeep programs so that Legislators and the public can better assess how well the programs are contributing to the ministry-wide goal of providing a safe environment for travel. **Partially implemented**

Actions taken, results and/or actions planned

The ministry is currently in the process of hiring an engineering consultant who will; assess the ministry's current safety performance measures, review practices in relation to other jurisdictions, identify other potential safety related performance measures, undertake analysis and make recommendations regarding opportunities for the ministry to adopt further safety related performance measures to better inform legislators and the public regarding the ministry road upkeep programs.

This work will be completed by March of 2012.

Recommendation 8: Provide the results of network-wide assessments of road and bridge condition, and options for future funding, to personnel responsible for planning and overseeing upkeep work at the district and regional levels. In addition, a summary of those results and the funding options provided should be presented to Legislators and to the public as a report card on ministry efforts at network upkeep. **Partially implemented**

Actions taken, results and/or actions planned

The ministry is evaluating the practices of other jurisdictions in North America regarding both the type of condition information publically reported and the form in which it is published, to determine best practices. The ministry will use this evaluation to improve our current public reporting. The ministry currently provides condition information to staff for asset preservation planning activities.

The ministry anticipates this work will be completed by March of 2012.

Recommendation 9: Create a set of service-related objectives and performance measures to assess its own contributions to the success of contracted routine maintenance services. **Partially implemented**

Actions taken, results and/or actions planned

The ministry has established a project team that will; assess the ministry's current service performance measures, review practices and performance measures in relation to other jurisdictions, undertake analysis and make recommendations regarding opportunities to adopt further service-related objectives and performance measures with respect to the ministry's own contributions to the success of contracted routine maintenance services.

This work will be completed by the Fall of 2012.

SELF-ASSESSED PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (Cont.)

Recommendation 10: Analyze customer complaints and enquiries, and use this information to identify areas for making improvements in the road upkeep programs and in results reporting.

No action taken

Actions taken, results and/or actions planned

The ministry has established a project team that is; reviewing our current practice for receiving customer complaints and enquiries, undertaking analysis to identify opportunities for improvement, and making recommendations that will provide opportunities to use customer information to improve road upkeep programs.

This work will be completed by the Spring of 2012.
