

Manitoba 

Budget Paper G

**MODERNIZING
GOVERNMENT**

MODERNIZING GOVERNMENT

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■ INTRODUCTION

Manitobans expect good government – delivered in an affordable, effective way, reflecting the priorities they have identified. Public attitudes, perceptions and expectations evolve on how to best address social and economic challenges. Governments are expected to play an important leadership role in society, facilitating economic growth and social progress. The public is challenging government to provide services more effectively and more efficiently, largely from within existing resources.

A recent survey by the Institute for Citizen-Centred Service (ICCS), found that 73 per cent of Canadians have higher expectations for government-delivered services than they do for those delivered by the private sector. Governments are expected to adapt to the needs and expectations of the public through improved service delivery.

The Manitoba government is committed to continuously improving the way it operates and delivers important public services. This ongoing process of internal reform provides opportunities to enhance the delivery of public services to Manitobans.

Major accomplishments have been realized in key areas such as health, education, public safety, economic development, and rural and northern development. These efforts are made-in-Manitoba solutions to ensure public services remain effective, relevant and sustainable well into the future.

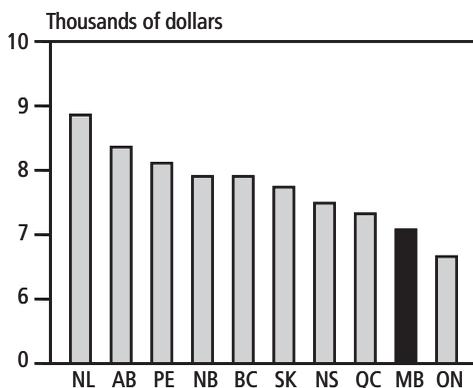
The changes are tangible and meaningful. Innovative legislation means Manitoba has been able to shut down drug houses that disrupt neighbourhoods and undermine public safety. The technology of the Internet enables us to provide more information about government services and more choices for accessing those services. Online services such as applications for child-care support and student financial aid make it easier for Manitobans to connect to services they need. Access centres bring

53% of Canadians surveyed by the ICCS agreed that in delivering services and programs, governments face the additional challenge of having to balance the overall public interest while also trying to address the unique needs and expectations of citizens.

MANITOBA'S ACTION STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

1. Education First
2. Building through Research and Innovation
3. Raising and Retaining Investment
4. Affordable Government
5. Growing through Immigration
6. Building on our Clean Energy Advantage
7. Building our Communities

Total Expenditures Per Capita 2005/06



Sources: Statistics Canada and provincial mid-year financial statements

important health and social services under one roof in different Winnipeg neighbourhoods and make it easier for neighbourhood residents to find services.

■ AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT

The Manitoba government's seven-point Action Strategy for Economic Growth provides a framework for government action to facilitate strong economic growth and encourage opportunities for entrepreneurs, investors and individuals throughout the province. One of the Action steps is a commitment to *affordable government*. Providing affordable public services means using public revenues effectively and efficiently to deliver government programs and services. The government is carefully managing expenditures even as demands for services, especially in health care and education, are rising.

Spending by the provincial government is growing more slowly than the economy, with general government revenues and spending now lower as a share of Gross Domestic Product when compared to 1999/2000. Additionally, Manitoba's total per capita expenditure has been the second-lowest of all provincial governments since 2000/01. Since 1999, total expenditure growth on a per capita basis in Manitoba has been the lowest in Western Canada. The highest per capita increases in government expenditures were reported in Alberta at 49.2 per cent, with British Columbia at 29.8 per cent and Manitoba at 24.3 per cent.

The Manitoba government has made significant investments in the province's publicly funded health care and education systems. This has included reducing wait times for lifesaving treatments, delivering health services closer to home, training more health care professionals and more than doubling financial support to the Pharmacare program. The commitment has been kept to fund public schools at the rate of economic growth. Post-secondary enrolment has increased by

one-third, and the 10 per cent reduction in tuition has been implemented and maintained. Support for apprenticeship training has also increased.

Public services have been enhanced in a fiscally responsible manner through the pursuit of three goals: enhancing the value of government, ensuring competitive conditions for economic growth, and keeping government affordable for future generations.

Enhancing the Value of Government

Relevant and effective public programs contribute to the well-being of Manitobans. Using existing resources efficiently allows government to deliver the greatest quantity of public services, while a focus on effectiveness improves the quality of programs and services. Ensuring quantity and improving quality combine to enhance the overall **value** of government activities.

Ensuring Competitive Conditions for Economic Growth

Manitobans expect government to be efficient and “do things better” without reducing the quality of important public services and programs. The government must also be flexible and responsive to competitive challenges from other nations, regions and provinces to maintain the “Manitoba Advantage.” Establishing a smarter regulatory environment ensures resources can be directed toward economic development, important public services and tax reductions.

Keeping Government Affordable for Future Generations

Since 1999, the provincial government has delivered seven balanced operating budgets under balanced budget legislation, including the 2006 Budget, addressing debt and pension liabilities.

■ MODERNIZING GOVERNMENT

Affordable and effective government requires the public sector be both efficient and productive. Innovative designs, practices and tools need to be identified and implemented. Maintaining affordable government means being open to changing the way government functions, modernizing processes and practices, and engaging the public in new ways. As such, modernizing government contributes to both an affordable and innovative public sector.

Government support of community economic development (CED) principles ensures provincial operations are open to community-based, locally driven enterprise. Through government purchasing, investments and other supports for CED, there is a stronger connection to community and social well-being, environmental benefits and innovative partnerships and approaches.

Manitoba has focused on two fundamental approaches in pursuing continuous improvements: *internal reforms* and *improving service delivery* to individuals, families and businesses. Opportunities to enhance efficiency and effectiveness are achieved in four ways.

1. ***Simplicity*** focuses on practical changes that clarify or simplify how resources are internally organized, increasing choices and accessibility for citizens.
2. ***Partnerships*** afford opportunities to co-deliver new or existing public services with other levels of government or external organizations.
3. ***Technology*** enables better communication flow with Manitobans and more productive administrative practises.
4. ***Innovation*** introduces new ideas or processes in the public sector that improve service delivery.

■ ACHIEVING SIMPLICITY

Simpler government structures make it easier for the public to find and access programs and services. There are many examples of making it easier for the public to access government services, *increasing choices* available to the public.

Enhancing Protection for Manitoba Farmers

In 2005, the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation and the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation were merged to form the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC), in response to the changing realities in modern agriculture. Both corporations served the same clients - Manitoba's agricultural producers - and shared a common goal of supporting agriculture and rural economies. A single organization will result in more effective service delivery.

By reducing duplication, the new corporation is able to extend new and innovative services and protection for farm families. For example, MASC has added more crops to the list of those eligible for coverage in 2006, increased the maximum coverage for certain crops, and enhanced excess moisture insurance coverage. The combined knowledge and experience of MASC staff will also result in more innovative programs designed to serve the emerging needs of Manitoba's farmers and rural communities.

Straightforward Services for Drivers

In April 2004, Driver and Vehicle Licensing and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation (MPI) merged to offer a 'single-window' service for all vehicle licensing, registration and insurance. Besides making services more accessible to Manitobans, the merger also results in efficiencies, including modernizing technology and reducing duplication.

ACHIEVING SIMPLICITY

improving the public's access to programs and services by implementing clear and practical organizational design

ONE-STOP SHOP

refers to a location that offers a multitude of services, increasing convenience and efficiency for citizens and businesses

*Moving to a simplified
one-tier system for income
assistance provides
Manitobans with better
access to income
assistance services.*

The merger also laid the groundwork for further service improvements. In November 2005, MPI announced that in the near future Manitobans will receive license and insurance renewal information in one envelope and be able to do both renewals at the same time. This “one-stop shop” initiative will increase choice for Manitobans by more than doubling the number of outlets available for licensing services throughout the province.

Helping Manitobans in Need

In 2004, the “one-tier” initiative transferred responsibility for income assistance programs in rural and northern Manitoba to the province (responsibility for the City of Winnipeg’s income assistance program was transferred to the province in 1999). Before this service improvement was put in place, municipalities handled income assistance for all non-disabled single persons, childless couples and two-parent families, while the province was responsible for all other persons in need, such as single parents and persons with a disability.

In addition, because of the one-tier initiative, access to provincial training and employment readiness programs has improved.

Investing in Students

In 2001, the government announced a comprehensive plan to reduce the number of school divisions in Manitoba by one-third, from 54 to 38. A limit was later placed on the amount of funds a school division can allocate toward administrative costs, resulting in more resources being directed to the classroom. Rural and northern school divisions can allot a slightly higher proportion of resources to administration, in recognition of their unique needs. The government responded to the concerns of rural Manitobans and included a provision that prohibited the closing of schools in amalgamating divisions for a period of three years.

Restructuring educational governance and administration in Manitoba has enhanced student access to programming, achieved greater equity across the province and reduced administrative costs for the direct benefit of students.

The government has also identified opportunities for greater efficiency within Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. Recently, the Assessment and Evaluation Branch and the Program Development Branch were merged to reinforce the connection between curriculum, instruction and assessment. Overall, the process of streamlining the two branches has saved over \$1 million, with further savings expected when the merger is fully implemented.

Finding Efficiencies

The government is open to new ideas and approaches that make government more effective. For example, through a process known as “clustering”, some internal administration, finance and information technology services have been re-organized to consolidate services in fewer administrative groups. This has resulted in \$1.2 million per year in savings.

In 1999, the Winnipeg Hospital Authority and the Winnipeg Community and Long-term Care Authority were amalgamated into the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. To date, this measure has saved more than \$12 million. In addition, two Western Manitoba health authorities were combined into the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, creating financial efficiencies and cutting administrative costs.

Two Winnipeg regional health authorities were amalgamated into the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. This measure alone has saved more than \$12 million.

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

working with organizations, communities, and governments to strengthen public services or introduce new ones

■ DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing additional partnerships with other governments or external organizations for co-location, co-delivery or realignment of resources can result in further service improvements and cost savings. An example of partnerships working for the benefit of Manitobans is the Gamma Knife Centre of Excellence located at the Health Sciences Centre, which provides leading-edge brain surgery. The Centre was created through a process led by Manitoba where all provinces and territories agreed to co-operate and share human resources and equipment by developing sites of excellence for advanced treatments. There are other examples of strong and effective partnerships.

Linking Opportunity and Prosperity in Agribusiness and Rural Communities

Agriculture in Manitoba is highly diverse and made up of mostly small business ventures whose successes profoundly affect rural communities. An effective partnership between industry, rural communities, and government is essential in order to take advantage of the new techniques, scientific advances and economic opportunities in today's global economy. As a result of extensive consultation, a uniquely Manitoba solution was achieved.

In 2004, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) began implementing a new strategy called "Growing Opportunities". MAFRI is increasing the focus on value-added production and encouraging multi-income stream ventures on farms and in rural communities. Specialized agricultural and community support services will be offered to Manitobans through expanded offices now called Growing Opportunities Centres (GO Centres). GO Centres will provide producers and rural communities with 'one-stop shop' locations for services such as farm production, rural economic development, business development, leadership capacity building and

production insurance. Of the 47 MAFRI offices across Manitoba, 20 are being converted into GO Centres located throughout rural and Northern Manitoba.

Delivering Bilingual Services

The Bilingual Service Centres, a first of their kind in Manitoba and Canada, are located in St. Boniface, St. Pierre-Jolys and Notre Dame de Lourdes. The Centres involve a number of partners delivering a range of services. They enhance the delivery of French language services to Manitobans by co-locating federal, provincial and municipal services, as well as providing access to community-based organizations, in either official language. The Centres also have a Web site to provide additional access points.

Each centre offers a unique set of services designed to fit the region in which it is located. For example, the centres in St. Boniface and St. Pierre-Jolys house business counselling satellite offices of the Canada-Manitoba Business Service Centre. The centres in St. Pierre-Jolys and Notre Dame de Lourdes provide on-site space for staff from local non-profit community development corporations who provide employment and/or economic development resource services. In some cases, residents can pay for municipal bills, like water and sewer bills, property tax bills, parking tickets, dog licenses, bus passes and residential parking permits.

Collaborating for the Health of Manitoba's Children

In 1999, the Manitoba government adopted "the best possible outcomes for Manitoba's children" as a pillar in its overall vision for Manitoba. In 2000, the government created Healthy Child Manitoba (HCM) and the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet, consisting of ministers whose departments can improve outcomes for Manitoba's children. Services for children are co-ordinated across government following a strategy for which there is a shared responsibility.

ENGAGING TECHNOLOGY

transforming relationships with citizens to improve program and service delivery, and to make sure Manitobans are “connected”

Developing services that respond to the needs of children depends on meaningful partnerships with local community agency networks. A provincial Early Childhood Development Advisory Committee with wide-ranging membership provides advice to government from the community. Reflecting the emphasis on partnerships, 26 parent-child coalitions have been established, with local representation from parents as well as other areas that impact on children’s lives. HCM has provided key support for programs such as the Healthy Baby prenatal program, the Baby First and Early Start programs for new parents (recently combined and now called Families First), the Stop FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) program, and the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program.

■ ENGAGING TECHNOLOGY

Information and communication technologies (ICT) improve program and service delivery, and ensure Manitobans are “connected.”

Technologies such as the Internet and broadband create unprecedented opportunities to address the needs of Manitobans in a dynamic and responsive way. The government is using ICT to improve public service delivery and extend new public services for the benefit of students, families, businesses and communities in rural and Northern Manitoba.

Sustainable Technology-Enabled Service Delivery

The effective use of ICT enhances public programs, improves community linkages, increases productivity in the civil service and better manages information. The government’s strategic investments in managed computer services, information protection and security, and high-speed network services provide Manitobans with a world-class platform for modernizing service delivery, including the ability to deploy new online services for Manitobans.

In 2004, the ICT Restructuring Initiative was established to support the ongoing application of ICT across the provincial government and enhance planning and co-ordination of ICT resources within the government.

Delivering Online Services

The Internet is part of providing reliable, user-friendly and interactive services for the public and businesses in Manitoba. In 2002, the government implemented a multi-channel service delivery program to provide better access to government. **At Your Service Manitoba** features a “no wrong doors” approach, providing citizens with direct access to government programs, services and information through three channels of contact: in person, on the Internet and over the phone.

Child Care Online has enabled Manitoba families to search online, 24-hours a day, for licensed child care in their neighbourhood. Subsidy applications can be made online and a calculator helps estimate the value of the subsidy. The Web site also allows child-care providers to display information about their facility, the programs offered and current vacancies. It also includes the ability to apply to be a child care professional or renew certification in this field. Child Care Online has enabled staff to direct their efforts to reducing wait times for approval and other time-sensitive supports.

My Student Aid Online (MySAO) is a 24-hour web service that interacts with students filling out the student aid application. The service helped reduce student loan processing times from seven weeks in 2001 to approximately four weeks in 2004. This frees up time for staff to deal with more complex situations on a one-to-one basis.

Since 2003, the **Parks Reservation Service (PRS)** has been upgrading its online service. In 2006, the PRS will introduce an enhanced made-in-Manitoba parks reservation system that will provide faster,

Technologies such as the Internet and broadband create unprecedented opportunities to address the needs of citizens in a dynamic and responsive way.

For the 2004/05 program year, 70% of student aid applications were submitted through the Internet, making MySAO the primary service channel.

*The Personal Property Registry
was awarded the 2001
Achievement Award by the
International Association of
Corporate Administrators.*

*Using broadband, the
potential exists to link a
doctor in Brandon to a
patient in Churchill, or an
elementary school classroom
in Melita to a science
centre in Charlottetown.*

responsive real-time service to campers through the use of technology, the Internet and a call centre. This is one of many improvements made to the provincial parks system to help Manitobans and tourists enjoy visits to a provincial park.

The **Personal Property Registry** provides for the electronic submission of notices and includes the ability to e-mail confirmations, rather than send out mail notices. Before implementing this system, forms had to be filled out manually and mailed to the Registry. Under the new system, between 95% and 97% of all registrations are electronic, resulting in cost savings as well as substantial service enhancements. Approximately 50,000 notices are handled each year and are now in electronic format.

Ensuring Access to the Internet

The government has taken steps to ensure Manitobans have access to the Internet. While many Manitobans are connected to broadband or high-capacity Internet, not all rural, Northern or First Nations communities have access. Manitoba's provincial broadband strategy aims to ensure that all Manitoba communities have access to broadband network services by 2010.

Access to broadband networks offers local businesses the opportunity to participate in a wider commercial arena by reducing economic costs normally associated with remote distances.

Broadband capacity also enables new and innovative public programs and services. For example, Telehealth networks link medical expertise to local health care professionals, meaning patients can stay in their communities for medical treatment. Access to the Internet opens educational opportunities for residents in linked communities - broadband capacity is a key pillar in the University College of the North's ability to deliver post-secondary education to Northern communities.

Delivering Better Public Safety Services

In 2001, Manitoba Justice initiated the Co-operative Justice System (CJS) to create an integrated, computerized information system to provide more comprehensive information to enforcement agencies, prosecutors, defence counsel, sheriffs, correctional officers and other justice staff. The CJS, when fully implemented, will eliminate the need for paper-based manual processes and older or incompatible computer systems that made it difficult to quickly access all the information related to an offender.

■ ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

Innovation involves capitalizing on the knowledge, experience and ideas of public sector employees to create original and positive solutions, for improved programs and services. This type of reform is critical as many of the challenges addressed by government services and programs are truly unique to our province and therefore require responses that fully recognize the specific needs of Manitobans.

Changing the Way We Manage Health Care

Manitoba's Wait-Time Reduction Strategy targets five key areas for wait time reductions, and includes a plan to improve how wait times are measured and addressed. An improved wait-time framework can better inform the consulting physician and assist individual patients and their families in choosing how to proceed with care, as well as improve patient confidence.

Manitoba Health's Web site has been enhanced to provide additional information. Specific information related to Manitoba's wait-time statistics are updated more often and with greater accuracy. In 2006, the government will release a Wait-Time Reduction Accountability Report detailing its progress in meeting provincial targets and national benchmarks. The government will also be producing a new Manitoba Health Guide to better inform the public

INNOVATION

capitalizing on the knowledge, experience and ideas of public sector employees to create **original and positive solutions**, resulting in improved programs and services

MANITOBA'S WAIT-TIME REDUCTION STRATEGY

- more diagnostic testing
- more surgeries
- more health care professionals
- system innovation and better wait-list management
- prevention and health promotion

While the Integrated Service Delivery initiative makes use of partnerships, technology and simplicity, it is best described as an innovation due to its scope and transformative effect on the overall delivery of social services in Manitoba.

about health services and initiatives undertaken to reduce wait times.

Transforming the Delivery of Health and Social Services

The Integrated Service Delivery initiative launched in 2003 is transforming the delivery of social services, by delivering innovative solutions for Manitobans in need. Both individuals and families have more choices in obtaining seamless, timely and responsive social services. When possible, case planning incorporates individual or family decision making as part of the service delivery process.

The government has partnered with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to establish community Access centres, which co-locate primary care services with health and social services at a single point of access. Access River East is the first site to include primary care services in addition to health and social services. A second site is opening in Transcona later this year. Four other integrated health and social service sites (not inclusive of primary care services) have been opened in Winnipeg, including two in St. James-Assiniboia, one in St. Boniface/St. Vital, and one in River Heights/Fort Garry. An integrated service centre is scheduled to open in the Seven Oaks area in late 2006.

Putting Public Safety First

The Domestic Violence Front-End Project is a nationally recognized and award-winning organizational innovation in Manitoba's criminal justice system. It has significantly reduced trial delays and case backlogs in the area of domestic violence by moving the responsibility for time-consuming administrative matters from provincial judges to Pre-trial Co-ordinators. When Pre-trial Co-ordinators handle administrative matters at the 'front end' of the criminal justice system, it allows provincial judges more time to address legal matters in court, such as

trials and guilty pleas. As a result, the value of the time spent in court has improved, cases of domestic violence are resolved in less time, and costs associated with trial delays and remands have been reduced.

In addition, the same Crown attorney is in charge of a case as it works its way through the justice system, resulting in greater accountability for cases and reductions in legal delays. This also means that there is now earlier and more consistent contact between the Crown attorney and the victim.

Improving Public Services from Within

The Service Quality Partners (SQP) network is an example of grass-roots innovation, generated entirely from within the public sector, helping to modernize government operations. SQP is a volunteer network of staff from all levels within the Manitoba government that champions service improvements by leading and sustaining change through education, communication, direct assistance and recognition.

The Manitoba Service Excellence Awards (MSEA) showcases civil servants who have contributed to enhancing public service delivery. The MSEA Innovation Award recognizes a team that successfully develops and applies knowledge and ingenuity to create, adapt or improve government products, services or processes.

Modernizing the Way Government does Business

Over the past few years, several important changes have also been made in the way that government is organized. For example, the appointment of a Healthy Living Minister in 2003 supports a focus on creating conditions and supporting behaviours that promote the best possible health choices for everyone.

The first Department of Water Stewardship in the country was established in 2003, and now one department has sole responsibility for protecting and

*In 2005, the Institute of
Public Administration
of Canada awarded
Manitoba Justice
the **Gold Award for
Innovative Management.***

*The Public Safety
Investigations Unit of
Manitoba Justice
recently won the
**Manitoba Service
Excellence Innovation
Award for its work in using
new investigative strategies
and techniques to combat
drugs, solvent abuse
and prostitution.***

SPECIAL OPERATING AGENCIES

SOAs are service operations that are granted more direct responsibility for their operating results and have even greater flexibility to encourage innovation, enhance service delivery and reduce the cost to government. SOAs have to submit annual business plans, quarterly and annual reports, and are subject to annual audits conducted by the Auditor General or by an external auditor.

The Manitoba government supports economic growth by continuously working to make interactions between businesses and the public sector more **seamless and clear**.

managing Manitoba's high-quality water resources, ensuring our water resources can meet the present and future needs of all Manitobans.

Similarly, a new Department of Energy, Science and Technology was established in 2002 to better align existing resources to support the development of energy, research and innovation as key contributors to the provincial economy.

Over the past several years, the government has implemented reforms within existing government agencies to better manage public resources. One example is the consolidation of two Special Operating Agencies (SOAs): the Mail Management Agency and the Materials Distribution Agency. Another is the soon to be created Crown Lands and Property Agency SOA.

In the case of the Crown Lands and Property Agency SOA, the new business model will provide the opportunity to focus on the delivery of specialized services to government departments and the public. Once fully operational, this SOA will have full authority for all Crown land sales, leases, permits and acquisitions. As a result, this new organization will deliver better services to the public as the management of all land transactions will be more open, fair and transparent.

■ STREAMLINING AND IMPROVING BUSINESS INTERACTIONS

The Manitoba government can help promote economic growth by making it easier for businesses to comply with government regulations. Since 1999, the government has streamlined its interactions with businesses and enhanced the ability to deliver new services to the private sector.

To reduce the time and effort small business spends to comply with sales tax regulations, the government reduced the frequency of filing sales tax remittances.

Over 11,000 small businesses have chosen to file less frequently, meaning small business owners spend more time with customers and staff, not on paperwork.

In 2005, the administrative and compliance provisions under eight provincially administered taxation statutes were consolidated to make it easier for businesses to understand what is required of them.

The government has also passed legislation to harmonize cost of credit disclosure requirements (coming into effect in 2006). These changes had been agreed to by federal, provincial and territorial governments and will make it easier for business to operate across the country.

In 2004, the government implemented the single business number (BN) as Manitoba's common business identifier. The BN replaces a variety of different account numbers a business was formerly assigned under each provincial taxation statute for activities such as payroll deductions, corporation income tax, GST and importing/exporting. A more universal adoption of a single BN will simplify business interactions with government.

The vision for Manitoba Business Links (MBL) is to link together government departments and agencies that would benefit from having access to the information attached to the BN. MBL is the technology required to share information linked to the BN.

Last year, the City of Winnipeg also announced its intention to develop a registry model around the BN, and will work with the Manitoba government as well as the federal government to accomplish this goal.

Two other technology-based initiatives which will improve public sector and business interactions are the Biz Gateway and Biz Pal. The Biz Gateway creates a more user-friendly web-based portal for provincial business information services. The government is also working to introduce Biz Pal, a web-based service that will allow businesses to generate a customized list of permits and licenses they require from all three

Performance Reporting helps citizens measure the success of public organizations and programs through regular reporting to the public.

levels of government to reduce the costs of regulatory compliance.

The government will continue to look for new and innovative ways to simplify and make more efficient the way business and government interact.

■ PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Throughout Canada, governments at all levels are working to provide more comprehensive performance information to the public. More information has been made available on department Web sites over the last few years, allowing the public to access up-to-date information to determine whether programs are meeting their goals.

The Manitoba government is committed to improving both accountability and transparency in its public reporting.

Significant improvements have been made over the last few years in the area of financial reporting. The province has also made steady progress on its adoption of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) in its financial reporting, and has committed itself to producing both its annual budget and financial statements on a consolidated basis for 2007/08. The importance of this endeavour was underlined by the Auditor General on releasing the results of his audit on the Public Accounts of Manitoba for 2005:

“Once consolidated financial budgets and statements are in place as the primary source of information for both budgeting and public reporting, public and legislator information, discussion, communications and decision-making will be significantly enhanced. ... Government reporting on the 2005 financial statements already reflects its shift in emphasis to the GAAP results.”

“For the first time since publishing consolidated financial statements in 1988, the Government has prepared Consolidated Financial Statements which are fully in accordance with GAAP. It should be anticipated

that because of changing GAAP requirements, a qualification will be received for the next two years until school divisions are consolidated. We acknowledge that the Province is undertaking significant steps to eliminate this upcoming qualification for the year ending March 31, 2008.” (Auditor General’s January 2006 press release)

In 2005, the first overall Manitoba government performance report to the public, *Reporting to Manitobans on Performance: 2005 Discussion Document*, was released. The report highlighted progress and recent actions in four categories: economy, people, community and environment. It outlined a number of key measures and recent actions to meet the challenges in these areas.

One of the purposes of the *Reporting to Manitobans* document is to make performance information more available for review by interested groups and individuals. It is hoped that by encouraging greater public interest in performance reporting, individuals and groups will provide feedback as to how to report this type of information in the future.

The number of specialized reports of indicators has also been increasing. For example, *Manitoba’s Comparable Health Indicator Report* has been published for the past few years. Another specialized report is *Investing in Early Childhood Development*, an annual progress report. In 2005 the first *Provincial Sustainability Report for Manitoba* was also published, outlining important information in the three areas of economic, environment and social well-being.

■ FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Manitoba government supports continuous internal review and reform in order to provide Manitobans with affordable, innovative and effective government operations, programs and services. The Manitoba government will continue to emphasize reforms that improve accountability and transparency, two important goals of modern government.

Province of Manitoba Financial reports may be found at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/finance/financialreports.html>

Reporting to Manitobans on Performance: 2005 Discussion Document can be found at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/finance/mbperformance/index.html>

Manitoba’s Comparable Health Indicator Report can be found at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/pirc/>

Early Childhood Development Progress Reports can be found at http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/ecd/ecd_reports.html

Provincial Sustainability Report for Manitoba can be found at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/sustainabilityreport/>

■ SUMMARY OF MODERNIZING GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

SIMPLICITY

- Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing/MPI merger
- “One-tier” income assistance
- Fewer school divisions
- Reduced education administrative costs
- Internal Finance and administration and IT “clustering”
- Fewer regional health authorities

PARTNERSHIPS

- MAFRI – Growing Opportunities
- Bilingual Service Centres
- Healthy Child Manitoba

TECHNOLOGY

- First-rate ICT infrastructure
- New online services
- Provincial broadband strategy
- Co-operative Justice System initiative

INNOVATION

- Wait-Time Reduction Strategy
- Integrated Service Delivery initiative
- Domestic Violence Front-End Project
- Service Quality Partners network
- Re-organizing Departments and SOAs

STREAMLINING BUSINESS INTERACTIONS

- Reduction in frequency of sales tax remittances
- Consolidating taxation statutes
- Harmonizing cost of credit disclosure
- Single Business Number
- Manitoba Business Links
- Biz Pal
- Biz Gateway

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- Improved financial reporting
- *Reporting to Manitobans on Performance: 2005 Discussion Document*
- *Manitoba’s Comparable Health Indicator Report*
- *Investing in Early Childhood Development*
- *Provincial Sustainability Report for Manitoba*
- *Wait-Time Reduction Accountability Report (Fall 2006)*