

I urge the Members of the House of Assembly to give the Auditor General unrestricted access, in accordance with the *Auditor General Act*, to audit the accounts of the House of Assembly.

2.2 Framework of Accountability

There is no legislative requirement for all Government departments and Crown agencies to prepare and table strategic and operational plans in the House of Assembly or to table performance reports on their activities in comparison to these plans.

During 2002-03 all Government departments as well as 77 of the 85 Crown agencies had some form of annual report for 2001-02 tabled in the House of Assembly. While this represents a significant increase in the number of reports tabled over previous years, the reports that were tabled, in general, did not provide information on the performance of each entity in relation to its approved plans using established measurable criteria. As a result, the entities have not provided the information required to truly demonstrate their accountability to the House of Assembly.

A true accountability process would include more than the tabling of a performance report - it would also require the tabling of strategic and operational plans so that Members of the House of Assembly would have the information necessary to compare an entity's performance in relation to its goals and objectives.

2.3 Special Warrants

The common parliamentary means of providing spending authority to government is through the annual passing of supply acts. This involves having the Members of the House of Assembly vote on the government's funding requests before the spending authority is provided. Approval by a majority of the Members of the House of Assembly is needed to pass an Act.

Through the use of a "special warrant", Government can, without the prior debate and approval of the Members of the House of Assembly, spend public money.

During 2002-03, Government issued 12 special warrants totalling \$24.2 million.