



Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2024

Office of the Auditor General

Independence • Integrity • Impact

**Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Financial Statements
March 31, 2024**

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Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The accompanying financial statements are the responsibility of management of the Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia. Management has prepared the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. Management is responsible for the reliability and integrity of the financial statements.

The Office maintains a comprehensive system of internal control including an appropriate code of conduct, written policies and procedures, and an organization structure that segregates incompatible duties. It has designed its system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded and executed in accordance with legislation and required authority, that assets are properly safeguarded, and that reliable financial records are maintained.



Kim Adair, FCPA, FCA, ICD.D
Auditor General of Nova Scotia



Mike MacPhee, CPA, CA
Deputy Auditor General of Nova Scotia



Tel: (902) 444-5540
Fax: (902) 444-5539
www.bdo.ca

BDO Canada LLP
6940 Mumford Road
Suite 510
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3L 0B7

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Committee of Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia ("the Office"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024, the statements of operations and accumulated surplus (deficit), statement of changes in net debt and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Office as at March 31, 2024, and its results of operations, its change in net debt and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Office in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Office's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Office or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Office's financial reporting process.



Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Office's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Office's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Office to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.



We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants

Halifax, Nova Scotia
June 13, 2024

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Statement of Financial Position
As at March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Financial Assets		
Petty cash	\$ 250	\$ 250
Accounts receivable (Note 9)	84,276	73,330
Due from government (Note 3)	276,765	170,089
	361,291	243,669
 Liabilities		
Accounts payable	176,959	67,585
Accrued liabilities	2,600	2,315
Accrued salaries, benefits and vacation (Note 4)	388,728	334,152
	568,287	404,052
 Net Debt	 (206,996)	 (160,383)
 Non-financial Assets		
Prepaid expenses	49,570	36,656
Tangible capital assets (Note 5)	157,426	123,727
	206,996	160,383
 Accumulated Surplus	 \$ nil	 \$ nil

Commitments (Note 6)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE OFFICE:



Auditor General of Nova Scotia

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	2024 Budget (unaudited)	2024 Actual	2023 Actual
Revenues			
Government contributions (Note 7)	\$6,061,000	\$5,510,911	\$4,785,902
Professional fees	345,000	360,804	362,900
	<u>6,406,000</u>	<u>5,871,715</u>	<u>5,148,802</u>
Expenses			
Salaries and benefits	5,012,000	4,710,472	4,213,973
Professional services	555,000	516,180	336,163
Office lease and taxes	250,000	239,598	237,861
Office supplies	147,000	45,017	29,415
Staff training	145,000	99,142	103,497
Other services	98,000	49,290	35,083
Membership dues	90,000	61,369	50,231
Travel	85,000	44,890	23,095
Telecommunications	20,000	13,544	11,552
Parking	4,000	3,630	4,859
Amortization	nil	56,370	45,780
	<u>6,406,000</u>	<u>5,839,502</u>	<u>5,091,509</u>
Transfer (to) from General Revenue Fund (Note 3)		<u>(32,213)</u>	<u>(57,293)</u>
Annual Surplus (Deficit)		nil	nil
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit), beginning of year		<u>nil</u>	<u>nil</u>
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit), end of year		<u>\$ nil</u>	<u>\$ nil</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Statement of Changes in Net Debt
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	2024 Budget (unaudited)	2024 Actual	2023 Actual
Annual surplus (deficit)	\$ nil	\$ nil	\$ nil
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(152,000)	(90,069)	(74,330)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	nil	56,370	45,780
	<u>(152,000)</u>	<u>(33,699)</u>	<u>(28,550)</u>
Acquisition of prepaid expenses	nil	(49,570)	(36,656)
Use of prepaid expenses	nil	36,656	50,736
	<u>nil</u>	<u>(12,914)</u>	<u>14,080</u>
Increase in Net Debt	(152,000)	(46,613)	(14,470)
Net Debt , beginning of the year	<u>(160,383)</u>	<u>(160,383)</u>	<u>(145,913)</u>
Net Debt , end of the year	<u>\$ (312,383)</u>	<u>\$ (206,996)</u>	<u>\$ (160,383)</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements
The Office does not budget for certain non-cash items such as amortization

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Statement of Cash Flow
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Cash Flows from:		
Operating Activities		
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	\$ nil	\$ nil
Items in earnings not involving cash		
Amortization	56,370	45,780
Change in non-cash working capital balances		
Accounts receivable	(10,946)	(4,000)
Due from government	(106,676)	15,926
Prepaid expenses	(12,914)	14,080
Accounts payable	109,374	15,498
Accrued liabilities	285	(1,308)
Accrued salaries, benefits and vacation	54,576	(11,646)
	90,069	74,330
Capital Activity		
Additions to tangible capital assets	(90,069)	(74,330)
Change in cash during the year	nil	nil
Cash, beginning of year	250	250
Cash, end of year	\$ 250	\$ 250

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

1. Purpose

The Office of the Auditor General is an office of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly (the House) and serves the House to help hold government accountable for its collection, expenditure, and stewardship of public funds. The Office is not subject to income taxes because it is a public sector entity. The mandate and authorities of the Office are provided by the Auditor General Act.

2. Significant Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The following are significant accounting policies adopted by the Office.

- (a) *Cash* – consists of a petty cash float provided by the Province of Nova Scotia.
- (b) *Revenue Recognition* – The Office recognizes government contributions as expenses are charged against its annual appropriation.

The Office recognizes professional fee revenues to recover costs for the audits it performs on certain public sector organizations. These revenues are accounted for in the period that the audits are conducted.

- (c) *Harmonized Sales Tax* – The Office does not record Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) in its financial statements because all HST collected and paid is reimbursed to the Province of Nova Scotia.
- (d) *Tangible Capital Assets* – Furniture, equipment, and leasehold improvements with an individual cost greater than or equal to \$500 are capitalized and amortized over their useful lives. Those assets with a cost less than \$500 are expensed on the Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus (Deficit). Tangible capital assets are recorded at historical cost less accumulated amortization.

Tangible capital assets are purchased through the Office's annual appropriation approved by the House of Assembly. Any contributed assets are separately disclosed in the year of acquisition.

- (e) *Amortization* – Starting in the year of acquisition, furniture, equipment, and leasehold improvements are amortized on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Furniture and equipment	10% per year
Computer equipment	25% per year
Leasehold improvements	over term of lease

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

2. Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(f) *Employee Future Benefit Plans*

Pension Plan – All eligible employees of the Office are covered by the Nova Scotia Public Service Superannuation Plan (PSSP), a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan. Changes to the plan governance structure and plan amendments in 2014 transferred responsibility for the PSSP to the Public Service Superannuation Plan Trustee Inc. (PSSPTI). Contributions are required by both employees and the Office to cover current service cost.

Pursuant to legislation currently in place, the Office has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions with respect to any past service or unfunded liability of the plan, nor does the Office have access to any surplus that may arise in the plan. Consequently, the Office applies the defined contribution method of accounting for the plan.

The Office's contribution to the plan is expensed during the year in which the services are rendered and represents its total pension obligation. Contributions are a defined amount based upon a set percentage of salary.

- i) Vacation Benefits* - The cost of vesting vacation benefits is determined using the employee's current salary and accumulated vacation time.
- ii) Retirement Health Plan Benefits* – Retirement health plan benefits are a liability of the Province of Nova Scotia and have no net impact on the financial statements of the Office.

- (g) *Financial Instruments* – Accounts receivable, accounts payable, accrued liabilities, accrued salaries, benefits and vacation, and due from government are measured at cost. The carrying amount of each of these financial instruments is presented on the Statement of Financial Position. These instruments have no significant exposure to interest rate, credit, or liquidity risks.

All financial assets are tested annually for impairment. When financial assets are impaired, impairment losses are recorded in the Statement of Operations.

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

3. Due from Government

The Office, similar to many Crown corporations, does not maintain a bank account. All funds are held with the Province of Nova Scotia. The Due from government represents the net balance owing from the Province of Nova Scotia. The Due from government balance includes transfers to and from the General Revenue Fund that are impacted by the difference between revenues and expenses, as well as the change in year end receivables, payables and accruals.

	2024	2023
Due from government, beginning of year	\$ 170,089	\$ 186,015
Transfer (to) from General Revenue Fund	(32,213)	(57,293)
Change in year end receivables, payables and accruals	138,889	41,367
	\$ 276,765	\$ 170,089

4. Accrued Salaries, Benefits and Vacation

The accrued salaries, benefits and vacation liability of \$388,728 (2023 - \$334,152) has two components:

Salaries and Benefits – The Office accrued \$285,850 (2023 - \$247,766) for salaries and benefits earned by employees before the end of the year but paid after year end.

Vacation - The Office accrued \$102,878 (2023 - \$86,386) for vested vacation benefits. The amount was determined using the employee’s current salary and accumulated vacation time.

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

5. Tangible Capital Assets

	-----2024-----			---2023---	
	Furniture and equipment	Computer equipment	Leasehold improvements	Total	Total
Cost					
Opening cost	\$ 236,974	\$ 223,441	\$ 29,280	\$ 489,695	\$ 415,365
Additions	10,706	45,283	34,080	90,069	74,330
Disposals	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Closing cost	247,680	268,724	63,360	579,764	489,695
Accumulated Amortization					
Opening balance	205,290	147,733	12,945	365,968	320,188
Disposals	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Amortization expense	8,910	42,180	5,280	56,370	45,780
Closing balance	214,200	189,913	18,225	422,338	365,968
Net Book Value	\$ 33,480	\$ 78,811	\$ 45,135	\$ 157,426	\$ 123,727

6. Commitments

The Government of Nova Scotia has entered into a lease agreement on the Office's behalf for office space. The agreement expires in April 2027. Commitments for lease payments and associated operating costs for the next five fiscal years are estimated to be:

2024-25	\$245,000
2025-26	\$250,000
2026-27	\$255,000
2027-28	\$ 22,000

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

7. Government Contributions

The Office is funded through annual budgetary appropriations approved by the House of Assembly. Government approved an appropriation of \$6,061,000 for 2023-24 (2023 - \$5,209,000). The Office charged expenses of \$5,510,911 (2023 - \$4,785,902) against the appropriation. Any unused appropriation cannot be carried forward for use in subsequent years.

8. Retirement Benefits

Employees of the Office are members of the Nova Scotia Public Service Superannuation Plan which provides defined pension benefits to employees. The Nova Scotia Pension Services Corporation manages the day-to-day operation of the plan investments and benefit administration. The Office is not responsible for any unfunded liability, nor does it have access to any surplus that may arise in the plan. The Office's responsibility with regard to this plan is limited to its contributions. The plan is funded by equal employee and employer contributions. The contribution rate is set by the plan trustees (Public Service Superannuation Plan Trustee Inc.) pursuant to the legislated funding policy and is set for a five-year cycle. The Office's expense in relation to retirement benefits amounts to \$372,080 (2023 - \$324,483).

9. Related Party Transactions

- (a) *Business Transactions* - The Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia is related to all Government of Nova Scotia departments, provincial crown corporations, agencies, boards, and commissions as a result of common ownership. The Office enters into transactions with these organizations in the normal course of business measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties. The Office is mindful of its independence and objectivity when entering into any such transactions.
- (b) *Funding and Specific Disclosure* - The Office's sources of funding are through an annual appropriation provided by government and the billing of professional fees for certain audit work performed. The Office does not bill government for the audit of its consolidated financial statements (the Public Accounts of Nova Scotia) or for performance audits the Office conducts.
- i) Government contributions* - The Office's annual appropriation approved by the House of Assembly is discussed in Note 7.
- ii) Revenues and Receivables* - During the year the Office received professional fee revenues of \$360,804 (2023 - \$362,900) from related parties, of which \$75,944 (2023 - \$73,200) was included in accounts receivable at year end.

Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia
Notes to Financial Statements
March 31, 2024

9. Related Party Transactions (*continued*)

(c) *Services Provided with no Charge* - The Province of Nova Scotia has centralized some of its administrative activities for efficiency and cost-effectiveness purposes. As a result, the Province of Nova Scotia uses a shared services model so that one governmental unit performs services for other units without charge. The costs of such services as payroll processing, cheque issuing, and information technology support provided by the Province of Nova Scotia are not recognized in the Office's financial statements.