



NEWS RELEASE

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Managing government information technology systems is difficult, but critical, says Auditor General

VICTORIA — Information technology (IT) offers government unprecedented opportunity to expand services, improve performance and reduce costs. Yet, as Auditor General Wayne Strelieff noted today in his latest report to the Legislative Assembly, many IT projects are never completed on time or on budget, and many end up unable to do all they were intended.

Strelieff makes clear that this problem is not limited to government. "Managing IT well is currently one of the hardest jobs facing both public and private sector managers," he says. "In government, IT has become critical to how well and how cost-efficiently our public agencies deliver the services we all depend on as citizens. For this reason, improving the way IT systems are developed and managed means improving the public good."

To assess the situation in more detail, Strelieff selected the Attorney General's ministry as a case study. The Attorney General, responsible for administering justice in British Columbia, depends on IT to deliver a large number of essential services, among them the operation of courts and prisons. To evaluate how well the ministry was managing its systems, the auditor general's study used the "portfolio management model" as a standard for comparison.

In his report, Strelieff was pleased to note that the ministry has established strong senior management control over the development and use of IT projects. He also recommended a number of ways in which the ministry could improve how it assesses the potential value and risk of proposals and how it manages risk during projects.

In concluding his comments about this audit, Strelieff encouraged all government organizations not only to review his recommendations, but to consider using them to evaluate the management of their own IT systems.

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[2001/2002 Report #5 – Management of the Information Technology Portfolio in the Ministry of Attorney General](#)

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