



NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

**December 14, 2006**

**BC's Auditor General reports on Provincial 25,000 seats plan.**

VICTORIA—In a report released today, Acting Auditor General, Arn van Iersel, reported that overall, he was pleased to find that the Ministry of Advanced Education and a sample of post-secondary institutions are managing this initiative in keeping with principles of good business practice. “However, given that the initiative is currently behind schedule, with just over half of the student seats planned for in the first two years delivered, a few critical areas need to be addressed to ensure success,” said van Iersel.

The report, titled *Government's Post-Secondary Expansion—25,000 Seats by 2010*, assesses the Province's management of the post-secondary seat expansion plan. The audit reviewed the efforts of the Ministry of Advanced Education and seven of the province's public post-secondary institutions.

According to van Iersel, his office decided to undertake this audit because government's commitment to create 25,000 new public post-secondary seats by 2010 is a significant undertaking<sup>¾</sup>with about \$1 billion in funding committed to support it.

In recent years, he noted, the number of student applications and enrolments at BC's public post-secondary institutions has slowed or, in some cases, even declined. This change in the rate of growth was not anticipated by the ministry and the majority of institutions included in the audit. van Iersel believes that improved risk management would help the ministry and institutions better prepare for and manage such challenges.

van Iersel also recommended that funding allocations for the initiative needs to be made more effective and transparent. “The ministry's current funding approach is challenging,” he said, “because funding intended for the implementation of 25,000 new student seats is also being used to help cover inflationary costs on already existing seats.”

As for the post-secondary institutions he examined, he found that they are planning and managing for growth, but need better human resource succession plans and enhanced public performance reporting to improve their overall effectiveness.

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**2006/07 Report #7** Government's Post-Secondary Expansion—25,000 Seats by 2010

This report is available:

On the Internet at the Office of the Auditor

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