



AG Independence Eroded Due to Lack of Resources

Report of the Auditor General – June, 2018

Volume 1, Chapter 5

Why Is This Important?

- Chronic under funding of the AG Office has reached a critical point given constant government expansions.
- Past and current New Brunswick AGs have requested budget increases
- A lack of budget is curtailing the AG's ability to fulfil the mandate and eroding AG independence.
- Government has effective control of the AG Office budget and therefore limits what the AG Office can audit as well as how much work the AG can do.
- Other AGs in Canada have the same situation in a general sense, however, their budgets have not been constrained as here in New Brunswick.

AG Concerns

Why should New Brunswickers care about a lack of AG Office funding?

- AG Office is the only Office with authority and access to examine government (outside the justice system)
- Current situation indicates a lack of transparency and does not serve the needs of its citizens for open review of government decisions and performance
- The process that is supposed to protect the interests of taxpayers and hold government to account for management of public resources is failing

Why is a budget increase necessary?

- AG is effectively impeded from fulfilling her mandate. The necessary work cannot be done.
- Adequate audit coverage on government operations cannot be achieved

How does New Brunswick compare to other provinces?

- AG budget of \$2.3 million for 2018-2019 is the smallest in Canada (except for PEI).
- Only \$2.80 per resident in 2018 goes to fund AG Office (NS = \$4.06; NL = \$7.36)
- Smallest budget increase needed to equalize NB AG to other provinces = \$1 million

What work is not getting done?

- No performance audits in many departments and Crown corporations within the last five years
- Lack of audit of new Crown corporations and new third party contracts to provide government services, such as Vestcor, Cannabis NB, Medavie (Extra-Mural)