

# Agriculture and Rural Development

## SUMMARY

### DEPARTMENT

#### Matters from the current audit

There are no new recommendations to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in this report.

#### Matters from prior audits

The Department has implemented our:

- October 2012 recommendation to improve its risk management processes—see below
- November 2006 recommendation to improve its systems for reporting and dealing with allegations of employee misconduct—see page 114

### AGRICULTURE FINANCIAL SERVICES CORPORATION

There are no new or outstanding recommendations.

### ALBERTA LIVESTOCK AND MEAT AGENCY

There are no new or outstanding recommendations.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### DEPARTMENT

#### Matters from prior audits

#### Enterprise risk management—implemented

##### Our audit findings

In 2012<sup>1</sup> we recommended that the department improve its risk management processes. The department implemented our recommendation by developing an enterprise risk management policy framework. The policy includes risk assessment, risk treatment, monitoring and review and communication.

The department also developed risk assessment templates to document and track risks and mitigation strategies.

With the implementation of the ERM framework, management is able to identify, assess, manage and monitor risks. Management produces a risk management report and submits it to the department's executive team semi-annually for their review.

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Auditor General of Alberta—October 2012*, no. 12, page 85.

## Systems for reporting and dealing with allegations of employee misconduct—implemented

### Our audit findings

In 2006<sup>2</sup> we recommended that the department improve its systems for reporting and dealing with allegations of employee misconduct. The purpose of our recommendation was to ensure the department had a clear process for staff to report allegations of employee misconduct, as well as a well-understood process for investigating allegations.

In June 2013, the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* was proclaimed. The Act provides Government of Alberta employees a clear process for disclosing concerns about wrongdoing, and provides protection from reprisal. It also covers procedures for the disclosure of wrongdoing and allegations by others of wrongdoing.

Management posted material on the department's website, along with links to other websites, which provides staff with:

- information on how to report wrongdoing
- wrongdoing disclosure forms
- the contact details of the designated officer who manages and investigates disclosures
- an employee fact sheet that provides sufficient details about the process of making a disclosure of wrongdoing

Management also has internal processes for disclosing concerns of employees' misconduct that do not fall under the scope of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act*.

The department's adoption of the requirements of the Act, along with its internal processes, in our opinion, achieves the objective we recommended.

## OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

### AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

The following recommendation is outstanding and not yet ready for a follow-up audit:

**Food safety: Accountability—October 2013, no. 5, p. 59**

(Originally October 2006, no. 12, p. 105; repeated as October 2009, no. 13, p. 114)

We again recommend that the Departments of Health and Agriculture and Rural Development improve reporting on food safety in Alberta. [This recommendation is being repeated to Health; ARD is making satisfactory progress.]

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Auditor General of Alberta—November 2006, no. 12, page 46.

## **AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES**

The following recommendation is outstanding and not yet ready for a follow-up audit:

**Food safety: Eliminating gaps in food safety inspection coverage—October 2009, no. 12, p. 111 (Originally October 2006, vol. 1, p. 102)**

We again recommend that Alberta Health Services and the Departments of Health and Agriculture and Rural Development, working with federal regulators, eliminate the existing gaps in food safety coverage in Alberta. Gaps include:

- mobile butchers
- consistently administering the Meat Facility Standard
- coordinating inspections in the “non-federally registered” sector

