

*Ministry of Finance
and Corporate Relations*

**1997/98
Annual Report**

**April 1, 1997
to March 31, 1998**



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

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Transmittal Letters



*The Honourable Garde B. Gardom, Q.C.
Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia*

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations.

This report details ministry activities from April 1, 1997, to March 31, 1998 and is an accurate account of achievements during that time.

*Joy K. MacPhail
Minister of Finance
and Corporate Relations*

Minister:

I am pleased to submit the 1997/98 Annual Report of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations.

*Chris Trumpy
Deputy Minister*



1997/98 Highlights

- ◆ Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations' spending for 1997/98 was \$115,952,000. This was \$5,862,000 less than its total appropriation of \$121,814,000. This 5 per cent savings was primarily due to lower spending by the Office of the Comptroller General, Revenue and Provincial Treasury Operations.
- ◆ Provincial Treasury was awarded "Canadian International Borrower of the Year" by Euromoney (a London-based financial trade journal), recognizing the province's tactical approach to offshore capital markets.
- ◆ Treasury Board Staff played a key role in developing Film Incentive BC, a set of tax credits designed to spur the domestic film industry.
- ◆ The Office of the Chief Investment Officer completed a diversification program in June 1997 and all clients have now reached their policy allocation targets. This very successful undertaking and has added billions of dollars in additional funding to British Columbians pension plans.
- ◆ The Corporate Registry completed a project with the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, the Registrar of Companies, the Workers' Compensation Board, and Revenue Canada (GST) to combine the registration forms of the four agencies into one interactive, on-system form, so that taxpayers can simultaneously register with any or all of the four agencies simply by keying in information in response to computer-generated prompts.
- ◆ Human Resource Services Branch implemented the first Employment Equity staffing process, in which designated groups took priority in filling temporary positions. Over 50 per cent of the ministry's new temporary positions are now filled by members of under-represented groups. This initiative is significant in generating a more diverse workforce, as staff filling temporary positions are often successful in competing for regular positions throughout government.
- ◆ Provincial Treasury continued its consultations with the business community and released a new draft *Company Act* for public comment.
- ◆ Purchasing Services improved accessibility for B.C. suppliers to public sector purchasing opportunities by permitting any B.C. public sector organization to directly post their bid notices electronically on the BC Bid Internet web site.
- ◆ For six businesses, concurrent audits by the Consumer Taxation Branch and Revenue Canada (GST) reduced the amount of documentation that businesses had to provide, reducing interruptions to the businesses' staff and to their business activities.
- ◆ Treasury Board Staff played a lead role in the provincial-territorial group formed to help bring about a provincial-territorial consensus on improvements to federal transfer payments to provinces.

- ◆ Consumer Taxation Branch worked with Revenue Canada under a formal agreement to match databases to identify unregistered businesses that may not be complying with federal or provincial tax legislation.
- ◆ Expanded data available on the BC Stats world wide web site provided faster, cost-effective access to many BC Stats statistical reports and tables. Usage increased to approximately 2,700 users per week.
- ◆ The Product Distribution Centre provided pharmaceuticals for inmates at all correctional facilities, resulting in savings of \$475,000 for Corrections Branch.
- ◆ Corporate and Ministry Support Services Division managed the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund's annual charity campaign for government, which raised more than \$1.282 million (an increase of 3.34 per cent over the prior year) for 323 charitable agencies across the province.

Mission Statement

Ministry Organizational Chart

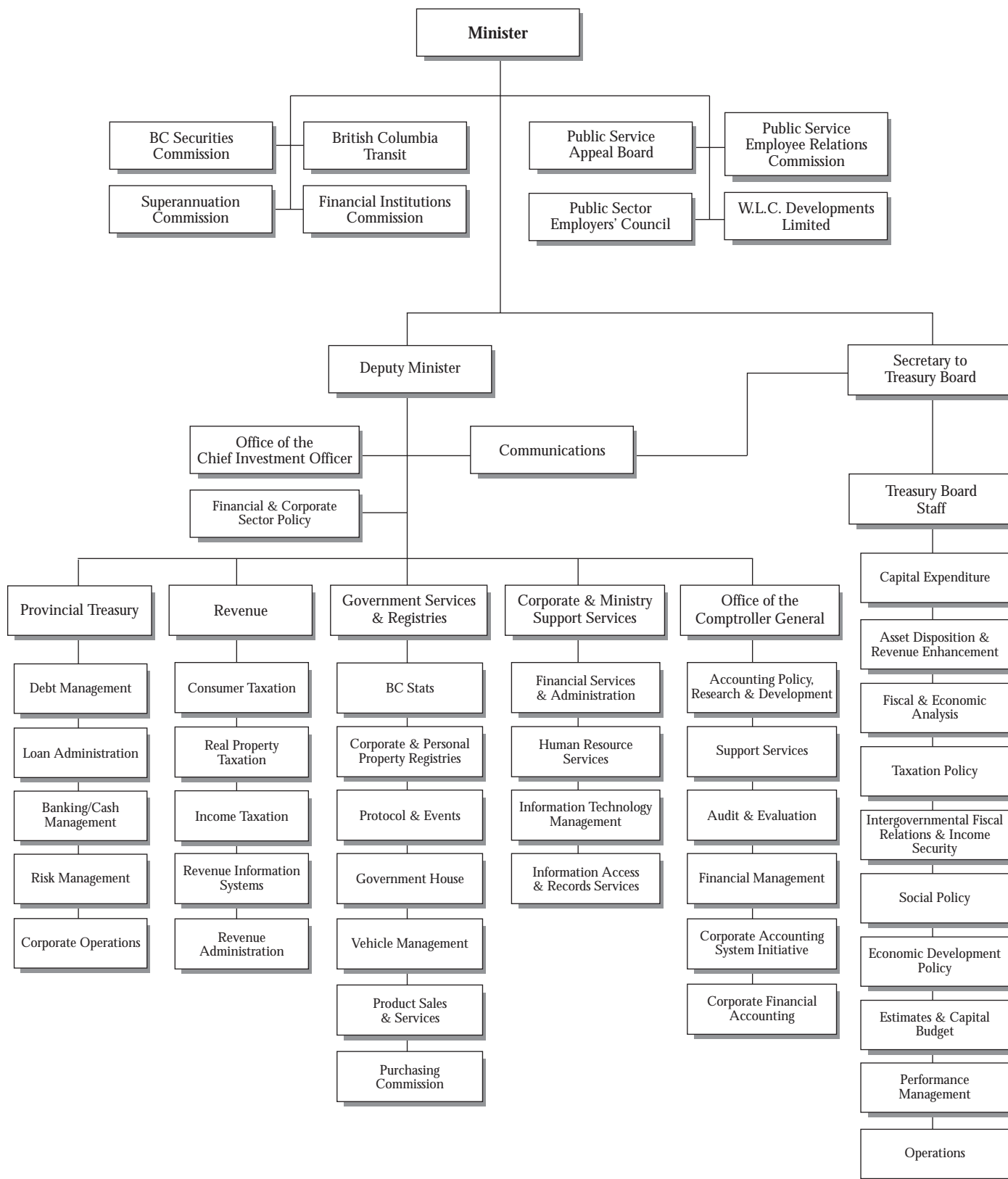


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Reports from Ministry Divisions and Branches

Treasury Board Staff

Treasury Board Staff is responsible for developing and reviewing government's economic, social, fiscal and taxation policies. This division provides analysis, forecasts and advice to Treasury Board (the Cabinet committee responsible for budget and management matters) and to the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations.

Treasury Board Staff develops the provincial budget under the direction of Treasury Board. Throughout the fiscal year it reviews requests to Treasury Board for additional ministry and program funding, monitors the status of the budget and, when necessary, recommends alternative fiscal management strategies.

Treasury Board Staff also provides analysis and advice on federal–provincial and provincial–municipal relations. In addition, Treasury Board Staff represents the government on its various public sector pension boards.

Budget: \$8,118,000

Employees: 98

Core Activities

- ◆ Implemented Treasury Board's decisions by allocating financial resources among ministries and special offices.
- ◆ Supported Treasury Board in developing and producing the *Estimates*.
- ◆ Developed and evaluated tax options to meet the government's fiscal, equity and economic development objectives.
- ◆ Conducted economic and financial analysis in support of government's strategic priorities, including treaty negotiations, and provided regular analysis of foreign and domestic economic developments to the minister and senior management.
- ◆ Supported the fee and licence advisory committee, a sub-committee of Treasury Board, which reviews proposed fee and licence changes.
- ◆ Prepared quarterly reports, economic forecasts and the annual *British Columbia Financial and Economic Review*, and assisted in producing the third *Debt Statistics Report*.
- ◆ Provided ongoing analysis of federal funding for provincial programs and provided the minister with financial analysis on how other provincial governments and the federal government are addressing fiscal issues.
- ◆ Provided research support for the minister for various finance ministers' meetings, and for the premier at the Western Premiers' Conference and the Annual Premiers' Conference.
- ◆ Represented British Columbia on several federal–provincial policy and technical committees that examine tax policy and changing fiscal arrangements between levels of government.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Reviewed 434 submissions from government ministries, ranging from reallocating funding between programs to requesting additional funds for new programs not contained in ministry budgets.
- ◆ Hosted the annual minister's economic outlook conference with several Canadian forecasters in January 1998. Thirteen participants tabled forecasts for the economy.
- ◆ Conducted a performance management review of three special operating agencies: Vital Statistics Agency, Personal Property & Manufactured Homes Registries and the Royal British Columbia Museum.
- ◆ Worked with the Office of the Auditor General to produce the spring 1997 Third Joint Report on the government's Accountability and Performance Management Initiative.
- ◆ Played a key role in developing Film Incentive BC, a set of tax credits designed to spur the domestic film industry.
- ◆ Provided advice and analysis on tax changes to be included in the government's three-year economic plan and worked with the federal government to secure more timely aggregate data on personal and corporate income tax collections.
- ◆ Played a lead role in the federal-provincial group charged with introducing the National Child Benefit.
- ◆ Played a lead role in the provincial-territorial group formed to help bring about a provincial-territorial consensus on improvements to federal transfers to provinces.
- ◆ Played a lead role in developing the B.C. position on Canada Pension Plan reform and a supporting role in the provincial team negotiating changes in the Canadian social union.
- ◆ Played a lead role in the reform of governance arrangements for B.C.'s four statutory pension plans.
- ◆ The Asset Disposition and Revenue Enhancement Branch within Treasury Board Staff was engaged in negotiations related to the disposition of large government assets and complex business operations. For the start of the 1998/99 fiscal year, this function was transferred to the B.C. Assets and Land Corporation.
- ◆ The Capital Expenditure Branch, which provided analysis and recommendations to Treasury Board on major social capital facilities such as schools and hospitals and for the capital budgets of tax-supported Crown corporations, became part of Treasury Board staff during 1997/98. In 1998/99, it was established as a separate division within the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations with extended responsibilities covering the implementation of social capital projects.

Provincial Treasury

Provincial Treasury operates as the province's banker. It manages debt, provides banking and cash-management services, collects loans, provides administration services, and oversees risk management. These services are extended to all ministries, Crown corporations and public sector agencies. This Division is also responsible for government financial and corporate sector policy development.

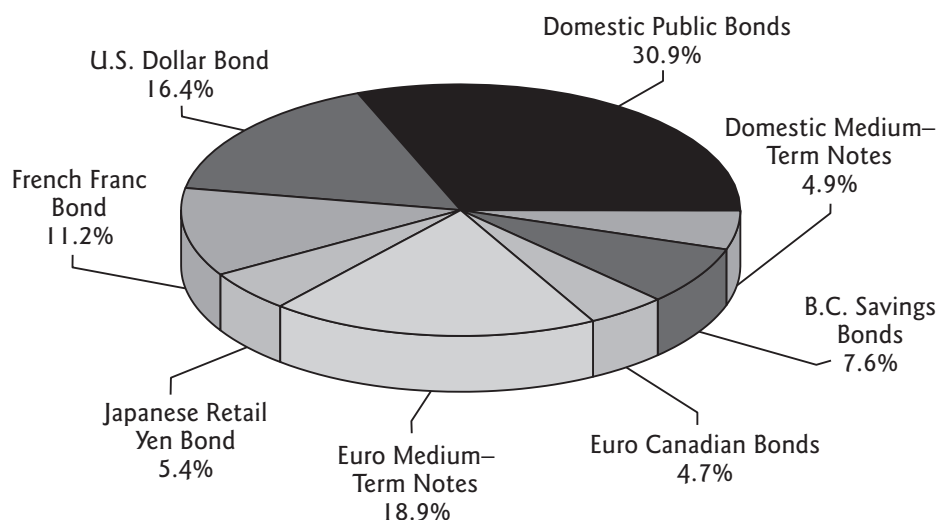
Budget: \$15,446,000

Employees: 167

Core Activities

- ◆ The Financial and Corporate Sector Policy Branch provides policy advice to government, implements government policy decisions, and responds to inquiries on the policies and legislation that regulate: credit unions, trust companies, insurance companies, the sale of real estate, insurance and mortgages. This also includes the corporate/commercial sector: companies, societies, co-operative associations and condominiums, the use of personal property as collateral for loans, and various statutory liens.
- ◆ The division's Risk Management Branch manages a comprehensive risk management program to reduce the risks to which government is exposed by virtue of its assets, programs and operations, and the risks of its public-education and health-care systems and Crown entities. The risks include earthquakes, fires, medical malpractice and school liability. The program includes risk financing, risk transfer, risk management awareness and claims management. Risks are primarily financed through self-insurance. Program participants are charged premiums substantially less than what government would have to pay to finance these risks on the commercial insurance market. To promote risk management awareness, three educational publications with a combined circulation of over 9,000 copies are published on a quarterly basis. In 1997/98, 1,022 new claims were opened and 1,343 claims were closed. In addition, 199 indemnities to entities dealing with the government were reviewed and approved.
- ◆ The Debt Management Branch borrowed \$4.4 billion in various markets on behalf of the province to meet government and Crown corporation financing requirements and to refinance existing debt. In 1997/98, 57 per cent or \$2.4 billion of its financing needs were from offshore capital markets, reflecting favourable valuation of the province in the eyes of international investors.

1997/98 Borrowing Activity

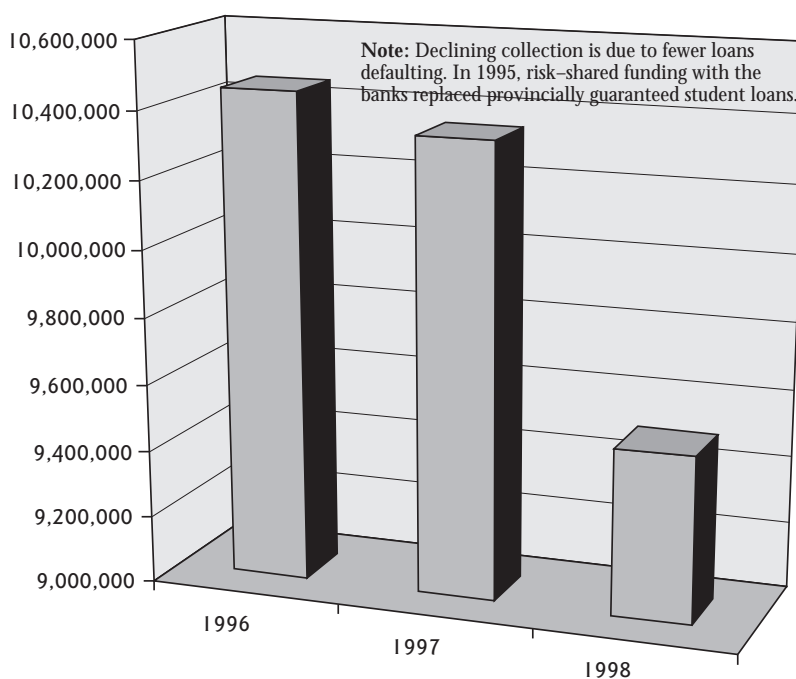


- ◆ The Banking/Cash Management Branch actively managed the government's annual direct cash flows of \$100 billion, to maximize the returns on short-term cash surpluses and to accurately predict funding requirements to reduce borrowing costs. In accordance with performance measurement targets, cash managers attempt to keep cash bank balances within acceptable ranges, at six banks, 80 per cent of the time.
- ◆ The branch strives to minimize banking fees through negotiation and issuance of requests for proposals. The branch issues requests for proposals for direct government requirements as well as assisting Crown corporations. The BC Transit banking requirements, Vancouver General Hospital credit facility and general government armoured-car requirements were successfully tendered in 1998. Compared to a national independent survey of bank fees, our costs are only 60 per cent of regular bank fees.
- ◆ The move to electronic remittance of tax payments continues to increase. In this fiscal year \$220 million in sales tax remittances and \$980 million in consumer tax remittances were processed electronically. Using electronic payment and file transfers, financial institutions are now processing 52 per cent of tax remittances, up from 27 per cent in the previous year.
- ◆ Banking/Cash Management Branch assumed more responsibility for debt accounting, including preparation of the debt-related schedules for the Summary Financial Statements and the debt-related components of the Statement of Changes in Cash and Temporary Investments at both the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Summary Financial Statement levels.

- ◆ The division's Loan Administration Branch collected \$12 million in government-defaulted receivables, including \$10.3 million in defaulted British Columbia Student Assistance Program (BCSAP) debt. As of March 31, 1998, there was \$102.3 million outstanding in BCSAP debt. Collection efficiency is measured by per-collector recoveries. The average amount collected monthly by each collector has increased to \$49,500 in 1997/98 from \$26,000 in 1991/92. The Commercial Loans section made new payment arrangements or restructured to improve security on 26 commercial loans.

Loan Administration Branch

Collection of B.C. Student Assistance Debt



1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Liaised with industry stakeholders, regulators and the public regarding proposed policy changes in the financial and corporate sector.
- ◆ Prepared orders-in-council making appointments to agencies, boards and commissions.
- ◆ Co-ordinated the ministry's non-budget legislation for the spring 1998 session of the legislature.
- ◆ Continued consultations on a proposed new *Condominium Act*.
- ◆ Continued consultations with the business community and released a new draft *Company Act* for public comment.

- ◆ Released a discussion paper proposing new business names legislation for British Columbia.
- ◆ Was awarded “Canadian International Borrower of the Year” by Euromoney (a London-based financial trade journal), recognizing the province’s tactical approach to offshore capital markets.
- ◆ Completed (as part of the Corporate Accounting System conversion) the transition to laser cheque printing, and transferred cheque-stuffing operations to BC Mail Plus to achieve greater economies of scale.
- ◆ On behalf of the Office of the Chief Investment Officer (OCIO), implemented a restructuring of the international equity pool funds from managed and indexed portfolios to three pooled funds: European, Asia and EAFE (Europe, Asia, Far East), to facilitate regional allocation of funds into markets with higher expected returns.
- ◆ Partnered with the ministry’s Revenue Branch in the development of a new system for managing the Property Tax Deferment Program, by building on the existing functionality of the Loan Administration System.
- ◆ Established a web page listing the province’s outstanding bonds and providing timely, on-line updates. www.fin.gov.bc.ca/pt/dmb/debt_instruments.shtml#top
- ◆ Managed an investor relations tour for the minister and senior officials in Europe and North America to promote the value of the province’s credit.
- ◆ Realized \$3 million in annual interest cost savings through international borrowings (i.e., compared to the province’s cost of funds in the domestic capital markets).
- ◆ Reported to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on action taken to address the Office of the Auditor General’s value for money audit. The committee endorsed the actions taken by the Debt Management Branch.

Office of the Chief Investment Officer

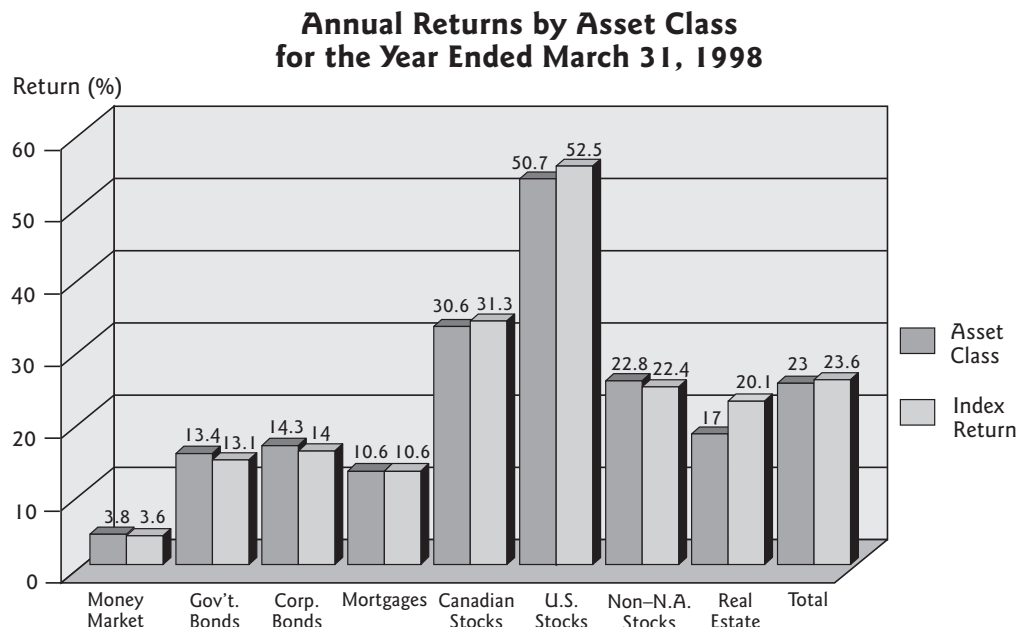
The Office of the Chief Investment Officer (OCIO) provides fund management services for government, government bodies, and public sector trust funds such as pension funds and sinking funds. Trust funds represent the largest client group and account for 96 per cent of the assets under the OCIO's administration.

Budget: \$4,300,000

Employees: 42

Core Activities

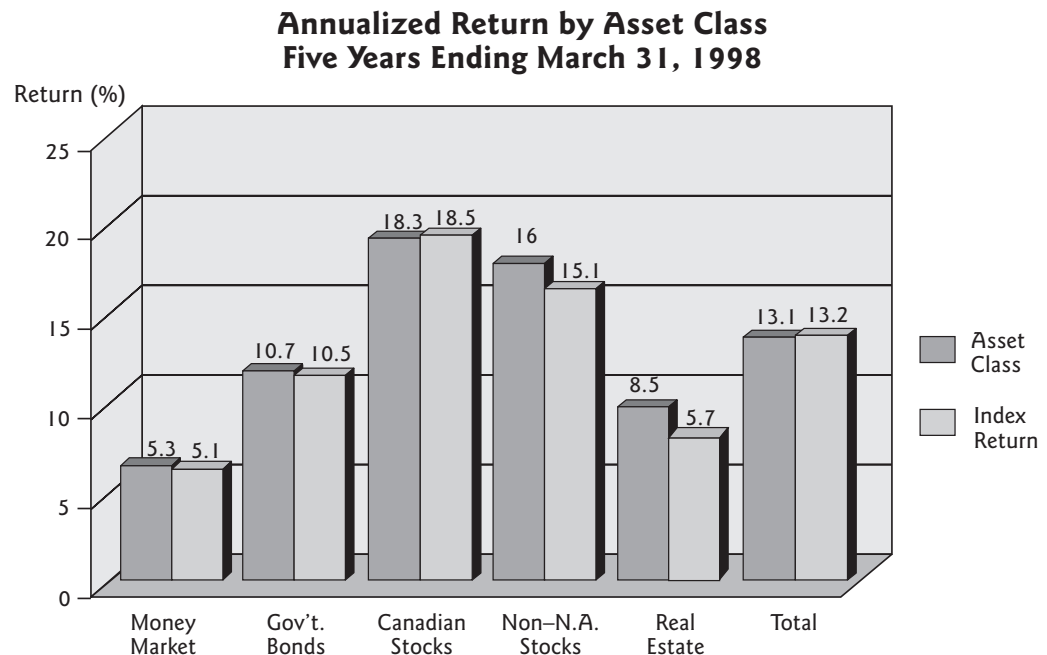
- ◆ The OCIO provided fund management services for approximately 1,500 portfolios. As of March 31, 1998, the asset base was \$51.2 billion, which makes the OCIO the largest institutional investor in Western Canada. In fiscal 1997/98, assets under administration grew \$8.7 billion or 20.5 per cent.
- ◆ The OCIO provides a complete range of fund management services for its clients. This includes: cash management; consulting; economic analysis; manager reviews; risk management; trading; trade settlement; performance measurement; security lending; and corporate governance.
- ◆ The OCIO uses a combination of in-house and external, private-sector fund managers. As of March 31, 1998, approximately 80 per cent of the assets were managed internally.
- ◆ Performance of the investment managers is compared against recognized industry benchmarks, calculated in accordance with international standards established by the Association for Investment Management and Research. In fiscal 1997/98, the OCIO underperformed its total fund policy asset mix benchmark by 0.6 per cent. OCIO investments outperformed the market indices in five out of eight asset classes.



- ◆ In terms of the individual managers, all the internally-managed pools met or exceeded their benchmarks. Unfortunately, most of the external managers underperformed and this reduced overall results.
- ◆ The OCIO remains a low-cost provider of investment services. Internal costs are among the lowest of North American pension plans.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ The diversification program was completed in June 1997, and all clients have now reached their policy targets. This has been a very successful undertaking and has added billions of dollars in additional funding to the pension plans.
- ◆ International pooled funds were restructured to facilitate regional allocation of funds into markets with higher expected returns.
- ◆ Changes were made to the manager composition of external pools to improve future performance.



Government Services and Registries

Government Services and Registries manages the government purchasing program by purchasing goods and services for ministries and by developing government's purchasing policy. It ensures fair treatment of all suppliers and ensures best value for each tax dollar. On request, it will also purchase goods and services for Crown corporations and other public sector organizations.

The division provides services to the Legislative Assembly and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor (including protocol and events), and operates Government House. It also provides statistical and analytical services for government, and manages the government's light-vehicle fleet, postal and distribution services, printing, warehousing, and disposal of surplus Crown assets.

The registry function of the division operates the province's corporate, personal-property and manufactured-home registry systems.

**Division Budget: \$17.807 million (net)
with \$111.936 million in cost recoveries**

Employees: 613

Purchasing Services

Plans for and directs the purchase of goods and some services.

**Budget: \$2,814,000 (net) and
\$370,000 in cost recoveries**

Employees: 45

Core Activities

- ◆ Completed 2,102 purchase orders, valued at approximately \$210 million, for one-time purchases and Master Standing Offers. Completed 84 Requests for Proposals for services, and assisted Ministries in approximately \$270 million worth of service contracts. Estimated savings was \$12.7 million on purchase orders, and \$16.5 million on service contracts. Purchase order cost savings is based on winning bid compared to average of other compliant bids, and Master Standing Offer pricing as compared to Fair Market Value of identical products. Service contract cost savings are based on estimates similar to those used for purchase orders.
- ◆ Negotiated a 20 per cent discount on accommodation rates and a 30 per cent discount on car-rental rates for government business travel, for \$4 million in travel savings.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Continued negotiations to extend the Agreement on Internal Trade to Crown corporations, municipalities, educational institutions, and social and health public bodies.

- ◆ Improved accessibility for B.C. suppliers to public sector purchasing opportunities by permitting any B.C. public sector organization to directly post its bid notices electronically on the BC Bid Internet web site.
- ◆ Reduced duplication in information technology acquisitions and increased ministry co-operation and communication through the Purchasing Commission's Strategic Acquisitions Group.

Vehicle Management Services

Manages vehicle purchase, use, maintenance, fuel management, insurance, licensing, and leasing for the provincial government's light-vehicle fleet.

**Budget: \$2,037,000 (net) with
\$13.75 million in cost recoveries**

Employees: 35

Core Activities

- ◆ Maintained government light-vehicle fleet size at 4,400 vehicles.
- ◆ Provided maintenance management services.
- ◆ Managed a pre-negotiated fuel discount program that saves government \$600,000 annually, including \$60,000 in savings for participating Crown corporations.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Signed contract on March 31, 1998, with Vehicle Management Services to provide vehicle support services to government for the light vehicle fleet and other mobile assets. A Transportation Management Group will be established to manage the contract and implement the transition to the contracted service-delivery model. Alternative placement of surplus Vehicle Management Services Branch staff in 1998/99 will reduce the number of employees budgeted by 31 FTEs.

Government House

Provides support to the Lieutenant Governor and operates Government House.

**Budget: \$1,317,000 (net) with
\$60,000 in recoveries**

Employees: 6

Core Activities

- ◆ Supported the Lieutenant Governor's constitutional role and schedule of official engagements. Hospitality events and ceremonies at Government House were attended by more than 11,300 guests, with an additional 92,000 visitors to the grounds of Government House.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Hosted a celebration of Confederation Day, British Columbia's joining Canada, with an Open House/Gardens event attended by more than 6,600 people.

- ◆ Held a series of evening concerts, entitled Music in Government House, in the spring.
- ◆ Supported the visit to British Columbia of Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince of Wales and Princes William and Harry.

Protocol and Events Branch

Manages provincial protocol activities and administers logistics for official honours, awards, and government conferences and events. Provides access, information and public tours of the Parliament Buildings.

Budget: \$1,362,000 Employees: 14

Core Activities

- ◆ Organized protocol services for 52 diplomatic visits to the province, including foreign ministers, ambassadors and other distinguished visitors.
- ◆ Organized various events for the Royal Visit of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and his sons.
- ◆ Provided guided tours of the Parliament Buildings for 106,379 visitors.
- ◆ Provided event planning advisory services, developed official itineraries and co-ordinated 117 events held on the Parliament Buildings grounds.
- ◆ Promoted and administered various provincial honours and awards programs, such as the Queen Elizabeth II scholarships. Eleven new members were invested in the Order of British Columbia and 539 government employee Long Service Awards were issued to ministries for presentation.
- ◆ Coordinated 3,909 congratulatory certificates issued to British Columbians for birthdays and anniversaries.
- ◆ Organized annual events to commemorate public holidays and anniversaries, such as Remembrance Day, Canada Day and the cross-Canada Christmas Lights Ceremony.
- ◆ Provided logistical support for the Western Premiers' Conference, summits on Northern Jobs and Development, and the Premier's Youth Forum.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Provided event planning for the 100th anniversary of the Parliament Buildings through a special session of the Legislative Assembly with all former Members of the Legislative Assembly invited.
- ◆ Organized the accreditation of B.C. officials for the APEC world economic leaders meeting in Vancouver in November 1997, and organized the Premier's Reception, bilateral meetings and official arrivals greeting ceremonies for the 18 APEC leaders.

BC Stats

Provides business and demographic statistics and analysis on the economic, social and demographic conditions of the province and its people for government planning and policy decisions. BC Stats also provides services to local governments, educational institutions, the business community and the public, with cost recovery (cost recovery comes from the budgets of other government ministries, agencies and commissions for goods and services provided).

**Budget: \$1,165,000 (net) with
\$509,000 in cost recoveries**

Employees: 24

Core Activities

- ◆ Provided annual estimates and analysis of the size and age distribution of the provincial and regional populations. The information was used in various provincial–local government per-capita funding formulae, and as indicators of regional economic change.
- ◆ Developed provincial and sub-provincial population and employment projections for planning purposes as required by the *Growth Strategies Act*.
- ◆ Provided quarterly estimates and analysis of provincial nominal and constant-dollar Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This information is used to determine the overall health of the provincial economy and the budget economic forecast.
- ◆ Reported on BC Benefits recipient rates and Employment Insurance recipient rates by region and occupation to provide a measure of relative regional disparity and the need for training programs to fill labour–market gaps.
- ◆ Tracked provincial government hiring, separation and transfers, and prepared government, ministry and division–specific workplace profile reports used to monitor the provincial government’s employment equity program.
- ◆ Prepared and distributed eight monthly, four quarterly and eight annual reports covering social, demographic and economic conditions in B.C. These reports were distributed to over 3,300 clients, both inside and outside government, generating recoveries of \$133,000.
- ◆ Answered approximately 12,500 requests for statistical information from the private and public sectors.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Expanded data available on the BC Stats world wide web site (www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca), which provided faster, cost–effective access to many BC Stats statistical reports and tables. Usage increased to approximately 2,700 users per week.
- ◆ Developed estimates on the contributions made by tourism and the information technology industries to the overall growth in the provincial economy.

These non-standard industries are emerging as drivers of the economy that require monitoring to ensure effective policy formation.

- ◆ Provided data collection and analysis services pertaining to Forest Renewal B.C. program outputs such as job creation, watershed restoration, job re-training, enhanced forestry activity, value-added forestry and community development.
- ◆ Assembled information on small business in the province, including employment creation, bankruptcies, incorporations, and number of firms by industry, size, and location, in support of policy development relating to small business in B.C.

Queen's Printer and Publishing

Meets the printing needs of the Legislative Assembly, government ministries, and some publicly-funded agencies (full cost recovery comes from the budgets of other government ministries, agencies and commissions for goods and services provided).

Budget: \$40.0 million in cost recoveries Employees: 159

Core Activities

- ◆ Provided \$9.529 million in typesetting, desktop publishing, design, printing, photocopying, binding and image-capture services.
- ◆ Tendered and awarded \$10.92 million in printing orders to private-sector printers.
- ◆ Produced and sold \$1.434 million in hard-copy and electronic publications.
- ◆ Provided \$11.924 million in office products, stationery, protocol giftware and forms.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Maintained an Internet web site to provide the public with electronic access to activities of the Legislative Assembly and with access to government job opportunities through "POSTINGS." www.qp.gov.bc.ca
- ◆ Implemented a Print-on-Demand publishing system by setting up an electronic publications index that allows the public to order government publications via the Internet.

Postal and Distribution Services

Provides mail pickup, processing and delivery services for government ministries, some Crown corporations and some publicly-funded organizations (full cost recovery comes from the budgets of other government ministries, agencies and commissions for goods and services provided).

**Budget: \$30.562 million
in cost recoveries**

Employees: 119

Core Activities

- ◆ Processed 42 million pieces of government mail.
- ◆ Saved \$5.8 million on contracted services through volume discounts.
- ◆ Distributed 928,936 facsimile messages to distribution lists, a 29 per cent increase over the previous year.
- ◆ Maintained a database of 200,000 addresses in 1,500 mailing lists for use in the distribution of mail.
- ◆ Arranged 566 employee household moves for employees who were relocated, a 21 per cent increase over the previous fiscal year.
- ◆ BC Mail Plus was selected to produce digitized photo identification cards for B.C. drivers licences and identification cards for ICBC (formerly Motor Vehicle Branch), and began production in January 1997. Approximately 782,610 cards were produced during the 1997/98 fiscal year. In addition, 40,500 BC Transit bus passes were produced using the card production facilities at BC Mail Plus.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Continued to manage card production for B.C. drivers' licences on behalf of ICBC, and to explore new card production opportunities.

Product Distribution

Warehouses and distributes health, medical and safety-related staff uniforms and general goods for resale (full cost recovery comes from the budgets of other government ministries, agencies and commissions for goods and services provided).

Budget: \$22.146 million in cost recoveries

Employees: 57

Core Activities

- ◆ Provided \$19.781 million of medical and pharmaceutical products to public health care providers. Provided 33,000 doses of vaccines such as hepatitis A & B, rabies, cholera, typhoid, and immune serum globulin.
- ◆ Provided uniforms and insignia to approximately 24,000 public sector employees such as firefighters, police officers, correctional officers, ambulance

attendants, conservation officers, forest service enforcement officers and inland ferries employees.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Provided pharmaceuticals for inmates at all correctional facilities, resulting in savings of \$475,000 for Corrections Branch.

Warehousing and Asset Investment Recovery Branch

Manages consolidated storage space for government and disposes of surplus Crown assets. Operating within the branch, the Intangible Property Program identifies government-owned works that may have commercial potential and licenses the rights to these works to the private sector (full cost recovery comes from the budgets of other government ministries, agencies and commissions for goods and services provided).

Budget: \$4.54 million in cost recoveries

Employees: 31

Core Activities

- ◆ As part of the completion of the government publication index initiative, the Vanalman distribution warehouse in Victoria, operated by Warehousing and Asset Investment Recovery, has been consolidated into the Office Products Centre of Product Sales and Services.
- ◆ A pilot project is being conducted through the Prince George warehouse involving the purchase of field equipment, such as snowmobiles, and leasing it back to ministries for pooled usage.
- ◆ In conjunction with conservation officers and wildlife officers of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Asset Investment Recovery has implemented a province-wide process for the sale of seized and found wildlife assets. Revenues in fiscal 1997/98 were \$78,000 for approximately 200 lots as compared to revenues of \$11,000 for 200 lots in 1996.
- ◆ Regional cash and carry sales were held in Kamloops, Smithers and Victoria during fiscal 1997/98. Revenues were \$128,500 for the three sales. Customers consigning assets for the sales included the federal government, Crown corporations, Liquor Distribution Branch, municipalities and universities. Items sold included vehicles, small boats, desks, chairs, obsolete electronics and other office equipment. Redistribution of assets prior to sales at these regional sites resulted in savings to ministries of approximately \$15,000.
- ◆ Continued positive working relations with the federal government's Supply and Services, Crown Asset Disposal Branch through a federal-provincial reciprocal working agreement. Supply and Services Canada is reviewing opportunities to extend Asset Investment Recovery's involvement in serving the disposal needs of Canadian Forces bases at Esquimalt and Comox.
- ◆ Redistributed assets worth \$750,000 within government.

- ◆ The Intangible Property Program negotiated 24 new licence agreements for the rights to reproduce or use government works. The projected results over the life of the agreements are creation of 30 jobs in the private sector, generation of \$2.5 million in royalties, and cost savings to government of \$1.5 million.

Registries

Provides for the operation of the province's corporate, personal-property and manufactured-home registry systems.

Budget: \$8.297 million

Employees: 119

Revenue generated: \$36.7 million

Core Activities

- ◆ Provided 19,558 business registrations, 386,275 personal property security interests financing statements, 26,242 new corporate entities, 330,884 corporate maintenance filings, 7,563 new manufactured home filings and 10,828 manufactured home transfers of ownership.
- ◆ Provided 746,505 personal property searches, 70,172 business and corporate name searches, 392,382 corporate searches and 47,350 manufactured home searches.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Implemented an imaging system for the filing and retrieval of Declarations of Partnerships forms (1,500 new filings each month).
- ◆ Placed Corporate Registry forms on the Ministry's web site so clients can download and print them through the Internet.
- ◆ Improved and migrated the correspondence system for all partnerships and companies letters to an Oracle environment.
- ◆ Implemented remote transport permits so Government Agents can issue them locally, directly to owners wishing to move their home.
- ◆ Improved the office accommodation at 940 Blanshard Street in Victoria by reorganizing the front counter in the public area and by combining the Manufactured Homes and Personal Property Registries into the same area.

Revenue Division

Collects taxes for the government, administers the province's major tax legislation, ensures legislation is applied fairly and consistently to build mutual trust between the taxpayer and government, promotes voluntary compliance, and enforces tax legislation in the absence of voluntary compliance. Delivers benefits to British Columbians under the BC Family Bonus, Seniors Supplement, bus pass, First Time Home Buyers, Land Tax Deferment and fuel tax rebate programs.

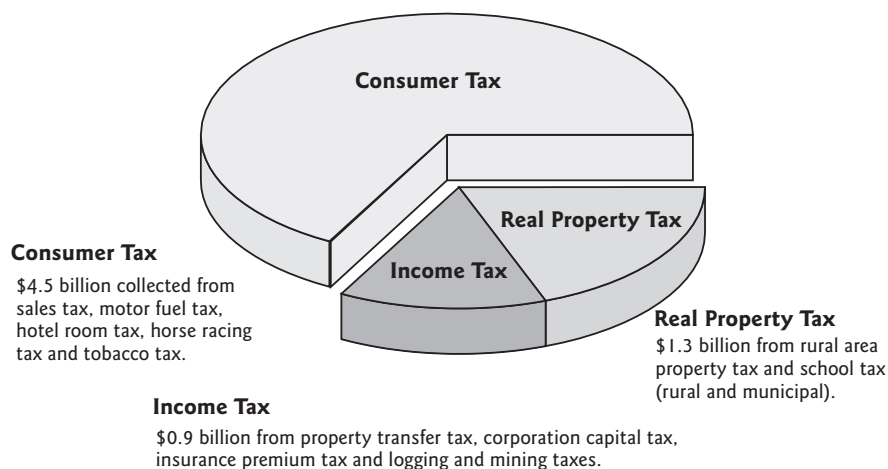
Budget: \$334,533,000

Employees: 464

Revenue Collection Activities

- ◆ Processed 1.2 million tax returns and one million payments, of which 0.4 million were electronic; imaged 1.1 million pages of income tax financial information; issued 0.7 million pieces of information material; and responded to 100,000 telephone calls and letters from the public.
- ◆ Collected \$105.1 million in debt accounts (excluding real property tax).
- ◆ Recovered in excess of \$23 million from income, capital, and property transfer tax audits and other compliance activities.
- ◆ Completed 2,800 consumer tax audits for a recovery of \$57.1 million.
- ◆ Registered 14,000 businesses under the consumer taxation statutes.
- ◆ Processed 18,000 consumer tax refund claims and paid refunds of \$51.6 million.
- ◆ Issued and processed 350,000 annual rural property tax notices to property owners in unincorporated areas.

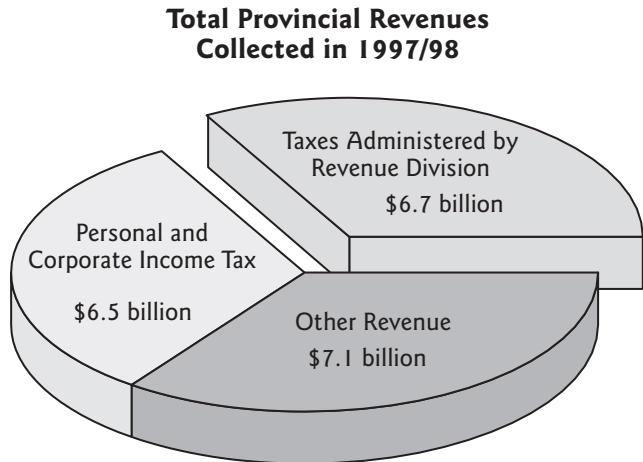
Breakdown of Tax Collected by Revenue Division



Note: the Revenue Division collected an additional \$432.0 million in financing transactions. The total of revenue and financing transactions is \$7.1 billion.

Benefits Programs Activities

- ◆ BC Family Bonus Program managed 245,000 accounts providing benefits to more than 460,000 children.
- ◆ Bus pass program issued 38,000 annual passes to low-income senior citizens and people with disabilities.
- ◆ Seniors Supplement provided financial supplement to 36,000 low-income senior citizens.
- ◆ Processed 21,000 claims for property transfer tax exemption under the First Time Home Buyers program.
- ◆ Processed 1,400 property tax deferment applications, increasing the total number of approved applications to 9,900.
- ◆ Issued motor fuel tax refunds totaling \$1 million for persons with disabilities, a 16 per cent increase over the previous fiscal year.



Total 1997/98 provincial revenue was \$20.3 billion; of that, \$6.7 billion was collected by Revenue Division (net of financing transactions)

1997/98 Special Activities

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

- ◆ Completed two work process reviews saving \$10.5 million and shared an award of \$46,000 among 24 team members.
- ◆ Recognized, through certificates, the outstanding efforts of 46 employees.

LEGISLATIVE:

- ◆ Worked with Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture to design and implement provincial incentives under the *Income Tax Act* to encourage film production as announced in British Columbia's 1998 budget.
- ◆ Participated in a project to unify portions of the fuel tax legislation across Canada, to unify the types of dye used, to simplify remittance of tax by using common terms and forms, to perform joint audits and to lessen the compliance burden on business.
- ◆ Became responsible for administration of the *Indian Self-Government Enabling Act* for the transfer of property taxation powers from the province to certain First Nations.
- ◆ Developed legislation and related procedures, in consultation with the federal government and local band councils, to enable bands to impose tax on sales of tobacco from retail businesses located on reserves.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE DELIVERY:

- ◆ Completed a project with the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, the Registrar of Companies, the Workers' Compensation Board, and Revenue Canada (GST) to combine the registration forms of the four agencies into one interactive, on-system form so that taxpayers can simultaneously register with any or all of the four agencies, simply by keying in information in response to computer-generated prompts.
- ◆ Continued the business process re-engineering and business requirements phase of a major management information system project to replace multiple, non-integrated consumption tax systems, resulting in processes that will better serve business, government and the public.
- ◆ Developed an interface with Revenue Canada and the National Child Benefit Program to receive BC Family Bonus benefit data in a highly secure, timely and efficient manner.
- ◆ Continued to expand the electronic filing and remittance program for social service tax, using electronic data interchange and interactive voice response technology.

WORK PROCESS SIMPLIFICATION:

- ◆ Successfully consolidated six separate Victoria division office locations into one.
- ◆ Developed and implemented, with the Loan Administration Branch of Provincial Treasury, a replacement for the outdated Land Tax Deferment System, to manage more than 10,000 property tax deferment accounts.
- ◆ Streamlined rural property tax administration by implementing a post-audit review of homeowner grant applications to allow earlier processing and depositing of property tax payments.
- ◆ Continued participation in the International Fuel Tax Agreement and the International Registration Plan programs, to provide a single, uniform system for administering the licensing of, and simplifying tax compliance for, inter-jurisdictional carriers, while being revenue-neutral for the province and the trucking industry.
- ◆ Improved to registration procedures to allow those applying in person in Victoria to receive their vendor registration numbers immediately.
- ◆ Designated work teams for separate portions of the registration base to process registrations, close-of-business information and clearances, resulting in consistent follow-up and continuity in the management of a business's file.
- ◆ Simplified and customized of forms for refund requests from farmers, fishers, aquaculturists and motor vehicles. This has reduced the administrative burden on businesses and reduced the time required to process refund claims.

- ◆ Developed changes in computer programs in response to reduction of the number of school districts and to regional district requests to levy property taxes on multiple services.

COMPLIANCE:

- ◆ Worked with Revenue Canada under a formal agreement to match data-bases to identify unregistered businesses that may not be complying with federal or provincial tax legislation.
- ◆ Exchanged information with Revenue Canada on possible situations of non-compliance for investigation and audit.
- ◆ Through concurrent audits by the Consumer Taxation Branch and Revenue Canada (GST), reduced the amount of documentation that six businesses had to provide, reducing interruptions to the businesses' staff and activities.

CLIENT COMMUNICATIONS:

- ◆ Four new public-information bulletins were developed to meet tax application needs concerning warranties and service contracts, propane, log-hauling operations, and boat sales.
- ◆ Prepared a bulletin, *Understanding Your Consumer Taxation Branch Audit*, which was designed to remove much of the uncertainty surrounding an audit of a business.
- ◆ Consumer Taxation Branch's staff met to discuss concerns and exchange information with taxpayer industry groups including the Tax Executives Institute, The British Columbia Trucking Association and the Retail Council of Canada.

Office of the Comptroller General

The Office of the Comptroller General maintains the provincial government's corporate accounting system, and is responsible for the quality and integrity of the government's financial management and control systems. The mandate of the Office of the Comptroller General is set out in the *Financial Administration Act* (FAA).

Budget: \$18,640,000

Employees: 159

Core Activities

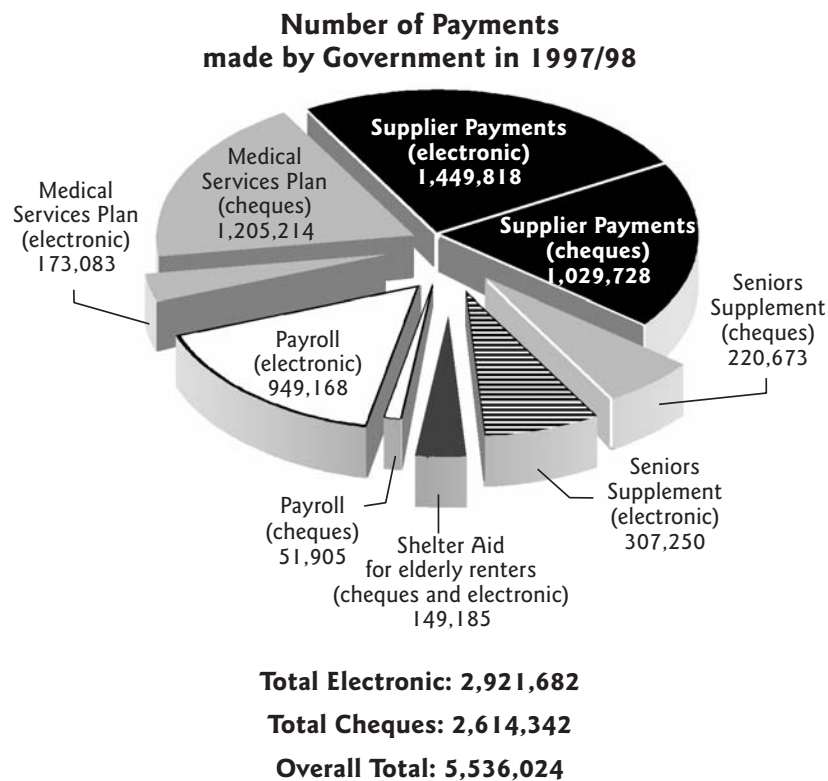
- ◆ Developing, issuing and revising policies and procedures to ensure the effectiveness of financial and administrative management in government.
- ◆ Ensuring the proper collection, receipt, recording and disposition of public money, and ensuring that proper authority exists for disbursements.
- ◆ Issuing directives respecting the method by which the accounts of the government are kept and the method by which any public officer or other person shall account for public money which comes into their hands.
- ◆ Maintaining the central accounts and accounting systems of government and producing financial reports.
- ◆ Performing independent, objective audits of government operations, financial management, compliance, information technology and special investigations.
- ◆ Preparing the Public Accounts, Interim Financial Statements and reports required by the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations or Treasury Board.
- ◆ Providing leadership regarding physical asset control and capitalization of assets.
- ◆ Providing expertise and sound advice regarding alternative financing, public-private-partnership proposals and government restructuring.
- ◆ Performing other duties assigned by Treasury Board under the FAA or any other Act; including being responsible for evaluating and reporting on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the financial operations of the provincial government.

1997/98 Special Activities

Each year the Office of the Comptroller General initiates and participates in special activities that support major government initiatives and ensure excellence in financial governance.

- ◆ Reviewing government financial systems to ensure financial integrity and compliance with risk and control policy.
- ◆ Developing and implementing across government the Corporate Accounting System's generic interface to eliminate the outdated central batching system and introduce new modules—including data warehousing, budget loading and chart-of-accounts—as enhancements to the core operating system.
- ◆ Selecting Oracle Financials as the next generation corporate operating system for government ministries and agencies.

- ◆ Implementing the Corporate Accounting System in the ministries of Health, Children and Families and Human Resources, and the Office of the Ombudsman.
- ◆ Contributing to improved performance management and accountability in government through contract reform, reviews of the K–12 education system, and assistance to ministries in developing performance measures.
- ◆ Improving the effectiveness of internal audit across government by developing a corporate audit plan, revising audit standards, issuing a new audit methodology, and training staff.
- ◆ Internal Audit performed 71 audits that assisted ministries and crown corporations to achieve efficiencies in financial and operational management. These audits reduce risk to government and assist government bodies to more effectively meet their respective mandates.
- ◆ Developing the capitalization of three new asset classes by writing policy and procedures, resolving accounting implementation issues, and providing training to ministries to assist with year–end reporting of capitalized assets.



Corporate and Ministry Support Services

This division assists the ministry's operations and programs with financial administration, personnel, information access and records, and information technology services. In addition, it supports corporate activities such as performance management and accountability, training and development, renewal, employee recognition, multiculturalism and mentorship. In all, this division provides centralized administrative support services to a client base of 3,250 employees within the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations and 19 outside client organizations—including the Executive Council (members of Cabinet) the Premier's office and various organizations across government—under service agreements.

Budget: \$15,810,000

Employees: 168

Core Activities

- ◆ Implemented an online staffing process for revenue-generating positions. This system has allowed access to other ministries with similar positions (i.e., auditor positions). Overall staffing actions: 1,257.
- ◆ Initiated 27 ministry internal placements and 15 external placements supported through the Public Service Employee Relations Commission and Article 29 of the collective agreement.
- ◆ Implemented the corporate Job Evaluation Plan by completing 243 job reviews.
- ◆ Human Resource Services Branch implemented the first Employment Equity staffing process where designated groups took priority in filling temporary positions. Over fifty per cent of the ministry's new temporary positions are now filled by under-represented group members. This initiative is significant in generating a more diverse workforce, as staff filling temporary positions are often successful in competing for regular positions throughout government.
- ◆ Developed a supervisory kit to manage high absenteeism cases.
- ◆ Responded to 302 requests for documents under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- ◆ Developed a three-year strategic plan for ministry records management.
- ◆ Managed the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund's annual charity campaign for government, which raised more than \$1.282 million, an increase of 3.34 per cent over the prior year, for 323 charitable agencies across the province.
- ◆ Retired non-standard e-mail systems, in support of continued migration to government standard computer technology.
- ◆ Restructured the Information Technology Management Branch to align with ministry business requirements. This improved efficiencies, process and cost-avoidance.
- ◆ Created governance model for corporate information systems decisions and resource sharing between information systems branches.

- ◆ Implemented enhanced monitoring procedures for network servers and drives, including an internal “automatic paging,” to improve risk management. Full documentation of the ministry network was completed.
- ◆ Established program–area project managers responsible for Year 2000 issues and provided direct project management support to key divisions.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Continued refinement of service agreements with diverse, autonomous client organizations for delivery of finance and administration, human resource, information technology, freedom of information and records management services. These services are provided on a shared basis to various organizations receiving some, or all, of their support services in those areas from the Corporate and Ministry Support Services Division of the ministry.
- ◆ Successfully implemented division–wide performance management and accountability measures associated with the delivery of support services. These services included quarterly measurement and reporting of key quantitative indicators, and customer feedback surveys.
- ◆ Implemented the use of electronic technology to deliver financial services. Revised the Financial Services and Administration Intranet web site, www.min.fin.gov.bc.ca/index1.html, to include an electronic version of key elements of financial services and administration policies and procedures, including chart-of-accounts information. Created electronic forms for completion and approval of leave and overtime transactions.

Communications Branch

The branch provides communications and public relations support to the minister, deputy minister, ministry executive and ministry programs. The branch writes speeches, brochures, pamphlets, annual reports and strategic communication plans. It manages issues and communication activities to ensure effective two-way communication between the ministry and the general public, news media, business and industry, special interest groups, ministry employees and other levels of government. The branch does this by anticipating, identifying and monitoring issues; developing and implementing communications strategies and appropriate vehicles; and providing responses and advice on media relations. In addition, it organizes special events, co-ordinates ministry advertising, and responds to public information requests.

Budget: \$732,000

Employees: 10

Core Activities

- ◆ Wrote and distributed 41 news releases during the year.
- ◆ Organized all communications activities for the annual Provincial Budget, including budget-day events, distribution of materials across the province, lock-ups for the news media, and access to the minister and ministry staff for regional and ethnic media on the afternoon of budget day and during the days following.
- ◆ Provided communications expertise and advice to ministry divisions and government agencies on credit rating reports, quarterly financial reports and other government initiatives.
- ◆ Co-ordinated the marketing activities for the annual fall issue of B.C. Savings Bonds.
- ◆ Maintained and improved the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations Internet site for faster and easier access to ministry information and publications. The address is www.fin.gov.bc.ca.
- ◆ Continued the ministry's internal communications by leading a ministry-wide editorial board and producing a thrice-a-year newsletter, NetWorth News, for all ministry employees.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Developed communications strategies for changes to salaries and pensions of Members of the Legislative Assembly and for elements of the *Traffic Safety Statutes Amendment Act*, which was introduced to make B.C. roads safer.

Reports from Commissions and Agencies Reporting to the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations

Co-ordination of Agencies, Boards and Commissions

The Government of British Columbia appoints qualified individuals to serve the public interest on regulatory agencies, boards and commissions. The composition of these boards should reflect the population of the province with women, men, ethnic communities, visible minorities, aboriginal people, youth and persons with disabilities all represented. Boards should also include a mix of business, labour, community and regional interests. Appointments are made either by a minister or by Cabinet on a minister's recommendation.

The branch now has approximately 12,000 resumes from persons qualified and willing to serve the public interest on citizen boards. All resumes are summarized in a database to provide quick access to candidates with particular skill sets. Government currently has over 3,200 people appointed to agencies boards and commissions.

Budget: \$395,000

Employees: 5

Core Activities

- ◆ Liaison with ministers' offices, ministries, agencies, boards and commissions and individuals interested in appointments.
- ◆ Providing advice on government's appointment principles and other appointment matters.
- ◆ Maintaining a large data base of individuals interested in being appointed.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Supported the Premier's Youth Office "Youth on Boards" initiative, bringing youth voice to a number of agencies, boards and commissions.

Superannuation Commission

The Superannuation Commission is one of the largest pension plan administrators in Canada and is responsible for administering five statutory pension plans in B.C.: the College Pension Plan, the Members of the Legislative Assembly Pension Plan; the Municipal Pension Plan; the Public Service Pension Plan and the Teachers' Pension Plan. During 1997/98 the commission also provided services to the pension plans of the following Crown corporations: BC Rail Limited, Westel Telecommunications Ltd. and the Workers' Compensation Board.

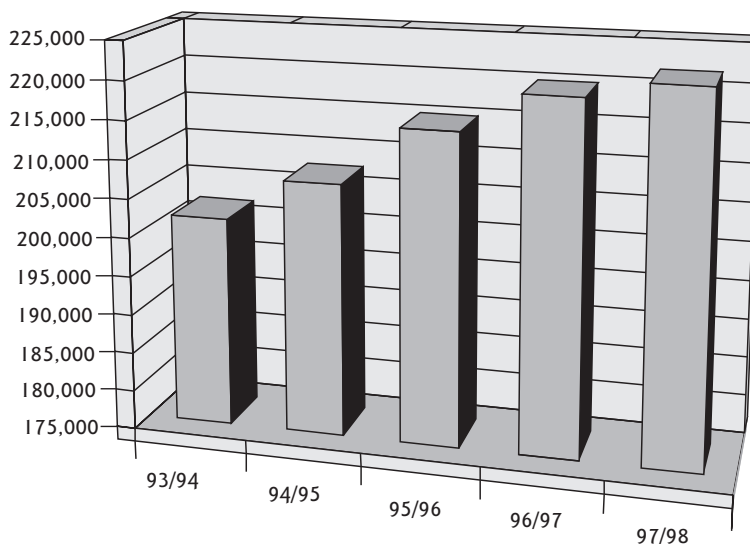
Budget: \$27,250,000

Employees: 257

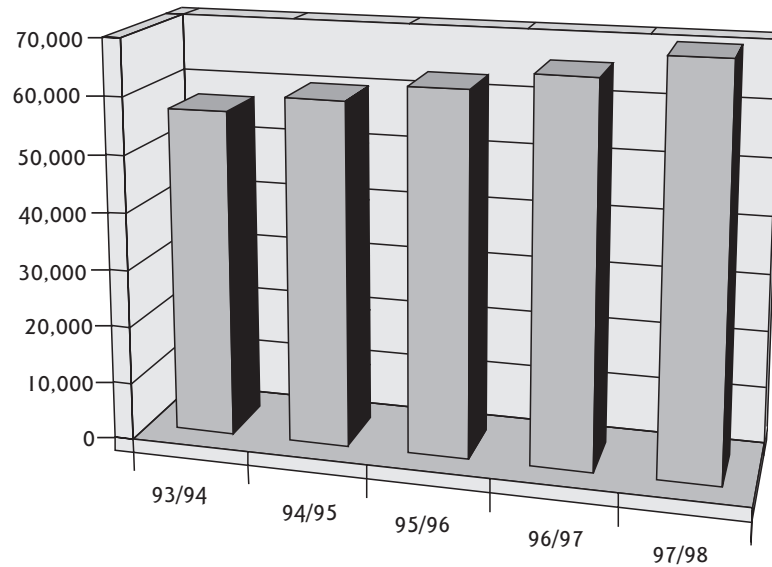
Core Activities

- ◆ Administered eight public sector pension plans with combined assets of over \$30 billion, and worked with the Office of the Chief Investment Officer to ensure sound fiscal investment of pension plans and related trust funds.
- ◆ Served almost 800 public sector employers, approximately 220,000 current contributors and 70,000 pensioners.
- ◆ Calculated pension and termination benefits and administered portability agreements between jurisdictions.
- ◆ Calculated and approved purchases of past service, a feature that allows plan members to contribute towards their pension plans for past breaks in service.
- ◆ Administered and recorded activities in four pension boards—the College Pension Advisory Board, the Public Service Pension Advisory Board, the Teachers' Pension Board and the Municipal Pension Board—through the pension board secretariat.
- ◆ Worked to accommodate changes in legislation, both federal and provincial.
- ◆ Collected over \$1 billion in pension contributions and paid out approximately \$1 billion in termination and monthly pension benefits.

Number of Active Contributors to the Various Plans



Number of Pensioners



1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Continued to develop the pre-retirement phase of the new pension administration computer system, scheduled for implementation during 1998 (calendar year).
- ◆ Continued to enhance the commission's employer web site, which gives pension counselling and quick calculation tools to 200 employers, many with multiple users.
- ◆ Responded to public sector early retirement incentive programs, by providing benefit and cost estimates to employees considering early retirement and related programs.

Public Sector Employers' Council

The council is the link between the government and public sector bodies, coordinating human resource and relations policies and practices among public sector employers. In order to effectively deliver programs and services, PSEC has developed processes and relations to improve communications and co-ordination between public sector employers and unions. PSEC's responsibilities also include developing, implementing and managing guidelines for various issues, to ensure consistent application of public sector initiatives and mandates.

Budget: \$1,607,000

Employees: 16

Core Activities

- ◆ Co-ordinated human resources and relations policies and practices between government and public sector employers for: post-secondary, university, Crown corporations, public service, health, community social services and public schools.
- ◆ Co-ordinated inter-sectoral collective bargaining objectives by developing the Monetary Mandate Framework, ensuring the cost of public sector collective bargaining settlements was within the government's stated fiscal parameters.
- ◆ Sponsored initiatives to foster a positive relationship between labour and management.
- ◆ Reviewed and approved pay equity plans. Of the sectors covered by PSEC's pay equity policy, as of the end of 1997/98, 80 pay equity plans representing approximately 66,050 employees had been developed, out of a probable total of 125 plans representing approximately 86,400 employees. This represented a completion rate of 64 per cent in terms of the number of plans and 76 per cent in terms of the number of employees.
- ◆ Pay equity continued for support workers in the hospitals facilities sector, and low-wage redress continued in the community social services and community health sectors. These initiatives covered another 50,000 employees out of the 110,000 to 120,000 employees employed in these sectors.
- ◆ Reviewed and approved exempt compensation standards for employers to ensure practices that are fiscally reasonable and prudent.
- ◆ The council met four times during the year, and PSEC staff carried out the policies of the council between meetings and acted as co-ordinator between government ministries, employer associations and the council.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Developed and shepherded legislation on exempt employee severances and employment termination to ensure public sector executive contracts are within common-law standards, eliminate excessive severance pay-outs and stop the practice of double dipping.

- ◆ Initiated research on public sector compensation in Canada, building a database on cross-jurisdictional wage comparisons for various sectors.
- ◆ Started research on the concept of gainsharing and developed a long-term strategy to inform stakeholders of potential gainsharing opportunities in the public sector.

WLC Developments Ltd.

WLC Developments Ltd. is a government-owned corporation created in 1982 to sell surplus provincial Crown land in Whistler. For fifteen years the corporation operated with a skeleton staff as it gradually brought land to market during the development of the Whistler/Blackcomb resort township.

In mid-1997 government expanded the role of WLC from selling Crown land in Whistler to selling Crown land throughout the province. Prior to this change, land sales outside the Whistler area had been managed by the Crown Lands Branch of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (MELP). In 1997 the MELP minister delegated responsibility for sales to WLC under a formal land-disposition agreement.

The new mandate was accompanied by a restructuring within WLC. Staff responsible for land sales at MELP were transferred to the corporation. A new executive team was put in place, along with the appointment of several government deputy ministers to the corporate board of directors. The new leadership now has the mandate and resources to develop a more focused and contemporary approach to the task of marketing Crown land.

Operating Budget: \$3.3 million Sales: \$28.6 million

Employees: 23

Core Activities

- ◆ Completed sales of remaining WLC Whistler properties, Pine Centre lands in Prince George, lands for Aberdeen Golf Course in Prince George, Campbell Creek Industrial Park in Kamloops, and a shopping mall site in Songhees area of Victoria.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Established new operations for Crown land sales by consolidating of WLC Developments Ltd. with the development and marketing operations of the Crown Lands Branch of MELP.
- ◆ Undertook research to identify and establish an inventory of marketable properties owned by the provincial Crown.

Public Service Appeal Board

The board is responsible for ensuring that the principle of merit is upheld in the job competition process within the public service. The board hears and rules on appeals of public-service job competitions by unsuccessful applicants. The board has the power to direct that appointments be rescinded and reconsidered. The board is comprised of one full time and four part time members. The legislation also allows the board to appoint persons as members for the purpose of one or more appeals.

Budget: \$320,000

Employees: 3

Core Activities

- ◆ The board met quarterly for policy discussions and professional development.
- ◆ A total of 123 appeals were filed during fiscal year 97/98 compared to 106 filed during the previous year.
- ◆ Twenty-three competitions under appeal were cancelled by ministries and four appeal applications were filed beyond the deadline established by the Public Service Appeal Regulations.
- ◆ The board heard a total of 27 appeals and held a total of 19 pre-hearings to resolve administrative issues. This represents an increase of 4 hearings and 9 pre-hearings from last fiscal year.
- ◆ Fifty-one appeals were voluntarily withdrawn.
- ◆ The board lacked the jurisdiction to hear a total of seven appeals.

1997/98 Special Activities

- ◆ Throughout the year the board pursued its goal of reducing appeal-processing time while maintaining the overall fairness of its established procedures. The key to an expeditious process lies in ensuring people filing appeals are aware of the rules and ensuring human resource advisors not only appreciate the concepts of administrative fairness and natural justice, but gain early advice related to appeal procedures.
- ◆ To assist the parties to the appeal process, the board has established a web site aimed at improving the accessibility of information concerning the overall appeal process, as well as providing easy access to the board's past decisions. The web site has been most successful, being accessed over 2,000 times in its first six months of operation. The site is being used by human resource advisors and employees as a means of obtaining objective information concerning the appeal process and past decisions. Feedback from users has been positive and the rate of access is increasing rapidly as more interested parties become aware of the site. The site is currently being accessed in the order of 100 times per week. The web site address is www.psab.gov.bc.ca

Other Commissions and Agencies Reporting to the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations

B.C. Securities Commission

- ◆ This commission is an independent regulatory body responsible for regulating securities trading in the province. The commission's goal is to maintain a fair and efficient securities market that is worthy of investor and public confidence, and to support a dynamic and competitive securities industry that contributes to provincial economic growth.
- ◆ For details on the commission's activities during the fiscal year, please refer to its annual report, available by calling (604) 899-6670 or writing to 200-865 Hornby Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6H 2H4.

BC Transit

- ◆ BC Transit is the provincial Crown corporation responsible for urban transit systems in British Columbia. The corporation's mandate includes planning, funding, constructing, marketing and operating (or contracting the operation of) bus systems in the Vancouver and Victoria regions and designated communities throughout the province. Approximately 1,500 buses operate throughout the province. In Vancouver, BC Transit's fleet includes buses, Sky Train rapid transit, SeaBus passenger ferries, West Coast Express commuter rail and handyDART door-to-door transportation for people with special needs. The British Columbia Rapid Transit Company Ltd. (BCRTC), under contract with BC Transit, operates the SkyTrain system. The 29-bus West Vancouver Blue Bus system is operated by the West Vancouver Municipal Transportation Department. Transit systems are financed through direct operating revenues from fares and advertising plus a funding formula specifying the shares of operating costs to be covered by the provincial and municipal governments. Fleet capital costs are the responsibility of the provincial government.
- ◆ For details on the corporation's activities during the fiscal year, please refer to its annual report, available by calling BC Transit Marketing and Public Relations at (250) 385-2551.

Financial Institutions Commission

- ◆ This commission regulates the province's financial services sector, including credit unions, trust companies, the insurance and real estate industry and mortgage brokers. It also administers regulations relating to captive insurance companies.
- ◆ For details on the commission's activities during the fiscal year, please refer to its annual report, available by calling (604) 660-2947 or by writing to 1900-1050 West Pender Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6E 3S7.

Public Service Employee Relations Commission

- ◆ This commission is responsible for providing leadership in the management of human resources in the public service. As the central personnel agency for government, the commission gives direction and assistance to ministries and agencies through the following programs: staffing and workforce adjustment, employment equity and diversity, employee development, labour relations, corporate human resource policy, classification and organization, employee benefits, and a central payroll and human resource information system.
- ◆ For details on the commission's activities during the fiscal year, please refer to its annual report, available by calling (250) 387-5593 or writing Policy and Communications, Public Service Employee Relations Commission, 548 Michigan Street, Victoria, B.C., V8V 1S3.

Legislation Administered by the Ministry (1997–1998)

B.C. Securities Commission

- *Securities Act**
- *Securities (Forged Transfer) Act**
- *Vancouver Stock Exchange Act**

BC Transit

- *British Columbia Transit Act*

Corporate and Ministry Support Services

- *Legislative Assembly Management Committee Act*

Deputy Minister

- *Auditor General Act*
- *Capital Region Water Supply and Sooke Hills Protection Act*
- *Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs Act*
- *Ministry of Intergovernmental Relations Act (s. 3)**
- *Ministry of Transportation and Highways Act (s. 34)*
- *Premier's Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities Act*

Financial Institutions Commission

- *BC Community Financial Service Act*
- *Condominium Act**
- *Credit Union Incorporation Act**
- *Financial Institutions Act**
- *Insurance Act**
- *Insurance (Captive Company) Act**
- *Insurance (Marine) Act**
- *International Financial Business Act**
- *Mortgage Brokers Act**
- *Mutual Fire Insurance Companies Act**
- *Real Estate Act**

Government Services and Registries

- *British Columbia Day Act*
- *Company Act**
- *Company Clauses Act**
- *Constitution Act (ss. 25–27)*
- *Cooperative Association Act**
- *Douglas Day Act*
- *Legislative Grounds Protection Regulation*
- *Manufactured Home Act**
- *Ministry of Provincial Secretary and Government Services Act (ss. 1 & 8)*
- *Miscellaneous Registrations Act**
- *Partnership Act**
- *Personal Property Security Act**
- *Provincial Symbols and Honours Act*
- *Purchasing Commission Act*
- *Queen's Printer Act*
- *Repairers Lien Act**
- *Scholarship Act*
- *Society Act**
- *Statistics Act*

Office of the Comptroller General

- *Financial Administration Act*
- *Financial Information Act*
- *Unclaimed Money Act*

Provincial Treasury

- *Bonding Act*
- *BC Enterprise Corporation Loan Privatization Act*
- *BC Railway Finance Act*
- *Creditor Assistance Act**
- *Educational Institutions Capital Finance Act*
- *Financial Administration Act (Part 6)*
- *Home Acquisition Act*

* Financial and Corporate Sector Policy is responsible for these statutes.

- Home Conversion and Leasehold Loan Act
- Home Mortgage Assistance Program Act
- Homeowner Interest Assistance Act
- Home Purchase Assistance Act
- Hospital District Finance Act
- Housing Construction (Elderly Citizens) Act
- Pacific North Coast Native Cooperative Act
- School District Capital Finance Act
- Small Business Development Act
- Trade and Convention Centre Act
- Tugboat Worker Lien Act*
- Warehouse Lien Act*
- Warehouse Receipt Act*
- Woodworker Lien Act*
- Mining Tax Act
- Motor Fuel Tax Act
- Property Transfer Tax Act
- School Act (section 134 and division 4)
- Social Service Tax Act
- Taxation (Rural Area) Act
- Tobacco Tax Act

Revenue

- BC Benefits (Income Assistance) Act
(ss. 36 & 50 of regulations)
- British Columbia Payment to Canada of
Federal Income Tax on Behalf of Natural
Gas Producers Act
- Corporation Capital Tax Act
- Disability Benefits Program Act
(s. 35 of regulations)
- Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway
Belt Tax Act
- Fire Service Act
- Horse Racing Tax Act
- Hotel Room Tax Act
- Income Tax Act
- Indian Self Government Enabling Act
- Insurance Premium Tax Act
- International Financial Business
(Tax Refund) Act
- Land Tax Deferment Act
- Logging Tax Act

Public Service Employee Relations Commission

- Public Service Act
- Public Service Labour Relations Act
- Public Service Bonding Act
- Public Service Benefit Plan Act

Public Service Employers' Council

- Public Sector Employers' Act
- Public Education Labour Relations Act

Superannuation Commission

- Legislative Assembly Allowances and
Pension Act
- Pension (College) Act
- Pension (Municipal) Act
- Pension (Public Service) Act
- Pension (Teachers) Act

Treasury Board Staff

- Budget Measures Implementation Act
- Medical and Health Care Services Special
Account Act
- Pension Agreement Act
- Public Works Agreement Act
- Special Accounts Appropriation and
Control Act
- Special Appropriations Act
- Supply Act
- Tax and Consumer Rate Freeze Act

* Financial and Corporate Sector Policy is responsible for these statutes.

Ministry Publications

Most Ministry of Finance publications may be ordered from the Government Publications Centre at 1-800-663-6105 (in Victoria 387-6409) or at www.publications.gov.bc.ca on the Internet.

Some Ministry of Finance publications may be ordered from Crown Publications at 521 Fort Street, Victoria, British Columbia, V8W 1E7, telephone: (250) 386-4636 fax: (250) 386-0221 or at www.crownpubs.bc.ca on the Internet.

Many Ministry of Finance publications may be viewed on-line at www.fin.gov.bc.ca

Government Services and Registries

- BC Guide to Programs and Services of the Provincial Government
- British Columbia Gazette, Parts I and II
- Carillon (brochure)
- Consular Corps
- Government Business Travel Guide
- Government of British Columbia Telephone Directory
- Incorporating a Company in B.C. (brochure)
- Incorporating and Maintaining a Society in B.C. (brochure)
- Name Approval Request Guidelines
- Office Products Catalogue
- Order of British Columbia nomination form and information brochure
- Parliament Buildings (brochure)
- Product Distribution Catalogue
- Registering Your Business (brochure)
- Registration and Search Guide for Registrants Pursuant to the *Personal Property Security Act*
- 1996 Revised Statutes of British Columbia and Rules of Court
- Symbols of British Columbia (brochure)

BC Stats Releases

Call (250) 387-0359 to order or search at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

- British Columbia Population Forecast (\$20)
- Business Indicators [monthly (\$60)]
- Community Profiles [30 volume set (\$1,682) or individual community (\$70)]
- Consumer Price Index [monthly (\$60)]
- Current Statistics [monthly (\$50)]
- Earnings & Employment Trends [monthly (\$60)]
- Economic Accounts (\$20)
- Exports (B.C. Origin) [monthly (\$60)]
- Infoline [weekly]
- Labour Force Survey [monthly (\$60)]
- Tourism Room Revenue [monthly (\$60)]
- Immigration Highlights [quarterly (\$30)]
- Major Projects Inventory [quarterly (\$75)]
- Manufacturers' Directory (\$45)
- Migration Highlights [quarterly (\$30)]
- Profile of Provincial Electoral Districts (\$60)
- Quarterly Regional Statistics [quarterly (\$100)]
- Regional Index [BC Stats (\$40)]
- Regional Population Estimates and Projections:
 - Regional Districts (\$80)
 - Local Health Areas (\$150)

- Small Business Quarterly [quarterly (\$30)]
- Socio-Economic Profiles (\$60)

Public Documents Produced by the Office of the Comptroller General

- British Columbia Public Accounts
- British Columbia Interim Financial Statements
- *Unclaimed Property Act* Discussion Paper

Documents Produced Primarily for Government by the Office of the Comptroller General (also available to the public)

- General Management Operating Policy (GMOP)
- Financial Management Operating Policy (FMOP)
- Financial Administration Procedures Manual (FAPRO)
- Purchasing Card Coordinators Manual
- Pocket Guide for Purchasing Card Holders
- Pocket Guide for Business Travelers
- Government Management Policy Summary

Superannuation Commission

Fax (250) 356-9591 to order

- Strategic Business Plan 1996/97–1997/98
- College Pension Plan Annual Report and Summary Report
- Pensionfacts: Leave of Absence and Your Pension, Reinstatement of a Refund, Termination of Employment
- Appeal Process (brochure)
- Municipal Pension Plan Annual Report and Summary Report
- Pensionfacts: Leave of Absence and Your Pension, Reinstatement of a Refund, Termination of Employment
- Plan Member Booklet
- Appeal Process (brochure)
- Your Retirement Income

- Public Service Pension Plan Annual Report and Summary Report
- Pensionfacts: Leave of Absence and Your Pension, Reinstatement of a Refund, Termination of Employment
- Plan Member Booklet
- Appeal Process (brochure)
- Your Retirement Income
- Teachers' Pension Plan Annual Report and Summary Report
- Pensionfacts: Leave of Absence and Your Pension, Reinstatement of a Refund, Termination of Employment
- Appeal Process (brochure)
- Your Retirement (kit)
- Workers' Compensation Board Superannuation Plan Annual Report and Summary Report
- Pensionfacts: Reinstatement of a Refund, Termination of Employment, Re-employment of a Pensioner

STATUTORY PENSION PLANS

- Pension Update

FOR PENSIONERS

- Dental Benefits Plan for Pensioners
- Extended Health Benefits Plan for Pensioners
- Pensionfacts: Checklist—in the Event of a Death, Re-employment of a Pensioner

Revenue Division

- B.C. Sales Taxes: What Visitors Should Know (brochure)
- Consumer Tax Branch bulletins (112 different branch bulletins available to taxpayers)
- Guide to Property Purchase Tax (brochure)
- Property Tax Deferment Program (brochure)

- Payment of Rural Property Taxes at Financial Institutions
- Seniors Supplement (brochure)
- Your Responsibilities as a Vendor or Lessor (brochure)
- Your 1997 Rural Property Taxes (brochure)
- Your 1997 Home Owner Grant (brochure)

Treasury Board Staff

- Debt Statistics Report
- 97/98 Third Quarterly Report
- 97/98 Second Quarterly Report
- 1998 Provincial Budget
- British Columbia Financial and Economic Review (\$25)
- Estimates (\$22)
- Supplement to the Estimates

Provincial Treasury

- Form 18-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission 1997/98
- Debt Statistics Report
- British Columbia Prospectus
- Treasury Management (brochure)
- Performance Bonds (brochure)
- B.C. Savings Bonds (brochure)

Registries and Ministry Support Services

- Incorporating a Company in B.C. (brochure)
- Registration and Search Guide for Registrants Pursuant to the *Personal Property Security Act*
- Registering Your Business (brochure)
- Incorporating and Maintaining a Society in B.C. (brochure)

Financial and Corporate Sector Policy

- Shareholder Proposals in the *British Columbia Company Act*
- *The Strata Property Act*: Overview
- Strengthening Securities Regulation in British Columbia: Response to the Matkin Commission Report

Communications Branch

- Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations Annual Report
- Budget Information Kit

Financial Institutions Commission

Call (604) 660-2947 to order

- Financial Institutions Commission Annual Report (includes audited financial statements of the Credit Union Deposit Insurance Corporation of British Columbia)
- Peace of Mind Through Security—Your Guide to B.C. Credit Union Deposit Insurance (brochure)

