

**AGLG**

AUDIT REPORT  
MARCH 2017



MANAGING THE INHERENT  
**RISKS OF LIMITED  
HUMAN RESOURCES**

WITHIN SMALL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
DISTRICT OF TOFINO

A Performance Audit Carried out by the  
Auditor General for Local Government of British Columbia



**AUDITOR GENERAL FOR  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

To the Mayor and Council of the District of Tofino:

1. I am pleased to present this performance audit report on the management of human resources by the District of Tofino.
2. Our performance audits are independent, unbiased assessments, carried out in accordance with professional standards. They aim to determine the extent to which the area being examined has been managed with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. We conducted our audit in accordance with the standards for assurance engagements set by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada and under the authority of the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*.
3. A large proportion of local governments across British Columbia are small communities. Small local governments face challenges that require a broad range of skills and creativity to address, in part due to the limited staff resources available in smaller communities.
4. Like their larger counterparts, small local government organizations require staff with skills such as the ability to inspire others, foster cooperation and resolve conflict, in addition to professional and technical skills and knowledge. Further, small local governments need managers to understand and perform a range of practical human resource (HR) skills, from recruiting, selecting, training, coaching, work plan development, defining and monitoring standards to dealing with employee and labour relations issues.
5. As part of our province-wide risk assessment and prioritization exercise conducted in 2013, human resources management was identified by local government representatives as highly relevant and significant due to the risks and challenges confronting local government managers and their staff in small communities. A few examples of these risks include the requirement for greater skills diversification and broader operational knowledge, recruitment and retention issues, the affordability of remuneration when trying to remain competitive and workplace stress.
6. In carrying out our work, we acknowledge the difference in size and capacity of the local governments we have audited and the resulting variability in how we apply the measurement of audit criteria. Our findings reflect what small local governments should be expected to achieve and takes into consideration whether a local government has dedicated human resources in place.

7. This report outlines our findings in assessing the District of Tofino's management of the inherent human resource management risks it faces as a small local government. The purpose of the audit was to identify both the strengths and challenges of human resource practices within smaller local governments and identify opportunities for improvement and leading practices.

8. This report is not an audit of the dollar values of the District's compensation or its collective agreement bargaining process.

9. The District of Tofino is a small local government with limited capacity and many staff carry out multiple roles in order to deliver programs and services. While the District does not have dedicated human resources staff, it is effectively managing the risks associated with limited human resource capacity and we were pleased to find a strong foundation in place to provide core HR functions across the organization. The report however, does note a number of areas where the District may improve upon its practices.

10. This report recognizes that, as a small local government, the District may not be able to address all of our recommendations with the same priority or approach as a larger organization might. We hope this report will help Tofino enhance its human resource management and advance the public interest through good governance, performance management and decision-making. In addition to this report, we encourage the District to make use of valuable human resources tools such as the Local Government Management Association's *Human Resource Toolkit for Local Government Organizations* and *Executive Compensation Toolkit*.

11. I want to thank the District of Tofino for its cooperation during the performance audit process and their action plan in response to our findings and recommendations.



**Gordon Ruth, FCPA, FCGA**  
*Auditor General for Local Government*  
Surrey, BC

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### WHAT WE EXAMINED

12. Small local governments represent the vast majority of local governments in British Columbia. Over 66 per cent of BC municipalities have populations fewer than 20,000 people and of these, two-thirds have a population less than 5,000.

13. Small local governments face similar challenges to their larger counterparts, as increasing workplace complexity and skill requirements, an older workforce and changing community demographics impact the nature of work and how it is carried out.

14. However, these challenges are heightened for smaller governments that have limited resources, capacity issues, and face increasing competition for skilled staff. Many small municipalities and regional districts lack specialized skills, tools and resources to address these and other human resource (HR) challenges effectively.

15. The overall purpose of the audit was to identify strengths and challenges of human resource practices within smaller local governments and to identify opportunities for improvement and leading practices.

16. Our specific audit objectives were to assess whether human resource planning activities help enable local government to meet the public interest and to assess whether human resource management activities support leadership and career development and the achievement of the public interest. We reviewed current human resource planning and management practices and, where information was available, data and records from the 2011 to 2015 period for data and trend analysis.

Tofino has done a good overall job of managing most key HR risks.

## WHAT WE FOUND

17. Tofino is a small, remote municipality that experiences a significant seasonal increase in population through tourism, which has a significant impact on the District's operations. While the District does not have dedicated human resources capacity, Tofino has done a good overall job of managing most key HR risks.
18. The District's approach to workforce planning is largely an annual process closely tied to the budgeting cycle. Planning considers longer term impacts on operations and is linked to the District's strategic priorities to ensure they are addressed. Overall, while Tofino faces capacity challenges as a small local government, its approach to managing human resources adequately meets the District's needs. However, the District should develop operational service levels and quality standards to help inform workforce planning and staffing as well as to assist in measuring operational effectiveness.
19. Tofino's location and unique lifestyle creates challenges for the District to attract and retain staff and turnover in key positions has been prevalent over the period covered by the audit. To mitigate the effects of these challenges, the District uses a range of strategies, including hiring locally, providing District-owned accommodation, focusing on staff training, development and promotion, providing cross-training, emphasizing business process improvement and streamlining and making strategic use of contracted services.
20. Overall, Tofino has a relatively young municipal workforce and a young management team and recruitment and retention strategies should continue to be an area of emphasis for the District.
21. The District has in place many of the foundation pieces needed to ensure the effective management and administration of core HR services such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management and occupational health and safety. These core human resources functions are carried out in a decentralized environment and there are opportunities to raise staff members' awareness of existing policies and procedures, to strengthen certain policies and procedures and to increase consistent practice across the organization.
22. Organizational health and wellness is a strong point in Tofino and both management team communication and the management-labour relationship are viewed as solid and supportive. The District's workplace culture is positive.

## Exhibit 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS

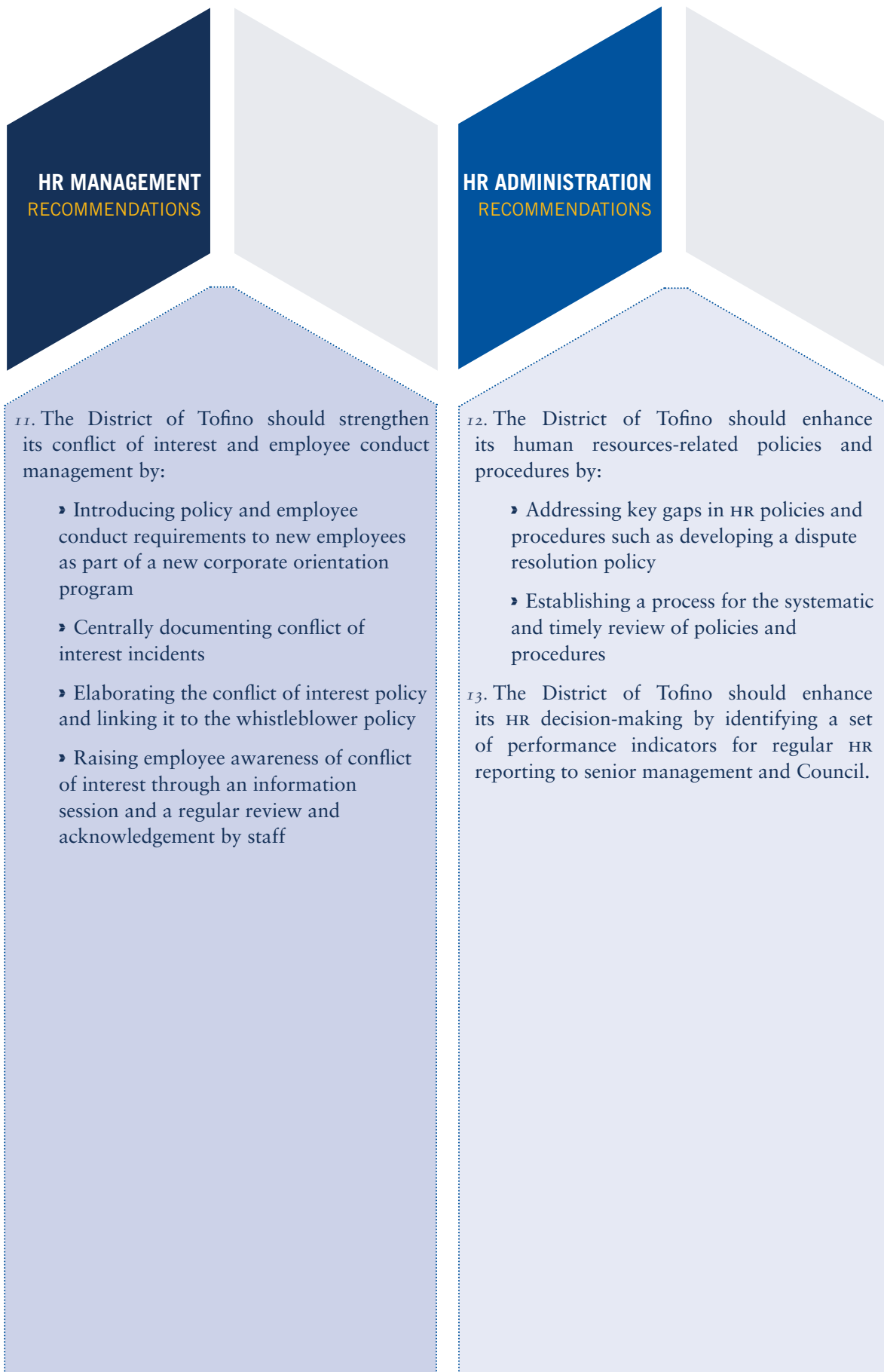
## HR PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The District of Tofino should enhance its overall approach to workforce planning by:
  - Moving to a greater focus on a three to five year window in future workforce planning
  - Developing defined service levels to help inform workforce planning and staffing levels
  - Expanding budget project sheets to include additional business case elements
2. The District of Tofino should address staff recruitment issues by:
  - Developing a comprehensive recruitment policy that addresses gaps in procedures and documentation practices
  - Enhancing its hiring processes by documenting and retaining complete candidate document files
  - Adding a hiring checklist to systemize the process of hiring new employees and the collection of HR information
3. The District of Tofino should ensure that all staff positions' job descriptions are dated and signed by the Chief Administrative Officer.
4. The District of Tofino should develop a formalized succession plan and prioritize key roles and mission-critical skills.
5. The District of Tofino should ensure that its employment agreement template is periodically reviewed by legal counsel.
6. The District of Tofino should develop a compensation policy for exempt staff.

## HR MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

7. The District of Tofino should enhance employee training and development by:
  - Developing and implementing an employee orientation program
  - Considering a leadership development program and more cross-training of staff in high demand service areas and where backfilling is not readily available
  - Formulating a corporate training plan
  - Centralizing employee training and certification records
8. The District of Tofino should take steps to review its performance appraisal programs and, if appropriate, revise as needed and then consistently complete them on an annual basis.
9. The District of Tofino should ensure grievance records are maintained, including withdrawn cases.
10. The District of Tofino should enhance workplace health and wellness by:
  - Reviewing the OHS policy and safety procedures and revising as needed
  - Increasing employee awareness of the OHS policy and procedures through the review process or a follow-up information session
  - Preparing terms of reference and recording meeting minutes to formalize the practices of its joint Labour Management Committee
  - Conducting exit interviews with all departing employees





## ABOUT THE AUDIT

23. The overall purpose of the audit was to identify strengths and challenges of human resource practices within smaller local governments and identify opportunities for improvement and leading practices.

24. Our specific audit objectives were to assess whether human resource planning activities help enable local government to meet the public interest; and to assess whether human resource management activities support leadership and career development and the achievement of the public interest.

### PERIOD COVERED BY THE AUDIT

25. The audit covered current human resource planning and management practices and the 2011-15 period for data and trend analysis. We completed examination work in December 2016.

### AUDIT SCOPE AND APPROACH

26. The audit included a review of the local government's human resources planning and management functions. The audit did not include the assessment of compensation dollar values or collective bargaining processes.

27. In carrying out the audit, we reviewed a range of documents related to human resources planning and management. We also interviewed elected officials, senior management, middle management and front line employees including Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) local representatives.

### AUDIT CRITERIA

28. Performance audit criteria define the standards against which we assessed the local government's performance. We express these criteria as reasonable expectations for the local government's management of its human resources in order to achieve expected results and outcomes.

29. Below are the criteria we used to assess the local government:

#### HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

- ▶ A human resources plan is developed, linked to organization and strategic objectives, communicated to staff and reported.
- ▶ The local government has analyzed their workforce and developed a recruitment strategy to address their requirements.
- ▶ A succession plan for critical or key roles has been developed.
- ▶ Employment contracts are appropriate, adequately reviewed, and contain clauses that minimize operational, financial and reputational risks.
- ▶ Compensation levels are set based on industry benchmarking.

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Job descriptions, competencies and qualifications are established and used for recruitment.
- Selection processes are fair, transparent and merit-based.
- Orientation, training and development programs, plans and procedures are in place.
- Senior management has performance measures linked to local government objectives and performance appraisal is conducted.
- There is a process to build a healthy workplace and to address related legal issues.

## HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION

- HR policies and procedures are in place and address key functions.
- An HR information system is used to assist in managing key functions and HR reporting to senior staff and council is conducted.

30. Our measurement of these audit criteria reflects the size and capacity of each audited local government and acknowledges the differences in what local governments of varying sizes should be expected to achieve. It also takes into consideration whether a local government has dedicated human resources staff in place.



## INTRODUCTION

31. This report presents the results of a performance audit conducted by the Auditor General for Local Government of British Columbia (AGLG) under the authority of the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*.

32. We conducted this audit under the audit theme “Fiscal Sustainability Planning, Capacity and Internal Operations.”

33. We selected the District of Tofino and four other local governments (District of Squamish, City of Nelson, City of Fernie and District of Port Edward) to be included in this set of audits. These local governments represented a cross-section of smaller local governments, in various regions and facing diverse pressures and challenges.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT HUMAN RESOURCES

34. More than two-thirds of British Columbia local governments are small, serving communities with populations of fewer than 20,000 people. Of these small local governments, most are very small, serving communities with populations of fewer than 5,000.

35. In 2012, BC local governments employed more than 39,000 people, an increase of 47 per cent since 2001. Given the size, breadth and scope of local governments, it is important that they effectively manage and administer their human resources.

36. In considering the performance of local governments, members of the public may tend to focus more on financial and operational results than on human resource management. However, labour costs are a big part of local government expenditures and effective human resources management can have a big impact on both the effectiveness of program delivery and financial results.

37. Everyone employed by a local government practices human resources management in one way or another. Individual employees follow their assigned job descriptions; engage in training and development activities and set performance goals and objectives for themselves.

38. Middle managers and supervisors assist in workforce planning, carry out performance appraisals, recruit, select and orient new employees and may be involved in discipline or termination activities.

39. Senior management ensures that legislative requirements are met, undertakes strategic, longer term human resources planning and helps ensure that the organization has the human resources capacity to achieve its objectives. They also develop and approve human resources initiatives that contribute to a positive, healthy workplace such as wellness, rewards and recognition.

40. Where a local government has a human resources department, it can provide strategic, operational and transactional support to ensure an effective and efficiently operating workforce. Human resources departments can provide a mix of advice and guidance, administrative support, policies, procedures, tools and templates.

41. In many local governments, the finance department, with the assistance of staff across the organization, tracks attendance, manages payroll and leave and ensures salary and benefits are accurate for every employee.

42. Collectively, staff across the organization are responsible for ensuring the local government achieves the goals its council or board establishes. Consistency of practices, collaboration among departments and alignment of human resources planning with business planning can help make sure human resources management contributes positively to organizational results.

## CONTEXT

### COMMUNITY PROFILE

43. The Village of Tofino was incorporated in 1932. A restructure and boundary expansion occurred in 1983 that included the incorporation of Tofino as a District Municipality. The District is located on the west coast of Vancouver Island (see *Exhibit 2*) at the northern tip of the relatively narrow Esowista Peninsula. The District's land area totals 10.52 square kilometers.

44. This area has experienced significant change and growth over the past 15 years. It has become an international destination and tourism is now the main economic driver. The natural resource-based sector, formerly focused on fishing and logging, has evolved to focus mainly on aquaculture and sustainable logging.

*Exhibit 2 - DISTRICT VISUAL FACTS*



**POPULATION**  **1,876**

AREA 10.52 SQKM

INCORPORATED 1932

Source: 2011 Census

45. According to the Census, Tofino had a population of 1,876 in 2011. From 2001 to 2006 Tofino's population growth rate was 12.9 per cent, more than double the British Columbia average of 5.3 per cent. Between 2001 and 2011, the population grew at an average of approximately 2.6 per cent per year, or by 410 persons.

46. A large proportion of single family dwellings in Tofino are secondary residences owned by non-residents. The purchase of real estate by non-residents has resulted in higher demand than a community of this size might otherwise face, which has contributed to housing affordability challenges. As a result, affordable housing has become the top priority of the District. According to the 2011 census, there were 1,033 private dwellings in Tofino, although only 765 were occupied by full-time local residents. In early December 2016, there were fewer than ten single family residence listings shown in the Multiple Listing Service (MLS).

47. The District is part of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Biosphere Reserve, an internationally recognized area that includes terrestrial and marine environments and extends from the southern boundary of the Long Beach Unit of Pacific Rim National Park Reserve to just north of Estevan Point. The Reserve includes approximately 350,000 hectares, of which nearly 83,000 hectares are marine-based.

48. Because of its location, development in Tofino is restricted by ocean on three sides and any future village expansion is limited to a southerly direction. Pacific Rim Highway runs up the middle of the peninsula, dividing it into east and west sectors. Future expansion to the south is limited, as the community borders the Reserve.

49. These geographical considerations suggest that Tofino will have to manage growth carefully to ensure that its limited land base is planned efficiently and carefully, and in a manner that complements the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROFILE

50. The workforce at the District of Tofino is led by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) who is supported by a management team. This team consists of the Director of Financial Services and the Managers of Corporate Services, Community Sustainability, Public Works and Building Inspections, RMI Initiatives and the Fire Chief. The CAO is also responsible for human resources. The District does not have dedicated human resources staff.

51. The District's workforce consists of 24 full-time equivalent positions, a number that increased by one position, or 4.35 per cent, over the 2011-15 period covered by the audit. Most of the District's workforce is represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Tofino has a volunteer fire department with 25 volunteer firefighters overseen by a paid Fire Chief. The District's Exempt to Union ratio is 25 per cent to 75 per cent respectively.

52. As shown in *Exhibit 3*, the District's annual revenue and expenditures increased moderately between 2011 and 2015. Revenue includes funding received under the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) from the Province of BC. The Initiative's objective is to assist designated resort municipalities with funding targeted to resort services and visitor facing resort capital projects, in order to support and increase visitation. In order to make effective use of this funding, the District established its RMI Services Department in 2013 and outlines the departmental priorities and results in its annual reports.

*Exhibit 3 - DISTRICT OF TOFINO FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% change
<b>Revenue*</b>	\$6,689,602	\$7,136,747	\$8,956,512	\$8,103,104	\$7,492,711	12%
<b>Expenditure</b>	\$4,673,813	\$5,077,768	\$5,214,958	\$6,198,132	\$5,968,600	28%
<b>Annual Surplus</b>	\$2,015,789	\$2,058,979	\$3,741,554	\$1,904,972	\$1,524,111	(24%)
RMI funding used*	\$530,404	\$844,985	\$1,241,344	\$1,169,158	\$323,341	(39%)

Source: District of Tofino Annual Reports

Note: \* Revenue includes the Resort Municipality Initiative funding used in the year

## FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

53. The purpose of our audit was to identify strengths and challenges of human resource (HR) practices in small local governments and identify opportunities for improvement and leading practices. We assessed whether human resource planning and management activities helped the local government achieve its objectives, support leadership and career development and advance the public interest.

54. Our findings are based on a review of the District's human resource practices, policies and systems. We examined relevant documentation and data and we held discussions with key management and staff, as well as elected officials.

### ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT

55. Our audit objective involved a review of the role the human resources unit plays in enhancing human resources planning and management activities across the organization. Tofino does not have such a unit or any dedicated HR support staff positions. Regardless of whether a local government has such a unit, it must have core HR practices and procedures in place in order to minimize risks to its effective functioning.

56. For example, a local government should have a workforce plan linked to service levels, job descriptions should be current, exempt staff compensation should be properly benchmarked and its occupational health and safety program should be aligned with WorkSafe BC requirements.

57. Further, a local government's recruitment and selection processes should be fair and transparent and it should have policies and procedures in place that support training and development, succession planning and performance management. Finally, every local government should have a set of key HR data and information that can be used to enhance decision-making across the organization.

58. Tofino's human resource functions are largely decentralized across the departments while the CAO provides oversight and guidance, as well as coaching and mentoring, to department managers.

The Financial Services department establishes a personnel file for each employee, manages payroll and benefits and monitors and reports on expenditures, including HR-related items such as sick leave, overtime and training.

59. In the absence of dedicated HR staff, the District's HR practices were largely informal and there was some inconsistency in practices and documentation across departments. District staff told us that HR files were included within the scope of an ongoing internal systems review intended to strengthen Tofino's records management.

60. This review should set standards for the documentation and management of core HR records including recruitment and selection files, training and development plans and employee performance appraisals. The review should also identify and address any gaps in HR policies and procedures. It should lead to greater standardization of HR documentation and consistency in HR practices within Tofino's decentralized environment.

### HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

61. Our audit objective involved an assessment of whether human resource planning activities help the local government further the public interest. Human resource planning forms the basis for an effective and efficient workforce.

62. The audit criteria included several key aspects of human resource planning, including long-range workforce planning based on analysis of demands and needs, sound recruitment and retention practices based on current knowledge skills and abilities and succession planning based on mission-critical roles. Human resource planning helps to ensure employment agreements protect both employer and employee from financial and operational risks and that compensation is fair and based on industry benchmarks.



Overall, while Tofino faced capacity challenges as a small local government, the District's approach to workforce planning was adequately meeting its needs.

#### WORKFORCE PLANNING

63. Workforce planning is an important activity that can help ensure that a local government's service levels will be achieved and that risks are minimized in the effective delivery of critical services such as drinking water, waste water and in the development and ongoing operation of key infrastructure including lands and roads.

64. In Tofino, we expect to see workforce planning tied to the local government's strategic or corporate objectives in its business plan, with staffing levels closely linked to service levels. The plan should be from three to five years in duration, subject to an annual review and turnover rates and projected retirements should be factored into the plan, thereby giving consideration to key recruitment, training and development and mission-critical succession planning.

65. Overall, while Tofino faced capacity challenges as a small local government, the District's approach to workforce planning was adequately meeting its needs.

66. Tofino's workforce planning was largely an annual process closely tied to the budget cycle managed individually by each department. During the budget process, requests for additional staff resources are presented to Council for approval based on the need for, and costs of, the position. Due diligence is presented to Council in a budget project sheet which has elements of a business case approach.

67. This process could be strengthened by adopting additional business case elements such as: cost/benefit analysis, workload analysis, service level impact and longer term strategic impact. We would also expect to see greater focus on a three to five year window in future workforce planning.

68. The District carried out elements of strategic workforce planning in the development of its strategic plan by considering longer term impacts on policies, programs and services and their associated resources. For example, staff told us that the District has explored opportunities for restructuring departments and streamlining operational processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness in its workforce planning efforts.

#### SERVICE LEVELS

69. Service levels and quality standards can help inform workforce planning and staffing levels. They also assist in measuring operational effectiveness and serve to enhance accountability across the organization.

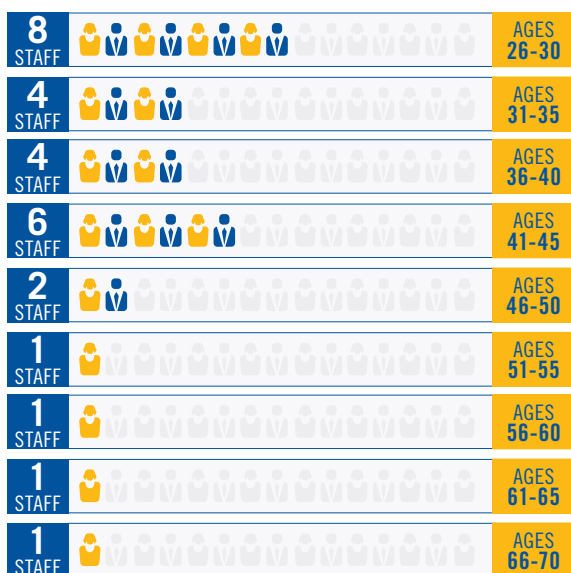
70. Tofino lacked defined service levels, notably in development approval and permitting services and across public works. Given Tofino's seasonal variations, the District should consider developing in-season and off-season standards for certain services such as the cleaning of public restrooms, maintenance of trails and beach access and garbage collection. It should develop operational service levels and quality standards to help inform workforce planning and staffing as well as to assist in measuring operational effectiveness.



**WORKFORCE AGE**

71. The District had a relatively young workforce, shown in *Exhibit 4*, with the number of staff aged 51 years or older having the potential to retire in the next five to ten years, representing approximately 14 per cent of the total workforce. The average age of Tofino employees was 40 years old.

*Exhibit 4 – DISTRICT OF TOFINO NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BY AGE*



Source: District of Tofino

72. As *Exhibit 5* shows, only 13 per cent, or one member, of exempt staff was aged 51 years or older. The average age of exempt employees was 40. As a result, attrition due to retirement should not be a major consideration in the District’s workforce planning.

*Exhibit 5 – DISTRICT OF TOFINO NUMBER OF EXEMPT EMPLOYEES BY AGE*



Source: District of Tofino

73. With a younger workforce, the District should consider focusing on developing staff, which is further discussed in the orientation, training and development section of this report.

**Recommendation 1**

74. The District of Tofino should enhance its overall approach to workforce planning by:

- ▶ Moving to a greater focus on a three to five year window in future workforce planning
- ▶ Developing defined service levels to help inform workforce planning and staffing levels
- ▶ Expanding budget project sheets to include additional business case elements

Overall, Tofino should emphasize recruitment and retention strategies in its workforce planning.

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

75. Sound recruitment and selection policies and processes help to ensure that a local government identifies, screens, assesses and hires properly qualified employees. Recruitment can also shape strategies to attract and retain employees.

76. A local government's selection of qualified staff is critical to its operational effectiveness. We expect Tofino to have fair, open and transparent selection processes, supported by consistent procedures. The District should regularly update job descriptions to reflect current duties, requirements and qualifications. It should establish and document criteria used to select candidates.

77. We also expect Tofino to adequately document the results of selection processes and retain that documentation in the event of appeals or grievances. Further, the District should provide all new employees, both union and non-union, with a letter of employment outlining their working relationship with the employer.

78. In BC, local governments have non-union (exempt) staff positions as well as unionized positions. For Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) positions, seniority is often a significant consideration in hiring and promotion decisions and, depending on the wording of the collective agreement, may be the determining factor in some circumstances. In comparison, the District fills exempt vacancies primarily on merit.

79. Tofino has experienced historical staff retention challenges and turnover has been prevalent during the period covered by the audit, including three of the seven management team positions. The District has implemented recruitment and retention strategies including: hiring locally, providing district-owned accommodation, staff training, development and promotion and employee engagement. Overall, Tofino should emphasize recruitment and retention strategies in its workforce planning.

80. The District's staff recruitment and selection is largely decentralized, with each department responsible for its own hiring processes. There is no single point of accountability for recruitment, which has resulted in some gaps in effective recruitment practices and documentation. Further, the District lacked a recruitment policy outlining the process and requirements of staff recruitment and selection to ensure consistency. Key elements of a recruitment policy could focus on:

- The purpose, philosophy, responsibility and guidelines for recruitment and selection
- Clear policy and procedures regarding fair and equitable selection processes
- Guidelines around internal and external methods of recruitment
- Details to be included in a job posting
- Details of employment offers and employment contracts
- An interview and selection protocol

81. The District's recruitment files included important elements of the selection process, including candidate scoring and interview responses that were adequately documented in most of the files we reviewed. However, all reviewed files lacked a documented reference check and candidate scoring or ranking results. Additionally, some recruitment files lacked the name of the interviewers, or included interview sheets that were not scored.

82. Recruitment files for each successful candidate were kept centrally by the Financial Services department, along with personnel files. However, some competition documents were kept by the hiring manager, resulting in incomplete files.

83. The files indicated that the District was appropriately transparent and clear in determining whether the highest ranked candidate was selected. However, to ensure consistency and completeness, Tofino may want to implement a hiring checklist to support the selection process.

84. The District may also want to collect HR information using a hiring checklist, as described in *Exhibit 6*. HR data gathered systematically in this way can help the District do more comprehensive HR planning.

*Exhibit 6 – HIRING CHECKLIST — A GOOD HR PRACTICE*

*A hiring checklist allows a local government to systemize its process of hiring new employees. This can be particularly useful where employee recruitment and selection is a decentralized process.*

*A checklist covers the key steps from the initial needs identification, key qualifications and requirements of the position, salary range, selection method, letter of offer and onboarding, including orientation.*

*A checklist adds consistency and value to the process and can help capture standard HR information. Where a local government has an HR department, it can centrally maintain the checklists and periodically review a sample of them as a quality control measure, providing feedback to hiring managers and others involved in the hiring process. In addition, checklists can be used at orientation and termination to gather useful HR information.*

**Recommendation 2**

85. The District of Tofino should address staff recruitment issues by:

- ▶ Developing a comprehensive recruitment policy that addresses gaps in procedures and documentation practices
- ▶ Enhancing its hiring processes by documenting and retaining complete candidate selection document files
- ▶ Adding a hiring checklist to systemize the process of hiring new employees and the collection of HR information

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

86. Job descriptions are an essential element of a local government's recruitment and selection process. A good job description helps in selecting the right person, clearly outlines expectations and ensures employees are held accountable for the requirements of the position. We expect the District to have an approved job description for every position that documents the position's activities as well as the knowledge, skills and abilities required to competently perform those activities, and other special requirements as needed.

87. We further expect Tofino to review and update job descriptions regularly or as required to reflect any significant changes in the duties of positions, to ensure that each position is aligned with the organization's strategic direction and, ultimately, to ensure the best-suited candidates are recruited and selected. By keeping job descriptions current, a local government also enables the development of a skills inventory and succession planning.

88. Tofino staff told us that every employee across the District had a job description, but that a defined process to regularly review and update them did not exist. Most of the five job descriptions we reviewed did not indicate the date of their last review and were not signed by the CAO.

89. However, staff advised us that job descriptions were typically reviewed and updated as necessary before the start of a recruitment process. While this may not always occur in a timely manner, given the size of Tofino's workforce and its capacity, this process is adequate.

90. The District is currently undertaking a process of reviewing exempt job descriptions as part of a compensation review that started in early 2016. Tofino may want to implement an integrated system for developing job

descriptions, job evaluation, recruitment and selection, performance management and training. Such an integrated systems approach can serve to strengthen core HR services and improve consistency in HR practice.

### Recommendation 3

91. The District of Tofino should ensure that all staff positions' job descriptions are dated and signed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

## SUCCESSION PLANNING

92. Succession planning, as described in *Exhibit 7*, is a leading practice that can serve to reduce risks to the safe, effective and efficient delivery of services to residents. It is one of the benefits of a sound staff training and development system. For it to be effective, we expect local governments to carry out succession planning in a deliberate and systematic way.



*Exhibit 7 – SUCCESSION PLANNING — A GOOD PRACTICE FOR WORKFORCE PLANNING*

*Succession planning is a good practice for HR planning and management. It recognizes that employees will leave the local government at some point. It sets out how the organization will manage through changes with the goal of ensuring operations continue unabated.*

*A succession plan should not be limited to the local government's top position. Instead, it should focus on all key positions and should consider recruitment and retention history, turnover patterns, employee ages and projected retirements. Succession planning should form part of the local government's strategic plan, helping it manage its resources in a strategic, long-term way. To enhance success, the organization's most senior employee should strongly support succession planning and be willing to commit the resources needed.*

*A succession plan ensures there will be qualified staff ready to take on key roles and responsibilities across the organization. One size need not fit all and a succession plan should be scaled to match the local government's resources, needs and requirements. In formulating the plan, the local government should consider timing (is there enough time to train and develop staff?), resources, including the use of technology and the Internet and depth within the organization (do existing staff demonstrate potential and interest?).*

*The essential components of a succession plan include the following:*

- *Identifying the employee with the potential to step into the key role and clarifying their desire to do so*
- *Identifying the key roles and responsibilities of the position*
- *Identifying the gap between current and required knowledge, skills and abilities*
- *Identifying how the local government will ensure that the employee attains the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities, such as a combination of:*
  - *Coaching*
  - *Mentoring*
  - *Job shadowing*
  - *Cross-training*
  - *Formal training*

*Each designated employee should have their own training and development plan and the local government should periodically check on progress, results and gaps and make any needed adjustments.*

*The Local Government Management Association's **Human Resource Toolkit for Local Government Organizations**, contains more information on succession planning.*

93. In Tofino, we expect to see a succession plan in place for all mission-critical positions and skills: those that are critical to the effective functioning of the organization and are typically difficult to recruit for. The key mission-critical positions in Tofino include: the Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Manager of Engineering and Public Works and Fire Chief. The plan should address staffing changes and unplanned vacancies and should involve both short-term ‘backfill’ as well as longer term plans. As a leading practice, such plans should start with the identification and development of current employees.

94. The District had an informal succession plan for the Chief Administrative Officer position and has focused recently on staff development and promoting from within. In addition, Tofino had plans for temporary backfilling in place and was following them.

#### Recommendation 4

95. The District of Tofino should develop a formalized succession plan and prioritize key roles and mission-critical skills.

#### EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

96. Employment agreements for exempt staff are useful tools that provide certainty to both the employer and employee. They also help reduce potential disputes and allow for predictability of costs. We expect Tofino to have signed employment agreements setting out duties, compensation, benefits and clearly delineating working conditions. Local governments should enter into signed employment agreements with all exempt staff.

97. In Tofino, the District’s employment agreement template for exempt staff contained the key clauses we would expect to address duties and responsibilities, compensation, benefits, performance evaluation, leave entitlements, probationary periods, termination and severance, as well as severability.

98. District staff told us that Tofino’s employment agreement template was last reviewed in 2010. The District’s legal counsel should review the template before it is used in the future in order to reduce potential risks to the District. In addition, the District should ensure that its employment agreement template is periodically reviewed by legal counsel.

#### Recommendation 5

99. The District of Tofino should ensure that its employment agreement template is periodically reviewed by legal counsel.

#### COMPENSATION

100. The compensation of exempt employees can have a big impact on staff recruitment and retention. Critical leadership skills, as well as financial, technical and operational skills and knowledge can be placed at risk when compensation packages are not competitive. We expect the District of Tofino to have a compensation policy along with regular compensation reviews. Compensation reviews are useful in determining an affordable and balanced approach to total compensation.

101. Tofino did not have a compensation policy establishing and communicating clear principles guiding exempt staff pay rates. Key elements of a compensation policy could focus on:

- ▶ The organization’s compensation philosophy
- ▶ Criteria for decision making
- ▶ Appropriate salary ranges for specific jobs/job categories
- ▶ Comparable organizations to be periodically surveyed for compensation benchmarking
- ▶ Timing of individual staff and organizational compensation reviews



We expect the District to provide all new employees with an orientation both to their position and to the organization and its expectations.

102. The District had a Benefits and Cost of Living Adjustments Policy that aligned exempt staff compensation to that of union employees and could serve as a basis for a future policy.

103. Staff told us that the District did not complete a compensation review during the period covered by the audit. However, the District is now in the process of an external compensation review which commenced in early 2016.

### Recommendation 6

104. The District of Tofino should develop a compensation policy for exempt staff.

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

105. Human resource management involves a number of key functions and practices supporting an effective workplace that are essential to employee and organizational success.

106. Our audit objective involved an assessment of whether human resource management activities support local government leadership and employee development and the achievement of the public interest.

107. Audit criteria included key elements of human resource management: orientation provided to new employees, training and development programs and plans that support employee and organizational success, systems for performance appraisal that link individual and organizational goals, an occupational health and safety program that mitigates workplace risks, the promotion of standards for ethical behaviour and labour relations governance that contributes to organizational wellness.

### ORIENTATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

108. Sound orientation can help to ensure that newly-hired employees get off to a good start. We expect the District to provide all new employees with an orientation both to their position and to the organization and its expectations.

An orientation package should include information on human resource management policies and procedures, code of conduct, health and safety requirements, employee benefits, organizational and management structure, mission and goals as well as programs, services and expectations.

109. The purpose of training and development activities is to maximize employees' contributions to the organization's goals and objectives. It is important for organizations to invest in training and development for their employees. For example, the Conference Board of Canada reported that Canadian organizations spent an average of \$800 on training and development for each employee in 2014-2015.

110. We expect to see training and development activities in Tofino that address operational issues and assist in the introduction of new programs and services, changing skill requirements and evolving organizational expectations and priorities. Training and development also supports succession planning.

111. To increase the overall effectiveness of training and development, we also expect to see training objectives that support business objectives and that are tied to each employee's development plan. The local government should have an organization-wide training plan and an established training budget that is updated annually. The results of training and certification should be measured and documented in a central location. The budget for these activities should be analyzed annually to inform future allocations.

### ORIENTATION

112. The District does not have an orientation package or employee handbook for newly hired staff aside from an introduction to the collective agreement for union employees and an introduction to pay and benefits. Tofino does not have a corporate orientation program facilitated by the CAO. Departments manage their own

The District should make efforts towards centralizing training records and formulating a corporate training plan.

on-the-job orientation, which focuses primarily on job duties and safety. For example, the Public Works Department has an Occupational Health and Safety orientation program for its employees.

113. The District should develop an orientation program that includes key information on the organizational structure, District core values and expectations, key employee policies and procedures, confidentiality, conflict of interest and ethical conduct requirements and occupational health and safety. The orientation package should be signed off by the employee.

#### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

114. Employees generally acknowledged that the District of Tofino was supportive of their professional development and technical upgrading requirements.

115. Individual departments carried out the majority of training and development activities. Oversight of training requirements and documentation of training plans and records was decentralized. Mandatory certifications were generally in place for water and wastewater operations staff and the District was considering equipment operator training and Level III certifications for water and wastewater training within Public Works. In addition, the Fire Department maintained training and certification records that demonstrated its compliance with provincial requirements.

116. The District should make efforts towards centralizing training records and formulating a corporate training plan which should help prioritize training, development and certification needs. Centralization would also reduce risks to employee and public health and safety, and assist in maximizing training budgets, closing skills gaps and ensuring that operational needs are adequately addressed. Further, training and development activities should be closely linked to the District's employee performance appraisal process.

117. Tofino had a training and development policy and set of procedures approved in 1999, although awareness and compliance with this policy was low. The application form was not used by employees and course evaluations using the criteria provided in the policy were not completed. This policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary and steps should be taken to increase awareness among District employees.

118. Staff told us that the District takes advantage of scholarship opportunities available for employees to support staff training and development. Given that most management team members are relatively young and new to their roles, the District should consider leadership skills development to promote their ongoing development and support succession planning.

119. Cross-training has numerous benefits, as described in *Exhibit 8*. The District carries out cross-training and sharing of staff between departments, including cross-training among office assistants and financial clerks. Staff members generally acknowledged that additional cross-training would help address high demand areas and specialized administrative duties where internal backfilling was not readily available.



**Exhibit 8 – THE BENEFITS OF CROSS-TRAINING EMPLOYEES**

*Cross-training involves developing skills and proficiencies relating to roles outside an employee’s current responsibilities. An in-house cross-training program can prepare employees to take on additional responsibilities and ensure consistency of service when an employee is temporarily absent, on extended leave, or when a position becomes vacant.*

*Cross-training can also serve as job enrichment for motivated employees who want to multitask, grow in the job and learn new skills. Cross-training of staff also allows an organization to pursue new opportunities without incurring the expense of hiring and training new staff.*

*Increasingly, cross-training is seen as a creative and cost-effective way to motivate employees, improve team performance, improve quality, develop leadership skills and, ultimately, enhance organizational success.*

*Cross-training involves planning, finding the time to do it, identifying trainers, selecting the right staff, and ensuring employees can maintain newly learned skills.*

**TRAINING COSTS**

120. The District’s annual training expenditures increased significantly, from \$25,170 to \$68,952 per year during the period covered by the audit, as shown in *Exhibit 9*. We were advised that this was largely attributable to an increase in the training for the fire department. The District’s staff training budget has accounted for approximately one per cent of the District’s annual total expenditures.

121. The District’s Financial Services Department allocates a training budget to each department and individual department directors identify their training needs based largely on historical needs and safety and certification requirements. The annual training budget is subject to Council’s review and approval given recommendations from individual departments.

122. The District may find it beneficial to change this approach. By analyzing and estimating the costs of each training activity and formulating an organizational training plan, Tofino could establish a more cost-effective training budget. Establishing oversight and standards related to training and development could also assist in identifying priorities and accurately forecasting the training budget. All of this would help ensure that training activities are prioritized to meet business objectives.

*Exhibit 9 – DISTRICT OF TOFINO TRAINING COSTS 2011-2015*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Training Expenditure</b>	<b>\$25,170</b>	<b>\$44,134</b>	<b>\$56,417</b>	<b>\$57,013</b>	<b>\$68,952</b>
Salaries & Wages	\$1,450,264	\$1,496,438	\$1,712,087	\$1,639,464	\$1,770,111
<b>Training Expenditure as % of Salaries &amp; Wages</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
District Total Expenditures	\$4,673,813	\$5,077,768	\$5,214,958	\$6,198,132	\$5,968,600
<b>Training Expenditure as % of Total Expenditures</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

Source: District of Tofino Annual Reports and Training Expenditure Reports by District Financial Services Department

## Recommendation 7

123. The District of Tofino should enhance employee training and development by:

- Developing and implementing an employee orientation program
- Considering a leadership development program and more cross-training of staff in high demand service areas and where backfilling is not readily available
- Formulating a corporate training plan
- Centralizing employee training and certification records

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

124. We expect Tofino to have in place an ongoing process of performance management with supervisors working collaboratively with their employees in setting work and career goals, identifying needs and evaluating performance, including areas for improvement. Supervisors should provide feedback verbally and informally as well as formally in writing. As a leading practice, employee coaching and mentoring programs could be established to encourage development and support succession planning.

125. The District had a performance appraisal policy requiring an annual formal performance review of all employees. However, the District carried out performance appraisals inconsistently and should take steps to strengthen performance management.

126. Tofino's performance appraisal policy clearly laid out the objectives, responsibilities and procedures for performance evaluation of all staff, including unionized and exempt employees. The District also developed a comprehensive performance evaluation template, which was attached to the policy. This template rated employee performance under detailed sub-requirements in seven general categories: results achievement, initiative and planning, quality

of work, general work abilities, judgment, communication and job-related knowledge/skills. The District attached a goal-setting development plan at the end.

127. Staff awareness and use of the performance appraisal policy and evaluation template varied by departments. Some employees received a formal evaluation annually using the template, while some others, employed by the District for a number of years, told us that they had never had a formal evaluation. Members of the senior management team should take steps to review this policy and evaluation template and, if appropriate, revise it as needed and then formally put it into use.

128. In addition to the policy, the District developed a management-oriented appraisal program, Leaders Dialogue, to assess management team members' performance. Under this program guideline and evaluation template, the CAO provided performance remarks and development suggestions through a discussion with the employee in five categories: celebrating success (recognizing achievements), challenge consideration, personal development plan, collaborating (with others) on commitments and qualities of a leader.

129. Although a few employees told us that they received feedback through the Leaders Dialogue program and considered this appraisal comprehensive and beneficial, the District has only completed it once rather than annually as per the policy.

130. The District has developed a sound process to assess the CAO's performance. The current CAO received a six-month probationary period performance appraisal from Council and a more comprehensive appraisal at end of the initial one year term. Both evaluation forms were comprehensive.

Council should complete a formal evaluation of the CAO on an annual basis.

131. For example, the one-year evaluation provided all councillors' ratings of the CAO's performance in these areas: relationship with mayor and council, assistance to council in understanding its governance role, decision-making and strategic orientation, fiscal management, leadership of the administrative team, local government knowledge and practice, development of community relationships, communication and accomplishment of goals. The evaluation compared performance to objectives and identified areas for improvement.

132. Although the CAO's employment agreement stipulates that an annual formal performance evaluation should be done, this evaluation was last completed in 2014. Council should complete a formal evaluation of the CAO on an annual basis.

### Recommendation 8

133. The District of Tofino should take steps to review its performance appraisal programs and, if appropriate, revise as needed and then consistently complete them on an annual basis.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY, LABOUR RELATIONS AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

134. Workplace health includes the physical and occupational safety and mental health and well-being of employees engaged in a wide range of activities across the organization.

135. We expect the District to be aware of and in compliance with its occupational health and safety obligations as well as all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. WorkSafe BC has specific requirements for employers of different size workforces and CUPE collective agreements typically require an occupational health and safety committee made up of equal numbers of management and union members.

136. We expect Tofino to take reasonable steps to support a harassment-free workplace and to have policies and procedures to report and investigate complaints of this nature. As a leading practice,

the organization should support workplace diversity and inclusiveness and ensure its HR policy promotes non-discriminatory practices consistent with human rights legislation. We also expect the District to have an employee code of conduct, standards for ethical behaviour and conflict of interest policies and procedures to support workplace integrity.

137. Joint labour-management committees should be in place, clearly mandated to oversee how work and working relationships are governed. Grievance procedures should be clearly outlined and processes should be enacted to ensure employees have opportunities for redress.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

138. Safety training is identified as a corporate strategy for the District and, overall, Tofino encourages and supports occupational health and safety through a range of formal and informal activities including:

- ▶ An Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy prepared in 2008
- ▶ A safety procedural manual prepared by an external consultant in January 2015
- ▶ A joint OHS committee with terms of references and the recording of meeting minutes
- ▶ Safety work procedures
- ▶ Safety training provided to employees
- ▶ Routine workplace and equipment inspections
- ▶ Adequately maintained safety records (such as inspection, maintenance and OHS training records)
- ▶ Regular reports on safety incidents, which are reviewed and discussed
- ▶ A weekly 'crew talk' program reinforcing safety

139. As shown in *Exhibit 10*, Tofino's annual number of safety incidents varied through the period covered by the audit.

*Exhibit 10 – WORKPLACE INCIDENTS 2011-2015*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safety Incidents	23	20	37	18	28

*Source: District of Tofino Safety Incident Report 2011-2015*

140. These incidents were reviewed and discussed by the joint OHS committee. The minutes of these meetings could be enhanced to include action items and results to ensure issues are addressed on a timely basis.

141. While District staff told us that they generally considered their practices to be in compliance with WorkSafe BC requirements, we found that OHS policy and procedures should be reviewed by Fire and Public Works staff in order to increase awareness and they should be updated as needed. An information session, in combination with an inspection by WorkSafe BC could be considered as ways of raising staff awareness.

142. The BC Municipal Safety Association offers a recognition program on occupational health and safety. This District could benefit from using these materials as guidance to perform an OHS self-assessment.

#### ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT

143. The District's Exempt Employment Agreement and the CUPE Collective Agreement outline sick leave policies for exempt and union members. *Exhibit 11* shows that the District's sick leave pay fluctuated between 2011 and 2015. Although the District does not report annual total sick leave expenditure for management purposes, financial services staff monitor utilization on an ongoing basis and calculate sick leave carryover for budgeting purposes at year end.

#### *Exhibit 11 – SICK LEAVE UTILIZATION*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sick Leave Hrs	1,384	899	1,490	1,759	1,430
Sick Leave	\$41,676	\$24,330	\$55,992	\$49,676	\$42,395

*Source: District of Tofino Payroll Records*

#### LABOUR RELATIONS

144. There is only one union, CUPE, at Tofino's workplace. In 2016, the District established a joint Labour Management Committee to address labour relations issues. The mandate and composition of the committee is set out in the CUPE Collective Agreement and meetings are scheduled on a quarterly basis. Both management and union members told us that they generally consider labour relations to be positive and collaborative.

145. Although staff told us that informal meeting notes were taken at these meetings, no formal meeting minutes were prepared, as required by the collective agreement. In addition, the District should consider jointly developing terms of reference governing the operations of the committee. More structure and formalization could increase the committee's effectiveness in addressing workplace issues and the concerns of both management and labour.

#### GRIEVANCES AND DISCIPLINE

146. The collective agreement outlined employee discipline procedures and the District's files contained a small number of disciplinary letters. Staff told us that employee discipline was generally not considered to be an issue in the District.

147. The CUPE collective agreement outlined procedures for grievances, including arbitration. There was one formal grievance case in 2013, relating to sick leave benefits. The file documentation on this matter was complete. However, two other grievance cases in 2012 were not documented, and not indicating the subject matters, although they were both withdrawn.

Overall, staff indicated a mixed level of awareness of HR policies and procedures and a moderate level of awareness of code of conduct and the conflict of interest policy.

The District should consistently maintain their grievance records to demonstrate appropriate handling and settlement of grievance cases per the collective agreement.

### Recommendation 9

148. The District of Tofino should ensure grievance records are maintained, including withdrawn cases.

### COMMUNICATIONS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

149. Employee engagement is important in Tofino, to enhance the District's employee attraction and retention. The District supports employee engagement through formal initiatives such as a Service Awards policy and annual bonuses, a weekly 'crew talk' program, as well as other informal activities including events held to recognize employee efforts and promote team building. Overall, staff told us that they considered the District to be a positive and respectful workplace.

150. The District did not consistently conduct exit meetings with departing employees. Tofino should consider conducting exit meetings with all departing employees, as they can assist in identifying opportunities to improve operations and services.

### Recommendation 10

151. The District of Tofino should enhance workplace health and wellness by:

- ▶ Reviewing the OHS policy and safety procedures and revising as needed
- ▶ Increasing employee awareness of the OHS policy and procedures through the review process or a follow-up information session
- ▶ Preparing terms of reference and recording meeting minutes to formalize the practices of its joint Labour Management Committee
- ▶ Conducting exit interviews with all departing employees

### ETHICAL CONDUCT

152. The District has a set of policies to encourage a respectful workplace, including a Code of Ethics, a Mutual Respect Policy against discrimination, a Whistleblower Policy and a Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy. Overall, staff indicated a mixed level of awareness of HR policies and procedures and a moderate level of awareness of code of conduct and the conflict of interest policy.

153. The Code of Ethics contains high-level provisions for conflict of interest, requiring employees to disclose any potential conflict to the District. However, it does not provide more details, such as a definition, examples of conflict of interest or disclosure procedures.

154. Employee awareness of conflict of interest could be raised through the development of a solid policy, an information session and an annual review and acknowledgement by staff. In addition, ethical conduct requirements should be introduced to new employees as part of a new corporate orientation program for the District.

155. In addition, even though staff told us that conflicts of interest were rare, the District should establish procedures to centrally record all incidents.

### Recommendation 11

156. The District of Tofino should strengthen its conflict of interest and employee conduct management by:

- Introducing policy and employee conduct requirements to new employees as part of a new corporate orientation program
- Elaborating the conflict of interest policy and linking it to the whistleblower policy
- Raising employee awareness of conflict of interest through an information session and a regular review and acknowledgement by staff
- Centrally documenting conflict of interest incidents

## HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION

157. Our audit objective involved an assessment of whether human resources planning and management activities are supported by sound human resources administration.

158. The audit criteria included key aspects of human resource administration such as employee policies and procedures that are comprehensive and that set forth organizational standards for all employees. Criteria also included a set of relevant HR data that is tracked and reported on, and that can be used to assess the performance of the organization's HR practices, and the administration of employee salaries and benefits.

## HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

159. Human resource policies and procedures help to communicate both expectations and requirements for how things are done across the organization. They set a standard and help to ensure consistency in how employees are managed and treated. They also help to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and regulations.

160. We expect to see effective HR policies and procedures in Tofino that foster a healthy, respectful workplace where staff is treated fairly and with transparency. Key policies and procedures include ethical standards and conflict of interest, confidentiality, health and safety, working conditions, attendance and leave management, staff compensation and overtime, reimbursement of fees and expenses, training and development, performance management, termination, discipline and dispute mechanisms and complaint resolution.

161. We also expect to see HR management policies as a set of formal, written documents that are easily accessible by management and employees. Local governments also have collective agreements that govern working relationships between management and union employees.

162. The District has a set of HR policies and procedures covering key HR topics such as training and development, occupational health and safety, performance evaluation, code of ethics, and a whistleblower policy. The District also has a Mutual Respect Policy and a Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy. It has no recruitment policy, compensation policy or policy for dispute resolution. A process for dispute resolution can eliminate ambiguity and inconsistency and can minimize financial impacts.

163. Tofino's HR policies are easily accessible to staff through the District's shared drive. These policies were largely approved by Council and signed by administrative staff to become effective.



Employee awareness and compliance with the policies are inconsistent across the District.

There is no established process to review the policies regularly and staff told us that they consider some HR policies to be outdated. We were advised that some policies may be reviewed as related issues arise. To assist, the District could consider the Local Government Management Association's *Human Resource Toolkit for Local Government Organizations*, which contains some 70 draft versions of up-to-date policies.

164. As previously mentioned, policies and procedures are not always part of employee orientation in Tofino, since the orientation varies by department in the absence of a corporate orientation program. Employee awareness and compliance with the policies are inconsistent across the District.

### Recommendation 12

165. The District of Tofino should enhance its human resources-related policies and procedures by:

- Addressing key gaps in HR policies and procedures such as developing a dispute resolution policy
- Establishing a process for the systematic and timely review of policies and procedures

#### HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION AND DATA

166. A human resources information system is an information system used to acquire, store, analyze and report HR information to user groups such as department heads across the organization. We expect to see an HR information system in Tofino that captures core HR data such as time and attendance, payroll, benefits administration, recruitment, training and HR management.

167. We further expect to see core HR information and results incorporated into District planning to assist with activities such as budgeting, forecasting, succession planning, training and development. HR information and results should be analyzed, prepared regularly and the results should be reported to senior management and elected officials on a regular basis.

168. Examples of both core and non-core human resources statistics that can be used to support human resources functions and that can inform human resources strategies and decision-making include:

- Basic workforce demographics
- Size of workforce and current trends
- Workforce per capita ratios and trends
- Management to staff ratios
- Payroll, benefits and compensation data
- Overtime utilization
- Turnover rates and patterns
- Time to hire
- Time, leave and attendance
- Training, learning and development
- Performance appraisal
- Injuries and WorkSafe BC records
- Grievances

169. The District currently uses the MUNIWARE system for payroll, which enables staff to generate basic information to assist in meeting their HR management needs relating to compensation, leave and overtime. However, there is limited analysis and reporting of this information to management or Council.

170. Tofino has controls in place to ensure the accuracy of payroll and there were no complaints from employees and no errors reported by the District’s external financial auditors.

171. The District has backup support for payroll and payroll procedures are formally documented to assist with cross-training and knowledge transfer.

172. Tofino has a standard process to set up a profile for each new employee and to deactivate the profile of each departing employee. The District’s termination process focused on payroll information and should add in terms to ensure that a departing employee’s access is cancelled to any corporate credit card, the District’s Intranet or other information systems.

173. Staff told us that the District is behind on its internal records management system and recently hired a records management technician to develop a records management program, including HR records. The process is expected to take up to two years.

174. From 2011 to 2015, the total amount the District spent on salaries and wages increased by 22 per cent, which is about seven per cent compounded annually, while the number of full-time equivalent employees increased from 23 to 24, or 4.3 per cent, as shown in *Exhibit 12*.

175. As shown in *Exhibit 13*, Tofino’s overtime pay increased significantly in 2013, when the District paid out a large amount of accumulated overtime for a departing exempt employee. The District reviewed its overtime pay policies after that and the current exempt staff employment agreement template contains terms restricting the accumulation of overtime.

*Exhibit 13 – OVERTIME PAY*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Overtime Pay	\$61,070	\$90,443	\$115,877	\$51,035	\$52,273

*Source: District of Tofino Payroll Records*

**HR REPORTING**

176. Tofino’s CAO provides Council with regular verbal updates on HR, covering key staffing changes, shared services arrangements and the collective bargaining progress. Staff told us that councillors often requested more detailed information for decision-making, particularly on additional staffing requests. Staff does not regularly report to Council on items such as recruitment and turnover and HR performance indicators have not been identified for regular reporting.

*Exhibit 12 – SALARIES AND WAGES*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% change
Salaries and Wages	\$1,450,264	\$1,496,438	\$1,712,087	\$1,639,464	\$1,770,111	22%

*Source: District of Tofino Payroll Records*



The District should consider enhancing its HR reporting to Council.

177. The District should consider enhancing its HR reporting to Council. In addition to providing more supporting details on additional staffing requests such as adopting a business case format, the District should carefully select several relevant HR-related metrics that can be efficiently collected and analyzed and do not consume more time preparing than they are worth. The District should regularly review the measures it reports on to eliminate any that prove not to be useful. In Tofino, HR reporting to Council could include the following measures:

- › Number of FTE's
- › Overtime utilization
- › Sick leave usage
- › Injury time loss
- › Vacancies (by department, reasons for vacancies)
- › Pending employee retirements
- › Number of applicants in response to job postings
- › Time taken to hire
- › Outcomes of review of exempt staff compensation
- › Corporate training plan and any gaps in mandatory certification requirements
- › WorkSafe BC compliance reports
- › Number of grievances and topics as well as other labour relations issues such as the results of employee engagement surveys

### Recommendation 13

178. The District of Tofino should enhance its HR decision-making by identifying a set of performance indicators for regular HR reporting to senior management and Council.



## SUMMARY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMENTS



### DISTRICT OF TOFINO – OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

P.O. Box 9, 121 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Tofino, B.C. V0R 2Z0

Telephone: 250.725.3229 | Fax: 250.725.3775 | Email: osborne@tofino.ca | Website: www.tofino.ca

March 21, 2017

Mr. Gordon Ruth  
Auditor General for Local Government  
201-10470 152<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Surrey BC V3R 0Y3

LGMA # 0530-01

Dear Mr. Ruth

On behalf of the District of Tofino, thank you for the opportunity to learn from the “Managing the Inherent Risks of Limited Human Resources within Small Local Governments” audit, and the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on your proposed audit report for the District of Tofino.

The District of Tofino is committed to leading a responsible and effective community government which is responsive to local needs and circumstances, acting as stewards of public assets and the public trust, and proactively fostering the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being within our community. This includes responsible and effective human resource management.

We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and your team at the beginning of the audit process, and we found the audit process to be efficient and courteously conducted. In particular, it was respectful of the staff’s time and schedule.

Our Chief Administrative Officer and his management team have prepared the attached Action Plan, which has been reviewed and endorsed by Tofino Council. The investment of staff and elected official time into the audit process was more than returned through the audit results, and our commitment to implement human resources practices and processes based on your recommendations has been incorporated directly into the District of Tofino’s Corporate 2014-2018 Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,



Josie Osborne  
Mayor

## Office of the Mayor

# DISTRICT OF TOFINO ACTION PLAN

AGLG RECOMMENDATIONS	STEPS TAKEN	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE
<b>HR PLANNING</b>				
<p><b>1.</b> The District of Tofino should enhance its overall approach to workforce planning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving to a greater focus on a three to five year window in future workforce planning</li> <li>• Developing defined service levels to help inform workforce planning and staffing levels</li> <li>• Expanding budget project sheets to include additional business case elements</li> </ul> <p><b>2.</b> The District of Tofino should address staff recruitment issues by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a comprehensive recruitment policy that addresses gaps in procedures and documentation practices</li> <li>• Enhancing its hiring processes by documenting and retaining complete candidate document files</li> <li>• Adding a hiring checklist to systemize the process of hiring new employees and the collection of HR information</li> </ul> <p><b>3.</b> The District of Tofino should ensure that all staff positions' job descriptions are dated and signed by the Chief Administrative Officer.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The District of Tofino should develop a formalized succession plan and prioritize key roles and mission-critical skills.</p> <p><b>5.</b> The District of Tofino should ensure that its employment agreement template is periodically reviewed by legal counsel.</p> <p><b>6.</b> The District of Tofino should develop a compensation policy for exempt staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to focus on five-year plus time horizon.</li> <li>• Develop service standards as identified in Strategic Plan.</li> <li>• New template for budget project sheets to be developed to account for justification.</li> <li>• Steering Committee for CAO/managers to be struck to oversee. Consultant needed to develop.</li> <li>• Records management plan preparation underway including policy for candidate files.</li> <li>• To be included in recruitment policy noted above.</li> </ul> <p>CAO to review all job descriptions with responsible manager. Provide sign off.</p> <p>CAO to work with HR consultant to initiate succession plan.</p> <p>Initiated in February 2017 with legal counsel.</p> <p>Initiated in 2016. Review by Council pending.</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Staff time, external assistance</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Time/funding</p> <p>No further resources needed</p> <p>Time/funding</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Project funding/ CAO time. Consider LGMA tool kit</p> <p>No further resources needed</p> <p>Funding to pay market rate to exempt employees</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>All departments esp. Community Sustainability &amp; Engineering/PW</p> <p>Financial Services</p> <p>CAO/Managers</p> <p>Corporate Services Div.</p> <p>CAO/Managers/Consultant</p> <p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p>	<p>Q1, 2018</p> <p>Q4, 2017</p> <p>Q3, 2017</p> <p>Q2, 2017</p> <p>Underway</p> <p>Q2, 2017</p> <p>Q2, 2017</p> <p>Q2, 2018</p> <p>Completion by Q2, 2017</p> <p>Q2, 2017 complete</p>

AGLG RECOMMENDATIONS	STEPS TAKEN	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE
<b>HR PLANNING</b>				
<p><b>7.</b> The District of Tofino should enhance employee training and development by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and implementing an employee orientation program</li> <li>• Considering a leadership development program and more cross-training of staff in high demand service areas and where backfilling is not readily available</li> <li>• Formulating a corporate training plan</li> <li>• Centralizing employee training and certification records</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee orientation program to be developed. Online modules as preferred delivery method.</li> </ul>	Funding for development, and regular updating.	CAO/Managers	Q3, 2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-training is existing and ongoing. Leadership development to continue to occur through revised leadership dialogue program.</li> </ul>	No further resources needed	N/A	Existing and ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training needs will continue to be considered by each department manager. Opportunities for cross departmental training will be brought to managers' meetings for discussion.</li> </ul>	No further resources needed	Corporate Services Div.	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be included in records management review.</li> </ul>			Q4, 2017
<b>HR MANAGEMENT</b>				
<p><b>8.</b> The District of Tofino should take steps to review its performance appraisal programs and, if appropriate, revise as needed and then consistently complete them on an annual basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching approach to employee development to continue to be encouraged as a means of 'performance management'. Develop coaching resources/entourage coaching training.</li> </ul>	CAO time/ Consultant funding (?)	CAO	Q3, 2017 & ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders dialogue for managers to be revised to include reference to Strategic Plan Objectives.</li> </ul>	CAO time	CAO	Q2, 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise employee performance appraisal format to remove scoring system. Focus on employee development.</li> </ul>	CAO and manager time/ consultant assistance	CAO	Q2, 2017
<p><b>9.</b> The District of Tofino should ensure grievance records are maintained, including withdrawn cases.</p>	Grievance records now maintained in personnel folders and in central folder.	None	Corporate Services/Finance	Complete

AGLG RECOMMENDATIONS	STEPS TAKEN	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE
<b>HR MANAGEMENT</b>				
<p><b>10.</b> The District of Tofino should enhance workplace health and wellness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing the OHS policy and safety procedures and revising as needed</li> <li>• Increasing employee awareness of the OHS policy and procedures through the review process or a follow-up information session</li> <li>• Preparing terms of reference and recording meeting minutes to formalize the practices of its joint Labour Management Committee</li> <li>• Conducting exit interviews with all departing employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OHS Committee to review. Recommendations to managers.</li> <li>• OHS crew talks to continue regarding significant OHS issues. Employee orientation (to be developed (Recommendation #7) to include OHS orientation.</li> <li>• JLMC to develop terms of reference. Meeting minutes to be kept.</li> <li>• Exit interview process to be developed in conjunction with recruitment policy.</li> </ul>	<p>OH&amp;S time</p> <p>None</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Consultant time, staff time</p>	<p>OH&amp;S Committee</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>JLMC, Corporate Services</p> <p>CAO</p>	<p>Q3, 2017</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Q3, 2017</p>
<p><b>11.</b> The District of Tofino should strengthen its conflict of interest and employee conduct management by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing policy and employee conduct requirements to new employees as part of a new corporate orientation program</li> <li>• Centrally documenting conflict of interest incidents</li> <li>• Elaborating the conflict of interest policy and linking it to the whistleblower policy</li> <li>• Raising employee awareness of conflict of interest through an information session and a regular review and acknowledgement by staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee orientation program to be developed and to include employee conduct expectations.</li> <li>• Employee conflict of interest to be documented in individual personnel files. Other locations to be reviewed through records management program.</li> <li>• Conflict of interest and whistleblower policy to be reviewed.</li> <li>• Policy training to be undertaken.</li> </ul>	<p>Consultant funding, CAO time</p> <p>Finance-corporate services time</p> <p>CAO/Legal counsel time</p> <p>CAO/Consultant time</p>	<p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p> <p>CAO</p>	<p>Q2, 2018</p> <p>Q3, 2017</p> <p>Q2, 2017</p> <p>Q1, 2018</p>

AGLG RECOMMENDATIONS	STEPS TAKEN	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE
 <b>HR ADMINISTRATION</b>				
<p><b>12.</b> The District of Tofino should enhance its human resource-related policies and procedures by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing key gaps in HR policies and procedures such as developing a dispute resolution policy</li> <li>• Establishing a process for the systematic and timely review of policies and procedures</li> </ul> <p><b>13.</b> The District of Tofino should enhance its HR decision-making by identifying a set of performance indicators for regular HR reporting to senior management and Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have policies reviewed by HR consultant for identification of gaps.</li> <li>• Establish policy review process for all District policies.</li> </ul> <p>Using the District of Tofino Strategic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO and Council to consider a performance indicator related to CAO performance review.</li> <li>• Performance indicators to be included in “Leaders’ Dialogue” to assist managers in meeting goals.</li> </ul>	<p>CAO and consultant time</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>CAO time</p> <p>CAO time</p>	<p>CAO</p> <p>CAO/corporate services</p> <p>Council/CAO/Manager</p> <p>CAO/Manager</p>	<p>Q4, 2017</p> <p>Q1, 2018</p> <p>Q1, 2018</p> <p>Q1, 2018</p>

## AGLG CONTACT INFORMATION



The AGLG welcomes your feedback and comments. Contact us electronically using our website at [www.aglg.ca](http://www.aglg.ca) or email [info@aglg.ca](mailto:info@aglg.ca) to share your questions or comments.

You may also contact us by telephone, fax or mail:

PHONE: 604-930-7100

FAX: 604-930-7128

MAIL: 201-10470 152<sup>nd</sup> STREET SURREY BC V3R 0Y3

