



2000 - 2001

Public Affairs



Bureau

A N N U A L R E P O R T



Copies of this report are available from:

Public Affairs Bureau
6th Floor, Park Plaza
10611 - 98 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5K 2P7
Phone: (780) 427-2754

For toll-free public access
from anywhere in Alberta
dial 310-0000

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Public Affairs Bureau 2000-2001

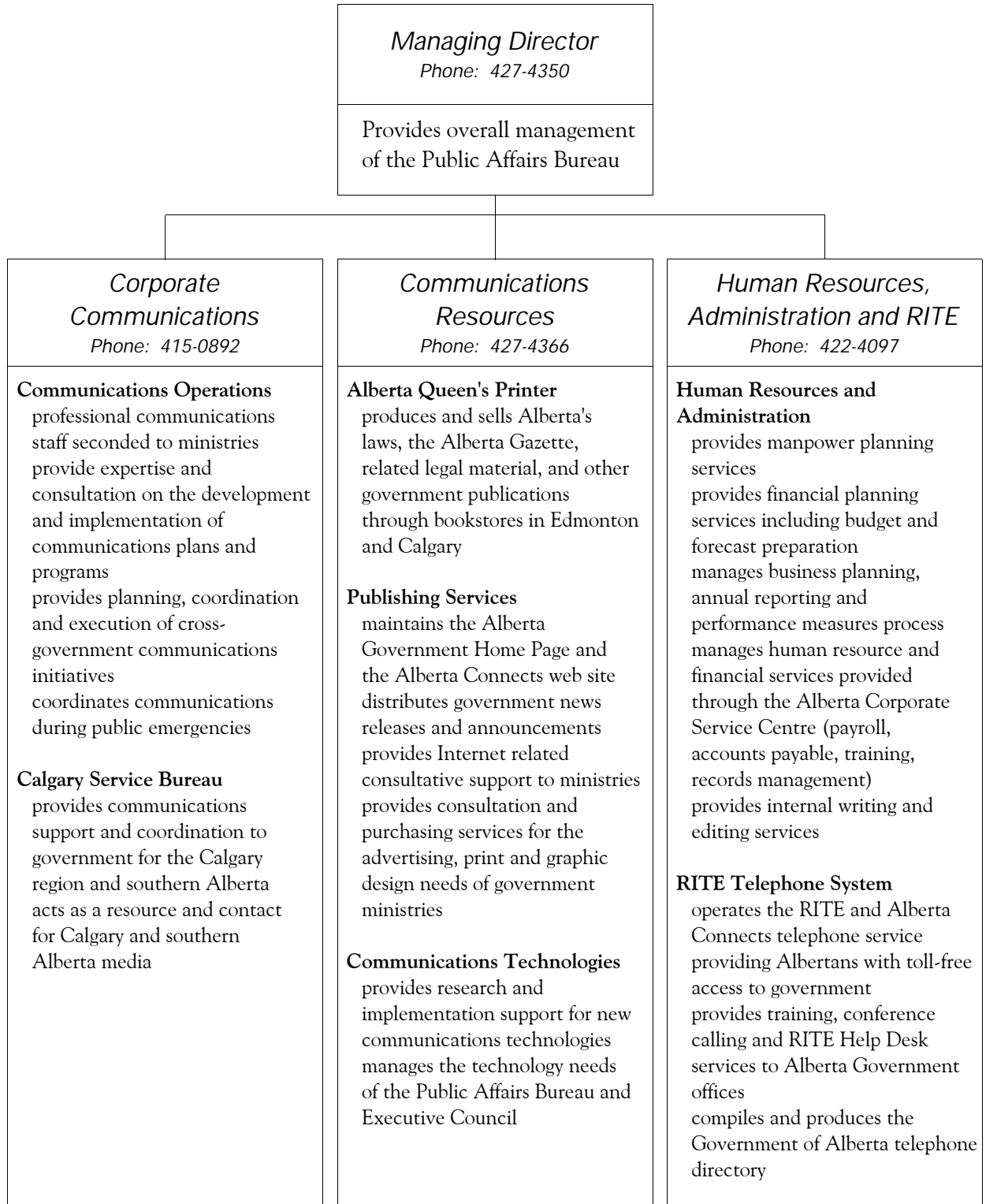
● Highlights

The mission of the Public Affairs Bureau is to help the government in its ongoing dialogue with Albertans by providing quality, coordinated and cost-effective communications services.

Some of the Bureau's key accomplishments for the 2000-2001 fiscal year include:

- Expanding the use of the Internet as a two-way communications tool.
- Working in partnership with government ministries, other levels of government and community and industry organizations to communicate key events and initiatives.
- Providing comprehensive communications support to cross-government initiatives, programs and services.
- Providing strategic communications support to key government actions, including the Six Point Plan for Health, the Learning Access Fund and implementation of the single tax rate.
- Improving access to government information for Albertans, through actions such as the redesign of web sites and increased volume on Alberta Connects.
- Continuing with the revision and conversion of the Revised Statutes of Alberta.
- Maintaining the commitment to staff professional development by:
 - offering over 30 courses to Bureau staff through the in-house training program, up from 25 last year; and
 - offering employees developmental opportunities to volunteer at the Media Centre for the Edmonton 2001 World Championships in Athletics.

● Organization Chart



● Operational Overview

The Public Affairs Bureau's spending for 2000-2001 was \$8,808,000, within its authorized budget of \$8,837,000. Bureau revenues totaled \$1,821,000—\$296,000 over the target of \$1,525,000.

The eight core businesses of the Public Affairs Bureau are to:

1. supply professionals to government ministries to develop and implement communications programs;
2. provide communications planning and consulting support to government;
3. coordinate government communications to and from Albertans on government initiatives, and during public emergencies;
4. provide specialized writing and editing services to government;
5. manage the RITE and Alberta Connects telephone service, giving Albertans toll-free access to government;
6. publish and sell Alberta's laws and other government materials, and operate the Queen's Printer Bookstores in Edmonton and Calgary;
7. manage the two-way flow of information through the Alberta Government Internet home page and Alberta Connects, manage the province-wide distribution of news releases and provide technical support for major government news conferences and announcements; and
8. help government ministries purchase communications support services, including advertising, printing and graphic design.

Our clients are:

- Albertans receiving information from government;
- Queen's Printer Bookstore customers;
- RITE telephone system users; and
- ministry clients using central Bureau and branch services.

Feedback from Bureau staff collected for the Government of Alberta Core Human Resource Measures Project - 2000 Survey of Employees shows that:

- 97 per cent of Bureau employees are satisfied in their work as a Government of Alberta employee;
- 91 per cent of Bureau employees understand how their work contributes to the department business plan; and
- 88 per cent of Bureau employees agree that the Bureau provides support to develop knowledge and skills in their job.

● 2000-2001 Key Activities

The Public Affairs Bureau met its business plan objectives for 2000-2001 through a wide variety of projects and initiatives, including the following examples.

G O A L 1

Increase Communications with Albertans in the Areas They Identify as Top Priorities

The Bureau assigns communications staff to ministries across government to help ensure the strategic planning, development and delivery of public information programs and communications related to government programs and services. Communications initiatives in top priority areas in 2000-2001 included:

“It’s Your Money” campaign: the use of a household mailer and an on-line survey to gather Albertans’ views on the direction for fiscal policy in a post-debt Alberta. Regular information on the fiscal policy of the government was provided through quarterly activity and financial reports, Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund meetings, and Budget 2001 communications.

Taxes: the implementation of the single tax rate plan was supported by communications activities that included the posting of the Alberta Tax Calculator on the Internet. Support was also provided to the Alberta Energy Tax Refund program and the Business Tax Review Committee report.

Energy Deregulation: a web site was established following energy deregulation to provide consumer protection information and energy rebate information and application forms. The web site contained an on-line form to obtain the tax refund, and allowed condominium and apartment complex owners to e-mail requests for application forms. The web site was supported by Alberta Connects advertisements. In addition, over 50,000 Alberta Energy Tax Refund information and application packages were distributed, a dedicated 310 call centre responded to over 100,000 calls, and almost 800 e-mail inquiries were routed to the ministry of Resource Development through the Alberta Connects system from November 2000 to March 2001.

Health Care Protection Act: Albertans were kept informed of progress on the Health Care Protection Act and the Six Point Plan for Health through media campaigns, national and provincial advertising campaigns, and an information web site that provided background information and daily legislative updates.

International Year of the Volunteer: a campaign was developed to increase public awareness of 2001 as the International Year of the Volunteer, including the development of a theme, video, poster, bookmarks and advertising.

Alberta SuperNet: the Public Affairs Bureau offered communications support for SuperNet, including a web site launch on the day of the announcement that led to over 6,700 hits and generated 100 inquiries on the first day. Many of the inquiries resulted in on-going discussions with communities, schools and other organizations.

Know Your Rights for Seniors: Community Development and Government Services Communications conducted a campaign to ensure that seniors know they are protected as consumers. Information was provided to seniors' lodges, personal care homes, drop-in centers and other key locations.

Marketing Alberta: communications support was provided to Ministerial and Premier's missions to the World Expo in Hanover and Hong Kong, and participation in the Team Canada mission. In addition, support was provided for visits to Alberta by over 80 delegations from 30 countries.

Tourism Marketing: the video and photography resources available to Travel Alberta and tourism operators were extensively updated. Communications support was provided for the development of Travel Alberta's *Dreams Live Here* video, a 100-image CD-ROM and a tourism product database.

Working Alone: communications support was provided for the release of the new Working Alone regulation, including the development of an information handbook and an advertising campaign focused on employers.

The Learning Access Fund: the communications branches of Alberta Learning, Health and Wellness, and Innovation and Science coordinated the announcement of additional funding for post-secondary institutions to create new spaces in areas of high needs in health, teaching, business and information and communications technology occupations.

Make Government Information More Accessible to Albertans

The Public Affairs Bureau worked to ensure that Albertans have quick access to information about all government programs and services. Initiatives in 2000-2001 included:

Access to Information: communications staff across government engaged in activities to improve the delivery of information about government programs and services to Albertans. Projects included:

- Web site redesign: work was initiated on the redesign of the Government of Alberta home page. In addition, the communications branches in Learning, and Justice and Attorney General, along with the Queen's Printer Bookstore, launched redesigned web sites to make it easier for Albertans to find the information they need.
- Gaming Communications launched on-line access to information packages and application forms for its licenses and programs. It also created searchable databases for Alberta Gaming and Liquor Control Board decisions and Community Lottery Boards.
- Alberta Community Development Communications initiated a "media room" site on its web site for the release of the *Alberta For All Ages: Directions for the Future* report, that featured audio clips from the Minister and the Chair of the Seniors Advisory Council.

Alberta Connects: provides an easily accessible method for Albertans to voice their opinions and request information about government programs, services or initiatives. It includes a toll-free telephone line, a web site that allows Albertans to send the government a comment or question and receive a reply by e-mail, and a post office box for written inquiries. Albertans are almost twice as aware of Alberta Connects than in the previous fiscal year (28.7 per cent compared to 14.9 per cent). The toll-free telephone lines received almost eight times the volume of calls, to 163,255 up from 18,000 calls the year prior. The volume of comments and questions on the Internet site increased substantially, to over 11,100, up from 6,300 the year prior. And the number of page requests to the Alberta Connects Internet site rose to 185,000, up from 83,000 the year prior.

310/RITE Service: RITE serves as Albertans' toll-free province-wide connection to the Government of Alberta. In 2000-2001, nearly 6.8 million calls were received, or 18,000 per day, up from 6.2 million in 1999-2000. RITE operators handled about 22 per cent of those calls (1.4 million); the rest used the auto-connect option.

Alberta One-Window Initiative: the communications branches of Government Services, Innovation and Science, Municipal Affairs, along with the Bureau's Communications Resources division and other government departments, are working on the development of a single point of access to all government services.

Calgary Service Bureau: the Calgary Service Bureau provided communications support and coordination to government for the Calgary region and southern Alberta. It also worked in partnership with Edmonton communications directors on key announcements, and improved the local focus and content of government stories for the Calgary media.

Alberta Communications Network (ACN): provides media and public access to government news releases. In 2000-2001, ACN distributed and provided access to more than 1,400 news releases and announcements, and recorded over 432,000 document requests from its web site.

Public Involvement: communications staff assist their client ministries in a variety of public consultations across Alberta. Albertans were given many opportunities to provide their views on important issues in 2000-2001, including:

- **It's Your Money:** over 120,000 responses were received to this fiscal planning survey. The total includes 12,000 responses to the on-line survey—a significant increase over the number of responses received to a similar on-line survey conducted two years ago.
- **Ag Summit 2000:** Internet technology, including real-time video streaming, chat rooms and e-mail feedback, allowed 1,500 Albertans to participate in this summit.
- **Intensive Livestock Operations:** Albertans were invited to provide written submissions or attend one of six public meetings on Sustainable Management of Livestock Industry in Alberta. Input was provided to the Livestock Regulatory Stakeholder Advisory Group, which assisted in the development of a new Code of Practice and a comprehensive provincial strategy.
- **Extended Parental Leave:** over 5,000 responses were received to a questionnaire on extending parental leave. The questionnaire was made available over the Internet.
- **Provincial Youth Forums:** six forums were held to gather input from young Albertans on substance abuse, violence and other issues of concern to youth. An additional Aboriginal Youth Forum was held to gather input from young Aboriginal peoples on these issues.

Improve the Efficiency and Coordination of Communications Across Government

Bureau staff helped streamline and improve processes for communication with Albertans and across government. Activities included:

Cross Government Internet Committee: chaired by the Public Affairs Bureau, this committee developed eight standards for government web sites, to be adopted by all ministries and the Alberta One-Window Initiative. The standards create a unified look and feel for government web sites.

Partnerships with Other Agencies: the Baby Avery case saw coordination of communications between government offices, the City of Calgary, community agencies and social service and police agencies in the United States. The Casino Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program required coordination of communications between the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, AADAC and the gaming industry.

Support to Cross Ministry and Interdepartmental Initiatives: communications branches worked together to coordinate communications on Intensive Livestock Operations, the FOIP Review, the Aboriginal Policy Framework, 2005 celebrations, *Alberta For All Ages: Directions for the Future*, the Alberta Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and the Swan Hills Treatment Centre.

Clustered Services: regional communications activities are shared among the communications branches at Children's Services, Human Resources and Employment, and Health and Wellness.

Pandemic Influenza Working Group: chaired by Alberta Health and Wellness, this interdepartmental group worked with regional health authorities, other government departments and other levels of government to develop preventative health measures and preparedness strategies in the event of an influenza pandemic.

Relocation of the Queen's Printer Bookstore: this started in December 2000 with the administration staff moving to the main Public Affairs Bureau location. The move has made operations and communications more efficient.

On-line Stationery Open Order: government ministries have access to an on-line system for ordering stationery from the private sector.

G O A L 4

Deliver Products and Services that Allow Us to Meet or Exceed Revenue Projections and Customer Needs

Bureau staff helped deliver products and services to meet and exceed the needs of Albertans. These initiatives included:

Revised Statutes of Alberta: in partnership with Alberta Justice, the revision and conversion of the Revised Statutes of Alberta is 90 per cent complete and will be available in December 2001. It is estimated that the official Revised Statutes of Alberta will be reduced from 27 to 12 bound volumes. The new format will better reflect customer needs.

Electronic Commerce: the Queen's Printer web site's on-line shopping revenues continued to increase to over \$54,000 in 2000-2001 compared to \$31,500 in 1999-2000.

New Electronic Products: the Queen's Printer Bookstore released new electronic products including the Alberta Gazette Part 1 CD-ROM (1995-1999) and Orders-in-Council CD-ROM (1967-1999). The bookstore also improved many of its CD-ROM products with new information and resources.

New Web Sites: the QP Source Internet Site was redesigned to better meet the needs of subscribers. The new site offers more resources and features to help users research Alberta's legislation, including the ability to search statutes and regulations by name or number, save their own customized searches, and access all main features from one page. The Queen's Printer web site was also redesigned, to provide an updated look and structure and to improve usability.

Publications: the Queen's Printer Bookstore worked in partnership with ministries to develop new, value-added products including:

JUSTICE – Family Law Centre Court Procedures Booklets

GOVERNMENT SERVICES – New FOIP Guidelines and Procedures Manual

HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT – First Aid Records Binder

ENVIRONMENT – Environment Codes with Practice Maps

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Listing of Significant Historical Sites and Areas

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT – Power Purchase Arrangements Determination Regulation

● Performance Measures Overview

- Performance measures results for Queen's Printer and RITE telephone system customers remain high, with averaged results increasing to 96 per cent. This represents a one per cent increase over the previous year. Work will continue to reach the target of 98 per cent customer satisfaction.
- The Bureau's internal client satisfaction results also increased, reaching an averaged satisfaction level of 93 per cent and exceeding the target of 90 per cent.
- Although the majority of Public Affairs Bureau measures are at very high levels, results for Goal 1 remain below target. Continued work is needed to determine whether targets and measures are feasible, particularly for the relatively new goal of communicating with Albertans on priority areas. Follow-up to the measures will provide feedback that will help identify possible improvements to both the measures and services available to Albertans. Follow-up and any subsequent actions are expected to take place before 2001-2002 performance measures are compiled.

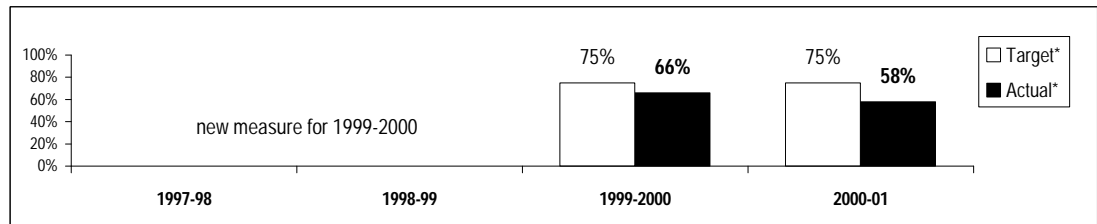
The Public Affairs Bureau's goals are to:

- Increase communications with Albertans in the areas they identify as top priorities;
- Make government information more accessible to Albertans;
- Improve the coordination and efficiency of communications across government; and
- Deliver products and services that allow us to meet or exceed revenue projections and customer needs.

● Public Affairs Bureau - Performance Measures

Public Satisfaction with Government Communications in Priority Areas

This measure is related to the goal of increasing communications with Albertans in the areas they identify as top priorities. It rates Albertans' satisfaction with the amount of information they receive, either directly from the government or through other sources in areas previously identified as priorities.



(*represents the total of "very" and "somewhat" satisfied responses)

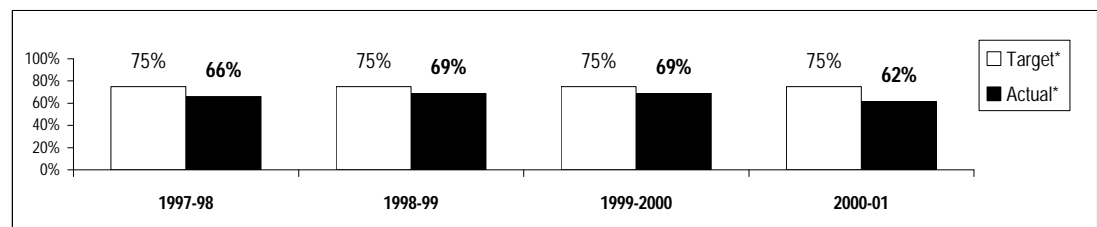
Source: Environics

2000-01 results reflect telephone interviews with 1,105 adult Albertans conducted from May 16 - 24, 2001. Respondents were randomly selected from across the province. A sample of this size within the given population produces results which are reliable to within plus or minus 2.9% 19 times in 20.

The figures shown represent the averaged results of satisfaction with the amount of information received in four priority areas, specifically the economy, taxes, health care and education. Priority areas are reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. Respondents were asked to choose from very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The reason given most often by respondents who indicated they were dissatisfied was that they did not receive enough information.

Public Satisfaction with Government Information

This measure is related to the Bureau's goal of making government information more accessible. It rates Albertans' overall satisfaction level with the information they receive about government programs and services, either directly from the government or through other sources.



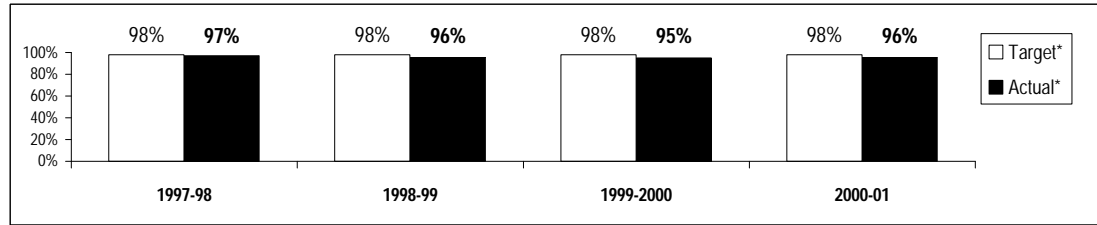
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Public Satisfaction with RITE and Queen's Printer Bookstore

This measure relates to the goal of making government information more accessible. It rates the satisfaction levels of Albertans using the RITE telephone system to access government and obtain information. It also measures how satisfied customers are with the services provided by the Queen's Printer Bookstore.



(*represents the total of "very" and "generally" satisfied responses)

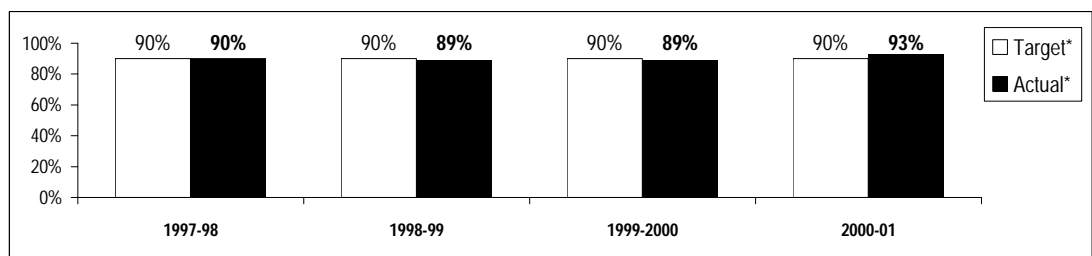
Queen's Printer Bookstore results were obtained through surveys mailed to approximately every 40th customer who had purchased products from the Bookstore in 2000-01. Of the 996 surveys sent, 224 were returned. The survey took place in May 2001.

RITE results reflect the responses of 257 system users during telephone interviews conducted in May 2001. Those surveyed were selected from a total respondent list of 619 names which was compiled in May when RITE users were asked if they would participate in a satisfaction survey.

The surveys were compiled internally by the Bureau. The figures shown reflect the averaged results of multiple questions. Results have also been averaged to give both groups' responses equal weight. Respondents were asked to choose from very satisfied, generally satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied. "Doesn't Apply" and no response replies are not included in the calculation of results.

Government Client Satisfaction

This measure is related to the goal of improving the coordination and efficiency of communications across government. It rates government client satisfaction levels with the communications services provided by the Bureau.



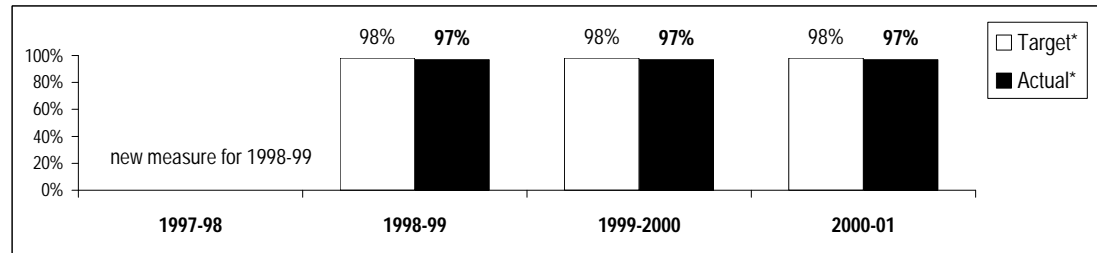
(*represents the total of "very" and "generally" satisfied responses)

Communications Directors provided lists of 550 departmental clients. Surveys were e-mailed to these clients. Some changes were made to the survey to accommodate the change from the mailed survey sent in the previous year to this year's Internet based survey. Changes include eliminating questions that had previously received high levels of "Doesn't Apply" and no response replies and making other minor adjustments to accommodate the new electronic format. The response rate for the survey rose 11 per cent over last year, with 332 clients responding.

The surveys were compiled internally by the Bureau. The figures shown reflect the averaged results of multiple questions. Respondents were asked to choose from very satisfied, generally satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied. "Doesn't Apply" and no response replies are not included in the calculation of results.

Customer Satisfaction with Products

This measure is related to the goal of delivering products and services that allow us to meet or exceed revenue projections and customer needs. It rates the satisfaction levels of Queen's Printer Bookstore customers with the products available.

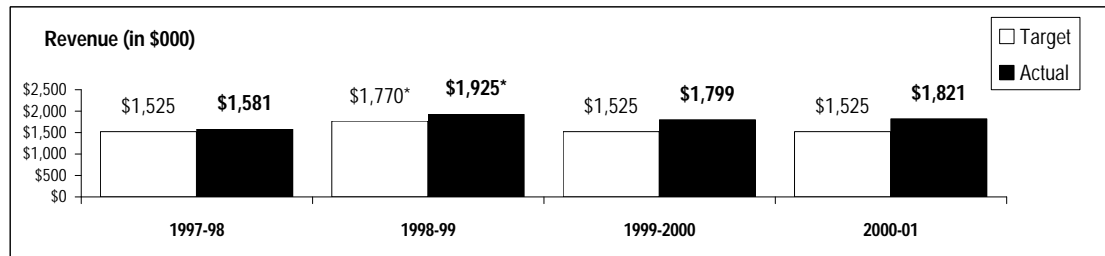


(*represents the total of "very" and "generally" satisfied responses)

The results shown reflect the averaged responses to two specific questions regarding the range of products available and the variety of format options included on the survey of Queen's Printer Bookstore customers (see "Public Satisfaction with RITE and Queen's Printer Bookstores" for methodology).

Maintaining Revenue

This measure is related to the Bureau's goal of delivering products and services that allow us to meet or exceed revenue projections and customer needs. It compares authorized revenue projections with the results actually achieved.



The Public Affairs Bureau generates revenue through the sale of legislation, government publications and other materials from the Queen's Printer Bookstores in Edmonton and Calgary.

Actual revenue results are taken from the audited financial statements of Executive Council.

*Increases in both the revenue target and actuals for 1998-99 are related to sales of the updated *Rules of Court*. A small amount of revenue was also realized in 1998-99 through chargebacks to some government entities for communications services provided by the Government Communications Group. These chargebacks were discontinued in 1999-2000.

● Financial Results

Branch	Authorized	Actual	Variance
	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)
Administrative Services	898	908	(10)
Communications Services	4,760	4,867	(107)
Communications Technologies	521	495	26
Queen's Printer Bookstores	1,309	1,315	(6)
Publishing Services	578	529	49
RITE System	771	694	77
Total spending	8,837	8,808	29
Total revenue	(1,525)	(1,821)	296
Net spending	7,312	6,987	325

