



# Office of the **Merit Commissioner**

**Budget Submission  
Fiscal Years  
2013/2014 – 2015/2016**

**Presented to  
The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services  
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia**

**November 14, 2012**



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## Overview

This budget submission for the Office of the Merit Commissioner is accompanied by the Service Plan for 2013/2014 to 2015/2016 which describes the broad direction for the Office over the same three-year time horizon. This budget request to the Committee is mindful that government delivers services from a limited public purse. The Office's budget request of \$1,054,000, still less than the 2011/2012 budget allocation, represents a modest increase of less than 3%.

In the past fiscal year, the Office made effective use of the existing budget allocation and fulfilled commitments as outlined to the Committee in our Service Plan. Four staff positions within the organization remained filled for most of the year; five external auditors continued to be engaged on a contract basis; an Audit Advisory Committee was consulted as appropriate; and substantial progress was made on implementation of the audit plan. For the coming years, a number of special studies and initiatives are planned in addition to the ongoing audit work.

The Office's former lease at 1070 Douglas will be retired this month (November 30, 2012). As a result, the funds allocated to the Office to offset the costs of a sub-lease for this space (\$11,000) will not be required in fiscal 2013/14. The proposed fiscal 2013/14 budget for Building Occupancy has been reduced accordingly.

The request for a slight increase in operating funds for fiscal 2013/2014 reflects increased salary and employee benefit costs. This proposed budget in the amount of \$1,054,000 is considered sufficient and necessary to allow the Office to carry out our work plan, to maintain appropriate oversight of merit-based hiring in the BC public service, to respond promptly and appropriately to requests from employees for reviews of appointment decisions, and to communicate the value of merit and its impact on employee engagement and productivity.



## Mandate

The Merit Commissioner’s Office provides independent oversight and insight into merit-based hiring in the BC Public Service.

All appointments to and from within the Public Service must be made on the principle of merit. Merit means that appointments are made on the basis of an assessment of competence and ability to do the job, and are not influenced by patronage. To carry out this mandate we focus on our core services: annual and special audits; independent staffing reviews; and education about the requirements of merit-based staffing.

The Office provides credible and relevant information about staffing on which the employer will act to produce positive changes. These outputs all support the long-term goal of building public confidence and a strong consensus that the Public Service is qualified, and hired fairly according to the principle of merit.



## Priorities for Fiscal 2013/2014

The Service Plan provides details that support each of the following priorities.

- Conclude the full-year 2012 Merit Performance Audit designed to examine appointments made under changed hiring practices introduced by the BC Public Service Agency, report results to organization heads, and formulate recommendations for improvement.
- Examine alternate approaches to audit and, if required, modify the audit program, then commence an audit of 2013 appointments.
- As a follow up to the audit undertaken in 2009/2010, conduct a special audit of temporary appointments originally intended to be under seven months but which have continued significantly beyond that timeframe.
- Conduct a special study on the use and impact of Behavioural Event Interviewing to determine if merit-based hiring is affected by this form of assessment.
- Undertake a special study of the practices related to hiring individuals directly from the public into permanent entry level positions.



## Statement of Operations

(Previous and Current Fiscal Years)

	Fiscal 2011/2012 (previous)		Fiscal 2012/2013 (current)
	Budget	Actual	Budget
<b>Funding</b>			
Voted Appropriation	1,062,000	930,689	1,024,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,062,000</b>	<b>930,689</b>	<b>1,024,000</b>
<b>Operating Budget and Expenditures</b>			
Salaries	534,000	484,830	559,000
Employee Benefits	109,000	95,612	109,000
Travel	13,000	20,396	13,000
Centralized Management Support Services	0	0	0
Professional Services	100,000	113,998	75,000
Information Systems	31,000	14,635	31,000
Office and Business Expenses	25,000	6,511	25,000
Information, Advertising and Publications	2,000	0	2,000
Statutory Advertising and Publications	5,000	7,710	5,000
Utilities, Materials and Supplies	2,000	2,661	2,000
Amortization	54,000	38,178	54,000
Building Occupancy	187,000	146,158	149,000
Other Expenses	0	0	0
Internal Recoveries	0	0	0
External Recoveries	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,062,000</b>	<b>930,689</b>	<b>1,024,000</b>
<b>Capital Budget and Expenditures</b>			
Info. Systems, & Furniture & Equipment	15,000	4,379	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>4,379</b>	<b>15,000</b>



## Proposed Budget

### By Standard Object of Expenditure (STOB)

		Fiscal 2012/13 (Current) Budget	Fiscal 2013/14 Proposed Estimates	Change	Fiscal 2014/15 Planned Budget	Fiscal 2015/16 Planned Budget
<b>STOB</b>	<b>Expense Type</b>					
50	Salaries	392,000	442,000 <sup>1</sup>	50,000	442,000	442,000
51	Supplemental Salary	30,000	5,000 <sup>2</sup>	(25,000)	5,000	5,000
52	Employee Benefits	109,000	125,000 <sup>1</sup>	16,000	128,000	128,000
54	Officer of the Legislature Salary	137,000	137,000 <sup>3</sup>	0	137,000	137,000
57	Travel	13,000	13,000	0	13,000	13,000
60	Professional Services	75,000	75,000	0	100,000	100,000
63	Information Systems	31,000	31,000	0	31,000	31,000
65	Office and Business Expenses	25,000	25,000 <sup>4</sup>	0	25,000	25,000
67	Info., Advertising & Publications	2,000	2,000 <sup>5</sup>	0	2,000	2,000
68	Statutory Adv. & Publications	5,000	5,000 <sup>6</sup>	0	5,000	5,000
69	Utilities, Materials and Supplies	2,000	2,000 <sup>7</sup>	0	2,000	2,000
73	Amortization Expense	54,000	54,000 <sup>8</sup>	0	54,000	54,000
75	Building Occupancy	149,000	138,000 <sup>9</sup>	(11,000)	142,000	147,000
85	Other Expenses	0	0	0	0	0
88	Internal Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
90	External Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,024,000</b>	<b>1,054,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>1,086,000</b>	<b>1,091,000</b>

<b>Capital Budget</b>						
	Info. Systems, Furniture & Equipment	15,000	15,000 <sup>10</sup>	0	15,000	15,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>



## Notes:

1. STOB 50 (Salaries) and STOB 52 (Employee Benefits) include salary increases for Schedule A staff, one additional part-time employee, and the Office's portion of Shared Services costs.
2. STOB 51 (Supplemental Salary) includes an adjustment to reflect conclusion of a maternity leave.
3. STOB 54 (Officer of the Legislature Salary) includes the salary for the Merit Commissioner, which is set by Order in Council.
4. STOB 65 (Office and Business Expenses) includes costs for office supplies, offsite file storage, postal and courier charges, printing and photocopying expenses (other than reports), newspaper subscriptions, staff training (including Pacific Leaders charges), and business meeting expenses.
5. STOB 67 (Information, Advertising and Publications) includes costs for printing public reports other than the Annual Report to the Legislature.
6. STOB 68 (Statutory Advertising and Publications) includes costs for preparation and printing of the Annual Report to the Legislature.
7. STOB 69 (Utilities, Materials, and Supplies) includes costs for utilities such as hydro, recycling, books, and supplies.
8. STOB 73 (Amortization) is the cost of repaying the Capital Budget expenditures for tenant improvements, furniture and information systems hardware and software. Tenant improvements and furniture expenditures are amortized on a monthly basis over five years, whereas information systems expenditures are amortized over 3 years.
9. STOB 75 (Building Occupancy) is the Merit Commissioner's share of the consolidated office space for the four independent offices at 947 Fort Street. The Fiscal 2013/2014 Proposed Estimates have been adjusted to reflect the expiry of the Office's former leased space at 1070 Douglas Street. The lease expires on Nov. 30, 2012.
10. CAPITAL BUDGET is for the purchase of Information Systems Hardware and Software and Furniture and is consistent with the 2012/2013 budget. Capital amounts are repaid through amortization in STOB 73.





## Proposed Budget By Business Area

	Current Year	Planned		
Business Area	Fiscal 2012/13	Fiscal 2013/14 Estimates	Fiscal 2014/15 Budget	Fiscal 2015/16 Budget

### Operating Budget (\$000)

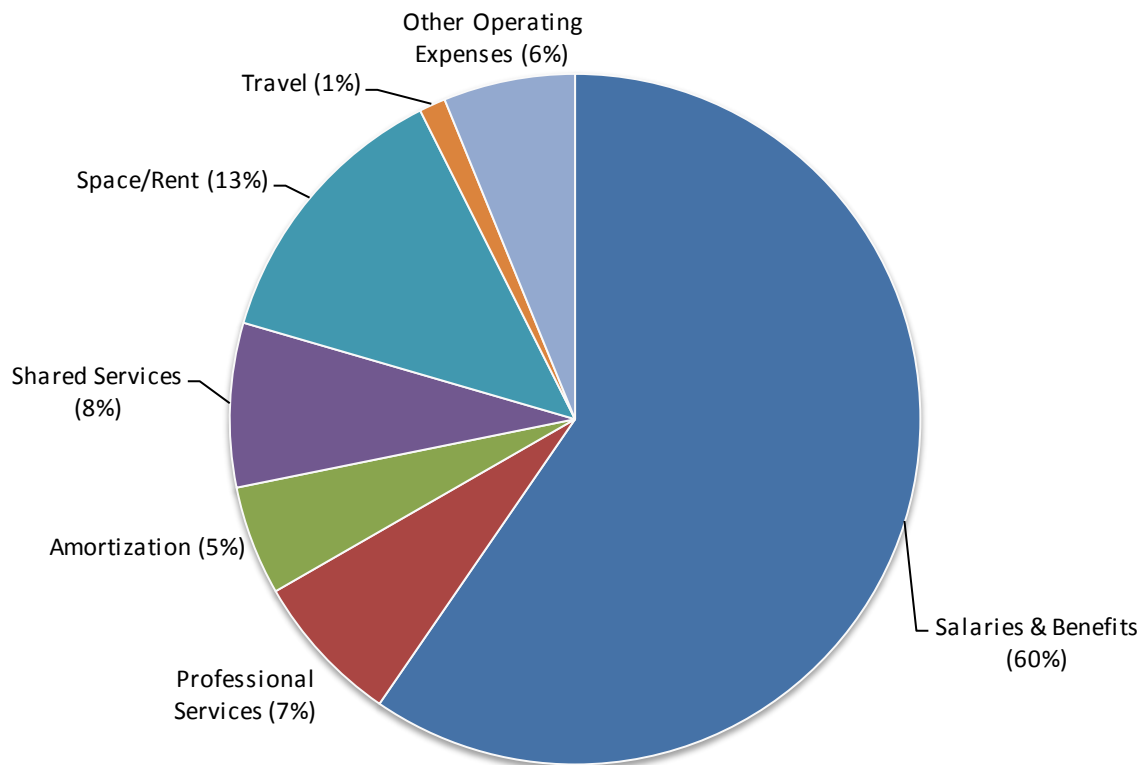
Core Operating Services	943	973	1,005	1,010
Shared Services	81	81	81	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>1,091</b>

### Capital Budget (\$000)

Info. Systems, Furniture & Equipment	15	15	15	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>



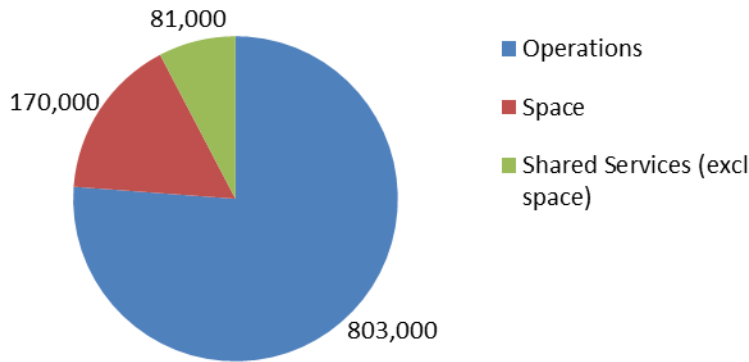
## Proposed Operating Budget by Expenditure Type Fiscal 2013/2014



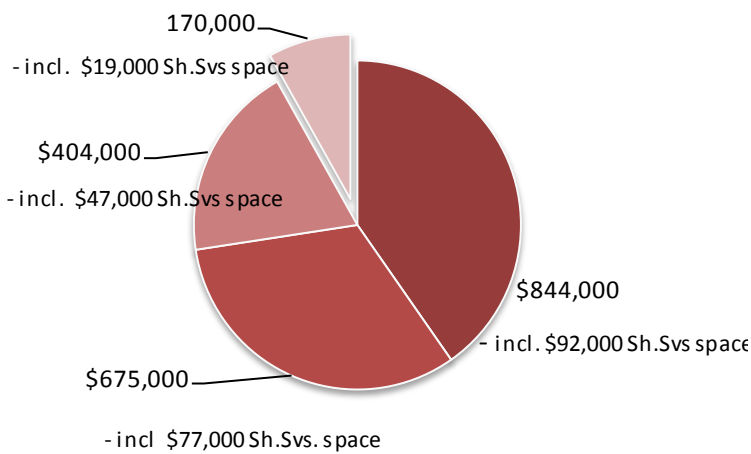


## Proposed Space and Shared Services Budgets Fiscal 2013/2014

**Fiscal 2013/14 Operational Budget Request  
Office of the Merit Commissioner  
Total: \$1,054,000**

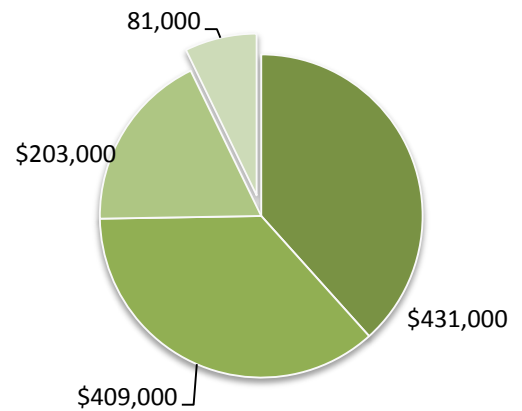


**Space Budget, All Offices  
(incl Amortization of Tenant Improvement Capital Costs)  
Total: \$2,093,000**



- Ombudsperson
- Info & Privacy Comm.
- Police Complaint Comm.
- Merit Commissioner

**Shared Services Budget, All Offices  
(excl. Space for Shared Services)  
Total: \$1,124,000**



- Ombudsperson
- Info & Privacy Comm.
- Police Complaint Comm.
- Merit Commissioner