

2015 Financial Integrity and Accountability Report

1. Introduction

Thank you for participating in the State of RI Financial Integrity Act Survey for 2015. Please note that your submission is due by December 11, 2015.

Completion of this survey ensures your compliance with RI General Law, Title 35, Chapters 14 and 20, and the Department of Administration Office of Accounts and Control Policy/ Procedure Number A-39.

Copies of all completed surveys will be forwarded to the Governor, the Director of Administration, the Legislature, the Office of the Auditor General, and the State Library in accordance with State Law.

Please note that all questions in this survey, along with the answers provided, must be reviewed and approved by the Director of the Department/Agency prior to submission. A follow up email will be sent to the Director of the Department/Agency confirming the Director's review and approval of the survey.

The survey should take approximately 1 1/2 hours to complete. You have the ability to save your work in progress at any time and to resume the survey at your convenience.

Many of the questions require the use of your professional judgment to answer. Your honest objective answers are very much appreciated.

Should you have any questions with regard to the survey, please contact Michael Sprague, Deputy Chief, Bureau of Audits, at email address mike.sprague@audits.ri.gov. Thank you.

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2. General Information

The survey begins with the gathering of general information about you and your Department/Agency (Entity).

Please enter the following information:

1. Name of Department/Agency (Entity):

Secretary of State's Office

2. Name of Preparer:

Colleen Halloran-Villandry

3. Title of Preparer:

Director of Finance & Personnel

4. Phone Number of Preparer:

401-222-2299 ext. 3

5. Email address of Preparer:

cvillandry@sos.ri.gov

6. Address of Preparer:

148 West River Street Providence, RI 02904

7. Director of the Entity:

Nellie M. Gorbea

8. Email address of the Director:

nmgorbea@sos.ri.gov

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3. Strategic Information

The following questions focus on the strategic risks of the entity. A strategic plan is a forward looking plan that aims to map out the means to achieve longer term goals and to plan a response to unforeseen problems and opportunities.

9. Does the entity have a written strategic plan that guides employees on what the entity is working to achieve?

- yes
- no
- other

Please specify

10. If the entity has a written strategic plan, when was it last updated?

- within the last year
- within the last 3 years
- within the last 5 years
- within the last 10 years
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

11. How is the strategic plan communicated within the organization? Select all that apply.

- quarterly or annual entity wide meetings
- written communication
- e-mail
- posted on agency web site or internal intranet
- no formal communication
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

12. Does the department's strategic plan have quantifiable goals to determine success?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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13. Does the department have performance measures for programs it administers?

- yes for all programs
- yes for more than half of programs
- yes for less than half of programs
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

14. Does the department use performance-based data, or other measures to compare it's actual performance, with programmatic goals and objectives? If yes, how often is this done?

- more than once a month
- every 1-3 months
- every 3-6 months
- every 6-12 months
- less than once per year
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

15. Is the entity responsible for meeting the immediate needs of the public or its constituents in an emergency situation such as a security threat or natural disaster?

- yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

16. Does the entity have an emergency preparedness plan in the event of catastrophe (e.g. fire, flood, hurricane, blizzard, pandemic illness)?

- yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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17. If the entity has an emergency preparedness plan, when was the last time this plan was used in an exercise or actual emergency?

- within the last year
- within the last two years
- within the last five years
- longer than five years ago
- we have never used the plan
- we do not have a plan

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

18. If the entity has an emergency preparedness plan, when was it last updated?

- within the last year
- within the last 3 years
- within the last 5 years
- within the last 10 years
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

19. If the entity has an emergency preparedness plan, how is it communicated within the organization? Select all that apply.

- quarterly or annual entity-wide meetings
- written communication
- e-mail
- posted on agency web site or internal intranet
- no formal communication
- entity does not have an emergency preparedness plan

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

20. Does the department actively monitor staff who perform vital functions, especially in those areas where non-performance could adversely affect risk?

- yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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21. Has inadequate/outdated technology affected the entity's progress toward meeting its objectives?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Updating existing infrastructure has delayed timelines.

22. Has inadequate/outdated equipment (other than technology) affected the entity's efforts toward meeting its objectives?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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4. Operational Information

The following questions focus on the operational risks of the entity.

23. Has there been a change in the nature, size or structure, of the entity, within the last year?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

Secretary Gorbea was inaugurated on January 6, 2015. Her Administrations commenced on that date.

24. Number of full time personnel on June 30, 2015:

1 - 5

6 - 10

11 - 15

16 - 30

31 - 50

51 - 100

101 - 175

176 - 250

251 - 749

over 750

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

25. Number of full time equivalent contract employees on June 30, 2015 (i.e., contracted through ADIL Business System or comparable company):

none

1 - 5

6 - 10

11 - 15

16 - 30

31 - 50

over 50

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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26. If the entity has policies and procedures manuals, when were they last updated?

- within the last year
- within the last 3 years
- within the last 5 years
- within the last 10 years
- never updated
- the entity does not have policies and procedures manuals

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

27. If the entity has policies and procedures manuals, how often does the entity provide training on the policies and procedures to the staff? Select all that apply.

- at the time of hire
- annually
- as needed due to changes or additions
- the entity does not provide training on the policies and procedure manuals
- the entity does not have policies and procedures manuals

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

28. Are policies and procedures (written or unwritten) designed to provide adequate segregation of duties or independent checks?

- yes
- no
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department's financial policies and procedures are designed to provide segregation of duties/independent checks.

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29. Is the internal control structure supervised and reviewed by management to determine if it is operating as intended?

- yes
- generally yes
- sometimes
- no
- not sure
- not applicable - entity does not have policies and procedures manuals

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department's use of the approval process within RIFANs and the Purchase Card Authorization process allows management to supervise and review financial transactions completed by the employees.

30. Are there adequate systems of authorization and approval of transactions?

- yes
- generally yes
- no
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department's use of the approval process within RIFANs and the Purchase Card Authorization process allows management to supervise and review financial transactions completed by the employees.

31. Does the entity have adequate staffing in order to reasonably ensure all control activities are in place and operating as designed?

- yes
- generally yes
- no
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Division of Finance & Personnel has four full-time equivalent employees. The Division has given each employee separate responsibilities to allow the employees to verify each others work and cash receipts.

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32. Estimate the number of financial transactions the entity processes on a monthly basis.

- less than 100
- 100 to 1,000
- 1,001 to 5,000
- 5,001 to 10,000
- 10,001 to 50,000
- 50,001 to 100,000
- 100,001 to 250,000
- greater than 250,000

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

33. Is there timely (2-3 business days) and appropriate documentation and recording of financial transactions?

- yes
- generally yes
- no
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department collects, deposits, and journal entries all financial transactions within 1-2 business days.

34. Does management identify and analyze risks relating to change, such as new technology, new regulations, restructuring and rapid growth?

- yes
- no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

35. Does the department have a process in place to identify new (or changed) laws, or statutory requirements that could affect its operations?

- yes
- no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

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36. Are there new (within the last year) and significant legal, regulatory, or professional requirements of the entity that the entity may not be able to satisfy?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

37. Is the entity responsible for overseeing multiple year and varied federal award programs?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The Department has an Effective Absentee Systems for Elections federal grant that is budgeted in multiple years.

38. Does the entity have written policies and procedures related to the administration of federal awards?

yes

no

the entity is not responsible for the administration of federal award programs

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department follows the grant requirements and the guidelines provided by the Department of Administration - Office of Management and Budget - Office of Grants Management.

39. Is there adequate management understanding of information technology?

yes

generally yes

sometimes

no

not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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40. Are controls in place to ensure information systems and data are protected from unauthorized access, theft, or malicious acts?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

41. Does the entity interact with the public using the Internet? (i.e. accept payments, take applications, complaints)

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The Department's website accepts filings and online payments.

42. Other than services provided by the Division of Information Technology (DoIT), are any information technology related functions outsourced?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The Department outsources PCC Technology Group, Custom Computer, OCEAN, and Ri.gov.

43. If the entity has outsourced information technology functions, how is the integrity of the data and processes maintained?

The Department's Division of eGov/IT maintains integrity through a combination of logging, alerting, and direct employee interaction.

44. Do information systems' controls effectively prevent and/or detect missing, or invalid data?

yes

no

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

When missing or invalid data is detected, alerts are generated to the Division's systems within the Department.

45. Do only authorized staff have information system override privileges?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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46. Have deficiencies been detected in internal controls, by management, internal audit, the Office of the Auditor General, federal funding agencies, or other regulatory authorities, within the last year?

yes

no

not sure

If deficiencies in internal controls have been detected, please provide a brief description.

47. Does management promote the identification and discussion of potential and known problems with auditors and other evaluators?

yes

generally yes

sometimes

no

not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

We have not had many occasions arise, but when in doubt, we reach out to Audit for guidance.

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5. Financial Information

The following questions focus on the financial risks of the entity.

48. Did you request a supplemental budget this year?

- yes
- no
- not sure

If yes, please provide a brief description.

49. Evaluate the effectiveness of the budget process as a control mechanism.

- highly effective
- effective
- somewhat effective
- not effective
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

50. Are there disagreements between the Controller's/Budget Offices and the entity with regard to accounting, auditing and reporting matters?

- yes often
- occasionally
- seldom
- no

If "yes often", please provide detail of the types of disagreements that exist.

51. Have formal or informal restrictions been applied to the internal or external auditor to limit access to people and information?

- yes
- no
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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52. Which answer best describes how the entity handles audit findings?

- audit findings are corrected within 6 months
- audit findings are prioritized by management and corrected when possible
- audit findings are generally not corrected
- the entity has not had audit findings

You may provide commentary here to clarify your answer.

There are no audit findings at this time. However, if the Department were to have an audit finding, management would prioritize the findings and make every effort to correct the findings as soon as possible.

53. Considering the past two years, please select the answer that best describes the entity's ability to meet its periodic reporting requirements.

- has met all reporting requirements
- generally meets all reporting requirements
- has been unable to meet some reporting requirements
- generally unable to meet its reporting requirements

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

54. Did the entity complete the required Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting within one month of issuing the sub-awards using federal funds?

- yes
- no
- no sub-awards issued using federal funds

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

55. If applicable, what is the entity's bond/debt rating?

Not applicable.

56. Is the entity's organizational structure appropriate for its size and responsibilities?

- yes
- generally yes
- not really
- no

Please provide a brief explanation if you answered that the entity's organizational structure is not, or not really, appropriate for its size and responsibilities

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57. Has the entity failed to obtain or been forced to return federal funds due to staffing issues or any other reason?

yes

no

If yes, please estimate the amount of funds and the reason they were not obtained or returned.

58. How effective is the entity at tracking federal award revenue and federal award expenses?

highly effective

effective

somewhat effective

not effective

not applicable, the entity does not receive award revenue

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

59. What tools does the agency use to track federal award revenue and federal award expenditures? Check all that apply.

grant management system

excel spreadsheets

other (specify below)

agency does not systematically track federal revenue and expenditures

If you selected "other" please use the space below to specify the system used.

60. Does the department document its review of federal funds sub-recipients?

yes

occasionally

generally no

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department awarded Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds in FY 2010 to the Governor's Commission on Disabilities. The Department receives periodic status reports from the GCOD and submits appropriate documents to the federal funding authority.

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61. Evaluate the risk of theft or misappropriation of assets by management or employees due to their access to cash or other assets.

- high risk
- moderate risk
- low risk
- little or no risk

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department uses an electronic Point of Sale (POS) system for cash receipts in its operating units; the Division of Finance & Personnel reconciles cash receipts with the POS system.

62. Are you aware of or do you suspect any theft, misappropriation or fraud to be currently occurring or have occurred during the last year within your entity?

- yes
- no

If yes, please elaborate

63. Are there adequate physical safeguards over cash, investments, inventory and fixed assets, of the entity?

- yes
- generally yes
- not in all instances
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

64. If the entity accepts payments from the public, please indicate which forms of payment are accepted. Select all that apply.

- cash
- personal/business check
- certified/bank check/money order
- credit/debit card
- ach/direct deposit/wire transfer
- entity does not accept payment from the public

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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65. Evaluate the entity's physical location in terms of safety and security. If the entity has multiple facilities, consider the safety and security of the facility in conjunction with its purpose.

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The State Archives are housed in a leased office space that is susceptible to severe flooding, potentially placing irreplaceable historical records at considerable risk of damage or permanent loss.

66. Evaluate the physical access controls for information systems. (i.e. locked closets and service rooms, public access to employee work areas)

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Most of our systems are now at the Enterprise Operation Center. Projects are in place to further secure on-site systems.

67. Evaluate the logical access controls for information systems. (i.e. password policies, authorized access procedures)

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor
- not sure

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Projects are in place to further secure on-site systems.

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68. Evaluate oversight of employee expenditures, such as travel and expense reimbursement.

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor

If you answered "less than adequate" or "poor" please provide a brief explanation.

69. Evaluate oversight of senior management's expenditures, such as travel and expense reimbursement.

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor

If you answered "less than adequate" or "poor" please provide a brief explanation.

70. Evaluate the entity's internal accounting and administrative controls.

- highly effective
- effective
- adequate
- less than adequate
- poor

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Division of Finance & Personnel uses the RIFANs financial reporting systems to assist with the internal accounting and administrative controls.

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6. Human Resource Management

The following questions focus on the risks related to Human Resources.

71. Have there been any significant changes in senior management or directors, within the last year?

yes

no

If yes, please provide a brief explanation

Secretary Gorbea was inaugurated on January 6, 2015. Her Administration commenced on that date. Additionally, Secretary Gorbea made changes within her senior leadership team upon the recent resignation of her Chief of Staff.

72. Has management established a code or other policies communicating appropriate ethical and moral behavioral standards for its employees?

yes

no

If "yes", how are they communicated?

Employees are notified of State Ethics Code responsibilities upon hiring. Additionally, the Department schedules periodic ethics training for Senior Management.

73. Is there an employee handbook that is readily accessible?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Secretary Mollis revised the Employee Handbook in 2012. We are currently updating the information contained in the handbook.

74. When was the employee handbook last updated?

within the last year

within the last 3 years

within the last 5 years

within the last 10 years

not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Secretary Mollis revised the Employee Handbook in 2012. We are currently updating the information contained in the handbook.

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75. When were job descriptions last updated?

- within the last year
- within the last 3 years
- within the last 5 years
- within the last 10 years
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Only the job descriptions for the Administration were updated within the last year.

76. Are there standardized hiring procedures and are they consistently applied?

- yes
- generally yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

77. Are background checks conducted on potential hires?

- no
- yes

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

78. Does the entity have sufficient numbers of people with the requisite skills to achieve its organizational objectives?

- yes, sufficient
- yes, but barely sufficient
- no, not sufficient

Please provide support for your answer here

79. Does the agency have a succession plan in place for senior management and other key employees?

- yes
- no

Please use the space provided for optional commentary.

The Department does not currently have a formal succession plan in place.

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80. Does the entity have operations or individuals that have evidenced significant ethical shortfalls and the appropriate personnel actions have not been taken?

- yes
- no
- not sure

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

81. Evaluate morale among senior management.

- excellent
- good
- fair
- low

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

82. Evaluate morale among employees.

- excellent
- good
- fair
- low

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

83. Are there mandatory vacations for employees performing key control functions?

- yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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84. Does management utilize methods such as cross-training, strategic hiring practices, detailed procedure documentation, enhanced supervision, etc. to help mitigate the risk associated, with sudden, or significant changes in key personnel?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Gorbea Administration has begun to institute many of these methods (e.g. cross-training, detailed procedure documentation, knowledge journals) to help mitigate the risk associated with sudden or significant changes.

85. Is there a risk that the Finance function of the entity will fail to function as a control in the event that senior management seeks to override established controls or take overly aggressive financial reporting positions?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

86. Is there any indication that unreliable or inaccurate estimates have been provided, or that management has been less than forthright?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

87. Evaluate management's past performance:

long track record of meeting or exceeding strategic goals, as well as a positive history of reacting to changing conditions

successful in meeting goals and objectives, appears to be in control of operations

moderately successful in meeting goals and forecasts, occasional crisis management due to changing operating conditions

often unable to meet goals, operational changes often create crisis situations for management

rarely able to meet goals, constant management by crisis

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

This Administration began in January 2015 and has been successful in meeting goals and objectives.

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88. Evaluate management's experience and skill mix:

- experienced management team that has successfully managed through one or more business cycles
- management team of average experience that has successfully managed through one or more business cycles
- senior management team lacks experience in a key area
- senior management team lacks experience with common industry problems

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

89. Evaluate management's depth:

- good management depth at key positions with full succession planning
- adequate management depth with all key positions covered by qualified individuals
- insufficient management depth with an active recruiting effort to fill positions
- insufficient management depth in key positions representing serious exposures

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

Good management depth at key positions covered by qualified individuals, but no succession plan currently in place.

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7. Regulatory / Compliance

The following questions focus on the risks relative to regulatory and compliance issues.

90. Is there an oversight authority or board of directors to whom management is responsible?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

91. If the entity does have an oversight authority or board of directors to whom management is responsible, is there evidence of ineffective monitoring of management?

yes

no

question not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

92. Have there been any changes in the entity's legal counsel during the past year?

yes

no

question not applicable

If you answered yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The Mollis Administration had a part-time lawyer on staff; however, the Gorbea Administration is hiring outside legal counsel on a case-by-case basis.

93. Is the entity currently under a regulatory or other supervisory order?

yes

no

If yes, please explain

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94. Are there any actual or pending inquiries, investigations, or actions by a regulatory agency, that would affect the entity's ability to operate?

yes

no

If yes, please provide a brief explanation

95. Does the entity have any specific anti-fraud policies?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

96. Does the entity have an internal audit function, other than the Bureau of Audits?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

97. Does the entity work with client information, requiring security, privacy, and confidentiality?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

98. Does the entity have a documented privacy and confidentiality policy?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

99. Is the entity subject to debt covenant requirements?

yes

no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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100. If the entity is subject to debt covenant requirements, is the entity in compliance?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

101. Does the entity have policies/procedures for maintaining compliance with environmental laws?

- yes
- no
- not applicable

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department of State does not conduct activities directly governed by environmental laws.

102. Is the entity involved in the production or handling of hazardous substances (besides the office related items such as ink and toner cartridges)?

- yes
- no

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

103. Does the entity conduct internal self-reviews with regard to compliance with laws and regulations?

- yes, often
- occasionally
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

The Department of State continuously monitors laws that are relevant to its activities to ensure compliance.

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8. Governmental Service

This series of questions relate broadly to the services provided by the entity.

104. How well is the entity meeting the needs of its constituents?

- very well
- adequately well
- adequately well in most areas, though some need improvement.
- not very well

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

105. Does the entity have a means of monitoring constituent satisfaction with its services?

- yes
- no

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

106. Does the entity focus on improving accountability and transparency to the general public through the use of internet portals (ri.gov) or another means of information disbursement?

- yes
- generally yes
- no, this has not been an area of focus

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

107. How is the entity working to improve government accessibility? Please check all that apply.

- physical relocation
- physical improvement to facilities
- change in hours
- improved phone service
- internet services
- improved customer service program

Please use the space below to provide any additional information relevant to this question.

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9. Commentary

This section of the survey provides you with the opportunity to include commentary on other issues and concerns you may have with regard to the entity's ability to meet its goals and objectives.

108. Please use the space provided for additional commentary. In addition to commentary here you may include any documentation that you feel is relevant to your compliance with the FIA statute by sending the document to Mike Sprague at michael.sprague@audits.ri.gov. Any supplemental documentation you supply will be included as an addendum to this survey when the results are distributed to the required parties.

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10. Completion / Conclusion

Please answer the final two questions with regard to this FIA survey.

109. Have you answered all questions to the best of your knowledge and belief?

yes

no

110. All questions included in this survey, along with all the corresponding answers as provided, have been reviewed and approved by the entity's Director?

yes

no

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11. Completion and Submission

Copies of this survey, along with a two question survey to be completed by the entity's Director, will be distributed to the Director of Administration, the Auditor General, the Legislature, and the State Library in compliance with RI Statute, 35-14-6 (Public Finance, Financial Integrity and Accountability, Annual Report).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your time and efforts are very much appreciated.

Submit by E-mail

If you experience problems with the "Submit by E-mail" button, please save the PDF file and e-mail it as an attachment to david.peterson@audits.ri.gov.

Print Form