Action Plan for Improving Support to Community Governments in the NWT

May 2018

PROGRESS REPORT

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Introduction

In August 2017, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) finalized the *Action Plan for Improving Support to Community Governments in the Northwest Territories*. The Action Plan was developed in response to the October 2016 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada: Support to Communities for Municipal Services in the Northwest Territories – Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.*

This report is an interim status report intended to capture activity completed over the preceding sixteen-month period since the Department's draft Action Plan was provided to the Standing Committee on Governance and Operations in January 2017, at which time the Department began implementation of the priority actions identified in the Plan. The Action Plan was amended, based on Standing Committee's recommendations, and then the final Action Plan was provided to Standing Committee in October 2017. This report outlines the work completed by MACA to achieve the performance outcomes articulated in the Action Plan.

For each action item, the Department has determined a rating of 'met', 'partially met' or 'not met'. It is important to note that while the Department has identified some of the action items as 'met', many of these action items will require continued implementation on an ongoing basis. It is MACA's intention to continue implementation of these action items in the future and that these actions will form part of MACA's core programs and services in support of essential services provided by community governments.

Background

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada conducted the audit between August 2015 and September 2016. The scope of the audit focused on whether MACA provided adequate support to community governments as they delivered essential services to their residents. Specifically, the audit studied the areas of drinking water management, waste management, fire protection and emergency services. Additionally, the audit also investigated tools used to monitor community governments with a focus on MACA's Accountability Framework, as well as the support provided to the nine designated authorities that provide municipal-type services. Finally, the audit also reviewed MACA's efforts to develop community government capacity through the programming available through the Department's School of Community Government.

The OAG audit included thirteen recommendations. The Department's Action Plan categorized the thirteen recommendations into four themes:

Theme 1: Supporting Delivery of Essential Services

Theme 2: Tools to Support Community Governments

Theme 3: Supporting Designated Authorities

Theme 4: Supporting Community Government Capacity

In the Action Plan, MACA developed sixty-six specific actions to address the recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada. Each of the action items includes a performance indicator and timeline to more effectively measure the Department's progress.

Context

MACA supports community governments in the delivery of core municipal programs and services. MACA's broad mandate reflects the diversity of programming that is found at the community level. The municipal programs and services community governments provide their residents includes, but is not limited to, the provision of water; the collection, treatment and disposal of sewage and solid waste; fire protection; emergency planning and management; road maintenance; recreation; land use planning; and, bylaw enforcement.

There are thirty-three community governments in the Northwest Territories (NWT) that deliver municipal-type services. Twenty-four of these communities are established as municipal corporations under territorial or federal legislation, and nine are designated authority communities which are governed by an Indigenous council established under the Indian Act.

The GNWT provides designated authorities with funding for the delivery of municipal-type services through MACA's community government funding policies. As these nine community councils are not subject to the NWT's municipal legislation, MACA does not have the same authority or ability to intervene in council operations as in those community governments established under municipal legislation. MACA's relationship with designated authorities is therefore based exclusively on the contract between MACA and the Indigenous government for the delivery of municipal services. As a result of the lack of a legislated relationship between the two levels of government (territorial and First Nations band council), there can be issues related to accountability for municipal programs and services, and at times an expectation on the part of the designated authority that MACA can provide them with the same level of support and intervention on elections or governance issues as is provided to community governments established under territorial legislation.

All thirty-three community governments in the NWT face challenges with the hiring, training and retaining of skilled staff for various community government positions. Many community governments have difficulty finding candidates with the diverse skills needed to fulfill the duties of the Senior Administrator Officer (SAO) position within the community. The SAO is responsible for the overall management of the community government administration including the hiring and management of all other community government staff. The SAO is the only community government staff member hired by council and is accountable to council for administration of the community government. Difficulties in attracting and retaining experienced SAOs increases significantly when recruiting for SAO positions in the smaller, remote communities of the NWT. This also has an impact on community governments' ability to engage with MACA on critical matters. Community governments often have to balance the need to focus on SAO recruitment with responding to requests from MACA to conduct fire fighter training or a table-top emergency planning exercise. This creates a state of constant change for most communities, with frequent periods of transition in the community government's administration with sometimes only brief periods of stability and progress on community initiatives.

Community Councils also face capacity challenges. Councillors' understanding of modern business / financial planning and accountability processes can be limited particularly in the smaller, more traditional communities. Some community governments have also faced rapid changes in their governance models due to the settlement of land and resources agreements. The advancement of Indigenous governance models through the signing of land claim and self-government agreements, coupled with a desire by councillors to follow previous, less rigorous financial practices can lead to issues of non-compliance with community council procedures and codes of conduct. The small population sizes of most NWT communities can also lead to conflicts of interest when it comes to staffing of community positions or the letting of community government contracts. MACA responds to these situations with formal council training and direct support to community councils when specific issues arise.

Despite these many challenges, MACA appreciated the work of the Auditor General of Canada in allowing the Department to identify and focus on continuous improvement in the areas of core service delivery. Although some of the actions have in the short term increased work with community governments, the lack of community government capacity in engaging with MACA has helped to make the progress more manageable from a department perspective.

PROGRESS ON PRIORITY ACTIONS

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 41

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should formally assess its information gaps with respect to water quality testing and use the information to work with community governments and the Department of Health and Social Services to identify and provide communities with the required types of support to comply with water testing requirements. It should also work with community governments to ensure that all water treatment plant operators receive the required training and support to obtain the appropriate certification.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
41.1	Continue to work with the Interdepartmental Drinking Water Committee (mandate commitment 5.4.2).	Number of times committee convenes as per TOR, review of TOR on annual basis	Ongoing	Met. The Interdepartmental Drinking Water Committee is a Deputy Minister-level committee which coordinates the four GNWT departments that have roles in drinking water management – Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Infrastructure (INF), Health and Social Services (HSS), and MACA. The Committee's Terms of Reference outlines that the Committee will meet twice per year. The Committee met on February 26, 2018. The next meeting of the Committee will be fall 2018.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
41.2	Establish a process to monitor database results, and identify a documented process to follow up collect missing data information, and response to database results.	Document a process, including established agreed upon goals	October 1, 2017	Partially met. MACA and HSS's Environmental Health division have an established process for monitoring database results. The Drinking Water Technical Committee will be documenting a process that aligns with the new database and will present it at the fall 2018 meeting of the DM-level Interdepartmental Drinking Water Committee. The timeline for this action item has been amended to October 2018.
41.3	Work with the Committee to implement a new database.	Completion of database	March 31, 2018	Met. The new database, WaterTrax, was implemented at the end of March 2018. The database includes both chemical and bacteriological sampling. Results from the new database will be available on the Drinking Water website in the summer 2018.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
41.4	Provide targeted training through the Circuit Rider Program and courses where certification is required depending on the classification of the water treatment plant.	Number of Circuit Rider visits, training events, Number of communities with certified WTP operator to the level of plant	Ongoing	Met. MACA staff completed sixteen Circuit Rider visits in 2017-18. Five Water Treatment Plant Operator training events were also hosted, with fifty operators from eighteen communities in attendance. Presently there are twenty-one of twenty-nine communities with a certified operator to the classification level of the water treatment plant or with restricted licence. There are now six signed customized training plans being implemented in four communities in need of a certified operator. MACA staff will be working with the remaining communities on training plans, which will include attendance at training, circuit rider and submission of Continuous Education Units (CEUs).

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 53

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in consultation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, should work with community governments to help identify and provide the necessary support and capacity building, so that they can comply with regulatory and other waste management requirements. This should include:

- support needed by each community government to comply with the water licence that regulates the management of solid waste sites and sewage lagoons; and

- support needed by community governments to ensure proper management of solid waste sites, and proper handling and disposal of hazardous waste.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
53.1	Broaden the Terms of Reference for the Interdepartmental Drinking Water and Wastewater Management Committee to include a subcommittee on waste management.	An updated Terms of Reference with waste management subcommittee	August 2017	Met. The Waste Management Technical Committee was formed and met in April 2017. A Terms of Reference has received approval in principal by the four GNWT departments. The Waste Management Technical Committee is currently developing a committee action plan.
53.2	From the NWT Study of Waste Management Systems, create an inventory on baseline analysis of solid waste sites and sewage lagoons.	Receipt of study Completion of inventory baseline analysis	March 2017 August 2017	Met. The NWT study of waste management, entitled Study of Waste Management in the NWT was finalized (and received) in March 2017. Met. The inventory of baseline analysis (NWT Waste Management System Volume One and Two) was completed in advance of the Study of Waste Management in the NWT in December 2016.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
53.3	Working through the Waste Water Committee to assist communities with water licence compliance developing their operations and maintenance manuals for their community sewage lagoons, solid waste sites and spill contingency plans.	Completion of tracking tool of communities assisted	Fall 2017	Met. MACA has created a water licence tracking spreadsheet to track the support MACA provides communities in water licence compliance. MACA is also working with communities on the development of Operations and Maintenance manuals for community sewage lagoons and solid waste sites. It is anticipated that the manuals will be completed by summer 2018.
53.4	Incorporate best practices on solid waste management into the Asset Management project and capital planning processes.	Completion of tools and display of resources available	April 2018	Partially met. MACA is scheduled to launch the electronic asset/maintenance management system in ten pilot communities in summer 2018. Tools and available resources have been built into the electronic system. The system provides reminders and preventative maintenance tasks such as the completion of the annual report and sampling for water licence compliance. The timeline for this action item has been amended to July 2018.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
53.5	Work with interested parties to investigate opportunities to share resources and regional waste management.	Completion of Waste Management Strategy	March 2019	Partially met. ENR is leading the development of the GNWT's Waste Resource Management Strategy. MACA has provided input through the first phase of the engagement process which took place from December 2017 to March 2018. Feedback gathered during the consultations will be distributed in a What We Heard document by ENR in May 2018 and will be used to draft the strategy and supporting implementation plan. MACA and the NWT Association of Communities are participating in the development of the Strategy.
53.6	Amend the Water and Sewer Fund Policy (Environmental Fund) to include solid waste.	Updated W&S Policy, posted to MACA website	March 2019	Partially met. Preliminary work has begun to update MACA's Water and Sewer Funding Policy to include funding for operation and maintenance of solid waste facilities.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
53.7	Amend the Solid Waste Management course curriculum, and deliver annual training. *Subject to ECCC (Environment and Climate Change Canada) and ENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) to develop curriculum*	Course updated, Number of participants and number of communities	March 2019	Met. MACA has revised the solid waste curriculum and it will continue to be expanded with new best practices, technical information and approved standards. The revised Solid Waste Management course was delivered in Inuvik in December 2017. Eleven community government participants from eight communities took the training. A Technical Advisory Committee has been formed under the Interdepartmental Water and Waste Committee. ENR is a member of the committee and provides quality advice and assistance in this area.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 63

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should take immediate action to reassess whether communities with fire departments meet requirements under the *Safety Act.* For those fire departments that do not, it should work with community governments to establish a plan to assist them in meeting requirements. For community governments without fire departments, the Department should work with them to develop a strategy for fire safety.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.1	Complete Community Fire Department Assessment Tool.	Assessment Tool completed and in use	2017	Met. The Fire Department Assessment Tool was created in February 2017 and is currently in use by the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) staff. The tool, created in consultation with the Workers Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC), provides community governments with an effective means to assess their fire department's current capacity, identify any critical gaps, and determine resource needs. The basis for this assessment is the WSCC's Firefighters Code of Practice which provides practical guidance in achieving safety requirements of the NWT *Safety Act* and related *Regulations*. Information gathered from the assessment is then used by OFM staff to help communities develop an action plan towards a sustainable and desired level of service.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.2	Identify priorities for Community Fire Protection Plans (mandate commitment 5.4.8) by completing assessments and developing community-specific action plans that help achieve *Safety Act* compliance.	Number of communities with action plans and progress towards achieving *Safety Act* compliance.	2018	Partially met. Since February 2017, seventeen community fire departments have been assessed. Thirteen of the assessments indicated non-compliance with WSCC's Firefighters Code of Practice in a number of key areas including training, governance, equipment maintenance, and operations. In response, MACA is developing community-specific action plans to address deficiencies and to build capacity. Action plans also provide a means to track progress while providing ongoing support and guidance to community governments and local fire officials.
63.3	Help communities maintain *Fire Prevention Act* and *Safety Act* compliance.	Number of communities re-assessed and action plans updated.	Ongoing	Not met. MACA has not completed any re-assessments of community government fire departments. MACA is currently working with community governments to complete initial assessments and to develop community fire protection action plans as required. Re-assessments are typically undertaken one to two years after the development of the initial community-specific action plan.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.4	Align firefighter training with community fire department assessment results.	Number of training courses delivered per year aligned with assessments, number of training offers	Ongoing	Met. The Department provides accredited and non-accredited (practical) fire training through a variety of delivery methods (e.g. face-to-face and on-line) using both NWT and College of the Rockies fire-training instructors. Accreditation by the College of the Rockies allows participants to hold national certification. Community governments request training from Basic Level (prevention based) up to a Professional level – National Fire Protection (NFPA 1001) depending on community assessments, available resources, needs and capacity. Councils are also provided with a Fire Protection Services Orientation presentation. MACA's School of Community Government has also recently introduced a Scene Safety and Security course, which provides training on the most basic defensive fire service. In 2017-18, the firefighter training courses based on community assessments were delivered to 146 fire fighters in eight communities.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.5	Develop a web-based fire training resource centre.	Completion of web-based resource centre	2017	Met. The web-based fire training resource centre is housed on MACA's departmental website. Materials and resources have been added to the resource centre including the new Scene Safety and Security course. New resources and information are added as they become available to ensure the site remains current and a useful resource to community governments.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.6	Continue development of tools and resources to support implementation of community action plans according to the level of service defined by each community.	Develop and maintain tools and resources available to support action plans	2015-2019	Partially met. In 2017-18, MACA completed the following tools and resources to support implementation of community action plans: • Participated in the development of the WSCC Firefighters Code of Practice; • community fire assessment and action planning tools; and • a standardized equipment guide. Initiatives currently underway in 2018-19 include: • standard operating procedures templates; • a community fire prevention resource centre;. • Fire protection training strategy; • Community fire protection bylaw and template; and • Property standards bylaw template and guide (combined with derelict building management strategy). The Community Fire Protection Plan was last updated December 2017.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
63.7	Update the *Fire Prevention Act* (mandate commitment 5.4.8).	Updated *Act* comes into force.	2019	Partially met. Information received from the 2017 public and stakeholder engagement effort was intended as a foundation upon which to build a second engagement process that will ask stakeholders and the public to consider and comment on potential legislative solutions to address identified issues in the *Fire Prevention Act (FPA)* and *Regulations.* A specific area of interest is the OFM's plan review function, which serves to verify compliance with adopted codes and standards. Stakeholders have indicated building code compliance requires a focused dialogue to help determine future changes to the *FPA* and *Regulations.* In 2018-19, MACA will re-engage residents, elected officials and stakeholders on how other jurisdictions in Canada manage code compliance, with a view to determining what approach is most suitable for the NWT; and how to effectively harmonize plan review with other related regulatory functions.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 69

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should work with community governments to provide the required supports, so that all communities have current emergency plans and receive training to implement these plans.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
69.1	Amend the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* and work with community governments to comply with the new legislation (mandate commitment 5.4.7).	Amended *CEMA Act* comes into force.	2018	Partially met. Bill 8 - *Emergency Management Act*, an act to repeal and replace the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* received first and second reading in the Legislative Assembly in March 2018. MACA is on track to bringing the Bill 8 - *Emergency Management Act* into force in 2018.
69.2	Implement a systematic annual review of all community emergency plans.	Completion and implementation of an annual review process; and progress towards updating emergency response plans.	2018	Met. A new plan review protocol was implemented winter 2017 to help community governments ensure emergency plans are maintained. Five community emergency plans have been updated since March 2017. Fifteen plans are currently up to date (i.e. validated in the past two years). MACA will continue to use the plan review protocol to work towards the review of all community emergency plans.

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Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
69.3	Implement online introductory emergency management training for municipal staff.	Completion of online training courses, number of participants	2017	Met. The online Introductory Emergency Management course is self-directed and available to all community government staff and volunteers. Since February 2018, when the online training was launched, fourteen students are enrolled or have completed training.
69.4	Monitor and evaluate community emergency planning and preparedness efforts.	Indicator in Accountability Framework (AF), reviewed annually	Complete	Met. The current and updated versions of MACA's Accountability Framework survey include indicators which monitor and evaluate community emergency planning and preparedness efforts.
69.5	Assess community training needs relative to emergency response and preparedness and develop a strategy for skills development.	Completion of training needs assessments, completion of a skills development strategy.	2018 – assess-ments 2019 - strategy	Partially met. MACA helps community governments develop and maintain community emergency response plans through workshops and table-top exercises. The feedback received from workshops and table-top exercises helps the department adapt materials in response to specific community needs. In 2018, the Department plans to undertake a general training needs assessment survey. The goal of the survey is to determine what instructional training and materials are necessary to ensure adequate community emergency response and preparedness.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 80

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should regularly review and modify (as required) the wording of the questions in the NWT Community Government Accountability Framework to ensure community governments can correctly answer them.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
80.1	Annually review all questions in the AF tool, based on stakeholder feedback and MACA analysis of prior year documentation.	Completion of report on stakeholder feedback	October 2017	Met. Between March and July 2017, MACA established internal working groups to conduct a comprehensive review of MACA's Accountability Framework (AF). The review incorporated the feedback received from stakeholders. The proposed updated AF was presented to the Local Government Administrators of NWT in October 2017 and to the NWT Association of Communities in February 2018. The updated AF, which will be rolled out in spring 2018, will include an enhanced comment / feedback function to allow community governments to provide feedback on an annual basis.
80.2	Develop and implement a project plan to update the AF.	Completion and implementation of project plan	Complete	Met. The project plan to update the AF was developed and plan implementation began in February 2017. The updated AF is scheduled to be released in spring 2018.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
80.3	Provide enhanced one-on-one support to community governments as they use the online AF Reporting Tool.	Number of community governments receiving one on one support, number of times support received	2017-2018	Not met. The updated AF will be launched in spring 2018. Regional staff will be actively involved in the launch of the new AF reporting tool. One-on-one support will be provided to those community governments who require support. MACA will also be offering a webinar to community governments on how to use the new AF reporting tool.
80.4	Evaluate data collected through the online AF Reporting Tool and consider a new or amended approach for 2018 process.	Identify trends and gaps in collected data; update process to collect data	2017-2018	Met. In collaboration with members of LGANT at their Annual General Meeting in October, MACA has determined a process and timeline for the roll out of the updated AF reporting and evaluation process in 2018 and future years.
80.5	Document all changes made to provide historical development continuum consistent with project plan objectives.	Develop tracking system using archived data and annual reports	Ongoing	Partially met. MACA is expanding its use of the GNWT's Digital Integrated Information Management System (DIIMS) to develop the tracking and archive process for the AF. DIIMS will be used to provide centralized data collection and to ensure the data needed to validate community governments' AF evaluations, such as annual reports and community bylaws, are easily accessible to all MACA staff.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 81

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should develop clear guidance for community government officials to complete and Department officials to assess the NWT Community Government Accountability Framework's performance indicator checklists. The guidance should explain the criteria for each question and provide community governments with clear guidance on how to respond appropriately to each question.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
81.1	Develop and implement a project plan to update the AF.	Completion and implementation of project plan	Complete	Met. The project plan to update the AF was developed and plan implementation began in February 2017. The updated AF is scheduled to be released in spring 2018.
81.2	Develop a handbook that includes an orientation to the tool, how it works, the intent of the tool, how responses are scored, and the follow up by MACA.	Completion of handbook, feedback from stakeholders	March 2017	Met. The updated handbook has been developed concurrently to the development of the updated questions. The handbook will be electronic and form part of the updated online AF reporting tool. The handbook includes information on why each indicator is important, how community governments will be rated, and the support and actions MACA will take in response to deficiencies.
81.3	Formalize the Department's process for delivery of the tool including calendar for implementation, information on tracking and validating, and guidelines for supporting community public reporting.	Completion of draft; Implementation fulfilled	Draft by Fall 2017, implement by Spring 2018	Partially met. MACA has determined a process and timeline for the roll out of the updated AF reporting and evaluation process in 2018 and future years. MACA is currently working on the updated data collection and validation processes for the AF in 2018 and future years.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 86

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should develop a strategy to verify the accuracy of information from community governments under the NWT Community Government Accountability Framework, in order to support meaningful engagement with community governments on required supports and foster accurate decision making about its department operations.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
86.1	Develop and implement a project plan to update the AF.	Completion of project plan	Complete	Met. The project plan to update the AF was developed and plan implementation began in February 2017. The updated AF is scheduled to be released in spring 2018.
86.2	Assess all questions to determine the weighting and criteria for assessing risk.	Completion of weighting and criteria system	March 2017	Met. The updated AF reporting tool is now more interactive and intuitive. Weighting of the questions is now achieved through branching and interdependencies of the questions, with the first questions for each indicator directly linked to statutory requirements and the level of risk involved.
86.3	Develop a handbook that includes an orientation to the tool, how it works, the intent of the tool, how responses are scored, and the follow up by MACA.	Completion of handbook, feedback from stakeholders	Complete January 2018	Met. The updated handbook has been developed concurrently to the development of the updated questions. The handbook will be electronic and form part of the updated online AF reporting tool. The handbook includes information on why each indicator is important, how community governments will be rated, and the support and actions MACA will take in response to deficiencies.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
86.4	Formalize the Department's process for delivery of the tool including calendar for implementation, information on tracking and validating, and guidelines for supporting community public reporting.	Completion of draft; Implementation fulfilled.	Draft by Fall 2017, implement by Spring 2018	Partially met. MACA has determined a process and timeline for the roll out of the updated AF reporting and evaluation process in 2018 and future years. MACA is currently working on the updated data collection and validation processes for the AF in 2018 and future years.

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OAG Recommendation Paragraph 95

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should identify standard performance information for essential services that could be required under its contribution agreements. It should also follow a risk-based approach to identifying those higher-risk communities for which more frequent information should be provided.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
95.1	Develop and implement a project plan to update the AF.	Completion of plan	Complete	Met. The project plan to update the AF was developed and plan implementation began in February 2017. The updated AF is scheduled to be released in spring 2018.
95.2	Create a process that will define risk based engagement with community governments.	Completion of process	January 2017	Met. Like the current AF reporting tool, the updated AF reporting tool helps identify where issues within community governments exist and when MACA may need to engage with, and provide additional support to, community governments. The updated AF reporting tool requires increased response by MACA in situations where health and safety or statutory requirements are not being met.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
95.3	Develop a protocol that defines MACA/INAC roles and responsibilities related to designated authorities to strengthen accountability.	Completion of defined roles and responsibilities	2017-2018	Not met. MACA and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) officials met in July 2017 and established a working group to clarify relationship between MACA, INAC and designated authorities. The development of a formal protocol or memorandum of understanding (MOU) is unlikely and was further complicated by the federal government's decision to divide INAC into two separate departments. Focus now is on increased communication and notification between MACA and Indigenous Services Canada when responding to designated authorities' roles, responsibilities and accountability.
95.4	Deliver workshops with community governments to validate new process and changes to contribution agreements.	Number of workshops offered per year, post workshop survey,	September 2017	Not met. The review of MACA's contribution agreements is underway. Engagement with community governments on the new agreements will occur in 2018-19. The timeline for this action item has been amended to 2018-19 to better align with the timelines for Action Items 95.6 and 95.7 shown below.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
95.5	Formalize the Department's process for delivery of the tool including calendar for implementation, information on tracking and validating, and guidelines for supporting community public reporting.	Completion of guidelines.	Draft by Fall 2017, implement by Spring 2018	Partially met. MACA has determined a process and timeline for the roll out of the updated AF reporting and evaluation process in 2018 and future years. MACA is currently working on the updated data collection and validation processes for the AF in 2018 and future years.
95.6	Amend contribution agreements to define core services, AF, and defined engagement processes.	Quarterly review of contribution agreements, number of updated CA templates	2019-2020	Partially met. The review of MACA's contribution agreements is underway.
95.7	Amend contribution agreements for designated authorities to define core services, and what the mechanism is for failure to perform.	Quarterly review of contribution agreements for designated authorities, number of updated CA templates	2019-2020	Partially met. The review of MACA's contribution agreements is underway.

Shaded grey = Action item met

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 99

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should review its monitoring mechanisms – notably contribution agreements and the NWT Community Government Accountability Framework – to determine how to use them more thoroughly to facilitate ongoing engagement with community governments. This would help provide community governments with required and timely support for essential services. The Department should also continue to develop tools aimed at identifying and collecting information critical for community government support.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
99.1	Develop and implement a project plan to update the AF.	Completion of project plan	Complete	Met. The project plan to update the AF was developed and plan implementation began in February 2017. The updated AF is scheduled to be released in spring 2018.
99.2	Create a community-specific engagement documentation process and tool for ongoing interaction with community governments. Documentation will include terms for escalation and risks, and roles and responsibilities.	Completion of engagement documentation process	Begin development in Spring 2017 with the intent of implementing in 2018, and including in 2018-2019 Funding Agreements.	Partially met. GNWT's Digital Integrated Information Management System (DIIMS) will be used to provide centralized data collection and to ensure the data needed to validate community governments' AF evaluations, such as annual reports and community bylaws, are easily accessible to all MACA staff. MACA will use the results of the AF validation process to create annual work plans for those community governments requiring additional support and training. MACA is also updating its contribution agreements to define core services, the AF and engagement processes between MACA and community governments. Engagement with community governments on the revised contribution agreements will begin in 2018-19.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
99.3	Work with NWTAC and LGANT, along with community governments on the development and implementation of engagement document as part of process to advance accountability.	Number of meetings with stakeholder; completion of engagement document	March 2017	Met. MACA, LGANT and NWTAC held a tri-party meeting in March 2017. Further engagement occurred with LGANT and NWTAC at the LGANT annual general meeting (AGM) in October 2017 and the NWTAC AGM in February 2018. Engagement with the Band Managers from the designated authority communities also took place in October 2017. Documentation on engagement with community governments has been incorporated into the updated AF handbook.
99.4	Amend Contribution Agreements.	Number of amended contribution agreements	2019-2020	Partially met. The review of MACA's contribution agreements is underway. Engagement with community governments on the new agreements will occur in 2018-19.

Shaded grey = Action item met

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 109

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' contribution agreements with designated authorities should include provisions related to the delivery of essential services it funds, to allow it to collect required performance information and take corrective action when essential services are at risk.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
109.1	Work with DAAIR on the implementation of the Aboriginal Engagement Strategy.	Completion of TOR for implementation of strategy; Strategy is implemented	Spring 2017	Partially met. MACA has worked closely with the GNWT's Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs (EIA) to ensure its actions taken are in line with the GNWT's Aboriginal Engagement Strategy. MACA will continue to work with EIA on negotiation of bilateral agreements and other engagement with Indigenous governments including s.35 consultation related to land use plans, community boundary changes, and community infrastructure development.
109.2	Develop and implement an engagement strategy designed to ensure that various stakeholders understand the Department's amended approach to dealing with issues related to DA communities.	Completion of engagement strategy; implementation of strategy	Spring 2017	Met. MACA, LGANT and NWTAC held a tri-party meeting in March 2017. Further engagement occurred with LGANT and NWTAC at the LGANT annual general meeting (AGM) in October 2017 and the NWTAC AGM in February 2018. Engagement with the Band Managers from the designated authority communities also took place in October 2017. Documentation on engagement with community governments has been incorporated into the updated AF handbook.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
109.3	Develop a protocol that defines MACA/INAC roles and responsibilities related to designated authorities to strengthen accountability.	Completion of protocol	2017-2018	Not met. MACA and INAC officials met in July 2017 and established a working group to clarify relationship between MACA, INAC and designated authorities. The development of a formal protocol or MOU is unlikely and was further complicated by the decision to divide INAC into two separate departments. Focus now is on increased communication and notification between MACA and INAC when responding to designated authorities' roles, responsibilities and accountability.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
109.4	Develop workshops and training (with INAC & DAAIR) that better explain INAC's role, MACA's role and the various functions that each support the band to do and how those relationships are established, defined and carried out.	Completion of workshops; Number of workshops per year; post-satisfaction survey of workshop	2017-2018 delivery	Met. MACA and INAC held three meetings in 2017 to develop six First Nations council training modules to assist designated authorities with the delivery of municipal-type programs and services. The training was introduced to First Nations band managers at the LGANT AGM in October 2017. Two Train the Trainer workshops on First Nations Governance were held in November 2017 and March 2018, with a total of twenty-eight participants for both workshops. Successful pilot training events were also delivered in Fort McPherson and Tulita during 2017. In 2018-19, workshops are being planned for Jean Marie River and Fort Providence. The six First Nation governance training modules are also available through MACA's online training portal. elearning-sofcg.org

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
109.5	Work with INAC to develop a version of the Accountability Framework tailored to all NWT First Nations serving as designated authorities.	Completion of AF version for designated authorities	2018-2019	Met. The updated AF reporting tool includes separate reporting streams for community governments (established under territorial legislation) and designated authority communities. The reporting for designated authorities is tied to the First Nations responsibilities and obligations under the amended contribution agreements. MACA has also engaged with Indigenous Services Canada on First Nation accountability. Indigenous Services has a tool for First Nations accountability reporting which focuses on effective governance practices, financial matters and safety while MACA's Accountability Framework focuses more on the function of community government programs and services.
109.6	Amend contribution agreements for designated authorities to define core services, and what the mechanism is for failure to perform.	Contribution agreements amended	2019-2020	Partially met. The review of MACA's contribution agreements is underway. Engagement with community governments on the new agreements will occur in 2018-19.

Shaded grey = Action item met

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 112

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should consult with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to determine how the two organizations could work more effectively together to strengthen community governance in designated authority communities.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
112.1	Develop workshops and training (with INAC & DAAIR) that better explains INAC's role, MACA's role and the various functions that we support the band to do and how those relationships are established, defined and carried out.	Completion of workshops, number of training events per year; post-satisfaction survey of workshop	2017-2018	Met. MACA and INAC held three meetings in 2017 to develop six First Nations council training modules to assist designated authorities with the delivery of municipal-type programs and services. The training was introduced to First Nations band managers at the LGANT AGM in October 2017. Two Train the Trainer workshops on First Nations Governance were held in November 2017 and March 2018, with a total of twenty-eight participants for both workshops. Successful pilot training events were delivered in Fort McPherson and Tulita during 2017. In 2018-19, workshops are being planned for Jean Marie River and Fort Providence. The six First Nation governance training modules are also available through MACA's online training portal: elearning-sofcg.org

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
112.2	Develop a protocol that defines MACA/INAC roles and responsibilities related to designated authorities to strengthen accountability.	Completion of protocol	2017-2018	Not met. MACA and INAC officials met in July 2017 and established a working group to clarify relationship between MACA, INAC and designated authorities. The development of a formal protocol or MOU is unlikely and was further complicated by the decision to divide INAC into two separate departments. Focus now is on increased communication and notification between MACA and INAC when responding to designated authorities' roles, responsibilities and accountability.
112.3	Work with INAC to develop a long term strategy on capacity building for community governments.	TOR with INAC on development of strategy; Completion of strategy;	2018-2019	Partially met. MACA has submitted two capacity building proposals for 2015-2017 and 2017-2018 to INAC. Both proposals were approved and capacity building training was delivered. A longer-term agreement between MACA and INAC has been discussed but not finalized in part due to limitations within INAC's funding policies.

Shaded grey = Action item met

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 128

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should formally assess how it identifies training needs for community governments, as well as the suite of training offered, to ensure that it continues to help community governments meet their needs and develop the required capacity to delivery essential services.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
128.1	Conduct alternate year surveys with community governments to assess and determine their priority training needs (mandate commitment 2.3.2).	Develop plan outlining schedule for community government surveys; completion of training needs assessments	Spring 2017	Met. Survey was conducted in 2017 and results have been distributed to community governments. Surveys will continue to be conducted every second year. Recommendations received through the surveys will be reviewed and incorporated into the School of Community Government's training plan.
128.2	Work with the Public Sector Capacity Building Steering Committee to implement improvements to the ALGAP program.	Meeting scheduled with implementation improvements on agenda; review progress quarterly	2017-2018	Met. Through its work with the Public Sector Capacity Building Steering Committee, MACA has completed improvements to the Advancing Local Government Administrators Program (ALGAP). Improvements include an online training program, development of new practical activities in core areas, one-on-one coaching, and a new recognition program.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
128.3	Work with program advisory committees, partners and clients to review/confirm the content within School of Community Government programs is aligned with capacity needs of community governments and amend content as required.	Develop TOR for PAC, partners, and clients; review database evaluation responses to determine alignment is required	March 2019	Partially met. Program Advisory Committees (PACs) are now in place for ten of the twelve program areas. MACA is currently establishing PACs for the two remaining program areas, with implementation planned for June 2018. Eight of the Committees held meetings in 2017-18. All twelve PACs will be hosting meetings in 2018-19. The Committees meet a minimum of once annually, and work under established Terms of Reference. Recommendations put forward by the Committees are incorporated into the training programs.
128.4	The SCG will provide training and curriculum to a variety of distributed learning methods to ensure courses are accessible, available and affordable.	Number of training events by year, by type of delivery and by cost for participant and cost for department	March 2019	Met. The Department completed its online eLearning portal in January 2018 at a cost of $75,000. Since its completion, thirty-eight online training curriculum and training opportunities have been provided. The types of eLearning deliveries offered are self-directed, instructor-led, and narrator/facilitator led. There is no cost to participants for online self-directed courses. Online instructor-led or classroom delivery cost is $50 per day to a maximum of $300. Instructor fees for traditional classroom deliveries vary from zero when delivered by GNWT staff members to $1,000 a day when delivered by professional institutions or contractors.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
128.5	Implement a process to review student and instructor feedback on whether training provided is meeting the needs to deliver essential services.	Completion of process to collect and review student and instructor feedback;	March 2019	Met. MACA has revised its program evaluation process. The evaluation process includes satisfaction levels, performance improvement, and training impact. All longitudinal evaluation and course assessment tools have been revised. MACA's School of Community Government now holding annual meetings to review and discuss broad recommendations regarding the School of Community Government's program delivery. Recent implemented changes include online program delivery, program redesign (in recreation, management, finance), and the addition of new curriculum (e.g. Climate Change Energy Management).

Shaded grey = Action item met

OAG Recommendation Paragraph 129

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should explore the use of distance education and partnership opportunities with educational institutions and other organizations as appropriate, to maximize the delivery of its programming.

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
129.1	Meet with INAC officials to investigate the potential for cost shared training in areas of shared responsibilities.	Meetings scheduled with INAC to identify cost shared training	May 2017	Met. MACA and INAC held three meetings in 2017 to develop six First Nations council training modules to assist designated authorities with the delivery of municipal-type programs and services. Successful pilot training events were delivered in Fort McPherson and Tulita in 2017. The total cost of training ($150,000) was provided by INAC. The six training modules are also available through MACA's online training portal.
129.2	Transition SCG programs to diversified delivery, including online options (mandate commitment 2.3.2).	Number of online options, number of face to face, number of workshops, trend of type year by year	Spring 2017 and ongoing	Met. MACA completed its online eLearning portal in January 2018. Since completion, thirty-eight online eLearning opportunities have been added including eighteen eLearning modules, six Moodle courses, and fourteen webinars. Sixty-three traditional classroom deliveries were also hosted.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
129.3	Host meetings with stakeholder and partner organizations to reconfirm or negotiate ongoing relationships.	Number of meetings with stakeholder, Satisfaction survey	March 2018	Met. In 2017-18, MACA held three meetings with INAC to discuss and develop First Nations governance training opportunities. MACA also met with INF officials on Airport Maintenance and Management Training redesign and ongoing financial support. MACA also held three tri party meetings with NWTAC and LGANT. Meetings were also coordinated with Royal Roads University for online delivery and co-certification and the College of the Rockies for fire and recreation training. In 2017-18, MACA conducted a training needs assessment survey with all thirty-three community governments.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
129.4	Collaborate with relevant and educational institutions and negotiate educational or training agreements with the Department.	Number of agreements with education institutions	March 2018	Met. In 2017-18, MACA reconfirmed or negotiated the following training partnerships: • INAC approved MACA's training proposal for 2017-18. A new proposal is currently being negotiated for 2018-19. • An extension to the agreement between MACA and INF on the Airport Training program. • NWTAC, LGANT and MACA tri party meetings were hosted. Tri party meetings continue to be held at a minimum of two times annually. A joint work planning meeting is being scheduled in spring 2018 to agree on an action plan. • Royal Roads University agreement continues to 2019-20 and includes hosting of the eLearning Moodle site, designing online curriculum, co-certification, articulated agreements and deliveries. • College of Rockies agreement carries into 2018-19 and provides firefighting course instruction and national fire certification.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Priority	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Progress / Status
129.5	Work with program advisory committees, partners and clients to review/confirm the content within School of Community Government (SCG) programs and implement recommendations.	Develop TOR for PAC, partners, and clients; review database evaluation responses; Implement PAC recommendations	March 2019	Partially met. Program Advisory Committees (PACs) are now in place for ten of the twelve program areas. MACA is currently establishing PACs for the two remaining program areas, with implementation planned for June 2018. Eight of the Committees held meetings in 2017-18. All twelve PACs will be hosting meetings in 2018-19. The Committees meet a minimum of once annually, and work under an established Terms of Reference. Recommendations put forward by the Committees are incorporated into the training programs.

Shaded grey = Action item met

Summary / Next Steps

MACA has made significant progress towards achieving the priority action items identified in the *Action Plan for Improving Support to Community Governments in the NWT*. With the implementation of the *Action* Plan, the Department has taken steps to improve its support in mitigating the risks facing community governments in the areas of drinking water management, waste management, emergency preparedness planning, and fire protection. Additionally, MACA continues to improve the tools used to monitor community governments. Most notably, the NWT Community Government Accountability Framework has undergone a comprehensive review and update during the reporting period. The report also illustrates MACA's progress towards increasing community government capacity through the enhanced programming and resources available through the Department's School of Community Government.

As the proceeding report outlines, MACA has met more than half of the priority action items since the Office of the Auditor General of Canada released its report in October 2016. Many of the action items that have received a rated of 'met' will require continued implementation and as such will now form part of MACA's core support programs for the essential services provided by NWT community governments. MACA remains committed to moving forward with implementation of the Action Plan and to improving the support it provides to community governments.

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