



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

December 8, 2016

### **Auditor General reports on progress since Missing Women Commission**

VICTORIA – The Office of the Auditor General of B.C. released a report following up on the recommendations made by the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry (MWCI) in 2012.

The report focuses on the provincial government's progress in response to 21 of the MWCI's original 63 recommendations, plus the two urgent measures.

Government has achieved important results in some areas. For example, it established a compensation fund for the children of missing women, enacted the new *Missing Persons Act*, and provides ongoing funding to WISH, an organization that provides services to women involved in sex work.

Other actions are still underway, like improving transportation along Highway 16 and developing provincial standards for bias-free policing.

The report says government hasn't implemented ongoing support for family members of those who are missing, and those who are looking to heal from the loss of a family member. Government also has not developed a provincial protocol to help women involved in sex work, who have an outstanding warrant, feel more comfortable reporting violence.

The report makes only one recommendation: that government resume reporting publicly on its progress, as it stopped doing so in 2014. "Because so many families and communities are affected by these tragedies, we feel that government still needs to share its progress with the public," said Bellringer.

The report also mentions four areas that have impacted government's progress on the recommendations: funding, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and the lack of a champion to drive change. For example, the lack of public reporting made it more difficult for stakeholders to work together to implement the recommendations. Other obstacles, like a lack of sustainable funding for certain programs, have also stalled improvements.

The MWCI, established in 2010 and led by former Attorney General Wally Oppal, looked at the police investigations into 67 women who disappeared from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, and the decision to stay proceedings on the 1998 attempted murder charges against Robert Pickton. The MWCI released its final report, *Forsaken*, in 2012. The report contained 63 recommendations and two urgent measures to address issues like support for families of victims, improving transportation and policing, and more.



OFFICE OF THE  
**Auditor General**  
of British Columbia

The full report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website ([www.bcauditor.com/pubs](http://www.bcauditor.com/pubs)). Auditor General Carol Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a news conference.

News Conference Date: Thursday, December 8, 2016

Time: 11:00 a.m. (Pacific time)

Dial-in Information:

From Vancouver: 604 681-0260

From elsewhere in Canada and the USA: 1 877 353-9184

Participant Pass Code: 44848#

During question and answer period, to ask a question: Press 01

During question and answer period, to exit the question queue: Press #

**About the Office of the Auditor General of BC**

The Auditor General is a non-partisan, independent Officer of the Legislature who reports directly to the Legislative Assembly. The *Auditor General Act* empowers the Auditor General and staff to conduct audits, report findings and make recommendations.

Contact us:

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For general questions, call Colleen Rose, Manager, Communications: 250-419-6207

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