Interim Reporting Practices and Legislative Oversight

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Key Messages

- Useful, timely interim reporting is necessary for effective legislative oversight.

- Institutional structure, including procedures and conventions, determine whether and how legislatures use interim reports.
Context

- OECD’s Best Practices for Budget Transparency
  - Guidance for the *Executive* Branch.

- Currently limited advice for users of interim reports
  - How can legislatures use interim financial reports to support oversight?

- Acute need given recent stimulus and planned fiscal consolidation.
"How frequently does the Executive publish interim financial reports?"
Timeliness of Interim Reports

“How much time elapses between the end of the reporting period and publication?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than 3 weeks</th>
<th>3 to 5 Weeks</th>
<th>More than 5 weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Granularity of Reporting

“At what level is expenditure information presented?”

- Aggregate: 6 respondents
- Ministry: 8 respondents
- Program Level: 9 respondents
Presentation of Comparative Information

“Do the reports show a comparison between actual and planned expenditure?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aggregate</th>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>Program Level</th>
<th>No Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7

7
Legislative Impact

“How are interim financial reports used by legislatures?”

- Ad Hoc Legislative Use: 12 respondents
- Legislative Review: 8 respondents
- Resource Allocation: 5 respondents
Fiscal Stimulus Reporting

“If fiscal stimulus measures have been undertaken recently, are there additional requirements on interim reporting”
A Canadian Case Study

Search Page

The IMD is a searchable database of the public money Parliament has approved for spending.

Every three months it indicates how much of the public money the Government of Canada has spent.

There are two ways to search the database:

- The first tab provides year-to-date information by Parliamentary authority and amount expended.
- The second tab provides detailed information that identifies when Parliament provided authority for the spending.

Search Database

View All Departments

Select Dept

Select Vote

Select Year

Search Database

Compare to previous year (select year)
# Functionality

## Search Database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Agency</th>
<th>Authorities $000s</th>
<th>Reported Spending $000s</th>
<th>% of Total Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Expenditures</td>
<td>17,056,523</td>
<td>10,924,161</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating expenditures</td>
<td>15,692,135</td>
<td>10,095,297</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions to employee benefits plans</td>
<td>362,593</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions to employee benefits plans - military</td>
<td>1,001,715</td>
<td>828,864</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister - Salary and motor car allowance</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act</td>
<td>5,459</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenditures</td>
<td>5,311,109</td>
<td>2,231,644</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

- Good practices for analysis of monthly financial information by legislative budget offices

- Good practices for scrutiny of interim reports by legislatures.