

## **ROLE 5: ASSIST ELECTED OFFICIALS OR CITIZENS**

### ***Practice 5b. Report performance: Produce and issue external periodic performance reports.***

**Portland, Oregon, City Auditor** ([www.portlandonline.com/auditor](http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor)): Since 1992 (initially for City Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1991), the City Auditor's Office has published thirteen annual performance reports on city services under the title *Service Efforts and Accomplishments* (SEA). The November 2003 SEA report, for City Fiscal Year 2002-03 covers nine large City bureaus (departments) which provide the following services: Fire and Rescue, Police, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Environmental Services, Water, Planning and Development Review, Housing and Community Development, and Planning. These services involve 76 percent of the City's budget and 83 percent of its staff. The stated purposes of the SEA Report are to improve the public accountability of City government; assist council, management, and citizens in making decisions; and help improve the delivery of public services. The report contains information on City government and Bureau goals, program results and performance trends, and spending and staffing levels. To put the information in context for readers, the SEA Reports provide four types of comparisons (not all are done for every measure):

- Comparisons of results for major city geographic districts: eight districts in 2002, with boundaries similar to those of the City's "district coalitions" for neighborhood involvement.
- Historical trends; in 2003, both 5- and 10-year trends were reported.
- Actual performance against targets and established standards.
- Portland's performance compared with that of six similar cities: Charlotte, Cincinnati, Denver, Kansas City, Sacramento and Seattle. These cities, used for comparison each year, have similar populations, service area densities, and costs of living to Portland.

The SEA Report includes data from the annual citizen survey conducted by the City Auditor's Office (see 3a). The geographic comparisons feature maps showing results for each of the eight districts for many performance measures, especially for measures of citizen satisfaction and perceptions. Recent SEA reports through 2002-03 include a summary in the front with significant performance trends for overall service results, spending and staffing, citizen satisfaction, and selected specific measures with positive and negative results considered of particular importance or concern, for public safety, "livability ratings," housing and development, water quality (drinking as well as rivers and streams), water rates, and the physical condition of City's street system. The Introduction section in the full report describes the report's scope and methodology, limitations, and relationship to the annual budget. Appendices describe the citizen survey methodology in greater detail, and provide more detailed data from the citizen survey and City bureaus including historical data that sometimes goes back over ten years, and contextual information on the comparison cities (e.g., population and density, per capita budget of major services, monthly water bill, size of elements of their infrastructure such as miles of streets and sewers). The 2002-03 report also included the 2003 Business Survey in Appendix B. For the 2001-02 SEA Report, the City Auditor's Office used a total of 1,526 staff-hours, including citizen survey administration, intercity data collection, report writing, preparation, and distribution.

The City Auditor's Office has been working with City bureaus and the Office of Management and Finance to ensure that SEA performance measures are aligned with measures to be used in the City budget process as part of the new managing for results process (see 4a and b). The 2002-03 SEA provides an early example of the new alignment, as it is the first SEA report to organize the presentation of chapters and performance results by major City Council and bureau goals. The City Auditor's Office also intends to work on ensuring SEA Reports meet the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB's) recently-issued "suggested criteria" for communicating performance information.

*Service Efforts and Accomplishments 2002-03*, November 2003, as well as previous years' *Service Efforts and Accomplishments* reports are available from as "publications" from the City Auditor's website ([www.portlandonline.com/auditor](http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor)) or as "audit reports" from the Audit Services Division home page ([www.portlandonline.com/auditor/auditservices](http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/auditservices)). Summaries of a number of recent years' SEA Reports (through 2001-02) are also available from these websites.