

INTRODUCTION

The 2001-02 Estimates set out details of the operating and capital spending requirements of ministries for the year commencing April 1, 2001 and constitute the Government's formal request to the Legislature for approval of the expenditures involved. Once approved by the Legislature in the Supply Act, the Estimates become the legal spending authority for each ministry.

The services or Programs which ministries are responsible for delivering are each identified by a unique vote number within the Estimates. Votes in turn are sub-divided into items or activities in order to distinguish between their different functions. This program/activity structure permits the Legislature to be more specific in appropriating funds to particular services. Within each activity, expenditures are shown by standard account, i.e. salaries and wages, employee benefits, transportation and communication, services, transfer payments etc. (see explanatory notes on page vi).

For comparative purposes, Estimates and Actual amounts for prior years are provided on program summary and activity summary pages. These amounts are restated to provided comparability where functional reorganizations and transfers, Supplementary Estimates or accounting changes have occurred.

A reconciliation statement is shown on each Ministry's program summary page to relate previously published Estimates and Public Accounts actuals to any restated amounts.

Where it is necessary to seek the Legislature's approval for additional expenditures after the tabling of the Main Estimates, Supplementary Estimates may be tabled.

Reconciliation of Estimates Expenditure to Budget Expenditure

The 2001-02 Budget has been prepared on the accrual and consolidation basis. To facilitate linking the Estimates, which are prepared on the modified cash basis, to the Budget, reconciliations which identify the major differences between the Estimates expenditure and Budget expenditure have been included for each ministry.

Under accrual accounting, expenses are included when goods and services are delivered, rather than when payment is made, which may occur in a different period. Other adjustments and provisions are made for items such as loan losses and severance costs, based on an estimate of potential future outlays. Under modified cash accounting, these are only recorded when a loan is forgiven or there is a cash impact.

Under consolidation accounting, the total expenses incurred by government agencies are reported, rather than just the portion funded by government (i.e. through transfer payments). The activities of government service organizations are included in government expenses, whereas the activities of government enterprises are not included in expenses, but instead are part of "Net Income from Government Enterprises", which is reported as a revenue item.