2019–2022

Strategic Plan

Office of the State Auditor
Suzanne M. Bump

A Note from Auditor Bump

Together we have come a long way over the last eight years. In that time, this office has become a national leader that is on the cutting edge of government accountability. Through our work we have helped to not only save taxpayer dollars, but more importantly have made government work better.

Over the last few months I have asked you to be a part of the important discussions that will shape the future of the OSA. We often ask agencies to do some self-reflection, to identify where they are thriving and where they can work better, and throughout our discussions I've asked you to do the same.

It is my great privilege to bring to you the product of these discussions, the latest iteration of the strategic plan for the Office of the State Auditor. Despite our past successes, this plan is not a victory lap, nor is it a road map. It is a challenge to each and every one of us. It lays out the structural elements of our agency's future and establishes benchmarks by which we will measure success.

This plan envisions a vital role for all OSA employees. It recognizes that each employee and business unit—whether you conduct audits, investigations, or studies, or help to support those that do—has a stake in our success and assists to make it a reality. As you read through these pages, I ask you to consider your role in that success.

W.E.B. Du Bois famously said,

"The most important thing to remember is this: to be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become."

Much has changed in our agency in recent years, from the way we do our work to the skills that staff bring to the job. As we begin the process of making this plan a reality, I hope you will keep Du Bois's words in mind and embrace the challenges and opportunities that will inevitably come our way.

Strategic Framework for this Plan

Mission

The Office of the State Auditor's mission is to make government work better. By applying cutting-edge technology and sophisticated analysis, we conduct rigorous investigations and assess the performance of state programs and spending to provide actionable recommendations for improvement.

Vision

The State Auditor's vision integrates technology, sophisticated methodology, and professional best practices to make government work better. The OSA is the employer of choice for accountability professionals, where tomorrow's leaders are mentored in an environment that fosters innovation and creativity. This high standard of professionalism ensures that the OSA will continue to provide highly effective oversight on behalf of the citizens of Massachusetts.

Core Values

Organizational values
- Adherence to statute and the highest professional standards of accountability, efficiency, and transparency results in effective oversight and problem-solving
- OSA holds itself to the same high standards as it demands of other recipients of state funds
- OSA avoids complacency by emphasizing continuous improvement and innovation, challenging OSA to lead in government accountability, crafting solutions to big problems

People values
- OSA recognizes the honor and responsibility of public service
- OSA recognizes that workforce diversity broadens perspectives and improves outcomes
- Employees are treated with respect; collaboration and creativity are encouraged; skills development, career advancement and retention are priorities

OSA develops leaders by welcoming new perspectives and challenges to the status quo.

Strategic Goals

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences

Audit Division
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units
- Reduce the number of person-days spent on each phase of an audit
- Develop and provide effective, targeted staff training sessions
- Ensure effective collaboration between BSI and Audit Operations
- Utilize data analytics and cognitive technology to improve efficiency across all units
- Provide high-quality editing support to all units

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders
- Expand staff diversity at all levels
- Encourage professional development via Career Path program participation, conferences, mentoring, management training, and peer-to-peer sharing
- Use periodic employee surveys to effect improvements in operations and staff morale
- Support effective manager communication of OSA values, goals, and leadership opportunities

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions
- Engage all staff resources (data analytics, audit planning, audit directors/managers and quality assurance) to map out meaningful audit objectives
- Develop actionable recommendations and monitor their implementation by auditees
- Assess performance audit outcomes and ROI as appropriate

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve
- Improve data analytics by identifying and utilizing new software for audit purposes, using more structured analytical processes such as cross matching, "big data" analysis, and fraud identification and mapping
- Automate internal processes (e.g., using SharePoint)
- Provide ongoing training and support in new technologies

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences
- Solicit input and share information via workgroups, as well as regional staff and director/manager meetings
- Provide mentoring, coaching, and on-the-job training
- Meet during every audit to identify issues, develop strategies, and resolve problems promptly
- Confer with the Legislature on audits that have policy implications

Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI) KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units
- Pair junior and senior investigators to ensure mentoring and consistency
- Track referrals from intake to disposition, assessing accomplishments and aligning with national best practices

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders
- Create and implement a career path plan, identifying clear objectives for promotion and advancement
- Assign mentors for all new fraud examiners
- Ensure that all BSI staff, with a particular emphasis on BSI's newer staff members, attend relevant and substantive professional development trainings

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions
- Prioritize for prosecution those cases that represent the most egregious abuses
- Enter into agreements for special ADA status to ensure cases are efficiently and professionally referred for prosecution
- Expand opportunities for collaboration with all levels of law enforcement

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve
- Ensure that all staff are trained on software
- Ensure full utilization of cutting-edge technology to improve efficiencies and analytical capabilities, and establish systems and protocols to ensure that, where explicable and appropriate, data analytics will inform the work

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences
- Establish meeting protocols with stakeholder agencies to improve communications and knowledge sharing

Division of
Local Mandates (DLM) KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units

- Conduct DLM trainings across all OSA units to deepen understanding of DLM's mission

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders

- Establish a professional development plan to ensure that staff reach their professional potential and to ensure that staff are trained on national best practices in relevant areas, including research, statistical and data analysis, and municipal issues

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions

- Prioritize municipal impact reports that address substantial financial issues in city and town finances
- Deepen relationships with municipal research and service providers (the Collins Center, Boston Municipal Research Bureau, etc.)
- Collaborate with members of the Legislature to achieve impact

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve

- Track projects on SharePoint, Checkbox, or the Public Drive to ensure transparency and ready access

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences

- Collaborate on interdepartmental projects, providing DLM's specialized expertise
- Contribute opinion pieces to constituents' media outlets

Information Technology (IT) KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units
- Identify and develop IT staff as subject matter experts for specific tools and software to decrease the need for consultants
- Broaden staff access to agency tools

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders
- Deepen IT staff engagement by increasing training opportunities
- Enhance leadership abilities of IT supervisory staff through targeted leadership development courses and training
- Provide opportunities for staff advancement within IT

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions
- Ensure all IT initiatives enhance the work of all units

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve
- Maintain a secure and modern computing environment
- Work with OSA departments to determine and recommend technology upgrades and solutions
- Ensure that OSA strategy aligns with EOTSS initiatives, when appropriate

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences
- Provide technical support and services that facilitate overhaul of the OSA Insider

Human Resources KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units

- Strive for 100% accuracy in payroll each pay period by utilizing reports and dashboards

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders

- Deepen OSA staff understanding of and commitment to workforce diversity to achieve an annual diversity increase
- Strengthen recruitment of supervisory and management personnel
- Work with other units to create succession plans

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions

- Launch a dashboard reporting on personnel metrics, including employee 90-day onboarding and exit surveys, employee count, diversity report, and other metrics
- Explore alternative conflict resolution methods in order to support a harmonious work environment

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve

- Collaborate on successful procurement of a new performance evaluation tool

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences

- Institute a newsletter feature to enhance understanding of employee policies and benefits
- Enhance staff engagement by meeting in regional offices

Communications KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units

- Provide informational events ("brown bag lunches") with internal and external experts
- Update and distribute agency-wide OSA branding templates, collateral materials, and informational toolkits
- Develop and execute presentation opportunities and training for OSA thought leaders

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders

- Expand careers page on OSA website to reflect OSA standards and values
- Facilitate internal communications initiatives, including for a new performance review tool/process
- Engage new OSA voices in the newsletter and other vehicles

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions

- Expand internal acknowledgement of post-audit reports
- Develop opportunities for OSA staff to engage with outside experts
- Establish OSA as a government thought leader on data analytics and other initiatives

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve

- Upgrade OSA Insider and determine if there is demand for additional cross-unit internal communication tools
- Analyze social media metrics to inform next steps
- Initiate new media platforms, such as podcasts and videos

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences

- Redesign external and internal newsletters: update content strategy and create mobile-friendly layout
- Engage OSA staff for "editorial board"–style input
- Identify tools to reach the 30% who don't read Audits & Plaudits

Legal KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units
- Facilitate programs to ensure that all staff are trained on topics that affect OSA's mission
- Maintain effective working relationships with Executive, Judiciary, and Legislative branch legal departments
- Collaborate with all units to ensure their timely outreach when legal issues arise

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders
- Develop and maintain expertise in the areas of the law that affect employees' work and OSA's mission
- Ensure that OSA staff are trained on all relevant and necessary policies to ensure an ethical and safe workplace for all

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions
- Establish protocols to efficiently and effectively assist audit staff with data acquisition

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve
- Ensure efficient and effective communication between Legal and Audit: upload all existing and new OSA data agreements into the metadata management system (MDM)

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences
- Ensure that legal information and resources are communicated and shared throughout all business units as efficiently and clearly as possible
- Supplement training protocols with informal "brown bag lunches" to break down barriers between OSA Legal and non-Legal staff

Operations & Finance KPIs

Ensure that resources are effectively allocated and utilized across all units
- Revamp inventory processes to ensure effective and efficient use of equipment and tools and minimize on-hand surplus
- Offer cross training to deepen skills of staff and broaden agency resources

Be an employer of choice, prioritize diversity, develop leaders
- Collaborate to create career development plans and training for Operations staff to expand opportunities and demonstrate OSA's commitment to the Operations workforce
- Create development plans for key staff as part of Administration and Finance succession planning

Address important issues of service delivery and government accountability and identify solutions
- Ensure that all staff understand the value and work of Operations staff by incorporating presentations into new-employee orientation
- Ensure that all OSA financial processes are applicable, defined, and documented and reflect agency resources and goals

Use technology to stay ahead of the curve
- Actively participate in the procurement process for a new performance evaluation tool
- Ensure that staff with financial processing tasks attend trainings to enhance skill levels
- Keep informed of the accounting and reporting system (MMARS) replacement process so that staff trainings and current internal processes are updated appropriately

Enhance communication with internal and external audiences
- Use the Insider and Audit & Plaudits as the primary platforms to share operations information and increase informational postings
- Strive for rapid response regarding regional offices' building issues so that reports are resolved promptly
- Use available technology to keep senior leadership informed of the agency's financial status; upgrade budget dashboard

Locations

Boston

State House
Room 230
617.727.2075

1 Ashburton Place
Room 1819
617.727.6200

1 Winter St.
9th Floor
617.727.0025

BSI
1 Ashburton Place
Room 1103
617.727.8638

DLM
1 Winter St.
9th Floor
617.727.0980

Chicopee
521 East St.
413.784.1080

Marlborough
65 Boston Post Rd., West
Suite 300
508.460.8902

Brockton
500 Belmont St.
Suite 230
617.727.6296