

2018

Performance Report



sama

SASKATCHEWAN ASSESSMENT
MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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Agency Profile

Governing Legislation: Established by *The Assessment Management Agency Act* in 1987 to manage Saskatchewan's property assessment system for the Province, municipalities and the education sector.

Corporate Structure: Corporation with Board of Directors appointed by Order in Council.

Services Provided to the Province: Property assessment research and policy development, central database of assessment information, assessment information for programs administered by the provincial government, and assessment quality assurance.

Services Provided to Client Municipalities and the Education Sector: Property assessment valuation services – annual maintenance property inspections, targeted property reinspections, revaluations every four years, support of value (management of property assessment appeals) and public education.

Accountable to: Minister of Government Relations, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, client municipalities, the education sector and the public.

Annual operating budget: \$20.297 million for fiscal year ending December 31, 2018.

Permanent staff: 156.25 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's).

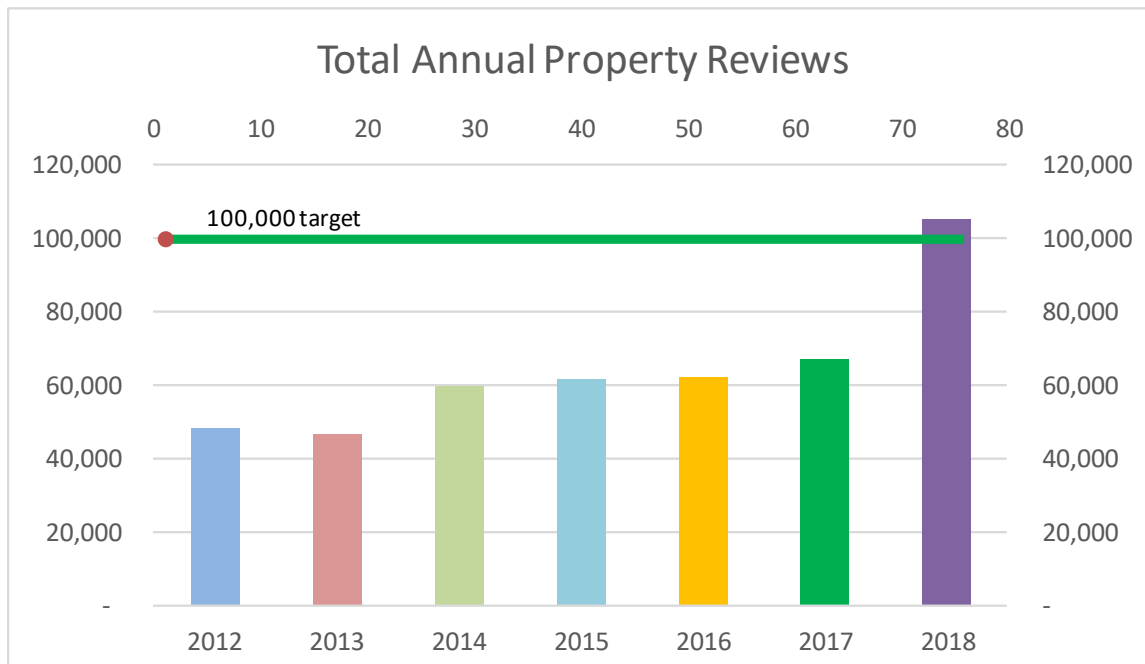
Client Municipalities and Property Counts

*includes 2018 addition of Battleford, Meadow Lake, Nipawin and North Battleford

	Urban	Rural	Total	Change from 2017	
	Municipalities	Municipalities		Accounts	%
No. of Client Municipalities	469	296	765		
No. of Land Accounts:					
Agricultural Land - Arable	1,891	313,281	315,172	-100	0.0%
Agricultural Land - Non-Arable	1,121	118,870	119,991	546	0.5%
Agricultural Land - Improved	177	44,223	44,400	707	1.6%
Residential - Improved	142,721	19,122	161,843	10,288	6.8%
Residential - Vacant	30,895	16,772	47,667	1,405	3.0%
Seasonal - Improved	10,016	12,251	22,267	-334	-1.5%
Seasonal - Vacant	3,215	6,679	9,894	-360	-3.5%
Commercial & Industrial	32,773	14,889	47,662	2,218	4.9%
Resource Property	343	93,666	94,009	2,312	2.5%
Total Land Accounts	223,152	639,753	862,905	16,682	1.97%

Reaching New Levels

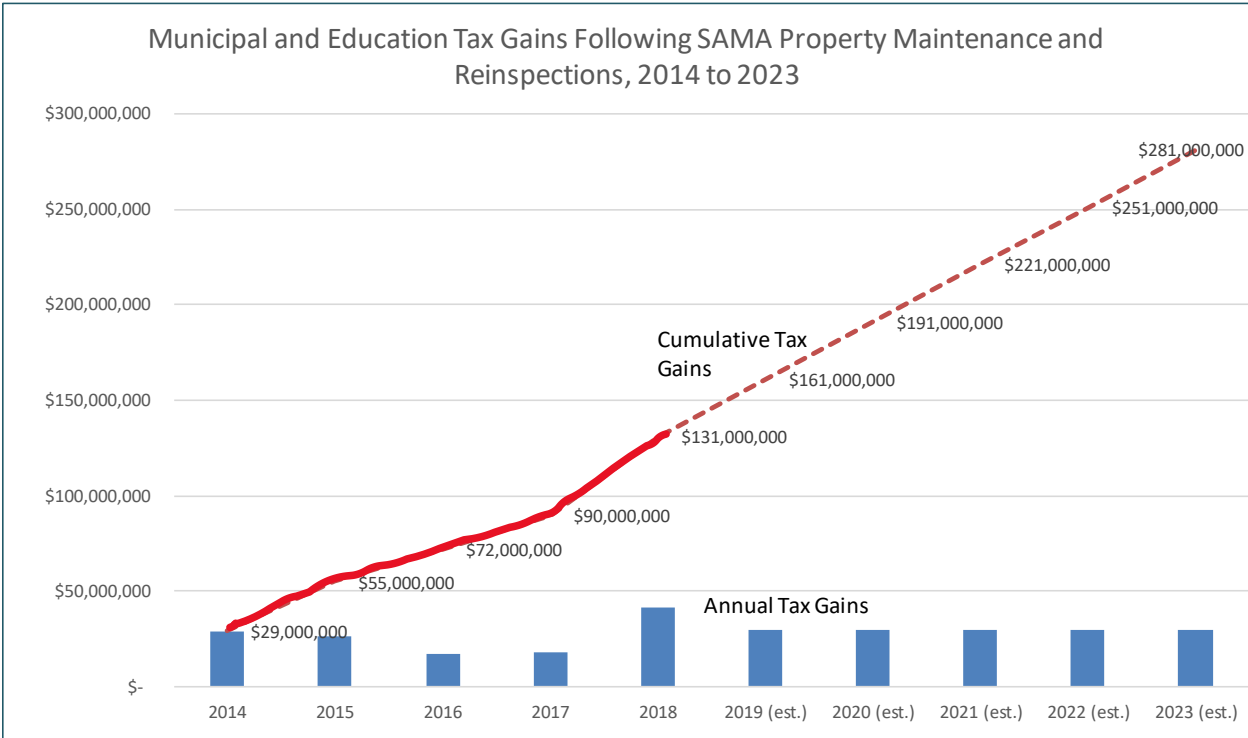
In 2018 the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA) completed its first full year of operation following implementation of many policy and technological changes due to the Technology Infrastructure (TI) Program. The TI Program proved to be a success, with SAMA meeting its objective of completing 100,000 property reviews in the calendar year. This was possible because of changes made to assessment procedures to make them more efficient and because 2018 saw the rollout of Remote Data Collection (RDC) devices to all of SAMA's field assessment staff. This represented a doubling of SAMA's output (in terms of property reviews) from five years prior.



2018 also continued the recent trend of decreasing market values since the 2015 base date, combined with overall percentage increases and tax increases which led to challenges for the Agency. Appeal levels continued to be at high levels and this is expected to continue as the agency inspects more properties annually, resulting in more notice of assessment changes being issued. The number of assessment appeals in 2018 was 2,624. This continues to be a challenge for SAMA because of the number of BOR (Board of Revision) decisions being delayed to late 2018 and some into 2019. New appeals in 2019 are also expected to be higher than in comparable years from the past. The results of these delayed BOR, as well as delayed SMB (Saskatchewan Municipal Board) decisions could affect the agency moving forward. As appeal proceedings increasingly deal with older assessments and data it takes appraisers longer to prepare for supporting values and the risk of assessment changes becomes larger for municipal clients.

Economic growth for Saskatchewan in 2018 resulted in continued growth in property assets within Saskatchewan municipalities. Property counts for SAMA clients grew by 16,682 properties or 1.97% to 862,905. This increase is primarily due to the fact that in 2018 SAMA gained 4 new municipal clients – the cities of North Battleford and Meadow Lake and the towns of Battleford and Nipawin. Growth rates exclusive of the new clients is estimated to be just under 0.7%.

The assessments conducted in the prior year and implemented on 2018 tax rolls provided an additional estimated \$41 million in annually recurring tax revenues for the agency's municipal clients and the education sector. Of the \$41 million, municipalities received approximately \$25.2 million and the education sector received approximately \$15.8 million (the provincial average municipal mill rate was 8.712 and the education sector mill rate was 4.451 with approximately \$3 billion dollars of taxable assessment added to SAMA's municipal clients in 2018). It is important to note that this is annually recurring revenue (i.e. the \$41M annual revenue translates to \$410M over a ten-year span). The following chart uses actual results from 2014-2018 and an estimated increase of \$30M for each of the next five years. By the end of 2023, SAMA property reviews are estimated to result in almost \$1.5B in additional revenue for municipalities and the education sector and then continue on in perpetuity.



The agency conducted 105,616 property reviews in calendar year 2018, up over the 66,959 property reviews in 2017 (an almost 58% increase). This increase represented the seventh consecutive annual increase in the agency's output of property reviews.

All of this work is focused on meeting our client's needs. Municipalities want a stable and predictable revenue source that is delivered inexpensively. Additionally, SAMA's clients want a system that is up-to-date. Ratepayers need to be treated fairly and equitably. SAMA strives to deliver all of this to our clients in a transparent and understandable fashion.

SAMA has achieved the goal set years ago to double its capacity in terms of property reviews. The agency also strives to improve the quality of those assessments. SAMA is now on pace to achieve a 12-year re-inspection cycle and has begun to capture the annual revenue that was being left on the table for municipalities. Prior to the start of the TI Program, SAMA estimated that there would be \$300M return after the first full ten years following completion and that estimate still appears to be accurate.

SAMA's Funding and Workforce

In 2018 the agency had a budgeted and actual workforce of 156.25 permanent staff. This was an increase of two-and-a-half assessment field staff assigned to SAMA's new clients.

The total budget decreased \$184,000 (2.6%) to \$20.297 million. This was due to the transition from restricted capital funding of \$1.2M from years 2014-17 to \$0.6M of ongoing technology funding that began in 2018 (because of this change the total budget decreased \$184,000 but the operating budget actually increased). In terms of actual revenues, the municipal revenue increased \$149,763 (1.9%) over the 2017 level. This includes revenue from 4 new clients, a 2% increase to the municipal requisition and a \$288,000 reduction in the move from restricted TI funding to ongoing technology funding. The provincial funding decreased \$300,000 with the move from restricted TI funding to ongoing operational technology funding. The actual funding party shares for 2018 were 55.2% provincial and 44.8% municipal (56.8% and 43.2% in 2017, respectively). Restricted capital funding for the TI Program ended in 2017, but 2018 saw the addition of a new funding for technology maintenance and initiatives. The funding party shares for SAMA were \$324,000 from municipalities and \$300,000 from the Province.

2018 Operating Budget	2018 Budget	2018 Actual	Variance	
			Amount	%
REVENUES (000s)				
Provincial - Operating	\$10,742	\$10,538	-\$204	-1.9%
Municipal Requisition	8,586	8,549	-37	-0.4%
Other Revenue	969	1,277	308	31.8%
Total Operating Revenues	\$20,297	\$20,364	\$67	0.3%
EXPENDITURES (000s)				
Salaries and Benefits	\$14,510	\$14,371 *	-\$139	-1.0%
Other Expenses	5,337	5,471	\$134	2.5%
Total Operating Expenditures	\$19,847	\$19,842	-\$5	0.0%
Surplus (Deficit)	\$450	\$522		
Inter-fund Transfers to Capital Fund	-\$450	-\$905		
Reserves (Net)	0	-721		
Beginning Surplus	0	1,289		
Ending Surplus (Deficit)	\$0	\$185		
Staffing (FTEs)				
Permanent Employees	156.25	156.25		
Managed Employee Vacancies	0.0	0.0		
Staff Complement	156.25	156.25		

SAMA's workforce had been at same level of full-time equivalent staff for six years (excluding non-permanent staff being funded via four-year TI Program restricted funds). Business process improvements and improvements via the TI Program have created productivity gains that have increased the output per staff member. Change and continual improvement have gradually become part of the agency's workforce culture.

Key Performance Measures

Delivery of Property Assessment Services

KPM #1: Properties assessed for client municipalities

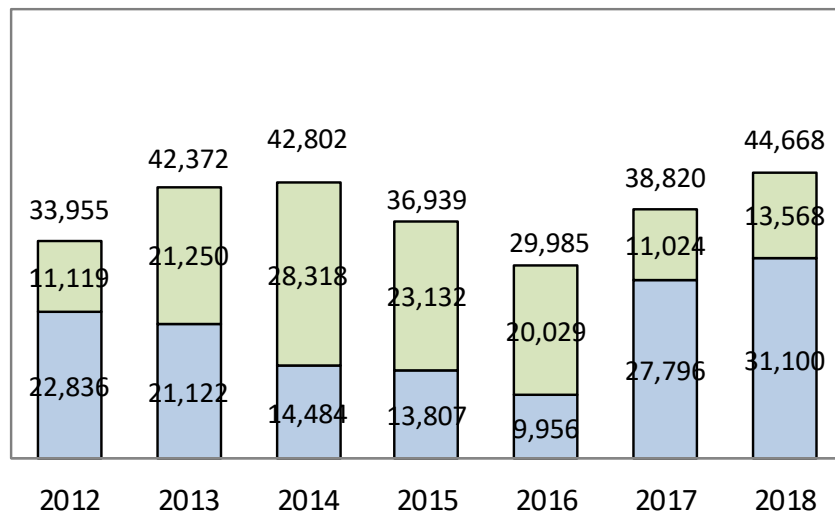
1. Annual Maintenance Program

The annual maintenance program reviews and updates all properties with developments or changes that may affect the property’s assessed value. The municipality submits a list of the properties affected, and the agency reviews each identified property and provides the municipality with an updated assessed value for their assessment roll.

The Agency’s Performance

In 2018, the agency reviewed 44,668 properties. Of these, 31,100 were for use on 2018 municipal assessment rolls, and in Q3 and Q4 the agency reviewed 13,568 properties for use on 2019 municipal assessment rolls.

Annual Maintenance Reviews
Number of Residential, Commercial and Agricultural Properties



Total reviewed in calendar year
■ Reviewed Q3 & Q4 for use in the following year
■ Reviewed Q1 & Q2 for use in the current year

The agency continues to level out the annual maintenance workload by advancing some maintenance to the preceding year in order to spread the work more evenly over the last months of the calendar year. This helps the agency to provide more timely delivery of the service to client municipalities.

In terms of SAMA's maintenance fee-for-service initiative, the agency invoiced for 24,190 residential, commercial and agricultural maintenance requests. This was a small decrease from the chargeable reviews done in the past two years (24,700 in 2017 and 25,812 in 2016).

The volume of standardized oil and gas annual maintenance (94,009 properties) tends to overshadow the volume of other industrial property assessments. In 2018, the agency also updated 6,800 properties via renditions received from resource companies and conducted a flow line review of 16,577 properties.

2. Reinspection Program

Over time, property assessments become dated because of the cumulative effect of physical attribute and condition changes that are not identified for an annual maintenance review. There is also the risk of assessable properties being absent from a municipality's assessment roll. The general reinspection program undertakes to review each property to re-establish a uniform base of up-to-date property records for the municipality.

Over the past 25 years, the reinspection program has slowly eroded as the resourcing needs for the annual maintenance and revaluation programs grew. SAMA estimates, based on recent reinspection results, that 2-5% of assessable property may be currently left off of assessment rolls due to SAMA's inability to keep up with long-term reinspections on a province-wide basis.

The agency has undertaken three initiatives to improve the reinspection program:

The first initiative is to increase appraiser efficiency and productivity in all program areas (reinspections, annual maintenance, revaluation and support of value) through various business improvement initiatives and to redirect those gains to the property reinspection program. During the past several years those gains have been partially used to enhance the reinspection program while also providing SAMA with more capacity to handle an increased demand for maintenance work and an increased level of appeals.

The second initiative is to simplify valuation policies and improve inspection efficiency. Over the last two years SAMA has positioned itself to implement new simplified residential and commercial cost models starting in mid-2016. These policy changes are expected to increase our inspection capacity by over 20%.

The third initiative is the introduction of new technologies, intended to increase SAMA staff capacity to inspect properties. Numerous components of technology have been introduced at various times during the last four years.

By the end of 2018, the following components of new technology have been introduced:

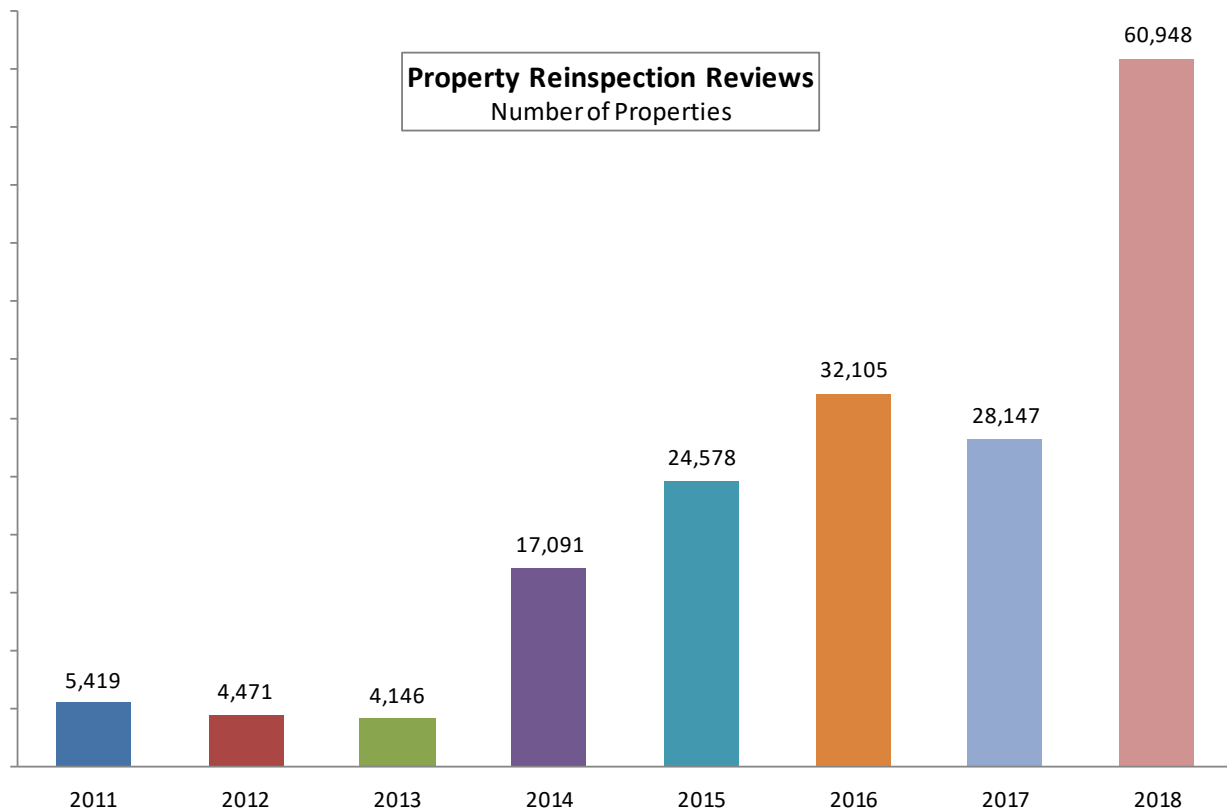
- more efficient data entry via the "Open Forms" enhancements made to the system, reducing the amount of time to enter property attributes into the Govern system
- an update of the core system to a .net platform - an integral step in being able to implement future upgrades such as data entry via tablet computers, web portal tools and GIS capabilities
- use of remote data collection devices (tablet computers) in the field to ensure timely and accurate recording of property attributes

The changes SAMA has made have started to yield results in terms of both reinspection counts and taxable assessment totals.

The Agency's Performance

The agency reinspected 60,948 properties in 2018 (28,147 in 2017, 32,109 in 2016 and 24,578 in 2015). The agency reinspected 28,577 agricultural properties, 15,336 residential / commercial properties and 17,035 industrial properties, targeting areas and municipalities where the assessments were estimated to be the furthest out-of-date.

SAMA has reached a level of reinspection that, if maintained, will allow the agency to meet its goal of reaching a 12-year re-inspection cycle. The 2018 reinspection program number of 60,948 is a turning point and is due to the successful completion of a large portion of the TI Program. The re-inspection level of 2018 is more than double the amount of re-inspections done in any other calendar year except 2016.

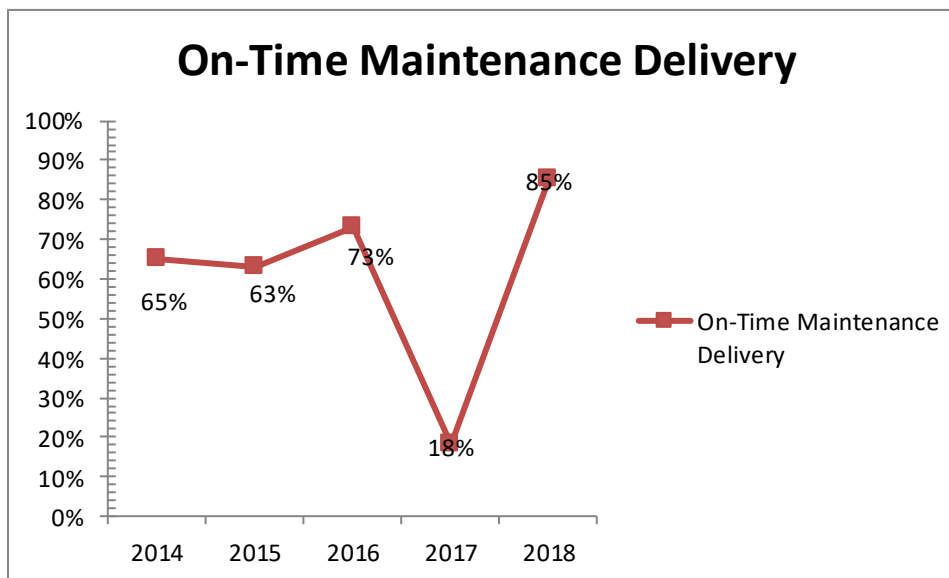


#2: On-time delivery of client services

The agency has undertaken to improve the on-time delivery of annual maintenance services to its client municipalities. Since 2008, the objective has been to advance the delivery of annual maintenance in an effort to ensure client municipalities can complete their assessment roll by the May 1st legislated deadline. Advancing maintenance deliveries to clients also carries the benefit of improving program efficiency by balancing out the agency's workload. The agency has also become more responsive to the needs of clients, implementing a system to deliver maintenance lists when desired by municipalities, rather than when convenient for the agency.

The Agency's Performance

SAMA delivered on-time to 85% of municipalities who requested their 2018 maintenance packages by a specific date (on-time delivery was 18% in 2017, 73% in 2016 and 63% in 2015). Furthermore, 92% of clients received their maintenance packages either by the requested date or within three weeks of it. 2018 was a return to more normal levels after delays in 2017. Changes in 2017 resulted in the delivery of annual maintenance inspection results being delayed approximately two months. 2018 represents the highest level achieved by SAMA since tracking of on-time maintenance delivery began.



KPM #3: Client satisfaction

the next client satisfaction survey will occur in 2019

The agency strives to provide reliable, timely and complete assessment information services to client municipalities, the education sector, the provincial government, and property owners. As part of the measurement of the agency's performance, SAMA has contracted Tanka Resource Group Inc. to carry out an anonymous biannual survey of SAMA municipal clients. The feedback received in the survey is used by the agency to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The planning process will then assign resources to areas of weakness. The maintenance of reliable service, positive communications and relationships with clients is essential to the agency's ongoing success.

The Agency's Performance

The agency's biannual survey of client municipalities focuses on determining their level of satisfaction with the assessment services received. The results of the 2017 survey were less positive for SAMA than 2015 but were still generally favourable for the agency.

The agency maintained high rating levels from its client municipalities for customer service, annual maintenance services and overall satisfaction with the agency. The agency also maintained a high recommendation rating from its clients.

Client municipalities scored the agency an average of 3.57 out of 4 for customer service (contact satisfaction), a decrease from 2015 (3.78). In terms of customer service, clients were most satisfied with the manner in which they were treated by SAMA staff (fairly and with respect) and were least satisfied with being dealt with in a timely manner.

77% of client municipalities scored the agency positively for the 2017 revaluation (94% in 2013). Of the 77%, 22% rated SAMA as excellent and 55% as good.

In the 2017 survey, 95% of the survey respondents indicated that they would recommend SAMA's services to other clients. In 2015, all respondents replied that they would recommend SAMA. 23% of municipalities reported having a problem in their dealings with SAMA, an increase of 5% from the previous survey.

The feedback was an endorsement of the service that SAMA is providing but also a signal that the agency has room to improve in certain areas. Respondents were most happy with the quality of SAMA service and the manner in which the services are delivered. The most common suggestions for improvement were: improving staff levels/continuity, improving maintenance accuracy, improving revaluation errors, improving communication and improving maintenance turnaround time.

Quality of Property Assessment Services

KPM #4: Amount of assessment at risk through appeals

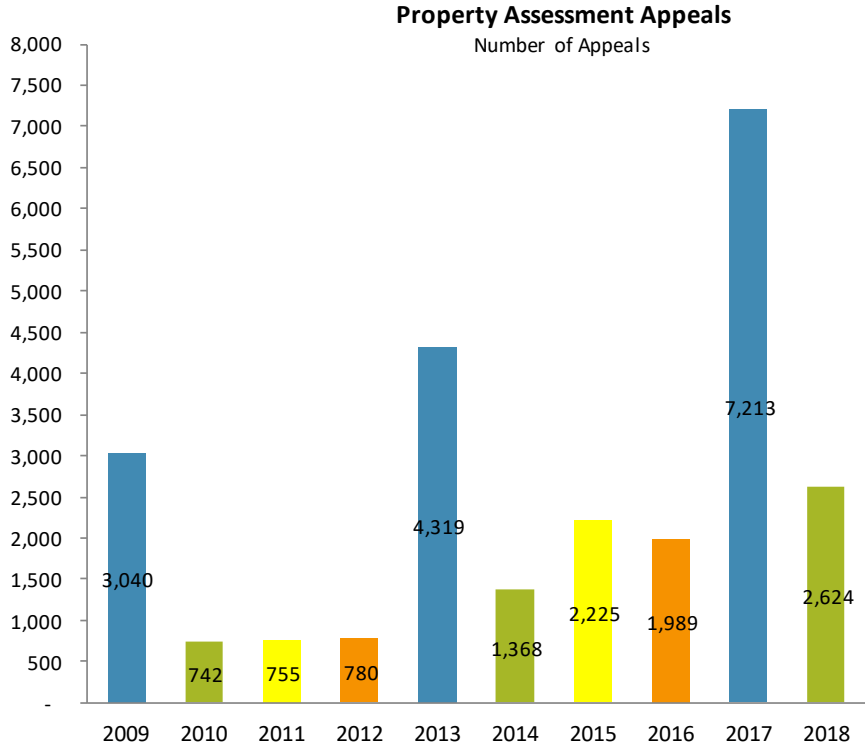
Property owners who believe that their property’s assessed value is not accurate may appeal the assessment to the local board of revision, and subsequently to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board and the Court of Appeal.

The agency’s appraisers will meet with property owners to identify and resolve any valuation errors prior to the formal appeal process. Dealing with property owners directly to swiftly correct assessment errors is a priority for the agency. Quick resolution increases stakeholder confidence in SAMA and reduces support of value costs and efforts for all parties involved. Where there is not an apparent resolution to a property owner’s concerns, the agency provides the municipality with professional appraisal and legal expertise to support the property assessment values through all levels of appeal.

The Agency’s Performance

Once every four years the agency revalues all properties in each of its client municipalities to reflect a more current valuation base date. The highest number of appeals generally occur in the first year of a revaluation, followed by a reduced level in Years two, three and four. 2018 was year two of the revaluation cycle and the number of appeals was higher than has been seen in past year twos. Appeals in 2018 were initiated on 0.3% or 2,624 properties (there were 1,368 appeals in 2014, which was year two of the previous revaluation cycle, 7,213 in 2017, 1,989 in 2016, and 2,225 in 2015).

The 2,624 appeals in 2018 represent a doubling over 2014 and signal the increasing amount of SAMA resources that are devoted to handling support of value. The number resolved by agreement to adjust or that were withdrawn was 2,055 or 75.8% (73.0% in 2017 and 82.0% in 2016). The 2,624 appeals represent an appeal rate of 0.30% (2,624 appeals of the 862,905 properties).



2018's support of value work involved over 22,000 direct labour hours, representing approximately 16.7% of SAMA's assessor resources (37.9% of resources in 2017, a revaluation year and 7.6% of resources in 2016 – a non-revaluation year). In the previous two revaluation cycles the number of appeals were 5,342 (2009 to 2012) and 11,890 (2013 to 2016). In the first two years of the current cycle SAMA has already had 9,837 appeals. The demand for support of value has and will continue to force SAMA to allocate a large portion of resources and is an area of risk for both the agency and its stakeholders. In addition to a general increase, there has also been an increase in appeals to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board when compared to the previous revaluation cycle.

SAMA is mitigating its appeal risk by:

- enhancing defence of value training for staff and improving documentation to explain and support assessment appeal decisions
- working through the SAMA City Assessor group to encourage the Saskatchewan Municipal Board to meet with assessment service providers and applicants to discuss ways to improve the timelines of appeal decisions

Appeals training was again the primary focus of business process improvement initiatives in 2018. In 2018 SAMA continued with its Appeals Support Committee. The committee tracks appeal levels and shares information amongst appraisers to help them be more successful in supporting values during the appeal process. The training provided to all appraisal staff has raised the skill level of staff dealing with appeals and has put SAMA into a stronger position going into the next round of SMB appeals. The training has played a part in SAMA being able to deal with 2,624 appeals while still drastically increasing the number of property reviews conducted.

KPM #5: Confirmation of municipal assessment rolls

The SAMA Board is responsible for confirming the assessment roll of all Saskatchewan municipalities after taking steps to ensure that the assessments in the municipality have been completed in accordance with legislation. Municipalities require this confirmation to allow them to enforce the collection of property taxes.

Both confirmation audits and primary audits are conducted to determine whether a municipality's assessments have been prepared and administered in accordance with the municipal Acts.

The Agency's Performance

There were 769 municipalities in Saskatchewan in 2018 – 765 municipalities received their valuation services from the agency and 4 municipalities provided their own valuation services.

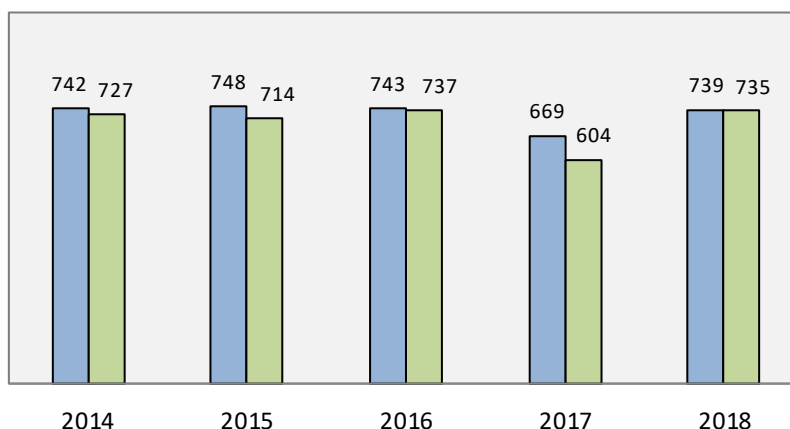
The confirmation process is initiated when a municipality submits its annual assessment return.

For the 2018 assessment roll year, 739 (96.6%) of all municipalities had submitted their assessment return by December 31, 2018.

The agency confirmed 735 (96.1%) of the submitted assessment rolls as of December 31, 2018, 8 assessment returns were still being audited and 26 municipalities had not submitted a return.

Primary audits are conducted as part of the confirmation process to ensure that the overall level of appraisal for a municipality falls into the acceptable range prescribed in Provincial regulations. Of the 762 municipal assessment returns received, 735 had compliant audit reports as of December 31.

Confirmed Assessment Rolls



■ Assessment Returns Received
■ Assessment Rolls Confirmed

Cost of Property Assessment Services

KPM #6: SAMA's Technology Infrastructure Program

In 2014, SAMA implemented a four-year 2014-2017 funding plan, which included a capital project for new technology called the Technology Infrastructure (TI) Program.

SAMA recognized that our inspection capacity was below where it needed to be, and through the use of updated technology and more efficient business practices the Agency sought to double our ability to carry out inspections.

2018 was the first post-year of SAMA's initial four-year TI Program plan. 2018 saw the completion of Phase 3, which was a significant factor for SAMA's gains in property review counts. Although the plan created in 2013 called for completion of TI in 2017, the final phase, which includes the web portal creation, the updated website and upgrades to SAMAView will occur in 2019.

Phase 1: Implementation of Open Forms in Govern Classic

The completion of phase 1 actually occurred in 2015. It involved an updated user interface to speed up data inputting. Although the development of this phase was a 2015 event, inspections per appraiser continue to increase as staff become more familiar and efficient using the updated software.

Phase 2: Implementation of updated Govern System

In phase 1 of the TI Program, SAMA updated the user interface of the Govern computer system. Phase 2 of the TI Program saw the internal workings of the Govern system updated and modernized to a .net system.

The upgrade of the .net system software has been in production since December 2016. After the initial implementation of Govern 6.1, three subsequent waves of reports and interfaces were implemented. Interface and reporting items requiring further enhancements have been identified for Information Systems prioritization and implementation.

Critical to the ongoing success of the Govern 6.1 implementation was an upgrade from version 16.06 to 16.11. This upgrade was implemented in September 2017 for use by SAMA end users. The primary goal for this upgrade was to include basic MATIX (GIS) functionality and create the foundation for necessary Remote Data Collection (RDC) functionality. It also includes fixes for defects identified in production since the December 2016 implementation, as well as basic functionality enhancements designed to enhance users' ability to use the Govern system to complete work. These include, but are not limited to:

- Improved speed for land rate changes;
- Administration control of fonts on the forms;
- Changes to the site history form;
- Split merge functionality;
- Estimates functionality;
- Batch process for hold reason code;
- Enhanced sales searches;
- Roll Forward functionality (fixes);
- Removal of stranded building records for sales;
- Manual entry of sales functionality (fixes); and,
- Enhanced call tracking form.

Phase 3 - Remote Data Collection

Remote Data Collection (RDC) development work was completed in 2018 and use of the devices was implemented in 2018.

SAMA appraisers now exclusively use Panasonic tablet computers to enter assessment data gathered while working in the field. Similar devices are used by Saskatchewan Municipal Hail, Police Forces, EMS and ambulance workers and other groups. The devices have basic functionality with an “out of box” version of Govern 6.1-16.11 for Mobile. On-site training was provided to all SAMA staff using the new devices and the rollout occurred in mid-2018. The new devices greatly reduced data-entry time and was a contributor to SAMA’s increased output in 2018. SAMA continues to work with the software provider to enhance the product and a major update is expected in early 2019.

Phase 4 – Web Portal

Concurrently, SAMA will be working with an agency that specializes in the development of critical corporate websites to address identified stakeholder needs and requirements necessary for the implementation of a web portal.

Requirements gathering was completed in 2018 and a contract was awarded to a vendor who has completed much of the project by the end of 2018. Full-implementation of the web portal and a rollout to stakeholders is expected to be completed by mid-2019.

2018 TI Program Financial Report

EXPENDITURES (000s)

Phase III - remote data collection	\$	303
Phase IV - web portal/page development		645
Inter-fund transfers to capital fund		295
Total Technology Development Expenditures		\$1,243

Ending Surplus (Deficit)		\$859
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Technology Infrastructure Program Timeline



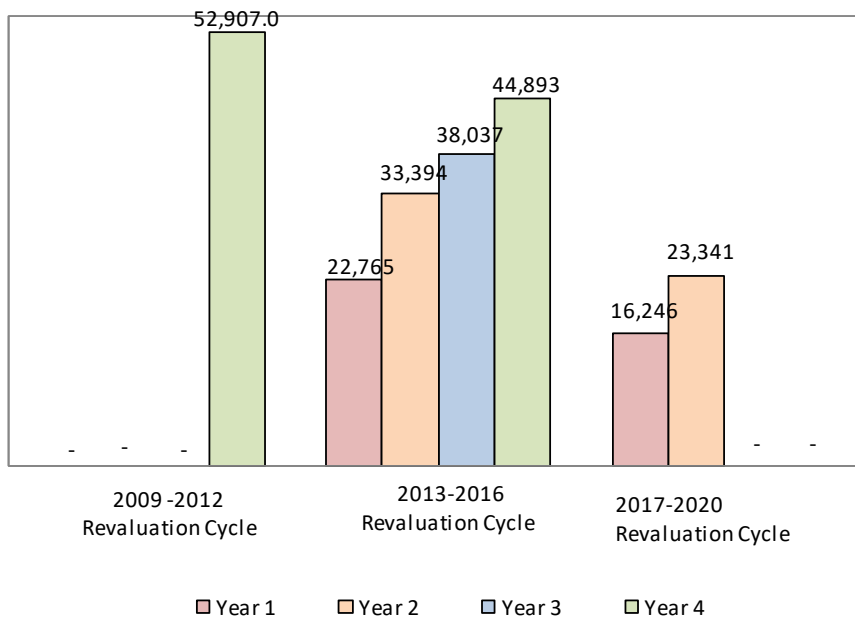
Efficiency Gains in SAMA's Revaluation Program

One of the agency's goals has been to decrease the number of hours spent on the quadrennial revaluation. Business process improvement changes to the sales verification and market analysis processes have resulted in a significant reduction in total appraiser time on revaluation activities. 2018 was the second year of the current cycle of 2017-2020. Revaluation represented 23,340 direct labor hours or 17.1% of the resources of SAMA's appraisal staff. In 2014, year 2 of the 2013-2016 cycle, revaluation efforts represented 28.2% of all direct labour hours. The balance of unverified sales at the end of 2018 was 4,786.

By spending less time on revaluation efforts, SAMA has been able to allocate more time to maintenance, reinspection and support of value activities.

Revaluation Appraiser Effort

Direct Labor Hours



KPM #7: Agency operating costs

The agency is responsible for providing quality, efficient and cost-effective assessment valuation services to client municipalities and the education sector. The agency served 765 cities, towns, villages, rural municipalities and northern communities in 2018.

The agency's business management model focuses on three areas – program delivery, performance management and accountability. Four-year business and financial plans and annual business and financial plans are developed in consultation with the agency's funding stakeholders, and annual performance reports are provided to the funding stakeholders.

The agency is working to continuously improve the integration of these plans with operational program delivery plans and to improve performance reporting both internally and externally to stakeholders.

The Agency's Performance

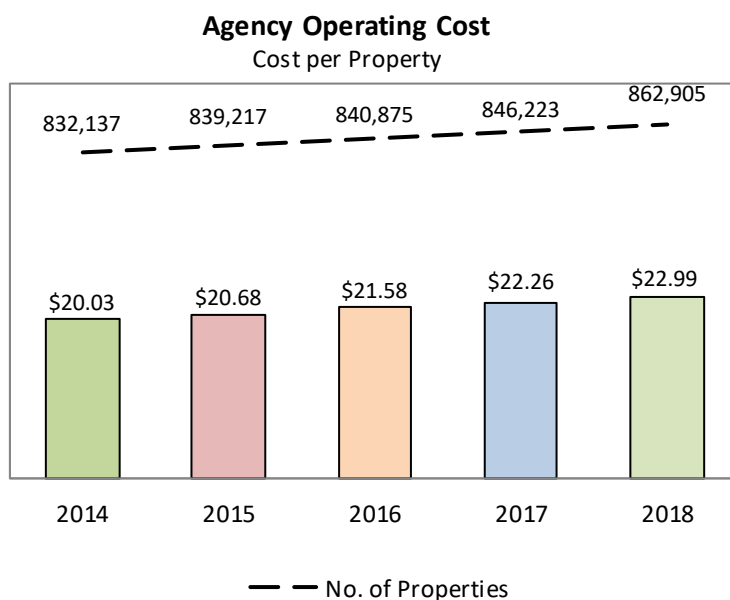
1. Planning and reporting

The agency has expanded the use of program charters throughout all program areas to define all work projects undertaken for each goal and objective set out in the agency's annual business and financial plan. Program charters set out the business need, scope, objectives and deliverables, milestones and key participants for each work project.

2. Operating costs

In 2018 the agency's operating cost per property rose to \$22.99 (862,905 properties and a total operational spending of \$19.842M). The 2018 operating cost per property represents a 3.3% increase over the previous year (\$22.26 in 2017 and \$21.58 in 2016). The 2018 Inflation Rate for Canada as calculated by Statistics Canada was 2.0%. Although total cost was down in 2018 there was an increase in the operating cost because of the shift from restricted TI Program funding to ongoing technology funding.

Delivery of annual maintenance, revaluation and support of value services remain the agency's main priorities while also concentrating on progressing through the TI Program and mitigating increases to operating costs.



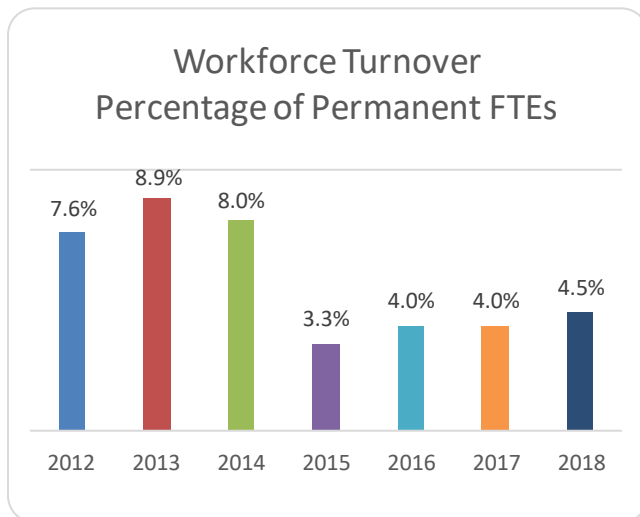
Workforce Commitment

KPM #8: Workforce Turnover

The agency's success in providing property assessment services within Saskatchewan depends on the knowledge, skills and expertise of our employees and the agency's ability to attract and retain a talented and skilled workforce.

The Agency's Performance

In 2018 the voluntary turnover rate at SAMA remained steady at 4.5%. The turnover rate has been below the goal of 5% for the fourth-straight year. SAMA attributes the low turnover rate to a number of initiatives undertaken by the agency that support a high level of employee engagement. SAMA operates in a competitive environment as an employer attracting and retaining qualified staff and there continues to be challenges within the assessment field as fewer people complete property assessment educational programs in western Canada.



KPM #9: Employee Engagement

The agency is striving to create a culture of motivated and engaged employees who work together in a productive, continuously improving environment, guided by leadership that is based on a clear and positive vision of the future, using processes that consistently deliver what is expected in order to consistently satisfy our clients' needs.

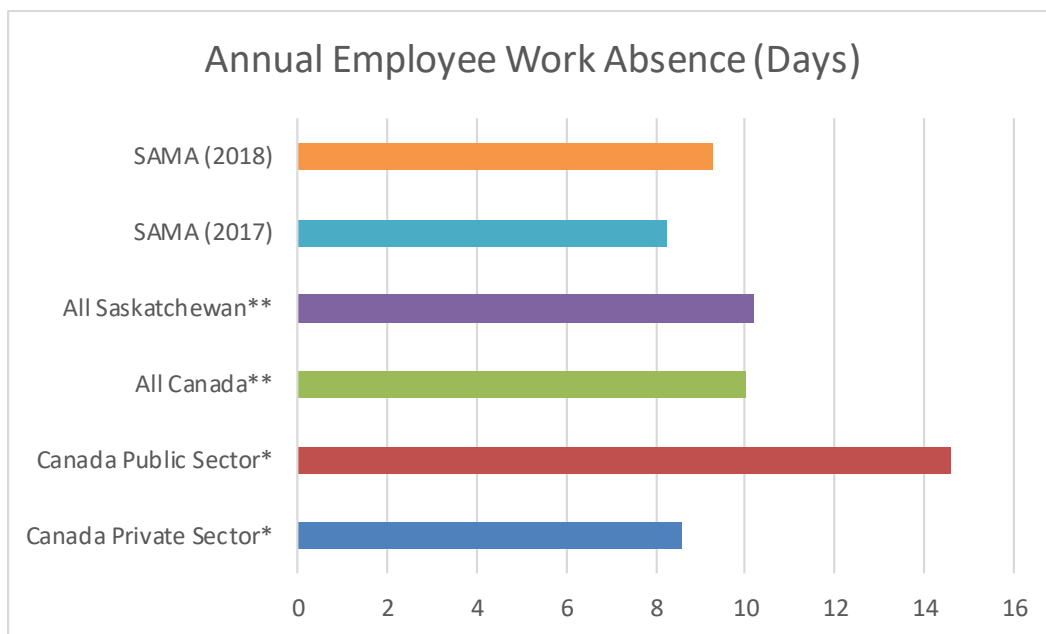
The Agency's Performance

Employee engagement and organizational performance are critically linked and the agency conducts surveys to determine the level of employee engagement, and to assist the agency in developing and implementing new initiatives and programs. SAMA conducted an employee engagement survey in early 2019 to determine the agency's current employee engagement status and to identify possible areas for improvement. Once again, the survey had a very high response rate of 92% for all SAMA employees (83% in 2015 and a public sector benchmark of 61%).

The 2019 survey showed an increase in favourable employee engagement, with a score of 67% (57% in 2015, 51% on the 2014 pulse survey and 46% in 2013). SAMA was pleased to meet its previously set goal of a 5% increase over the 2015 results but did fall short of the public sector benchmark of 72%. Additionally, the employee survey also indicated that employee engagement had increased in all measured survey dimensions, indicating progress in all of the drivers of employee engagement, rather than in isolated areas.

With the current rapid pace of change and SAMA's Technological Infrastructure Program, the agency recognizes that employees are undergoing a major shift in the policies and procedures that affect their work, as well as new technological tools that are an essential part of day-to-day work.

In 2018 SAMA's employee absenteeism rate was 9.13 days per employee (8.24 in 2017 and 9.28 in 2016). SAMA's rate of 9.13 is just above the Canadian private-sector average of 8.30 days.



*Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0190-01, *Work absence of full-time employees by geography, annual*

**Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0196-01, *Work absence of full-time employees by public and private sector, annual*

Investing in a Qualified, Experienced, and Continually-Learning Workforce

The agency employs the most comprehensive group of mass appraisal experts in the province of Saskatchewan and, as a provider of professional services, SAMA is committed to employing the most qualified and effective staff available. As such, SAMA encourages its employees to further their personal skill sets via education and training.

At the end of 2018, 62.4% or 53 of SAMA's 85 appraisers (60.0% in 2017, 61.8% in 2016 and 65.2% in 2015) are fully accredited (have at least four years of assessment experience and have completed the educational requirements of an assessment designation). SAMA continues to be an industry leader in supporting staff while they further their career training – providing full tuition and up to twelve paid professional leave days per annum for staff pursuing a professional appraisal designation.

The agency values the years of experience that have been achieved by employees and knows that staff retention is paramount to the long-term success of SAMA. The average SAMA employee has nearly fifteen years of service with the agency. Employing qualified staff and investing in their training helps to increase engagement and also the quality and efficiency of the province's assessment system over the long term. The agency currently invests just over 2.5% of the operating budget directly into training initiatives (excluding staff wages and benefits while training).

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