

INTERNAL CONTROLS BULLETIN

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Ten Year Reflection

As the year ends, many of us reflect on the past, and look forward to the beginning of a new year and all the promise it holds. It has been a decade since the Internal Control and Accountability (IC&A) Unit was established and this month we reflect on our history, celebrate the work we do, and its impact on supporting a culture of internal control across all areas of state government.

The IC&A Unit was established when the great recession was in full swing, bringing with it unprecedented financial and internal control regulation. In the beginning, the unit was focused on internal control in the broad sense and deciding how best to implement the new responsibilities set forth in [Minnesota Statutes 16A.057](#).

After the new IC&A Unit was established, the hard work of documenting an enterprise-wide system began. The unit established the Control Environment Self-Assessment tool agencies use every year to take stock of the things they do to create a strong internal control environment and make improvements.

The IC&A Unit has convened and facilitated over 80 internal control roundtable meetings for internal control and internal audit professionals. This forum allows staff from across the enterprise to collaborate, further strengthen internal controls, and reduce risk.

The IC&A Unit has published about 120 monthly internal control bulletins which contain useful tips and hints for improving the internal control structure in agencies and reducing the chance of fraud. With 2,400 [subscriptions](#) and counting,

these bulletins provide practical advice to give agencies ideas on how to maintain strong internal controls and prevent fraud.

IC&A also engages in formal training sessions for groups and individual agencies. We consult with many agencies and facilitate conversations about risk and internal controls that translate into actionable steps. We also regularly present at the Statewide Supervisor Core classes, and, starting in 2020, we will be on the agenda for Manager Core classes as well.

Fraud awareness and prevention week, celebrated in November, has been a highlight for the last five years. This event raises awareness across the enterprise about fraud, how it affects each of us, and what every employee can do to prevent it.

In 2019, the unit rolled out and implemented an enterprise wide Risk Assessment Tool for agencies to grapple with the huge number of statutory responsibilities they have, prioritize those which could pose the most risk, and work to proactively reduce those risks before issues arise.

As we reflect on the last ten years, we look forward to continually strengthening internal controls with a commitment and responsibility to those we serve, the people of Minnesota. We are proud of the work of those who came before us, and we are excited about what is next! Happy new year!

Questions?

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