



P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 5**  
**Audit Committee**  
**March 24, 2025**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Audit Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** March 17, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements of HRM, March 31, 2025

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**ORIGIN**

This report is originated by staff in preparation for the 2025 year-end audit of the consolidated financial statements, General Rate Surplus statements, and Miscellaneous Trust Funds statements of HRM.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report recommends that the Audit Committee approve KPMG's Audit Planning Report for HRM's 2025 year-end audit. Approval will ensure the audit proceeds as planned.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Audit Committee approve the attached Audit Planning report for the year-end audit of HRM's consolidated financial statements, General Rate Surplus statements, and Miscellaneous Trust Funds statements as prepared by the Municipal Auditor (KPMG).

**BACKGROUND**

Each year the Municipal Auditor is required to prepare an Audit Planning Report to be approved by the Audit Committee.

**DISCUSSION**

KPMG has prepared the attached Audit Planning Report for review and approval by the Audit Committee. Their Audit Planning Report outlines the scope of the audit, their approach to the audit, the audit risks, their determination of materiality, identified risks and mitigation strategies.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The fees for the year-end audit as described in the Audit Planning Report are \$113,045 net tax included, consistent with the amount in the tender and are budgeted for.

**RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendation in this report.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement was required

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified

**ALTERNATIVES**

The Audit Committee through discussion with our Municipal Auditor, may request additional services or audit procedures. These services or audit procedures would likely be a separate engagement and would result in increased costs to HRM.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Section 46 of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter outlines the responsibilities of the Municipal Auditor including issuance of an Auditor's Report.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - KPMG's Audit Planning Report for the March 31, 2025 year end audit of the consolidated financial statements of HRM.

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Dave Harley, Director Financial Management & Operations, Finance & Asset Management 902.497.4260

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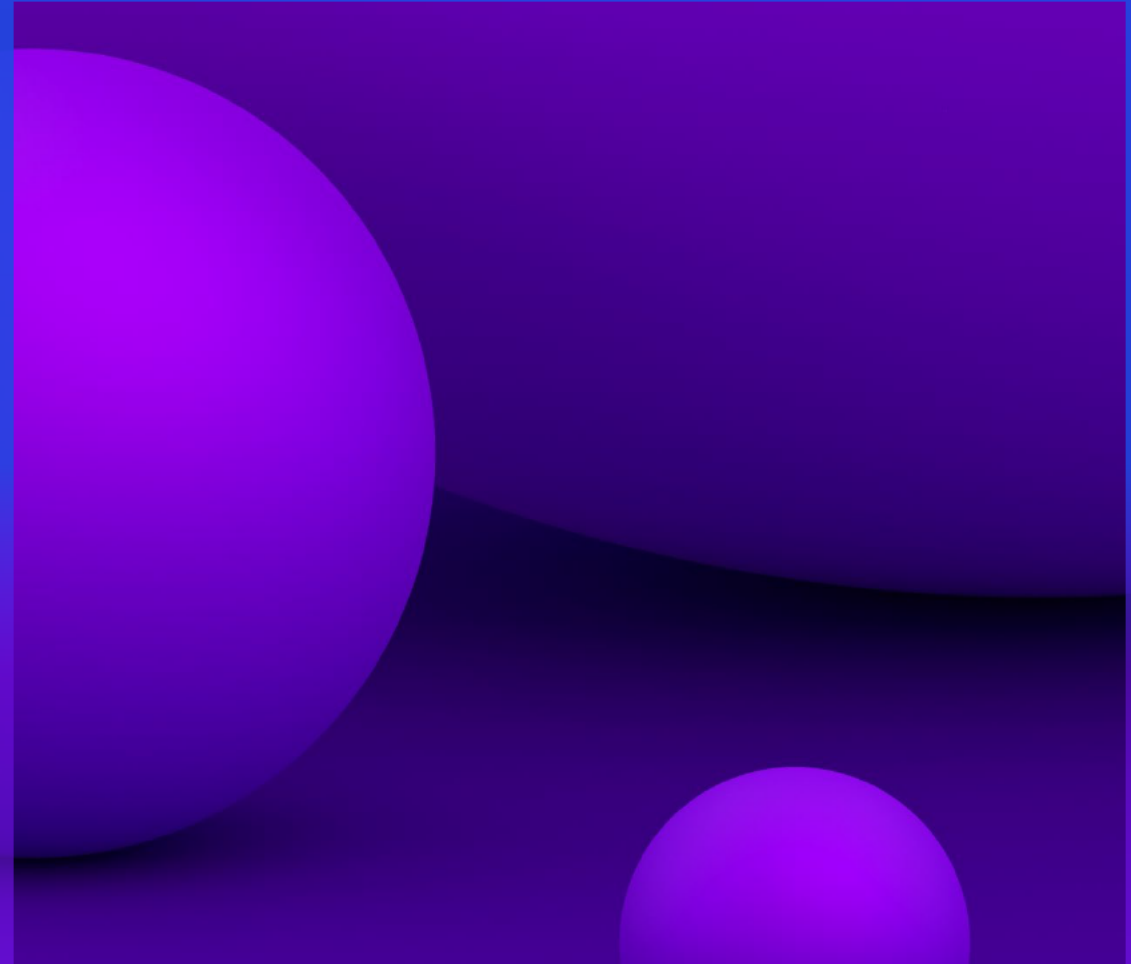
# Halifax Regional Municipality (“HRM”)

**Audit Planning Report  
for the year ending March 31, 2025**

*KPMG LLP*

Prepared as of March 13, 2025 for presentation to the Audit  
Committee on March 24, 2025

[kpmg.ca/audit](https://kpmg.ca/audit)



# KPMG contacts

## Key contacts in connection with this engagement



**Paul Janes**

Lead Audit Engagement Partner



**Rebecca Foster**

Audit Senior Manager



**Matthew Betik**

Engagement Quality Control Reviewer



**Lauren Willett**

Audit Manager



# Table of contents

## Digital use information

This Audit Planning Report is also available as a “hyper-linked” PDF document.

If you are reading in electronic form (e.g. In “Adobe Reader” or “Board Books”), clicking on the home symbol on the top right corner will bring you back to this slide.



Click on any item in the table of contents to navigate to that section.

**4**

Highlights

**5**

Audit strategy

**8**

Audit strategy -  
Group audit

**10**

Risk assessment

**12**

Key milestones and  
deliverables

**13**

Audit quality

**14**

Appendices



# Audit highlights



No matters to report



Matters to report – see link for details

## Scope

Our audit of the consolidated financial statements (“financial statements”) of the Halifax Regional Municipality and its subsidiaries (“the Company”) as of and for the year, ending March 31, 2025, will be performed in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards.

[Engagement letter](#)

## Audit strategy

Materiality \$17 million



Involvement of others

## Audit strategy - Group audit

Total	Total assets	Total expenses	Total revenue	
Total tested	99%	96%	96%	



Involvement of non-KPMG firms

## Risk assessment



Risk of management override of controls



Other significant risks

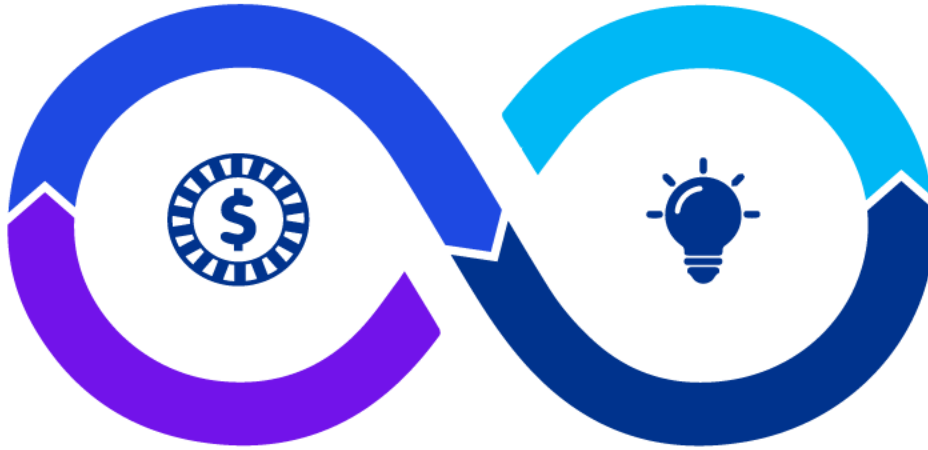


Presumed risk of fraudulent revenue recognition

The purpose of this report is to assist you, as a member of the Audit Committee, in your review of the plan for our audit of the financial statements. This report is intended solely for the information and use of Management, the Audit Committee, and the HRM Council and should not be used for any other purpose or any other party. KPMG shall have no responsibility or liability for loss or damages or claims, if any, to or by any third party as this report to the Audit Committee has not been prepared for, and is not intended for, and should not be used by, any third party or for any other purpose.



# Materiality



We **initially determine materiality** at a level at which we consider that misstatements could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users. Determining materiality is a matter of **professional judgement**, considering both quantitative and qualitative factors, and is affected by our perception of the common financial information needs of users of the financial statements as a group. We do not consider the possible effect of misstatements on specific individual users, whose needs may vary widely.

We **reassess materiality** throughout the audit and revise materiality if we become aware of information that would have caused us to determine a different materiality level initially.

## Plan and perform the audit

We **initially determine materiality** to provide a basis for:

- Determining the nature, timing and extent of risk assessment procedures;
- Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement; and
- Determining the nature, timing, and extent of further audit procedures.

We design our procedures to detect misstatements at a level less than materiality in individual accounts and disclosures, to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole.

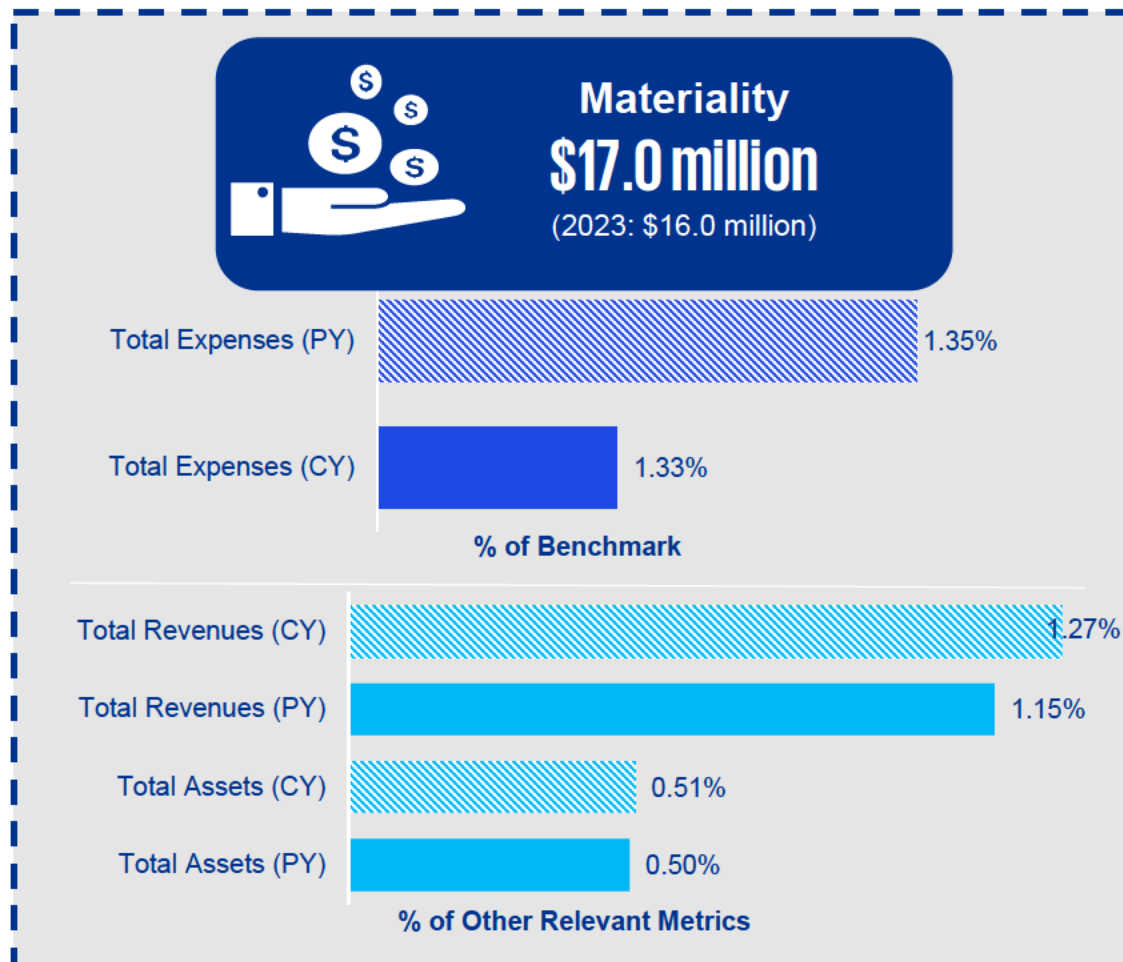
## Evaluate the effect of misstatements

We also **use materiality** to evaluate the effect of:

- Identified misstatements on our audit; and
- Uncorrected misstatements, if any, on the financial statements and in forming our opinion.



# Initial materiality



**Total Expenses**  
**\$1,275 million**  
 (2023: \$1,181 million)

**Total Revenues**  
**\$1,340 million**  
 (2023: \$1,390 million)

**Total Assets**  
**\$3,317 million**  
 (2023: \$3,212 million)





# Involvement of others

The following parties are involved in the audit of the financial statements:

Involved party	Nature and extent of planned involvement
Management's specialists	<p>Use of the work of management's specialists to assess the appropriateness of key assumptions used in the determination of employee future benefits including discount rates.</p> <p>Actuary specialists to assist with the assessment of risk related to the liabilities for employee future benefits, including understanding the impact of rising interest rates and in our audit of the key assumptions used by management in the determination of these liabilities.</p>



# Group audit - Scoping

We take a risk-based audit approach that requires an understanding of the group, its environment and system of internal control in order to appropriately identify, assess, and plan responses to risks of material misstatement to the group.

We perform group-wide risk assessment procedures, and when sufficient information is not available at the group level, we perform risk assessment procedures at a component level in order to appropriately identify, assess, and plan responses to risks of material misstatement to the group.

We plan to perform risk assessment procedures at a component level for the following components:

Component	Total assets	Total expenses	Total revenues	Scope
HRM	53%	82%	82%	Full scope audit
Halifax Regional Water Commission ("HRWC")	46%	14%	14%	Full scope audit, completed by component auditor - GT Halifax
<b>Total</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	
Components not subject to procedures at a component level: • HRM ABC's	1%	4%	4%	Stand alone audits completed separate of the main HRM audit
<b>Total consolidated</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	



# Nature of our planned involvement in the work of component auditors

Our approach is summarized as follows:

<p><b>Determine the nature and extent of involvement</b></p>	<p>We plan to direct, supervise and review the work of all component auditors. The nature and extent of our direction, supervision and review of the work performed by component auditors is affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the risk assessment procedures that we perform at the group level provide us with enough information to identify and assess the group risks at the component;</li> <li>• the nature and circumstances (e.g. significance of the risks, judgements and size) of the component to the group audit;</li> <li>• the competence and capabilities of the component auditor; and</li> <li>• significant matters arising from communications with the component auditor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Robust direction through instructions and two-way communications</b></p>	<p>As part of our direction, we plan to issue detailed group audit instructions to component auditors, which will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the component auditor's responsibilities, including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance with the relevant ethical requirements, including those related to independence, applicable to the group audit</li> <li>• the performance of risk assessment procedure at the component (when the risk assessment procedures that we perform at the group level do not provide us with enough information to identify and assess group risks of materiality misstatement at the component)</li> <li>• the performance of further audit procedures (e.g., control testing and/or substantive testing) on specific risks of material misstatement to the group financial statements, such as the significant risks communicated to you in the Risk Assessment section of this Audit Planning Report.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• matters relevant to their work and instructions relating to its performance.</li> </ul> <p>As part of our direction, we plan to involve component auditors in the group audit risk assessment and planning discussions.</p>
<p><b>Comprehensive supervision and review through two-way communications</b></p>	<p>As part of our supervision and review, we plan to request the component auditor to communicate matters throughout the audit process that are relevant to the group audit, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirmations relating to having appropriate resources to perform the work</li> <li>• compliance with relevant ethical requirements including independence</li> <li>• the results of the performance of the work requested in our instructions, including those related to risk assessment and further audit procedures</li> <li>• significant matters arising from their work, such as control deficiencies and misstatements identified.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, we plan to review the underlying documentation of certain component auditors, either remotely or physically, based on quantitative factors (e.g., size of the components total assets or revenue to the group) and qualitative factors (e.g., the significance of the risks of material misstatement being addressed at the component).</p>



# Risk assessment summary

Our planning begins with an assessment of risks of material misstatement in your financial statements.

We draw upon our understanding of the Company and its environment (e.g. the industry, the wider economic environment in which the business operates, etc.), our understanding of the Company's components of its system of internal control, including our business process understanding.

We use advanced technologies in performing our risk assessment procedures.

	Risk of fraud	Risk of error	PY risk rating
● Management Override of Controls	✓		Significant

● SIGNIFICANT RISK ● PRESUMED RISK OF MATERIAL MISSTATEMENT ● OTHER RISK OF MATERIAL MISTATEMENT

## Advanced Technologies

Our **KPMG Clara Dynamic Risk Assessment** tool gives us a more sophisticated, forward-looking and multi-dimensional approach to assessing audit risk.

[Learn more](#)

Our **KPMG Clara Business Process Mining** provides immediate visualization of how 100% of your transactions are processed to complement your process narratives & flow charts.

[Learn more](#)

**KPMG Clara Account Analysis** allows us to analyze the flow of transactions through your business to drive a more meaningful risk assessment.

[Learn more](#)

**KPMG Clara AI** allows us to layer AI into our auditing platform, allowing us to scan 100% of your data and pull all of the risky transactions and anomalies out for further analysis.

[Learn more](#)





# Significant risks



Management Override of Controls (non-rebuttable significant risk of material misstatement)

RISK OF



FRAUD

## Why is it significant?

Presumption  
of the risk of fraud  
resulting from  
management  
override of  
controls

Management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Although the level of risk of management override of controls will vary from entity to entity, the risk nevertheless is present in all entities.

## Our planned response

As this presumed risk of material misstatement due to fraud is not rebuttable, our audit methodology incorporates the required procedures in professional standards to address this risk. These procedures include:

- testing of journal entries and other adjustments,
- performing a retrospective review of estimates
- evaluating the business rationale of significant unusual transactions.

## Advanced technologies

Our KPMG Clara Journal Entry Analysis Tool assists in the performance of detailed journal entry testing based on engagement-specific risk identification and circumstances. Our tool provides auto-generated journal entry population statistics and focusses our audit effort on journal entries that are riskier in nature.



Click to learn more



# Key milestones and deliverables

## March - April 2025

### Planning & Risk Assessment

- Debrief prior year with management
- Kick-off with management
- Planning and initial risk assessment procedures, including:
  - Involvement of others
  - Identification and assessment of risks of misstatements and planned audit response for certain processes
- Obtain and update an understanding of the Company and its environment
- Inquire of the Audit Committee, management and others within the Company about risks of material misstatement
- Complete group audit scoping.

## April - July 2025

### Risk assessment & Fieldwork

- Evaluate the Entity's components of internal control, other than the control activities component
- Perform process walkthroughs for certain business processes
- Identify process risk points for certain business processes
- Complete data extraction and processing activities
- Complete initial risk assessment
- Communicate audit plan
- Identify IT applications and environments
- Evaluate D&I of controls for certain business processes (control activity component)
- Evaluate D&I of general IT controls
- Communicate group audit instructions to component audit teams
- Provide update on audit progress

## July - August 2025

### Final Fieldwork & Reporting

- Perform process walkthroughs for remaining business processes
- Review financial statement disclosures
- Present results to the Audit Committee and perform required communications
- Issue audit report on financial statements
- Closing meeting with management
- Filing date: issue audit reports on financial statements



# Audit quality - How do we deliver audit quality?

Quality essentially means doing the right thing and remains our highest priority. Our Global Quality Framework outlines how we deliver quality and how every partner and staff member contributes to its delivery.

The drivers outlined in the framework are the ten components of the KPMG System of Quality Management (SoQM). Aligned with ISQM 1/CSQM 1, our SoQM components also meet the requirements of the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) issued by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA) and the relevant rules of professional conduct / code of ethics applicable to the practice of public accounting in Canada, which apply to professional services firms that perform audits of financial statements. Learn more about our system of quality management and our firm's statement on the effectiveness of our SoQM:

 [KPMG Canada Transparency Report](#)

We define 'audit quality' as being the outcome when:

- audits are **executed consistently**, in line with the requirements and intent of **applicable professional standards** within a strong **system of quality management**; and
- all of our related activities are undertaken in an environment of the utmost level of **objectivity, independence, ethics and integrity**.



**Doing the right thing. Always.**

# Appendices

**A**

Engagement letter

**A**

Regulatory  
communications

**A**

New auditing  
standards

**A**

Insights

**A**

Technology







# Appendix: Engagement letter



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Cathie O'Toole  
CAO  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
PO Box 1749  
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

March 12, 2025

The purpose of this letter is to outline the terms of our engagement to audit the Municipality's consolidated annual financial statements ("financial statements") of the Halifax Regional Municipality ("the Entity") for the period of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, with the Entity having the option to engage KPMG to audit the Municipality's financial statements for each fiscal year up to and including 2026/27.

In addition, the purpose of this letter is to outline the terms of our engagement to audit the annual financial statements of the Halifax Regional Municipality – Miscellaneous Trust Funds and the Halifax Regional Municipality – Statement of General Rate Surplus ("financial statements" or "additional financial statements") during the Initial Term and each Term Extension (collectively, the "Term").

Our previous letter to the Entity dated July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 is still in effect with the only change being a change in audit signing partner for the audit from previous years.

We are available to provide a wide range of services beyond those outlined above. Additional services are subject to separate terms and arrangements.

We are proud to provide you with the services outlined above and we appreciate your confidence in our work. We shall be pleased to discuss this letter with you at any time. If the arrangements and terms are acceptable, please sign the duplicate of this letter in the space provided and return it to us.

Yours very truly,

Handwritten signature of KPMG LLP in black ink, with a horizontal line underneath.

Paul Janes, CPA, CA

Partner, responsible for the engagement performance and for the report that is issued on behalf of KPMG LLP, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal, or regulatory body.

Steno/Reference  
Enclosure

cc: Chief Financial Officer  
Audit Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

The terms of the engagement set out are as agreed:

Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_  
(having the appropriate authority to engage the Entity)

Date (dd/mm/yy) \_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix: Regulatory communications



## CPAB communication protocol

The reports available through the following links were published by the Canadian Public Accountability Board to inform Audit Committees and other stakeholders about the results of quality inspections conducted over the past year:

- [CPAB Audit Quality Insights Report: 2022 Annual Inspections Results](#)
- [CPAB Audit Quality Insights Report: 2023 Interim Inspections Results](#)
- [CPAB Regulatory Oversight Report: 2023 Annual Inspections Results](#)
- [CPAB Audit Quality Insights Report: 2024 Interim Inspections Results](#)



# Appendix: Newly effective and upcoming changes to auditing standards

For more information on newly effective and upcoming changes to auditing standards - see Current Developments 

Effective for periods beginning on or after December 15, 2023

## ISA 600/CAS 600

.....  
Revised special considerations – Audits of group financial statements

Effective for periods beginning on or after December 15, 2024

## ISA 260/CAS 260

.....  
Communications with those charged with governance

## ISA 700/CAS 700

.....  
Forming an opinion and reporting on the financial statements



# Appendix: Audit and assurance insights

Our latest thinking on the issues that matter most to Audit Committees, board of directors and management.

## [KPMG Audit & Assurance Insights](#)

Curated research and insights for audit committees and boards.

## [Board Leadership Centre](#)

Leading insights to help board members maximize boardroom opportunities

## [Current Developments](#)

Series of quarterly publications for Canadian businesses including Spotlight on IFRS, Canadian Assurance & Related Services, Canadian Securities Matters, and US Outlook reports.

## [Accelerate - The key issues driving the audit committee agenda](#)

Discover the most pressing risks and opportunities that face audit committees, boards and management teams.

## [Sustainability Reporting](#)

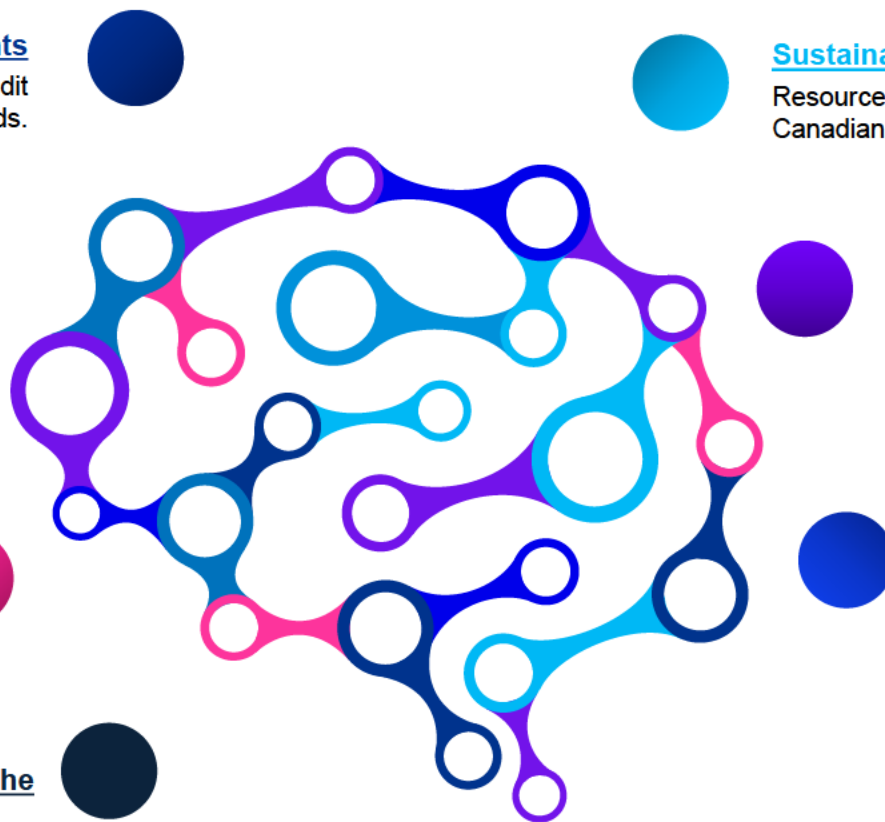
Resource centre on implementing the new Canadian reporting standards

## [IFRS Breaking News](#)

A monthly Canadian newsletter that provides the latest insights on accounting, financial reporting and sustainability reporting.

## [Audit Committee Guide – Canadian Edition](#)

A practical guide providing insight into current challenges and leading practices shaping audit committee effectiveness in Canada.





# Appendix: Our technology story



## Streamlined client experience

And deeper insights into your business, translating to a better audit experience.



## Secure

A secure client portal provides centralized, efficient coordination with your audit team.



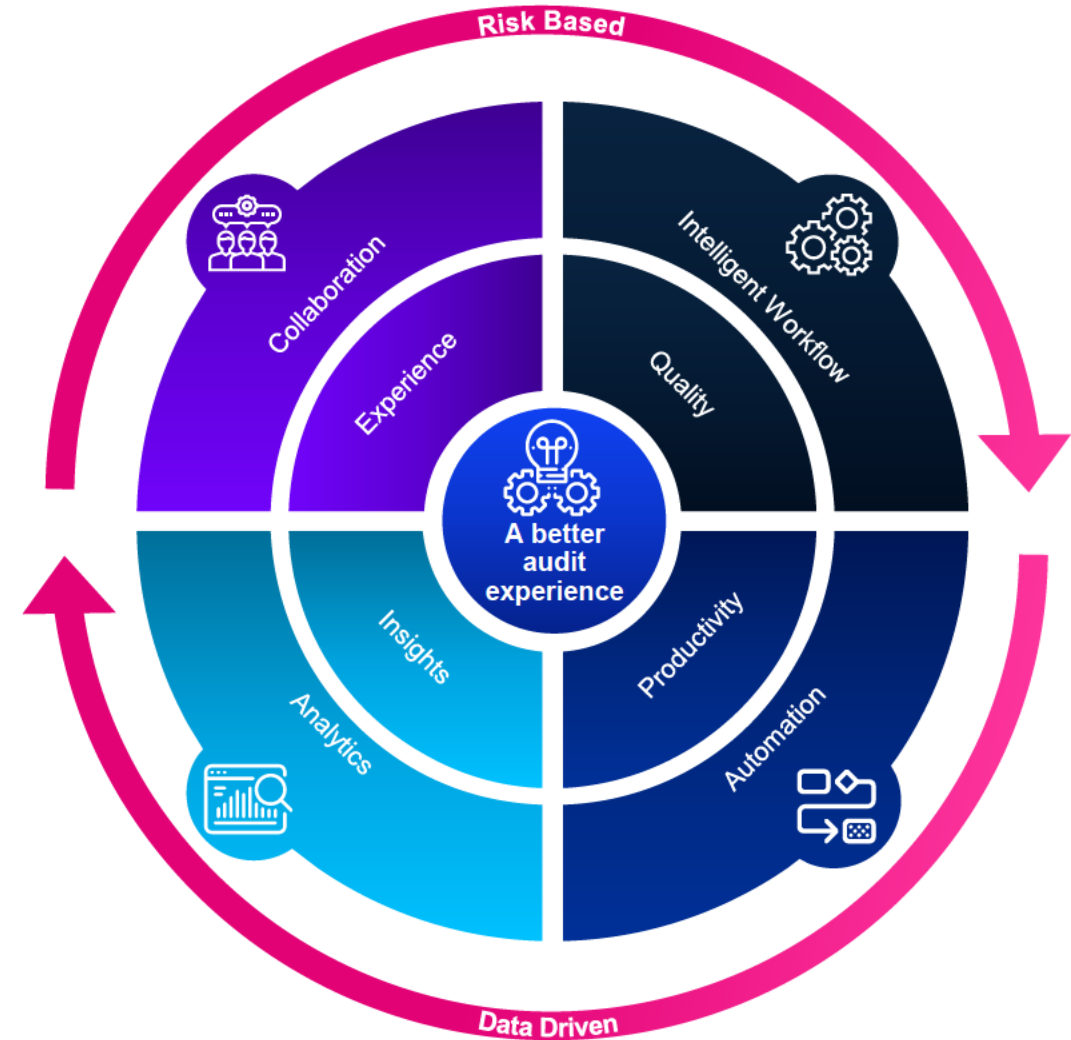
## Intelligent workflow

An intelligent workflow guides audit teams through the audit.



## Increased precision

Advanced data analytics and automation facilitate a risk-based audit approach, increasing precision and reducing your burden.





# Appendix: Expanding the use of audit technology



## Analytics

- AI Transaction Scoring
- Audit Routine Catalogue
- Data Visualization
- Group Scoping Tool
- Matching Routines
- Process Mining Analytics
- KPMG Forecast Analytics Suite



## Automation

- Automated Industry Routines
- Confirmation
- Data Extraction Scripts
- DataShare
- DataSnipper
- Inventory Counter App
- iRadar and iNav
- Offset Remover



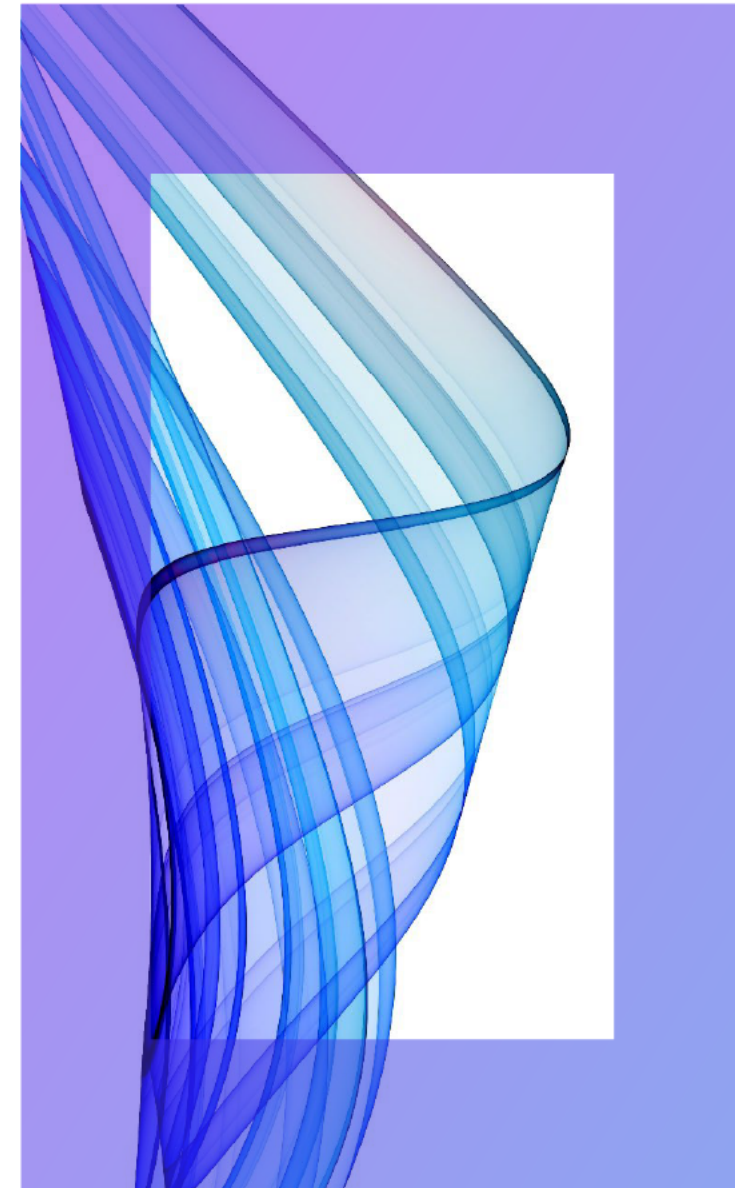
## Collaboration

- DocuSign™
- KPMG Clara for Clients



## Workflow

- KPMG Clara Workflow
- Account Analysis
- Journal Entry Analysis
- Planning Analytics







# Appendix: Continuous evolution

## Our investment: \$5B

We are in the midst of a five-year investment to develop our people, digital capabilities, and advanced technology.

## Responsive delivery model

Tailored to you to drive impactful outcomes around the quality and effectiveness of our audits.

## Result: A better experience

Enhanced quality, reduced disruption, increased focus on areas of higher risk, and deeper insights into your business.





[kpmg.ca](https://kpmg.ca)

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