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Summary of the Evaluation of the Centre of Expertise for Real Property

Context

The Centre of Expertise for Real Property (RP COE) was established in June 2021 to:

- facilitate implementation of the Fixed Asset Review's (FAR's) recommendations
- help departments and agencies adapt to changes to real property resulting from the pandemic

Evaluation approach

The evaluation targeted relevance, implementation, and progress towards two immediate outcomes. It covered the RP COE's activities from its inception to October 2023.

Findings

- There is strong evidence of an ongoing need for the RP COE to facilitate collaboration and provide leadership on the horizontal management of federal real property.
 - Since the 1960s, multiple reviews and audits have highlighted a need for this role.
 - Similar sentiments were voiced by interviewees who support the RP COE's role and placement within TBS.
- RP COE's implementation was effective to a large extent. It was less so when it moved from a focused approach to one that was less strategic.
 - RP COE's implementation and its numerous activities and collaboration with departments and agencies on broad issues drew heavily on the RP COE's modest resources.
 - These activities moved the RP COE away from its original FAR focus.
- RP COE has strengthened central leadership and horizontal governance. Lack of a government-wide strategy and a central decision-making body were identified as gaps.
 - Unlike the comparator jurisdictions, there is currently no GC enterprise-wide real property strategy or decision-making body to drive actions, commitments, transformation or resourcing.
- Departments and agencies have real property portfolio strategies to some extent. Hands-on and tailored support and shared best practices would help these departments and agencies improve their strategies.

Recommendations

Given the government's recent decision to no longer fund the RP-COE, TBS's Internal Audit and Evaluation Bureau encourages ASAS to continue its support to departments and agencies on real property, potentially through the Deputy Minister Real Property Committee, and help the professionalization of the real property community.

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