



## SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION OF THE COUNCIL OF CANADIAN ACADEMIES (CCA) MARCH 2018

### ABOUT THE EVALUATION

- The evaluation examined the relevance and performance of ISED's contribution to the CCA.
- It covered the period from 2005-06 to 2016-17.

### WHAT THE EVALUATION FOUND

- The CCA responds to the need for independent, objective and transparent scientific knowledge to support evidence-based decision-making.
- The CCA has produced credible, independent and evidence-based assessments for the federal government and these assessments have supported decision-making.
- Although the CCA conducts some awareness activities to highlight its assessments, more can be done to disseminate assessment findings.
- In terms of ISED's program oversight, the assessment proposal submission and approval process is effective at supporting the steady conduct of assessments on behalf of the federal government. However, the process is lengthy and unpredictable for departments/agencies.
- Overall, program delivery by the CCA is efficient and effective. The CCA uses expert volunteers to help drive down the cost of its assessments. Assessment and administration costs are in line with expectations and the CCA has improved its leveraging of funding from other sources. Timelines to complete an assessment are also largely consistent with targets.
- The CCA has made improvements to its operations and governance which have contributed to efficiency and effectiveness gains in the production of assessments.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- *The CCA is a not-for-profit organization created in 2005 to produce credible and independent assessments that cover a broad range of science.*
- *The objective of the CCA is to enhance Canadians' access to the best available scientific knowledge on pressing issues to inform debate, discussion, and decision-making.*
- *Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada funds CCA assessments on behalf of federal departments/agencies through its assessment proposal submission and approval process. ISED's funding to the CCA is \$3 million per year.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS (as agreed upon by management)

The findings from the evaluation led to the following recommendations to ISED.

1. Develop, in consultation with the CCA, a coordinated approach to improve the dissemination of CCA assessments.
2. In collaboration with the sponsoring federal department/agency, strengthen tracking of the results and impacts of ISED-funded CCA assessments.
3. Review its submission and approval process to simplify and better respond to the timelines and needs for scientific knowledge by the federal government. Going forward, consideration should be given to a process which would increase predictability for both the CCA and the federal government.
4. Develop service standards for key steps in the proposal submission and approval process.