

# REVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
JUNE 30, 2012

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### **AUDIT SUMMARY**

This report includes results of our annual review of performance measures reported by the Department of Planning and Budget (Planning and Budget) on the *Virginia Performs* website. The <u>Code of Virginia</u> requires we perform this annual review to determine that agencies are reporting accurate and appropriate information.

We reviewed the information reported on *Virginia Performs* for a sample of measures to determine the performance measure results for fiscal year 2012 were accurate, reliable, and understandable. Planning and Budget reports over 1,400 performance measures on *Virginia Performs* and they classify these measures into three different types - key measures, productivity measures, and other agency measures, as shown below.

	# of
Performance Measure Type	measures
Key measures	224
Productivity measures	78
Other agency measures	<u>1,135</u>
Total	1,437

Our previous reviews have examined key and productivity measures for executive branch agencies. In our current review, we examined other agency measures reported for executive branch agencies. We found the 2012 performance measure results reported on *Virginia Performs* were accurate and reliable for 83 percent of the performance measures we reviewed this year; however, we continue to find that citizens and others may have difficulty understanding the measures and their results due to inaccurate, inconsistent, and confusing descriptions and supporting information. These understandability issues are consistent with our previous reviews and although progress has been made, some measures may still be difficult for readers to understand and further improvement is needed.

As part of our review this year, we also gathered information from executive branch agencies on the usefulness of the performance measures. We surveyed agencies on how often they used key measures, productivity measures and other agency measures, and what they used them for. While most agencies frequently use their key performance measures, it appears that both productivity and other agency measures are of limited usefulness to agencies.

Productivity and other agency measures makes up close to 85 percent of all the measures reported on *Virginia Performs*. This is a significant number of measures and it requires a considerable amount of resources to maintain and track information on these measures. While the intent of these types of measures is to provide increased accountability, Planning and Budget may way want to evaluate whether these measures are adding value to the process or whether the current performance measurement process should be reexamined.

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## REVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This report summarizes our required review of executive branch agency performance measures. Section 30-133 (B) of the Code of Virginia requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to conduct an annual audit of performance measures and to review the related management systems used to accumulate and report the results.

The Department of Planning and Budget (Planning and Budget) is responsible for the development, coordination, and implementation of a performance management system which includes performance measurement. The four components of the Commonwealth's performance management system are as follows:

Strategic Performance Performance Program
Planning Budgeting Measurement Evaluation

Planning and Budget is also required to ensure that the performance management information is useful for managing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of state government operations, and is available to citizens and public officials. Planning and Budget maintains the <u>Virginia Performs</u> website which serves as a resource for performance management information for executive branch agencies. Our review focuses on the performance measurement component and performance measures that are reported on *Virginia Performs*.

Planning and Budget has developed three different classifications for performance measures reported on *Virginia Performs* - key measures, productivity measures, and other agency measures. They have defined the different types of performance measures as follows:

- Key measures are related to an agency's core mission.
- <u>Productivity</u> measures are intended to measure the costs associated with an agency's core business functions.
- Other agency measures are related to an agency's program functions.

Planning and Budget requires agencies to have at least one productivity measure and no more than three or four key measures. Planning and Budget also requires agencies to have at least one performance measure for each budget service area to provide accountability over each budget area. To comply with this requirement, agencies have developed a significant number of measures that are classified as "other agency" measures.

#### OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHOD OF REVIEW

Our objectives were to determine that performance measure information on *Virginia Performs* was accurate, reliable, and understandable for the performance measures we reviewed; determine if Planning and Budget and state agencies are in compliance with the <u>Code of Virginia</u> and Appropriation Act requirements applicable to the state's performance measurement system; and follow up on the prior year's recommendations.

Planning and Budget provided us a copy of the Performance Measures database from the Performance Budgeting System as of January 16, 2013. The database is the underlying source for the information reported on *Virginia Performs*. The database contained information on over 1,400 performance measures, shown in the table below by performance measures type.

Performance Measures By Type		
	# of	% of
Measure Type	measures	measures
Key measures	224	16%
Productivity measures	78	5%
Other agency measures	<u>1,135</u>	79%
Total	1,437	100%

While our previous reviews examined key and productivity performance measures, this review focused on the third type of measure, other agency measures. We selected a random sample of 75 other agency measures which covered 47 different executive branch agencies. Our review did not include performance measures for colleges and universities who report similar information on a different website maintained by the State Council of Higher Education.

Performance measures on the *Virginia Performs* website contain several standard reporting elements which are intended to provide information to help the user understand the measure and how it was calculated so they can better interpret the results. For each measure we selected, we reviewed the various elements on *Virginia Performs* for accuracy, reliability, and understandability. We sought to ensure the average user could understand the performance measure results and accompanying information. We specifically evaluated each element as follows:

- We reviewed the *Measure Name* to ensure that it accurately reflected what the measure was.
- We reviewed the *Measure Type* to ensure that it was appropriate in relation to the performance measure.
- We reviewed the *Preferred Trend* to ensure it was appropriate in relation to the performance measure.

- We reviewed the *Measure Methodology* to ensure it was reasonable and offered the user the necessary information to determine the data sources used for the measure and how the agency calculated the measure.
- We reviewed the *Measure Baseline* to ensure that the agency provided the appropriate data and the data accurately represented the information within the performance measure.
- We reviewed the *Measure Targets* to ensure that the agency provided the appropriate data and the data accurately represented the information within the performance measure.
- We reviewed the *Measure Frequency* for consistency with the measure target and measure baseline, and to ensure that updating of the measure occurred in accordance with the established time frame.
- We reviewed the *Measure Data* (results or the value used to describe the activity performance) reported for fiscal year 2012, or the most recent available data points, to ensure that it was accurate, within a five percent tolerable threshold, and to ensure that it was updated in accordance with Planning and Budget guidelines.
- We reviewed the *Explanatory Note* field for applicability and appropriateness, and ensured that agencies followed guidelines established by Planning and Budget.

As part of our review, we obtained and reviewed documentation from the various agencies and interviewed agency staff. We reviewed guidance and instructions from Planning and Budget to the individual agencies. In addition, we followed up on recommendations and specific exceptions from our prior review to determine if the agencies had resolved those issues.

#### REVIEW OF CURRENT YEAR'S PERFORMANCE MEASURES SAMPLE

Similar to our prior reviews, we found the majority of results reported for fiscal year 2012 were accurate, but we continued to find issues with how well the user could understand what was being measured based on information reported on *Virginia Performs*. We found the Measure Results reported for fiscal year 2012 were accurate for 62 of the 75 measures (83 percent) reviewed.

We also found a significant number of exceptions in measure elements that affect the user's ability to understand the performance measure and interpret the results. Forty-two of the 75 (56 percent) measures we reviewed had some type of issue that affected the user's ability to understand what the agency was measuring or how it measured the results. These exceptions are consistent with our previous reviews and while we have found improvements, there are still many misunderstandings over what information should be provided and how it should be presented.

We have summarized the most significant exceptions below, noting that some performance measures had more than one type of exception. We have reported the individual exceptions by agency and performance measure in Appendix A.

- *Measure Methodology* was not adequate so the user could understand how the agency calculated the measure and the source of data for the measure for 31 performance measures (41 percent error rate). This is a significant decrease from the previous year's 72 percent error rate.
- *Measure Type* was not accurate for 11 performance measures (15 percent error rate). This error rate is consistent with the previous year's error rate.
- *Measure Target* was not reasonable or did not include the appropriate information required by Planning and Budget for four performance measures (six percent error rate). This is a significant decrease from the previous year's 48 percent error rate.

#### STATUS OF PRIOR YEAR RECOMMENDATIONS TO INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES

As part of our review, we also followed up on issues reported in our prior review for specific performance measures. Overall, we found that most of these issues were resolved by the end of our review. Our prior report identified various issues with performance measures at 28 agencies.

We followed up on these issues and found that five agencies had corrected all of their issues and 22 agencies had corrected some or most of their issues. We also found one agency that did not correct any of their issues. While there was significant improvement in the resolution of issues from our prior reviews, agencies continue to have some challenges understanding Planning and Budget guidance and procedures for changing performance measures in *Virginia Performs*.

#### STATUS OF PRIOR YEAR SYSTEMWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Planning and Budget is responsible for overseeing the strategic planning and performance measurement processes. Both the <u>Code of Virginia</u> and the Appropriation Act contain requirements over Planning and Budget's responsibility for these processes. Overall, Planning and Budget is responsible for ensuring that information generated from the performance measures processes is useful for managing and improving efficiency and effectiveness of state government operations, and is available to citizens and public officials. The Act further requires Planning and Budget periodically review the structure and content of plans and performance measures, the processes used to develop and implement the plans and measures, the degree to which agencies achieve intended goals and results, and the relation between intended and actual results and budget requirements.

In following up on our systemwide recommendation in our previous review, we contacted Planning and Budget to obtain any updated policies and procedures, as well as information on any training provided to agencies and Planning and Budget analysts since our last review. While Planning and Budget did have training for agency staff in August 2011, there has been limited training for Planning and Budget analysts.

As a result, Planning and Budget analysts are not trained in how to review performance measures information, nor are they required to review agency performance measure information on a regular basis. As Planning and Budget staff disclosed during last year's and this year's review,

Planning and Budget analysts have not been formally reviewing performance measures. While Planning and Budget has dedicated some resources to this process, often other higher priority areas such as budget development take precedence. As we have recommended in our previous reviews, Planning and Budget should continue to strengthen their oversight of the performance measurement process.

#### Recommendation: Strengthen Planning and Budget Oversight

Planning and Budget needs to strengthen its oversight over the performance measurement process. The Appropriation Act requires that Planning and Budget be responsible for the continued development and coordination of a review process for strategic plans and performance measures of the state agencies. The review process shall assess on a periodic basis the structure and content of plans and performance measures, the processes used to develop and implement the plans and measures, the degree to which agencies achieve intended goals and results, and the relation between intended and actual results and budget requirements.

A lack of oversight creates a performance measures process that produces measures that are not understandable, and not useful to agencies, decision makers, and the public. To improve their oversight, Planning and Budget should better train analysts in how to review the information and what to look for. In addition, they should periodically review the information to ensure measures meet guidelines established by Planning and Budget and are effectively achieving their intended purpose of increased accountability.

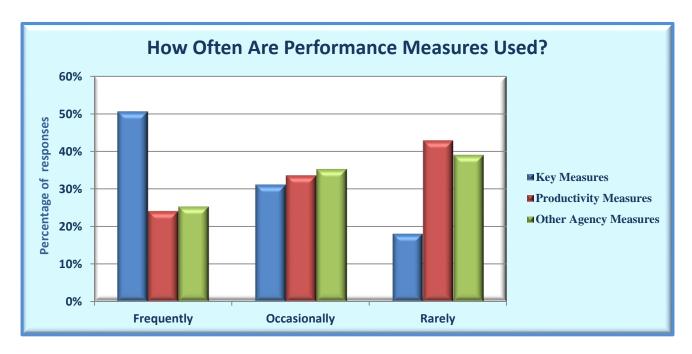
## RESULTS OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES SURVEY

During this year's review, we conducted a survey of executive branch agencies to determine how often performance measures were being used by the agency and what they were used for. Our survey included staff at approximately 100 executive branch agencies and included at least one individual from each of these agencies. We obtained a listing from Planning and Budget of staff involved in the strategic planning process and we directed our survey to these individuals. Our survey did not include Planning and Budget staff, legislative members or staff, or citizens, all of whom may use information on *Virginia Performs*.

We received 97 individual responses and we have summarized the responses below. The responses were anonymous so we are unable to determine which agencies or staff responded to our survey. Our survey this year was directed at executive branch agencies because they are expected to be the primary user of this information, but any conclusions reached as a result of the survey responses need to consider the limited survey audience. Our future reviews may include additional surveys to address how often performance measures information is being used by legislative members and staff, as well as citizens.

#### HOW OFTEN ARE PERFORMANCE MEASURES USED?

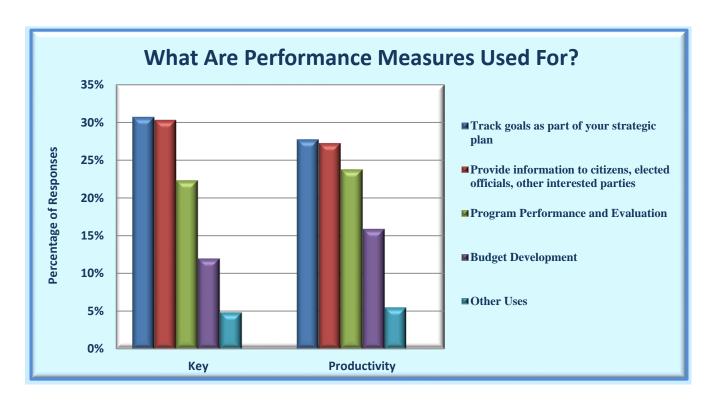
We surveyed executive branch agency staff on how often they used performance measures information. We obtained information on this question for each type of measure - key, productivity and other agency measures. Overall, we found that key measures were used significantly more often than productivity or other agency measures. While over 50 percent of our respondents indicated that they frequently use key performance measures, over 70 percent indicated that they rarely use productivity measures or other agency measures. The following chart summarizes the responses by measure type and frequency.



#### WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE MEASURES USED FOR?

We also surveyed executive branch agency staff on what they were using the performance measures information for to gain an understanding of how the information is being used by agencies. We again obtained information on this question for each type of measure - key, productivity and other agency measures. Given that other agency measures are rarely used as discussed above, we did not analyze this information or include the results below.

Overall, we found that the primary ways that agencies are using the performance measures information is to track goals as part of the strategic planning process and to provide information to citizens, elected officials, and other interested parties. We have summarized responses below for both key and productivity measures to show how agencies are using this information.



#### AGENCY COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Lastly, as part of our survey, we gave agency staff an opportunity to make suggestions on ways to improve the performance measures process. We received 29 suggestions or comments and have summarized the most common suggestions in the following areas. Some of these comments and suggestions further support some of the survey results we discussed above.

#### • Disconnect between performance measures and agency operations

Currently performance measures are aligned with budget programs and service areas. We received several comments about the disconnect between the service areas and actual business activities at the agencies. These agency activities are aligned to departments and business activities as opposed to service areas and as a result, some of the performance measures are of limited usefulness.

#### • Usefulness of measures other than key measures

As we have discussed throughout this report, there are several types of performance measures currently required – key measures, productivity measures, and other agency measures. We received several comments from staff who stated that their only meaningful measures are key measures. They suggested that some of the other measures are used only for the purpose of satisfying statewide requirements or were required in previous administrations and no longer have any benefit to the agencies.

#### **OBSERVATIONS FROM SURVEY RESULTS**

As stated earlier, this survey was directed to executive branch staff and did not include Planning and Budget staff, legislative members or staff, or citizens. Given this, any conclusions reached as a result of the survey responses need to consider the limited survey audience. Having said that, there are some observations from the survey that should be considered.

Of the 1,437 performance measures reported on the *Virginia Performs* website, over 1,100 (or close to 80 percent) represent other agency measures. It requires a considerable amount of resources to maintain and track information on these measures and it appears that from an agency perspective they are adding minimal value to the strategic planning process. This could be due to several factors including the disconnect between the service areas and the agency's business activities which limits the usefulness of the measures to the agency that we discussed earlier; or possibly the measure itself is the not the best measure for the service area and that is limiting the usefulness of the measure.

Planning and Budget should consider these factors in evaluating the purpose of the other agency measures and whether or not they are providing the intended accountability. Some of these same observations could be applied to the productivity measures, but they appear to be used slightly more and require less effort to maintain given that there are not as many of these types of measures.

#### Recommendation: Evaluate Performance Measurement Process

Overall, Planning and Budget should review the current performance measurement process, including the measure classifications, and determine if the process is providing the intended accountability over agency operations and resources. As part of this, Planning and Budget should evaluate the value that other agency measures are adding to the strategic planning process. While the intent of these measures is to provide accountability over each service area in the budget, Planning and Budget may want to consider the value these measures are adding to the process in light of resources required to maintain the information.



Auditor of Public Accounts

# Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295 Richmond, Virginia 23218

June 14, 2013

The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell Governor of Virginia

The Honorable John M. O'Bannon, III Chairman, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission

We have audited the performance measures reported on the *Virginia Performs* website and are pleased to submit our report entitled "**Review of Agency Performance Measures**" for the year ended June 30, 2012. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

#### Results of Review

Overall, we found that performance measures results reported for fiscal year 2012 were accurate and reliable for the majority of our sample. However, we did find a significant number of exceptions in other data elements that affect the user's ability to understand the performance measure and interpret the results. We also found some that some of the performance measures may be of limited usefulness to agencies.

We followed up on our audit findings from the prior year audit report and the results of this follow up are discussed in the sections entitled "Status of Prior Year Recommendations to Individual Agencies" and "Status of Prior Year Systemwide Recommendations."

### Exit Conference and Report Distribution

We provided a draft of this report to Department of Planning and Budget management on July 23, 2013. They concurred with the report and elected not to provide a formal agency response.

This report is intended for the information and use of the Governor and General Assembly, management, and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia and is a public record.

**AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS** 

lcw/clj

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY INDIVIDUAL AGENCY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURE

This Appendix summarizes the results of our review of current year performance measures by agency and individual measure. The following key is used to describe any exceptions found for each measure.

#### **Exception Key**

- 1- Measure Name does not accurately reflect what the measure was.
- 2- *Measure Type* is not appropriate in relation to the performance measure.
- 3- *Preferred Trend* is not appropriate in relation to the performance measure.
- 4- *Measure Methodology* is not adequate so the user could understand how the agency calculated the measure and the source of data for the measure.
- 5- Measure Baseline is not appropriate and accurate.
- 6- *Measure Target* is not appropriate and accurate.
- 7- Measure Results is not accurate within a five percent tolerable threshold.
- 8- Measure Results were not reported timely in Virginia Performs.

Agency Name	Measure Name	Type of Exceptions
Accounts	Percentage of time that original legislative appropriations are recorded and reconciled within 7 days of receipt from the Department of Planning and Budget	4
Accounts	Percent of the hotline cases assigned within two business days	4
Aging	Number of one-way transportation trips	None
Agriculture and Consumer Services	Percentage of pound and shelters inspected	None
Agriculture and Consumer Services	Number of inspectional activities	None
Agriculture and Consumer Services	Amount of time required to process all product registrations including new product registrations and registration renewals	None
Agriculture and Consumer Services	Average test turnaround time	None
Alcoholic Beverage Control	Number of management points assessed by Auditor of Public Accounts audit	2,4,7,8
Aviation	Ratio of aviation promotion grants executed to the value of allocations available	3
Blind and Vision Impaired	Percentage of textbook orders received by 6/1 that are delivered by 9/1, and of orders received after 6/1 that are delivered within 90 days	2,4,7,8
Board for People with Disabilities	Number of Policy Recommendations presented to state officials annually	7

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Agency Name	Measure Name	Type of Exceptions
Business Assistance	Percentage of Virginia Jobs Investment Program projects that achieve a return on investment within the first 12 months of jobs being created	4
Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council	Number of Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices accessing the Resource Center	7
Compensation Board	Overall customer satisfaction with Compensation Board activities, as demonstrated by the ratings (%) received in an annual survey of all constitutional officers	4,6
Conservation and Recreation	Number of new outdoor recreation projects funded annually through outdoor recreation grants to meet the needs of local communities and statewide recreation demands	None
Corrections	Percentage of food service staff that complete and maintain their ServSafe National Restaurant Association Education Foundation certification	2
Criminal Justice Services	Percentage of criminal justice profiles of Virginia localities published annually	2,4
Criminal Justice Services	Percentage of grant recipients monitored	None
Deaf and Hard-Of- Hearing	Percentage of state agencies, colleges and universities and their local counterparts participating in the VDDHH Interpreter Services Contract who utilize the contract to secure interpreter services	6
Education, Central Office	Percentage of school divisions that increased their reimbursements from federal and state funding sources	4
Environmental Quality	Number of watersheds for which an assessment of surface water assessment has been conducted	2
Environmental Quality	Number of local comprehensive plans amended based on Sustainable Communities grants to better protect blue and green infrastructure or prepare for climate change impacts	1,4,7
Forensic Science	Average turn-around time for latent print / impressions and digital / multi-media evidence cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)	None
Forensic Science	Average turn-around time for completed firearms/toolmarks cases that are examined and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)	None
Forestry	Agency Preparedness Assessment Score	1
Forestry	Percentage of eligible rural volunteer fire departments receiving available state and federal financial assistance	4,7
Game and Inland Fisheries	Establish an exceptional and diverse fish population in lakes and rivers; providing a satisfying sport fishing experience for the citizens of the Commonwealth	2,4
Game and Inland Fisheries	Personnel hours applied to the coordination and development of project recommendations	None
General Services	Number of customers served	4,7

Agency Name	Measure Name	Type of Exceptions
Health	Percent of scheduled restaurant inspections conducted within 30 days of the scheduled date	4
Health	Immunization coverage rates of children at school entry	4
Health	Number of routine waterworks inspections conducted in accordance with the Office of Drinking Water schedule	4
Health	Number of Fatality and Mortality Review reports produced	4,7
Health	Number of pregnant women receiving direct and/or facilitative services through local health departments	None
Health Professions	Percent of healthcare practitioner licenses renewed online	4
Historic Resources	Percentage of agency responses that comply with the 30-day federal response requirement for state, federal, and local project review	4
Housing and Community Development	Number of localities and other clients requesting information or other assistance on local boundary changes and governmental transition issues and local government fiscal conditions	2,6
Human Resource Management	Percentage increase of employees and family members utilizing annual checkups and screenings	7,8
Human Resource Management	Completion of timeline for roll out, training, and implementation	None
Indigent Defense Commission	Employee turnover rate	None
Juvenile Justice	Percentage of juveniles convicted of a new misdemeanor or felony within a year of being placed on probation in the three local Court Service Units (CSU)	None
Juvenile Justice	Number of incidents of escapes from a secure, state- operated juvenile correctional facility	None
Labor and Industry	Number of occupational safety and health hazards identified	None
The Library Of Virginia	Number of bibliographic records added to the Library's online collections catalog	2,4
The Library Of Virginia	Number of public library materials available per capita	None
Medical Assistance Services	Number of Virginia Medicaid enrolled physicians actively submitting claims	4,7,8
Medical Assistance Services	Percent of HIV program available funds expended at the end of the state fiscal year	None
Medical Assistance Services	Percentage of agency's discretionary contracting and purchasing through SWaM vendors	4
Military Affairs	Per square foot cost for armory maintenance and repairs	4
Mines, Minerals and Energy	Percentage of miners rating the agency-provided mine safety training as very helpful or very effective	None
Mines, Minerals and Energy	Percentage of environmental violations on mineral mine sites successfully eliminated by the violations' due dates	None
Mines, Minerals and Energy	Percentage of safety violations on coal mine sites eliminated by their due date	None
Motor Vehicles	Agency Preparedness Assessment Score	None

Agency Name	Measure Name	Type of Exceptions
Museum of Natural History	Percentage of publications reviewed internally for accuracy and quality	4
Museum of Natural History	Number of Museum members	4
Planning and Budget	Average satisfaction rating of the Governor's policy staff with the quality and timeliness of the impact analyses	None
Professional and Occupational Regulation	Percent of disciplinary violations resolved through consent order. Violations are defined as disciplinary cases resulting in Final Order, Consent Agreement/Citation, or Consent Order	None
Racing Commission	Percent of administrative measures marked as "meets expectations" (green indicator) for the agency	7
Racing Commission	Number of samples taken and submitted to the laboratory for analysis	2,4
Rail and Public Transportation	The percentage of on time and on budget key transit projects	2,7
School for the Deaf and the Blind	Percentage of deaf students in grades 1-8 demonstrating personal improvement in math computation	4
School for the Deaf and the Blind	Agency Preparedness Assessment score	None
Science Museum of Virginia	Revenue generation per visitor	1,6
Social Services	Percent of adults with new reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation after APS interventions have been put in place	2
Social Services	Percent of former TANF participants gainfully employed six months after program exit	None
Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center	Percentage of Governor's Management Scorecard categories marked as meets expectations	None
State Police	Average time required to respond to and correct Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) trouble calls	4
Transportation	Percentage of environmental compliance (cumulative statewide average compliance score)	None
Transportation	Percentage of Pavement Lane Miles constructed (Plan to Actual comparison)	None
Veterans Services	Percentage of USDVA Claims Folders and Rating Decisions reviewed within seven business days of the decision being signed by the USDVA and made available for review by DVS	3,4
Virginia Retirement	Percent of service retirement cases placed on payroll	4
System Virginia Retirement System	Asset allocations are monitored based on trust fund policy	1,4
VITA	Percentage of local Emergency-911 call centers receiving on schedule delivery of digital orthophotography to assist with emergency planning, response and recovery	4

Agency Name	Measure Name	Type of Exceptions
VITA	The percentage of agency requests for exceptions to Commonwealth Information Technology Resource Management (ITRM) Accessibility Standard requirements that were granted for more than 1 year	7,8
VITA	Percentage of service level objectives met	None