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Auditor releases annual report, strategic plan for future

RALEIGH _ The annual report for the Office of the State Auditor released Tuesday includes not only a summary of the agency's actions for the last fiscal year, but also a strategic plan for changes that State Auditor Leslie Merritt plans for the office in the future.

"Annual reports traditionally summarize what has happened in the previous year," Merritt said. "However, I wanted to add some details about what we are planning to do in the future as well. I think it is important for legislators and the public to know where we plan to go with the office."

Among the goals the office plans to pursue is moving to more risk-based auditing, strengthening the oversight of nonprofit organizations and reducing the backlog and turnaround time for investigative audits. Risk-based auditing will include new technology to assess both the potential of programs for problems and the opportunities available for more efficient operations. Improved services to nonprofits include a greater effort to educate both nongovernmental groups that receive state funds and the state agencies that distribute them about the best practices to use in accounting and new reporting requirements imposed by the state this year.

The OSA plans to produce a Strategic Report soon after the first of the calendar year that will summarize the previous year's audit and organizational activities, and include follow-up reports on what audited entities have done to resolve findings.

The annual report is available at <http://www.ncauditor.net/webproject/static/private/NCOSA-2005AnnualReport.pdf>, or at the Office of the State Auditor website, www.ncauditor.net, under About Us.

