

Accountability Report

2016–2017

Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office
July 2017

2016-2017 Accountability Report

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A. Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report for the Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office for the year ended March 31, 2017, is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes for the fiscal year 2016-2017.

The report is a complete and accurate representation of our office's performance and outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in our Business Plan for the year 2016-2017.

Original signed by:

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
President of the Executive Council

Original signed by:

Laura Lee Langley
Clerk of the Executive Council
Deputy Minister to the Premier

Original signed by:

Jennifer Glennie
Acting Secretary to the Executive Council

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B. Message from the President of the Executive Council

I am pleased to present the accountability report for the Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office for the fiscal year 2016–2017.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) is the permanent non-partisan secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet) and its Committees and is non-departmental in function and purpose.

ECO provides administrative and operational support, such as business continuity, human resources and forecasting/budgeting for the Office of the Premier.

ECO supports the Executive Council in developing, advancing, measuring and reporting on the priorities of government. ECO is responsible for aligning and coordinating government departments in the execution of key priorities of government and provides advice and support regarding the governance of and appointments to agencies, boards and commissions.

Through corporate leadership in policy formulation, ECO provides and coordinates policy advice, works to increase and align policy capacity across government and aims to ensure that the business of Executive Council and its Committees is conducted in a timely and efficient manner.

Original signed by:

The Honourable Stephen McNeil, President of the Executive Council

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C. Priorities and Accomplishments

ECO identified two strategic outcomes for 2016-2017:

1. Informed decision making by Executive Council and its Committees is fully supported.
2. Government priorities are advanced and core responsibilities are fulfilled through leadership in planning, policy development/alignment and resource management across government;

Measurement of Performance

In order to measure service performance, in June 2017, ECO conducted a survey of 245 clients with which it interacts on a frequent basis including all departments, public service organizations, and crown corporations.

Questions in the survey related to the effectiveness of services provided by ECO. The survey sought feedback on priorities identified in our 2016-2017 Business Plan and these results will be used to set targets and future performance standards.

Overall, the response rate to the main survey was 34%. Although this number is lower than we would like, this exceeds the response rate of our June 2016 survey of 31.5%.

Highlights of the survey responses are found in this report under each relevant strategic outcome and the core services/activities that support that outcome. The responses for “somewhat agree” and “strongly agree” are aggregated as indicative of the perceived performance for each of the respective core functions.

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Strategic Outcome 1: Support to Executive Council and its committees

Informed decision making by Executive Council and its Committees is fully supported

- 84% of respondents agreed that ECO's submissions guide is useful and informative. This is an increase of 2% from the previous year. ECO will strive to increase this measure to 85 %.
- 88% of respondents agreed that ECO provided helpful and timely advice and guidance regarding the submissions process. Last year's response rate was 81%. ECO's goal will be to increase this measure to 90%.
- 82% of respondents agreed that ECO provided timely advice and guidance regarding the content of submissions. This is a 9% decrease from the previous year. ECO will strive to increase the satisfaction level to 85% for this measure.
- 86% of respondents agreed that decisions of Cabinet and its Committees were communicated in a timely manner. This is a 6% increase from the previous year, based on changes made to the distribution process. ECO will strive to increase this measure to 90%.
- 82% of respondents agreed that decisions of Cabinet and its Committees were communicated clearly and concisely. This is a 9% increase from the previous year, based on changes made to the communication process. ECO will strive to increase this measure to 85%.

ECO provides support and advice in respect to the governance and accountability of provincial agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs). It also oversees the process of appointment of citizens to ABCs.

- 79% of respondents agreed that the appointments process resources were useful (a decrease of 3% from the previous year) and 78% of respondents agreed that they received helpful advice with the ABC appointments process (a decrease of 7% from the previous year). A new online application process and updated database are being implemented in the Fall of 2017. ECO will provide training to departmental contacts for ABC's to ensure the new system and the appointment process and resources available to them are clearly understood.

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- 71% of respondents agreed that they received timely advice and guidance regarding the governance and accountability of a government agency. ECO will continue to work at increasing this measure to a satisfaction level of 75%.
- 37% of respondents receive notifications of amendments to the policies through the listserv. We provided the link to the listserv within the question so that people who were not members could subscribe, and 5 new subscribers joined the list between May 29th and July 11th. ECO will work to further promote the benefit of being a member of the listserv group and work to increase this rate to 50% before the next reporting period.

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Strategic Outcome 2: Government priorities are advanced and core responsibilities are fulfilled through leadership in planning, policy development/alignment and resource management across government

Stronger policy capacity and better cross departmental collaboration

- 67% of respondents felt ECO communicated government's goals and priorities clearly. This represents a decrease of 11% from the previous year. This continues to be a priority for ECO and we will strive to improve this measure to 75%.
- 65% of respondents felt ECO supported departments in creating and strengthening connections with other agencies and departments. This is a 15% increase from the prior year and ECO will strive to improve this measure to 70%.
- 56% said that ECO was helpful in the policy development process in their department/office. This represents an increase of 1% from the previous year. ECO will strive to increase this measure to 70%.
- 51% agreed that ECO supported the development of policy capacity throughout government. This represents a decrease of 13% from the previous year, however there were a large number of respondents (29%) that indicated that they were indifferent. ECO will strive to increase this measure to 65%.

ECO is currently realigning its resources to improve its policy capacity in policy analysis and leadership in priority areas.

The Premier's Delivery Unit (PDU) was established in the fall of 2016 to work with departments to advance and measure progress and outcomes of specified priority areas as identified by the Premier and Executive Council.

- 43% of respondents consulted the PDU in 2016-17. Of these respondents 51% of respondents agreed that the PDU effectively supported the development and/or implementation of priority areas identified and 47% said that the PDU provided helpful guidance and support to measure and report on priority areas. As a relatively new function, the office will continue to evolve its approach to strategy management to best meet the objectives as set by government.

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D. Financial Results

	2016-2017 Estimate	2016-2017 Actuals	2016-2017 Variance
Office of Premier/Executive Council Office			
Departmental Expenses:	(\$ thousands)		
Salaries & Benefits	4,413	4,113	(\$300)
Operating Costs	1,077	607	(\$470)
Grants & Contributions	10	7	(\$3)
Total: Departmental Expenses	5,500	4,727	(\$773)
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	44.0	38.4	(5.6)

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E. Annual Report Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labour Board.

A wrongdoing for the purpose of the Act is:

- a) A contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) A misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) An act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health, or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) Directing or counseling someone to commit a wrongdoing.

OP/ECO have no items to report for 2016-2017.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2016-2017
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a