



# Accountability Report 2019–20

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Energy and Mines



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Accountability Report 2019–2020

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## Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Department of Energy and Mines for the year ended March 31, 2020 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Energy and Mines' Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Department of Energy and Mines' outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department of Energy and Mines management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Department of Energy and Mines management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Department of Energy and Mines 2019-2020 Business Plan.

*Original signed by*

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Hon. Derek Mombourquette  
Minister

*Original signed by*

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Simon d'Entremont  
Deputy Minister

## Message from the Minister

As with all government departments, it has been an interesting year of growth and adaptation for the Department of Energy and Mines. This was a year of finding new ways to move toward our goal of a cleaner and more prosperous Nova Scotia, as we adapted how we work in the face of a rapidly changing global pandemic. I am extremely proud of the staff at the Department of Energy and Mines, and want to personally thank them for their continued hard work and dedication. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

This year, we made amendments to the *Electricity Act* that build on Nova Scotia's position as a national leader in the fight against climate change. We have set the most ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction goals in the country, and by 2030, our emissions will be 53 per cent below 2005 levels. By 2050, our emissions will be net-zero. What's exciting is that more and more people and organizations want to be part of our cleaner energy future.

At the same time, we must continue to manage our resources in a responsible and sustainable way. We remain committed to moving toward renewable electricity and growing our green economy, which will create jobs and local prosperity.

Mining continues to be important to our economy, producing commodities demanded by consumers and industry, and creating jobs and wealth for the province. Department staff continue to collect, interpret and disseminate geoscience data with the goal of growing the Province's mineral sector. Mineral exploration and mining will continue to coexist with the environment. Nova Scotians expect a high standard of protection, and that will be a key consideration going forward.

Our work in mineral and petroleum resources remains focused on becoming more innovative in efficient processes and continuing to enhance environmental protections. This work is evenly balanced by a significant effort in gathering, interpreting and promoting data to create economic growth in the province.

The Mineral Resources Development Fund provided more than 30 grants in 2019-20, including to university and industry-based researchers to study gold extraction methods without harsh chemicals, and innovative uses for Nova Scotia's gypsum. Through the Offshore Growth Strategy we continue to engage in a variety of research initiatives and utilize leading edge technology to advance the sector. This research elevates local research and builds innovation capacity, while helping de-risk geology for exploration activity, attracting new international investments to our province.

This report provides more detail on these, and many other initiatives that helped us deliver on our 2019-2020 commitments, and I invite you to read more about the activities of the Department of Energy and Mines.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

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Hon. Derek Mombourquette  
Minister

## Financial Results

	<b>2019-2020 Estimate</b>	<b>2019-2020 Actual</b>	<b>2019-2020 Variance</b>
Program & Service Area	(\$ thousands)	(\$ thousands)	(\$ thousands)
<b>Gross Departmental Expenses:</b>			
Office of the Minister and Deputy Minister	465	381	(84)
Administrative Services	1,181	1,154	(27)
Sustainable and Renewable Energy	2,745	2,745	-
Business Development & Corporate Services	3,213	2,997	(216)
Geoscience and Mines	5,529	5,196	(333)
Petroleum Resources	2,035	2,087	52
Canada – NS Offshore Petroleum Board	4,305	4,305	-
Clean Growth and Climate Change	29,563	15,357	(14,206)
<b>Total: Gross Departmental Expenses</b>	<b>49,036</b>	<b>34,222</b>	<b>(14,814)</b>
<b>Additional Information:</b>			
<b>Ordinary Recoveries</b>	<b>27,785</b>	<b>21,869</b>	<b>(5,916)</b>
<b>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>91.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>

**Variance Explanation:**

1. Gross Departmental Expenses were \$14.8 million lower than estimated, primarily due to a underspend of \$10.5 million in Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program expenses (& related recoveries); and a \$3.8 million reduction in Low Carbon Economy Fund expenses.
2. Ordinary Recoveries were \$5.9 million lower than estimated, primarily due to reduced recoverable expenses from the Government of Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
3. Provincial Funded staff (FTEs) variance was primarily due to various temporarily vacant positions throughout the year.

## Measuring our Performance

The mandate of the Department of Energy and Mines is to serve the social, environmental, and economic interests of Nova Scotians by promoting the efficient, effective and environmentally sound use of energy and mineral resources.

The 2017 Ministerial Mandate letters outline that our work is to be directed towards the following strategic actions:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Continue with enhancements to the non-electric, home energy efficiency program
- Continue to develop the Offshore Growth Strategy
- Create a Mineral Resources Development Fund
- Ensure electricity rate stability and reduce energy costs for low income individuals and families
- Continue work on tidal and renewable energy

In addition to these strategic actions, the following initiatives have guided the work of the Department's other core functions in 2019-2020:

- Geoscience and resource development to better promote province's energy and mineral resources
- Oversee the Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship Program
- Operate the Energy Training Program
- Regulatory Initiatives and ongoing regulatory modernization
- Administration and auditing of onshore and offshore royalties

Highlights of the Department's accomplishments are included in the following sections, under the heading of the Ministerial mandate or core function to which they are most directly aligned.

### 2019-2020 Departmental Performance on Ministerial Mandate

The 2019-2020 Business Plans for Energy and Mines outlined activities, initiatives, and measures relating to its mandate. The following is an overview of our progress in the past year.

#### Continued to work on greenhouse gas mitigation

Nova Scotia is a national leader in fighting climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) with the most ambitious emission reduction targets in the country. The Department of Energy and Mines supported the Department of Environment and other Departments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through policy and program support and through green infrastructure investments (such as the Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency program, the Housing Nova Scotia deep retrofit program and funding for HRM's active transportation infrastructure.) In cooperation with the Government of Canada, the Department of Energy and Mines supported strategic investments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, leverage private investment, and support community-led clean energy projects.

In July 2019 the Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Canada committing to explore options relating to the production of renewable electricity in the Province. The Department amended the *Electricity Act* in February 2020 to support this initiative, enabling the development of the Green Choice Program. This program will be launched once accompanying regulations are developed and will result in a new, simplified process for large-scale customers to procure renewable electricity.

Two significant areas that the Department focussed on in 2019-2020 include:

*Low Carbon Programming*

To support greenhouse gas emission reductions, the Department administers the Low Carbon Communities and Connect2 Grant programs – programs designed to help municipalities, Mi'kmaw communities, and not-for-profit organizations create new ideas for clean energy in their communities. These Programs invested \$1.37 million in clean transportation, solar, and other low carbon projects, led by First Nations, municipalities, and non-profit organizations in 2019-2020, leveraging \$8.8 million in additional funding. The Department also partnered with several organizations to engage with stakeholders, such as QUEST (to deliver the Municipal Energy Learning Group, the Buildings Working Group and the Powered by Communities initiatives); the Canada Green Buildings Council; Bicycle NS and CANSIA.

*Green Infrastructure Funding*

The Department worked with the Departments of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and Municipal Affairs and Housing as well as the Government of Canada to establish two projects under the Green Infrastructure stream of the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. These projects support housing efficiency retrofits in First Nations communities and Housing Nova Scotia properties across the province.

The Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency Program is an investment of \$14 million (\$3.5 million from the Province) in the first four years of a 10-year program to provide deep energy retrofits. It is expected that 2,400 homes in total will be retrofitted, including 900 homes in the first four years. This project will see all on-reserve band-owned Mi'kmaw homes qualify for efficiency upgrades like new insulation, heat pumps and draft-proofing. It will lower heating and power bills, cut greenhouse gas emissions, improve the health, comfort and safety of homes, and create green jobs in all 13 Mi'kmaq communities. Training opportunities in energy efficiency are being developed in partnership with the Mi'kmaq communities, Efficiency Nova Scotia, Clean Foundation, and the Provincial government.

The Housing Nova Scotia Project is an investment of \$22 million in deep energy retrofits of more than 100 public housing structures in 51 communities across NS. These improvements will significantly reduce heating and cooling costs and provide a more comfortable living environment for hundreds of residents.

*Oversaw non-electric, home energy efficiency program enhancements*

The Department promotes energy efficiency, beneficial electrification and distributed energy resource programs for non-electrically heated homes (i.e., those heated by furnace oil, wood, propane, or natural gas) by funding programs delivered by Efficiency Nova Scotia.

In 2019-2020, the HomeWarming program, designed specifically for low-income Nova Scotians, provided retrofits for 1,690 homes (at no cost to the home-owner).

A previous pilot program for low-income renters & non-profits transitioned into the Affordable Multi-Unit Residential Building Program. For 2019-2020 this program provided deep retrofits for 36 shelters, transition houses and low-income rental apartment buildings. The province will continue to fund this program over the next four years.

In addition to program funding, the Department also supports the development of energy efficient policies, regulations, and equipment and building standards.



In 2019-2020, the Department continued programs to assist all Nova Scotians in reducing their energy bills. Over 22,600 Nova Scotians participated in the various programs offered to non-electrically heated homes. The programs included:

- The Home Energy Assessment Program, which tailors home energy assessments with recommendations for upgrades and rebates available for completing upgrades;
- The Green Heat Program provided homeowners a simplified way to access heating system rebates (eligible systems include cold climate heat pumps, geothermal, solar thermal and wood heat systems);
- The Solar Homes Program provided rebates for the installation of solar photovoltaics ( PV) systems by qualified installers;
- The Efficient Products Installation Program provided installed energy efficient products (such as LED lights, water-saving showerheads, hot water tank wrap etc.) to homeowners and renters at no cost; and
- The Instant Savings Program offered rebates at the point of sale – this year the largest uptake has been for smart thermostats for non-electrically heated homes.

#### Continued to develop the Offshore Growth Strategy

The Offshore Growth Strategy (OGS) continues to generate new insight into our offshore petroleum geology to attract new investments into the province, and ready our offshore regulatory regime and supply chain to support increased offshore oil and gas activity. Energy and Mines continues to work with the Offshore Energy Research Association (OERA) and other partners such as NRCan and Saint Mary's University to implement projects that add value by decreasing risk and showcasing the opportunities in offshore Nova Scotia. During 2019-2020 these projects included:

- Working with BP Canada and Equinor to continue their exploration projects;
- Promoting geoscience research internationally in exhibitions and at global trade shows and conferences;
- Collaborating with Natural Resource Canada (NRCan) and Genome Canada to design and implement ongoing projects in offshore exploration and, secure academic funding for two post doctoral research fellows at Saint Mary's University and NRCan;
- Providing support for graduate students and interns through the Accelerate Program at Mitacs, a non-profit organization (<https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/accelerate>) which funds cutting-edge research, creates job opportunities and helps companies reach business goals to achieve results and help bolster the Canadian economy;
- Phase 2 Genomic Applied Partnership Program (GAPP2) awarded to a partnership (Energy and Mines, University of Calgary, Saint Mary's University, Genome Canada, Nova Scotia and Alberta) valued at \$6.4 M;
- Working with Morocco state oil and gas company through a multi-year collaboration agreement to strengthen the Department's knowledge and resources in support of seismic reconstruction and geochemistry projects.

#### Administered mineral resources development fund

The Mineral Resources Development Fund (MRDF) was designed to increase mineral exploration and mine development by assisting prospectors, exploration companies, post-secondary researchers and students in support of projects in the mining sector. This initiative helps grow Nova Scotia's economy by attracting investments and creating jobs in rural areas. The fund was allocated a budget of \$1,500,000 for the 2019-20 fiscal year, an \$800,000 increase compared to the 2018-19 budget. This increase in funding allowed

the Department to significantly increase the number of projects the fund was able to support. The table below details the allocation of funding among the MRDF's funding streams:

Funding Stream	Number of Grants	Total Awarded
Prospecting and Exploration	20	\$335,100
Shared Funding	10	\$426,800
Marketing	1	\$50,000
Post-secondary Research	1	\$36,900
Innovation	2	\$165,000
Education, Outreach, and Engagement	6	\$204,400
Major Projects	2	\$147,000

#### Ensured electricity rate stability and reduce energy costs for low income individuals and families

Ensuring Nova Scotians benefit from price stability, innovation, accountability, and competition is the basis of the Province's 'Our Electricity Future: Nova Scotia's Electricity Plan 2015-2040.' Delays to the Muskrat Falls project in 2019 and 2020 indicate that imported hydroelectricity from Newfoundland and Labrador through the Maritime Link project will not be available as expected in 2020. NS Power has been authorized to meet the 40% renewable energy target over a three year period (2020-2022), balancing the delays in delivery of energy from Newfoundland and Labrador with the need to continue to make progress on renewable energy use in Nova Scotia.

##### *Electricity Plan Implementation*

The key feature of the Nova Scotia's Electricity Plan was electricity rate stability for the period of 2017-2019. Throughout this period, electricity prices in Nova Scotia were kept stable through legislated requirements, staying below the rate of inflation. In 2019, NS Power applied for a new electricity price stability period for the period of 2020-2022. While not a legislated requirement, the utility and other stakeholders continue to support extended rate stability, with rate increases below the rate of inflation continuing for NS Power's new plan period.

#### Continued work on tidal and renewable energy

Under the Marine Renewable Energy Strategy, the Province continued to collaborate with stakeholders and Nova Scotians to ensure the industry develops in a sustainable and responsible way.

##### *Tidal Energy*

The Department is responsible for the administration of the Permit Program under *Marine Renewable-energy Act*. In the fall of 2019, the Department made amendments to this legislation to provide a new path forward for four large-scale tidal energy projects in the Bay of Fundy. Over the last year the Department issued three new demonstration permits and one unconnected permit for a total of 4.2 MW awarded under this program. The permits were awarded to:

- Jupiter Hydro, 2MW, and one unconnected permit
- Nova Innovation, 1.5MW

- Sustainable Marine energy Canada, 700 kW, as well as a licence for a portion of their project at FORCE for 1.26 MW

#### *Solar Energy*

In 2019-2020, the Department continued to support the development of solar energy initiatives in NS. The Department launched the third and final round of the Solar Electricity for Community Buildings Program. The program is open to Mi'kmaw bands, not-for-profit and charitable organizations, municipalities and municipally owned organizations, and universities and community colleges. Projects can be up to 75 kilowatts and the price per kilowatt hour for the electricity produced is proposed by the applicant. The Program, run by the Clean Foundation, awarded 1,533 kilowatts of solar electricity to 26 applicants in 2019. Over the three years of the program, 71 projects were awarded contracts, representing 3,823 kW of new community-owned generation.

The Department also oversees the implementation of Efficiency Nova Scotia's SolarHomes program, growing local jobs while saving homeowners money and reducing environmental impacts. 2019-2020 was a record year for solar photovoltaic (PV) in Nova Scotia. More residential solar PV systems were installed in 2019 than in every other year combined. This year a total of 1,643 projects were approved and 929 SolarHomes projects were completed in 2019, and since July 2018, more than 2,300 projects have been approved and 1,207 project constructed. This represents more than 10MW of residential solar.

In addition to direct solar programming, the Department also supports the development of the solar industry through measures including:

- Training for solar installers at the Nova Scotia Community College and training for Nova Scotia Power electrical inspectors;
- Funding for the delivery of 58 public education sessions by SolarNS, reaching more than 1,000 Nova Scotians and for the Clean Annapolis River Project to perform engagement work on renewable energy;
- Provided funding for Solar Schools Canada to develop curriculum-based solar materials for elementary teachers;
- Funded collaboration between Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Community College for a live solar data platform; and
- The second Nova Scotia Solar Summit was well received, and the industry continues its steady growth.

Nova Scotia was also ranked as the top province in Canada by Energy Hub (<https://www.energyhub.org/nova-scotia/>) for installing a solar power system based on factors such as rebates, financing options, installation costs, and utility policies.

#### *Sustainable Transportation*

Interdepartmental collaboration and engagement with the HRM's Integrated Mobility Plan staff has led to a \$25 million investment in HRM's active transportation infrastructure through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

The Department of Energy and Mines also continued to develop policies and programs that support the transition to electric vehicles, including personal and commercial vehicles, public transit fleets, and marine vehicles. The Department commissioned Clean Foundation to launch the Next Ride campaign which resulted in 1,426 people experiencing their first test drive of an electric vehicle, and over 5,500 in person engagements at 92 events held in 35 communities throughout NS.

The Department is developing a rural ride-sharing initiative to field test the potential for an on-demand app-based ride-sharing program in a small community. A request for information released in Fall 2019 yielded over a dozen responses from interested organizations willing to conduct field tests in NS. Community engagement and selection is ongoing, as well as the development of a request for proposals for interested companies to participate.

## 2019-2020 Departmental Performance on Core Functions

In 2019-2020 the Department continued to advance functions in support of its mandate, strategic goals and government's priorities. These functions are detailed below and include strengthening the Department's relationships with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and continuing to support Mi'kmaw participation in the energy and mining sectors. The Department funds a Mi'kmaq Energy and Mines Advisor to support the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs.

### Supported geoscience and resource development

Resource development is an important part of Nova Scotia's economic future. The Department of Energy and Mines brings together the experts in the province's subsurface resources to better understand the province's energy and mineral resources.

#### *Onshore Petroleum Atlas*

The Onshore Petroleum Atlas is a project that aims to improve data accessibility and usability, providing new insight into the province's onshore geology. In 2019-2020 the Department completed an evaluation of the Stellarton coal bed methane gas fields, which offered valuable insight into the technical advances for the development of onshore resources and will help inform future regulatory work. The Department also completed a seismic analysis of the integrated geophysical and petrophysical information in the Cumberland Basin, while pulling gap information from analogues within the Windsor Basin.

#### *Resource Evaluation*

The Department monitored mineral exploration activities in Nova Scotia, including auditing the confidential assessment reports that are submitted in support of exploration licence renewals, visiting exploration sites, liaising with prospectors and mineral exploration companies, as well as collaborating with the Regional Geologist. Some accomplishments for 2019-2020 include:

- Working on an alteration study of the Highlands gold area in Cape Breton, which provides a better understanding of this gold system and led to the discovery of several new mineral occurrences;
- Conducting geochemical sampling of the Cheticamp mineral district with several new anomalies discovered;
- Initiating a compilation of critical mineral prospects in Nova Scotia (<https://novascotia.ca/natr/meb/geoscience-online/interactive-map-mra2.asp>);
- Publishing a geological map for Central Annapolis Valley; and
- Continuing to map the Eastern Shore to aid exploration companies.

#### *Exploration Services*

The Department continued to implement the Mineral Promotion Strategy that included promoting Nova Scotia's mineral wealth to national and international audiences at mining conferences. During 2019-2020 the Department collaborated with New Brunswick and Newfoundland & Labrador to form the new Mining Alliance to deliver a Pan-Atlantic event at international conferences.

### *Environmental Geology*

The Department continued its work to support the protection of public health and safety to ensure the best use of the province's resources. Accomplishments for 2019-2020 include:

- Establishing a coastal monitoring program and flood time mapping with the Department of Municipal Affairs;
- Developing and implementing real time monitoring of water wells;
- Working on an open file report on the distribution and controls on uranium as a contaminant in water wells; and
- Preparing the karst risk map for the province, featuring distinctive terrain characteristics such as sinkholes, caves and springs.

### *Geoscience Information*

The Department continued to provide high quality information and data to help support better decision making on the evaluation of resources. The Department developed and maintained the Geographic Information System (GIS) and associated databases and supplied digital data and services to clients (<https://novascotia.ca/natr/meb/download/gis-data-maps.asp>). The Department continues to publish new hardcopy geological maps and online interactive maps. This year the new provincial bedrock map has been one of the major projects worked on, which is expected to be published in 2021.

The Department also maintains the Drill Core Database (<https://novascotia.ca/natr/meb/geoscience-online/about-database-dcdh.asp>) providing access to mineral exploration assessment reports, open file reports and other GMB and Geological Survey of Canada publications. The searchable database provides approximate coordinate locations for many of the drillholes in the province. In 2019-2020 there were:

- 138 person days spent (by clients) looking at the Core Database
- Shipments of data were made to Atlantic Gold in support of their work at Moose River, and to Acadia University
- 55 days were spent on non-core activity (clients using the XRF, members of the public asking geology questions, use of the core saw, etc.).

### *Continued to support industry and supplier development*

In 2019-2020 the Department continued to identify private sector opportunities for Nova Scotian companies in the oil and gas, clean technology, renewable energy and mining sectors. The Department gathers research, market intelligence and engages with project developers and operators to understand global supply chain opportunities, work with companies to build capacity for projects both locally and globally.

The Department engaged global supply chain experts to help Nova Scotian companies to gain a better understanding of the opportunities being created in the evolving global marketplace and their competitive position in this dynamic industry. In addition, the Department provided companies with opportunities to showcase their supply and service capabilities when and where industry gathers at some of the most recognized trade shows in the world.

### *Mineral Management*

The Department is responsible for the Registry of Mineral and Petroleum titles, which provides global access to a secure, map-based system for acquiring mineral and petroleum rights. Over the past year 408 new exploration licences were issued, and 912

licences were renewed. Nova Scotia has approximately 1569 exploration licences, covering 60,000 Hectares.

#### *Oversaw the Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship Program*

The Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship Program provides scholarships to students pursuing energy-related studies at both universities and the Nova Scotia Community College. Pengrowth Energy Corporation, Pengrowth Management Limited, and the Government of Nova Scotia have together invested more than \$4.8 million to give students the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they need to become leaders in the energy sector. Since 2005, more than 290 scholarships have been awarded.

In 2019-2020, 16 post-secondary students and four graduate students earned scholarships through the Program:

- Eight students enrolled in university programs received a renewable scholarship of \$2,500 per year for four years;
- Eight students enrolled in trades and technology programs at the Nova Scotia Community College received a one-time scholarship of \$2,500; and
- One graduate student received a \$15,000 Energy Innovation Grant, to be awarded over a two-year period and three other graduate students received a \$7,500 on-time Energy Innovation Grant.

#### *Operated the Energy Training Program*

The Department has continued to work with industry and partners to increase opportunities and capacity within Nova Scotia's energy sector. In summer 2019, 16 post-secondary students gained work experience in the energy sector through the Energy Training Program for Students. The Program is in its 18th year of operation and has provided hands-on experience to over 460 young individuals in Nova Scotia.

## Regulatory Initiatives

#### *Joint Management of Offshore Petroleum Resources*

Offshore oil and gas activity in the Province is jointly managed by the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada through legislation, regulation, and policy. The Department works with Natural Resources Canada and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board to ensure that the exploration and development of Nova Scotia's offshore oil and gas resources are responsibly managed. In 2019-2020 work continued on the Frontier and Offshore Regulatory Renewal Initiative and Occupational Health and Safety initiatives, including review of stakeholder comments to support progress on the development of draft regulations.

#### *Onshore Petroleum Regulation*

The Department administers onshore petroleum rights as set out in the *Petroleum Resources Act* and Regulations

#### *Marine Renewable Energy Regulation*

The Department is responsible for the administration of *Marine Renewable-energy Act*, which governs the licensing and issuing of permits pertaining to marine renewable energy sources, including waves, tidal range, in-stream tidal, ocean currents and offshore wind. The Permit Program under *Marine Renewable-energy Act* attracted local, national and international companies to participate in the program. The program also created employment opportunities for Nova Scotians, as these companies established new offices in Nova Scotia. These companies actively engaged with local supply chain companies through their procurement processes.

*Mineral Resources Regulation*

The Department oversees the administration of the *Mineral Resource Act* for active and inactive mine sites in the province. The Department provided guidance through the “one window” process and processed approvals for mineral exploration and permitted requirements to assist resource development companies. In addition, the Department oversaw the reclamation plan and security requirements for all mine sites.

Royalties administration and audits

*Offshore Petroleum Royalties*

The Department is responsible for monitoring energy projects to ensure appropriate economic benefits are collected from the development of offshore petroleum resources. The administration and auditing of oil and gas royalties and Crown Share Adjustment payments contributes millions of dollars directly to the provincial treasury. The Department ensures the province's royalty regime reflects modern best practice and strikes a balance between attracting investment and providing a fair return to Nova Scotians.

*Mineral Royalties*

The Department is responsible for administering, auditing, and assessing royalties from onshore mineral projects. An effective mining regulatory regime supports competitiveness, efficiencies in government and industry, and economic prosperity in our province. In 2019-20, the Department continues to provide recommendations regarding the administration of the royalty regulations and agreements under the *Mineral Resources Act* and associated regulations that came into effect in 2018.

## Appendix A: Annual Report under Section 18 of the *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 purposes 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 counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing.

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Department of Energy and Mines in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2018-2019
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	N/A
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A