

Nova Scotia Labour and Workforce Development  
Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2009-2010



**Labour and Workforce Development**

**Fairness, safety and prosperity**


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## 1. Accountability Statement

The accountability report of Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development for the year ending March 31, 2010 is prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department's business plan information for the fiscal year 2009-2010. The reporting of outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of Department 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 business plan for the year.

  
Minister

  
Deputy Minister

## **2. Message from the Minister**

As the Minister of Labour and Workforce Development, it is my pleasure to share with you the highlights of our department's activities and accomplishments for 2009-2010. This year, we continued to follow our four-year strategic plan, which will guide us through to 2012-2013. The plan was developed through discussions with more than 800 stakeholders, partners and staff, and will help us deliver our vision of fairness, safety and prosperity for all Nova Scotians, by helping each to reach their highest living, learning and employment potential.

Under the heading of fairness, we initiated a number of protections for vulnerable workers. We concluded a review of private sector pensions in the province and introduced legislative changes that will minimize the impact of the worldwide economic downturn and reduce the pressures brought by pension plans' lower return on investment. We also undertook further research to improve the legislative framework around pensions.

2009-2010 saw the passage of legislation that would allow an employer to offer key employees a phased retirement. We also amended the Labour Standards Code to protect workers from losing their job when a public emergency prevents them from reporting for work.

On the safety front, we had mixed results. The number of new loss time injuries reported to the Workers' Compensation Board was below 8,000 for the first time in 10 years. However, 32 people died at work in Nova Scotia, our highest death toll since 1992. We addressed workplace safety on a number of fronts. We piloted an occupational health and safety module in the Grade 9 curriculum, with help from the WCB and the Department of Education. The pilot was a success and the program will be rolled out, province-wide, in 2010-2011. Our intention is to establish a culture of safety in our youth that will protect them first in summer and part-time jobs, and later when they enter to labour market as young adults.

We introduced administrative penalties in January 2010 that allow the department to levy a fine against an employer or employee who is issued an order by one of our officers. Administrative penalties reinforce the Internal Responsibility System, and should reduce workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities.

To increase prosperity, we acted to provide more Nova Scotians with the skills they need to succeed. In May, our department learned that federal transfers under the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Development Agreement and Labour Market Agreement would increase by \$22 million through Canada's Economic Action Plan. These agreements help unemployed and low-skilled people to prepare for, and find, sustainable employment, to the benefit of themselves, their families and their communities.

We invested \$15 million more than we forecast for LMDA and LMA expenditures, and we will move about \$11 million from our 2009-2010 allocation to future years to smooth out the federal funding decrease when the Economic Action Plan concludes in 2010-2011.

Programs such as the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning continued to support the dreams and aspirations of people who left school too early and were now faced with challenges in their work and family life. Through NSSAL, 503 people completed their adult high school diploma. An additional 531 people successfully completed their General Education Diploma, also offered through our department.

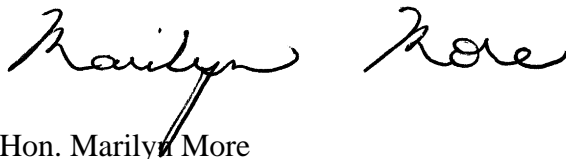
While classroom learning is the norm, workplaces are increasingly a learning environment. Last year, 1,767 people participated in 158 Workplace Education programs at 87 workplaces across the province. This award-winning program helps businesses upgrade their workers' skills and helps under-represented groups enter or re-enter the workforce.

Apprenticeship is a key program offered through our department that prepares people for challenging and rewarding careers in 65 designated trades. This year, there were more than 5,000 registered apprentices in Nova Scotia, including 1,350 new apprentices, and 984 individuals obtained their Certificate of Qualification in their trade of study. Their learning experience is a mix of 85 per cent on-the-job learning and 15 per cent classroom instruction.

I want to thank each and every employee of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, its agencies, boards, commissions and tribunals, and all of our partners in communities across the province who join us in our efforts to make Nova Scotia an excellent place to live, work and invest.

I look forward to their ongoing support and thoughts as we continue to implement our strategic plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marilyn More". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends under the word "More".

Hon. Marilyn More  
Minister  
Labour and Workforce Development

### 3. Introduction

This *Accountability Report* provides information on the Department of Labour and Workforce Development's performance in relation to the goals, priorities, performance targets, and budget expenditure targets presented in its 2009–2010 business plan.

The following principles, developed as a part of the Department's four-year Strategic Plan, are considered within the Department's business planning initiatives. These principles have guided our operations throughout the 2009–2010 fiscal year:

- 1) **Partnerships:** Develop and strengthen policies, processes, structures and relationships to achieve outcomes both internal and external to the Department.
- 2) **Shared ownership:** Share responsibility among stakeholders.
- 3) **Innovation:** Foster innovation both within the Department of Labour and Workforce Development and among our partners.
- 4) **Protection:** Ensure that businesses/individuals comply with legislation, regulation and best practices.
- 5) **Talent Development:** Develop our people to create a vibrant, healthy workforce.

Adoption of the above principles in our operations has facilitated dialogue and information transfer between the Department and its partners, stakeholders and all Nova Scotians, for whom we are held accountable.

For further information regarding the Department's broad range of activities, responsibilities and commitments as part of its strategic goals, priorities and performance measures, please refer to *Section 4: Departmental Progress and Accomplishments* and *Section 6: Measuring Our Performance*. Financial Results for the 2009–2010 fiscal year are displayed within *Section 5*.

For additional information pertaining to the Department's core business areas and the four-year Strategic Plan, please refer to our 2009–2010 business plan, available on our website at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/pubs/>.

## 4. Departmental Progress and Accomplishments

The five principles of partnership, shared ownership, innovation, protection and talent development greatly influenced the formation of the six strategic goals and determination of the priorities that fall within them. This report details the work that has been done over the past year to meet these goals and address key priorities.

### *Strategic Goal:*

- 1) **Nova Scotians will have safe, healthy and supportive workplaces and communities.**

### *Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)*

- Through programs and learning opportunities, encourage individuals to adopt and practice a culture of safety at work, at home and within their community.
- Protect the economic and social interests of Nova Scotians as they relate to gaming, the sale of liquor, theatres and amusements.
- Improve compliance through education, inspections and strategic action to protect Nova Scotians and their communities.

### *Priorities for 2009–2010*

-  **Implement administrative tools to enhance compliance with occupational health and safety measures.**

Nova Scotia continues to have an unacceptable number of serious injuries and fatalities in the workplace, many of which could be prevented by compliance with existing laws. Throughout development of the Department's four year Strategic Plan, stakeholders requested an increased enforcement presence related to occupational health and safety. In response, the Administrative Penalty Regulations were implemented by the Department to reduce the number of incidents and their personal and financial impacts.

Announced in September of 2009, the Administrative Penalty Regulations came into effect on January 15, 2010. The new regulations allow the Department's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) division to administer penalties when violations of health and safety laws are found by OHS officers in Nova Scotia workplaces. Under the new regulations, an Administrator within the OHS division reviews the information provided by an officer and decides if a penalty is warranted. The amount of the penalty issued is based on the determination of a contravention.

All workplace parties are subject to a penalty when a contravention has occurred and identified by an officer, and penalty levels are associated with the individual's role in the

workplace. To ensure the integrity of the Administrative Penalty process, individuals who have received orders for non-compliant activity and are thus liable to be penalized have the ability to take their complaint to the OHS Appeal Panel. The Appeal Panel is an independent arms-length body that hears appeals of decisions made or orders issued by staff of the OHS division.

In holding all members of an organization accountable for workplace health and safety, the Administrative Penalty system supports the Internal Responsibility System (IRS), which is the foundation of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Educating Nova Scotians about workplace health and safety issues and the IRS is the Province's foremost tool in injury prevention. Fines are seen as another means of promoting compliance and emphasizing the seriousness of workplace health and safety. When safety is taken seriously by individuals and companies, it becomes more personal, meaningful and respected.

 **Provide new temporary foreign workers with health and safety information in a variety of languages.**

A growing quantity of research indicates that temporary, foreign-born workers are at a higher risk for injury in the Canadian workplace. For temporary foreign workers, barriers can arise from limited language and literacy skills, poor understanding of the culture and values of Canadian society, and limited access to resources that provide information about workplace health and safety, workers' rights and employers' responsibilities. Furthermore, temporary foreign workers often receive no training in health and safety when they arrive at their Canada-based place of employment.

To help ensure the protection of these workers throughout their employment in Nova Scotia, the Department's OHS division provided an orientation presentation to employers in March of 2009 to better educate them in the occupational health and safety risks and requirements of non-Canadian born workers. The presentation emphasized the importance of providing temporary foreign workers with occupational health and safety training, such as training in hazard identification and safety rights and responsibilities. Employers were also encouraged to provide training and written materials in the first languages of workers who are employed in the workplace (e.g. French, Spanish).

To further improve dissemination of occupational health and safety information to temporary foreign workers, the OHS division engaged in a project to produce and distribute worker safety cards to temporary foreign workers in English, French, and Spanish. The cards detail employee rights and responsibilities and include a 1-800 number for inquiries and complaints, with multi-lingual response capabilities.

The division, in partnership with Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services (formerly the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association), also offers an instructional course on the OHS Act.

**✚ Work in partnership with the Workplace Safety and Insurance System to inform injured workers and those on Workers' Compensation benefits of the retraining programs and opportunities that are available throughout the Province.**

Agencies and stakeholders of the Workplace Safety and Insurance System (WSIS), including the Occupational Health & Safety division of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), the Workers' Advisers Program, the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal and others providing services to the system, work collaboratively to help keep people healthy and safe at work, to ensure against loss and to support workers' rehabilitation.

Through 2010, the WCB and the Skills and Learning branch of our Department will continue to work together to explore opportunities related to skills training and labour force reattachment, in an effort to further improve return-to-work outcomes. This initiative will better enable stakeholders to leverage safe and timely return to work resources and expertise available throughout the System.

**✚ Implement and monitor the compliance of retailers with the *Atlantic Lottery Regulations*.**

Statistical studies in Atlantic Canada have called into question the high level of retailer wins occurring within the Province. The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation had a statistical analysis completed in March 2007 and determined that retailers won more than 14 times than statistically probable in Atlantic Canada. That year, the Government announced during the Spring Session of the Legislature (March 28, 2007) that it would review the issue of ticket lottery wins, and appoint an external panel to review this issue and make recommendations to Government.

The Panel report was released in November 2007 and contained 26 recommendations for ticket lottery controls. Of those 26 recommendations, 12 were suggestions related to creating a regulatory framework specific to ticket lottery controls within the existing Atlantic Lottery Regulations.

Amendments were proposed for the Atlantic Lottery Regulations to appropriately address the 12 recommendations, including the proposal that lottery equipment suppliers become registered and that all lottery equipment be approved prior to release.

In the spring of 2009, a Discussion Paper on the *Proposed Amendments to the Atlantic Lottery Regulations* was distributed to lottery equipment suppliers, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation, and retailers with the request for consultation.

Amendments to the Atlantic Lottery Regulations came into effect on October 1, 2009 that provide scrutiny for the payout of lottery tickets to retailers and require the following:

- registration of lottery equipment suppliers;
- approvals for all new lottery products; and,

- approvals for Atlantic Lottery Corporation internal operating procedures.
- ✚ **In partnership with the Department of Energy, amend the Nova Scotia *Building Code Regulations* in late 2009 to require a higher level of energy conservation for residential housing.**

To promote water conservation, as of December 2009, requirements were introduced within the Nova Scotia Building Code to require for the installation of low-flush toilets and permit the use of water-free technologies and the re-use of grey water.

Additional Building Code Regulations regarding energy efficiency and water use came into effect on January 1, 2010, helping the Province to exceed the provisions of the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*.

The new Nova Scotia Building Code Energy and Water Conservation measures ensure that all new residential homes, small apartment buildings and non-residential buildings must meet prescriptive or performance requirements that are equivalent to an EnerGuide rating of 80. The EnerGuide rating is a rating system (on a scale of 1 to 100) designed to identify homes that are built for energy efficiency.

The new regulations are a step in the right direction for construction in the Province and are another indication that Nova Scotia is a leader in energy efficiency construction.

- ✚ **In partnership with the Department of Education, implement a pilot program that will provide occupational health and safety training to Grade 9 students in the Province.**

In 2008, a total of 4,588 workers under the age of 25 in Nova Scotia reported workplace injuries. Recognizing that youth are at high risk of experiencing workplace injuries, especially when they are new on the job, the Department has placed increased focus through 2009 and 2010 on preventing workplace injuries among this demographic.

In partnership with the Department of Education and the Workers' Compensation Board, the Department took a proactive stance to help prevent injuries before they occur by introducing a school-based program designed to educate youth as the future workforce of our province in the principles of occupational health and safety, including their rights and responsibilities.

The program was piloted to 330 Grade 9 students from across Nova Scotia this past academic year, with much success. In May of 2010, staff from the Department of Education convened with teachers from the Tri County, Cape Breton-Victoria, Halifax, South Shore and Annapolis Valley Regional school boards to discuss the benefits of the program and identify necessary revisions. In the upcoming 2010–2011 academic year, as part of the compulsory Healthy Living 9 curriculum, eight hours of in-class instruction will be introduced into all schools throughout the Province.

It is the objective of the Department to ensure that Nova Scotia students upon leaving the education system, regardless of scholastic standing or career path, have an understanding of workers' rights and responsibilities and the fundamentals of injury prevention.

**✚ In collaboration with the Departments of Health and Community Services, amend our Codes to increase the quality of life in long-term care facilities while implementing realistic life safety requirements.**

Individuals who reside in long-term care facilities require a high level of protection from fire and other safety issues. It is the intent of the Department to ensure that those residents who require special protection are provided a safe and comfortable environment without endangering other individuals.

Security is a critical matter in long-term care homes where, in many instances, some residents have the right to leave the building unattended, while others must remain confined for their safety. Currently, the locking system most commonly used throughout Nova Scotia allows patients to pass through exit ways after a short period of delay, during which time an alarm is sounded. This locking system provides potential for patients to leave the care facility and be at the mercy of the elements.

It is the shared concern of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development and the Department of Health that ineffective locking systems place those patients with dementia, who may be unaware of their surroundings, at increased risk by providing them easy access to the outside. Beginning in early spring of 2010, the Department, in partnership with the Department of Health, is undergoing a review of the existing locking systems in long-term care facilities housing residents with dementia, to allow for a higher level of confinement.

***Strategic Goal:***

**2) Nova Scotia has a fair, equitable and stable labour environment.**

***Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)***

- Protect and balance the rights and interests of workers and employers regarding employment standards, injuries, and pensions within the context of current labour market conditions.
- Foster effective labour/management relations protecting employer, employee and union rights and benefits in order to secure labour market stability.
- Support inclusive and diverse workplaces and communities by increasing equitable access to the labour market.

- Establish Department legislation and initiatives that incorporate current worker and workplace trends by assigning clear responsibility and accountability that will ensure Nova Scotia is responsive to change.

### *Priorities for 2009–2010*

#### **Improve service delivery to our agencies, boards and tribunals by updating regulatory forms and processes, and improving distribution of decisions to Nova Scotians.**

Agencies, boards, and tribunals have legal authority to exercise power over people or an activity and function independent of Government. Their powers may include licensing, advising a Minister, rule and policy making, and issuing approvals.

Operating within the Labour Services Branch of the of Labour and Workforce Development, the Labour Relations Board and Construction Industry Panel process applications and complaints, assist in the resolution of disputes, and hold hearings to adjudicate matters. The Labour Relations Board addresses matters arising under Part 1 of the *Trade Union Act*, as well as under certain sections of the *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act*. The Construction Industry Panel administers Part II of the *Trade Union Act*, which sets out some special procedures for the construction industry.

Similar to the Labour Relations Board and Construction Industry Panel, the Labour Standards Tribunal additionally strives to provide fair and impartial dispute resolution supports to Nova Scotians, by leading the appeal process arising from complaints filed under the *Labour Standards Code*.

In order to streamline service delivery to our agencies, tribunals and boards, as well as expedite distribution of decisions to Nova Scotians, the Department has made electronic application of hearing request and complaint forms available on the respective sites of its agencies, boards and tribunals.

Through 2010, the Department will continue its commitment to making more information and resources readily accessible online. Working through its Web Committee, the Department is also in the process of implementing IT solutions to allow for electronic submission of forms.

#### **Improve the pension legislative framework by implementing recommendations of the Nova Scotia Pension Review Panel.**

In response to the economic downturn, the Department has been reviewing the long-term viability of private sector pension plans. The Department released a discussion paper on March 5, 2010 to gather more input from employers, unions and industry about private sector pension plan management. The Nova Scotia Review Panel filed its final report last year and the Department has accepted about 90 per cent of the recommendations. The Department wants more input on the review panel's funding formula and whether there

should be more flexibility for private sector pension plans, based on risk, funding arrangements and governance. The comment period has been extended to June 25, 2010.

**✚ Complete the development of an information sharing agreement with the federal government regarding temporary foreign workers and explore legislative protections for temporary foreign workers.**

In 2009, the OHS division partnered with the Labour Standards division and the Federal Government to develop an Information Sharing Agreement that promotes the exchange of information regarding OHS activities and temporary foreign workers, and allows Government to provide more information in the hands of newcomers.

With the intention of developing legislation regulating the recruitment and employment of temporary foreign workers, the Department's Labour Standard's division has partnered with the Office of Immigration to develop a Consultation Paper on the employment of these workers. The paper, released on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, seeks submissions from the following groups:

- temporary foreign workers employed in Nova Scotia;
- Nova Scotian businesses that are employing or have employed temporary foreign workers;
- recruiters working to recruit temporary foreign workers; and,
- unions and other organizations interested in the issue.

Although temporary foreign workers are protected by Labour Standards and Occupational Health and Safety laws in the same way as all other employees, the Province has become aware that additional protections for these workers may be required due to the fact that they may be unfamiliar with Nova Scotian employment laws and standards, may face language barriers, and may be socially isolated and feel unable to complain about unfair treatment.

The main purpose of the consultation is to be proactive in gathering information regarding the issues facing these temporary foreign workers and to determine how the Province can protect their employment rights and improve their working conditions.

**✚ Implement changes to the Labour Standards Code with respect to mandatory retirement.**

On July 1, 2009, mandatory retirement was largely eliminated when *An Act Respecting the Elimination of Mandatory Retirement* came into effect. As a result of this new provincial legislation, most employers are no longer permitted to have mandatory retirement policies. Consequently, many Nova Scotia workers now have the option to retire or to continue to remain within the workforce when they reach the age of 65. This change will allow experienced workers to continue to remain within the Nova Scotia labour market, where a skills shortage is a real concern.

The Act is also of particular importance to some immigrant workers and other workers whose careers began late in life or were interrupted. It will additionally assist parents who take childcare leave from the workforce. Those groups may want to continue working longer to maximize their contributions to the Canada Pension Plan.

Implementation of *An Act Respecting the Elimination of Mandatory Retirement* resulted in amendments to both the *Human Rights Act*—making mandatory retirement discriminatory unless it is based on the bona fide occupational requirement that there is no reasonable alternative to a fixed age rule—and the *Labour Standards Code*, to reflect the new legislation.

The Department's Labour Standards division worked with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission to ensure a coordinated response to this change through 2010.

**✚ Implement the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy, which helps ensure the participation of the Aboriginal population in the growth of a qualified and skilled workforce in Nova Scotia.**

The Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development division (ATSDD) of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development is working with various groups, associations and communities to increase the number of registered apprentices and certified journeypersons from the Province's Aboriginal population, who have traditionally been under represented in the trades.

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy will help assist members of the Aboriginal population reach their full potential in the growth of a qualified and skilled workforce in Nova Scotia. The strategy is a collaborative plan of action that builds on existing programs to increase the number of Aboriginal people in the skilled trades. There is a steering committee overseeing activities carried out under the strategy. This committee is made up of representatives from the Union of Nova Scotia Indians (Aboriginal co-chair); Service Canada (federal co-chair); LWD-Apprenticeship Training (provincial co-chair); Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; Mi'kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat; Micmac Native Friendship Centre; Native Council of Nova Scotia; Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission; Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq; and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Through 2010, staff will continue to work closely with the on and off-reserve communities to register Aboriginal apprentices and provide those services involved in operating the apprenticeship system.

*Strategic Goal:*

**3) Nova Scotia is able to identify and respond to provincial workforce requirements.**

*Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)*

- Support active participation in the workforce by ensuring Nova Scotians have opportunities to access meaningful employment and appropriate skill sets.
- Provide the structure, processes, and supports to enable the portability and transferability of skills and the improved mobility of workers.
- Build the necessary infrastructure that develops and disseminates labour market information to support all stakeholders with workforce planning information to make informed decisions.
- Create a new workforce development framework that optimizes resources by integrating programs and services which involve multiple government and industry stakeholders.

*Priorities for 2009–2010*

**✚ Continue to implement the changes to the amended Agreement on Internal Trade, to support the portability and transferability of skills and mobility of workers.**

Amendments to Chapter 7 of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) seek to ensure that any worker certified for an occupation in one province or territory is recognized as qualified and certified for that occupation upon application in any other province or territory.

The provisions of the agreement provide for some exceptions to labour mobility where differences in skill, knowledge and abilities could create public protection concerns. Each Canadian jurisdiction has been responsible for establishing its own process for approving exceptions to labour mobility.

In Nova Scotia, public protection remains a priority. In partnership with other government departments and regulatory bodies, the Department of Labour and Workforce Development has been working to identify differences in occupational standards between our province and others, and to consequently identify where exceptions to labour mobility may be required as per Article 708 of the AIT, to ensure the safety of Nova Scotians.

Measures to achieve a legitimate objective with respect to the labour mobility provisions of Chapter 7 are now in their final stages of review. Through 2010, the Department will

continue to contribute resources to, and collaboratively advise on mechanisms for, implementing an amended Chapter 7 and achieving labour mobility.

**✚ Implement the *Fair Registration Practices Act* to ensure a fair and transparent process for licensed professionals and the certified trades, particularly with regards to new immigrants to Nova Scotia.**

Bill No. 211, the *Fair Registration Practices Act*, received Royal Assent on November 25, 2008 and was proclaimed on December 7, 2009. In accordance with the Act, which requires a fair and transparent process for professional licensing and occupational certification in Nova Scotia, regulatory bodies are required to ensure:

- Nova Scotian, nationally and internationally trained applicants are provided with clear and understandable information about licensing practices and requirements;
- decisions and responses to applicants are made in a timely fashion;
- qualifications are assessed in a transparent, objective, impartial and procedurally fair manner; and,
- an objective process is in place for applicants to appeal registration decisions.

As per the requirements of the Act, the Department is currently in the process of hiring a Review Officer within the Labour Market Partnerships division. The Review Officer's work to implement the *Fair Registration Practices Act* will include:

- developing corporate policies/strategies/plans;
- creating website, FAQs and other communication materials;
- creating reporting content, tool and guidelines;
- assessing registration practices against Act's obligations;
- coordinating capacity building initiatives;
- creating compliance order policies and procedures; and,
- working with advisory committee and consulting regulatory bodies.

The Review Officer will also be required to submit an annual report to the Minister of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development on the implementation and effectiveness of the Act to be tabled in the House of Assembly.

**✚ Update trade certification requirements for key occupations.**

Discussion papers were sent to stakeholders to consult on the development of a shared trade regulation framework between Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development division and the Building, Fire and Technical Safety division of the department. In addition, a number of trade regulations have been revised under the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act through an ad-hoc trade advisory committee process that is enabled under the Act.

**✚ Deliver transition measures to address shifting labour market requirements, including both declining and emerging industries.**

The Department of Labour and Workforce Development works with inter-departmental stakeholders to develop and deliver transition measures to address shifting labour market requirements, including both declining and emerging industries. Such measures include the setting up of time-limited transition centres, career development and exploration, literacy and essential skills training, and retraining.

The Department has developed a protocol that outlines actions, communication activities and roles and responsibilities to better position the Province for dealing with closures and large lay-offs. The Department's Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development division has also led several major transition efforts through 2009 and 2010. In each case, the division conducted organizational needs assessments and job opportunity scans in immediate surrounding communities. Extensive support was offered to assist these workforces begin the transition into new jobs and or education and training.

Transition programs were previously carried out in partnership with Service Canada and provided former employees with the development of return-to-work action plans, learning assessments, essential skills and training programs, and opportunities to connect to industry associations, sector councils and individual workplaces.

Funding for transition support is now coordinated by the Department through the Skills and Learning branch and includes monies from the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) and Labour Market Agreement's (LMA) Strategic Training and Transition Fund (STTF) in addition to provincial funding. Through 2009 and 2010, STTF funds totaling \$8.2M were fully invested in over 60 projects, supporting the following types of activities:

- Transition centres/services for workers who have been laid off.
- Wage subsidies for new employees within companies that are growing and can employ clients who have been affected by the economic downturn.
- Workplace training to prevent lay-offs, such as re-skilling or up-skilling to meet changing and/or emerging business growth areas.
- Targeted programming to re-attach laid off workers to the labour market, such as essential skills and upgrading.

**✚ Ensure the seamless transition of employment supports and services from the federal government into the Employment Nova Scotia Division.**

The Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada signed the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) and the Labour Market Agreement (LMA) on June 13, 2008. Over a six year period these two agreements will effect the transfer of more than half a billion dollars in program funds to the Province of Nova Scotia.

After signing the agreement, the two governments established a number of federal-provincial working groups that managed the transfer issues related to human resources, information technology, financial management, employment programs, facilities and assets. These working groups had representation at various staff levels from the federal government and from a variety of departments within the Nova Scotia Government.

Work was advanced on a departmental service delivery design, and a new division of Employment Nova Scotia was created within the Skills and Learning branch of Labour and Workforce Development to oversee the operations of both the LMDA and the LMA. On July 1, 2009, the Province accepted responsibility and funding for the delivery of Employment Benefits and Support Measures under Part II of the Employment Insurance Act. As well, the LMDA saw over 72 federal staff transferred to the Department.

Starting in fiscal 2009-2010 for 2 years, the federal government provided provinces with additional LMDA funding under the Federal Economic Action Plan. In Nova Scotia, the added \$16M in funding has been largely invested in the Skill Development (SD) program to create additional training opportunities for Nova Scotians. An additional \$8.2 million was added to the LMA to address issues related to the economic downturn.

Considerable work was undertaken to develop a new system to replace the existing federal Common System for Grants and Contributions (CSGC). The Labour Market Program Support System (LaMPSS) is an IT enabled business solution which will allow a direct systems interface with agreement holders and individual clients, and enable more integrated approaches to labour market program delivery across government. A joint commitment to deliver effective, efficient and seamless client service across three departments of government using LaMPSS has resulted in significant improvements to the processes that support the delivery of labour market programs. LaMPSS will be released for use on November 1, 2010.

GrantThornton audited the statement of operations of the Province relating to the Employment Benefits and Support Measures and the associative administrative costs as defined in the annual plan and in accordance with the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) for the period of July 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

The audit results are extremely positive. There are no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies identified during the course of the audit. The only deficiency identified related to a recommendation that client files include consistent documentation to demonstrate that the monitoring of files was occurring.

With respect to the statement of operations, the Province was 100% spent in its LMDA program grants for a total of \$78,652,523. (Note: this was a partial year with the first three months under federal governance.)

**✚ Develop a recruitment and retention program for the fire service in partnership with the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia.**

Within Nova Scotia and other jurisdictions, changing demographics and lifestyles, such as an aging population and labour mobility, have contributed to a decline in the number of individuals volunteering for the fire service. In response to this decline, the Office of the Fire Marshall began investigating the applicability of an Ontario Recruitment and Retention program in 2009 and assessed its strength in reflecting the growing diversity of our communities within our fire services.

The *Recruitment and Retention Program* was successfully presented to the fire service in November of 2009 and is now being implemented. It is the fourth program developed by the Department's Building, Fire and Technical Safety division to support fire services in Nova Scotia. Other programs include *Roadside Safety for Emergency Responders*, *Occupational Health and Safety for the Fire Services*, and the development of the Nova Scotia fire service *Protocol Manual*.

**✚ Develop and implement a strategy for labour market information to produce and disseminate quality, accessible and relevant labour market information to our major stakeholder groups: employers, unions, individuals, government/educators, and advisors.**

Everyday, thousands of people within our province are making labour market decisions that will have long lasting impacts on themselves and their families. In the context of an aging workforce and growing labour shortages, LMI has been identified as a key component in supporting the needs of Nova Scotians in a changing labour market.

Our policy-makers and planners depend upon high-quality, relevant LMI to ensure critical decisions around resources and programming best serve the interests of Nova Scotians. The existing LMI system is not, however, optimally aligned to facilitate such critical decision-making. To better meet the needs and priorities of all our LMI stakeholders, the Province has developed a Provincial Labour Market Information Strategy, which will coordinate and enhance existing efforts to collect, analyze and share LMI.

Recognizing LMI is a shared responsibility of federal and provincial governments in Nova Scotia. The Province formed a LMI Advisory Committee to establish LMI priorities, provide strategic direction on our LMI Strategy, and ensure efforts are coordinated and responsive to the needs of stakeholders. The Province plans to allocate LMA resources to support the implementation of the LMI Strategy, although a budget has not yet been determined.

Throughout 2010, the Department will remain an active contributor on the Committee. Future initiatives of the Department and collaborating Advisory Committee members, including the Departments of Economic and Rural Development; Finance; Education and the Office of Immigration, as well as stakeholders such as the Nova Scotia Business

Incorporated; the Nova Scotia Community College and Service Canada, involve building a LMI inventory; identifying LMI gaps for priority groups; developing a guide to LMI and continuing with Career Options site improvements.

**✚ Continue to build the tools that will support workforce planning and enhance career planning, including the advancement of Career Options as the source for career planning and labour market information in Nova Scotia.**

Career planning and labour market information (LMI) are critical elements of a well-functioning labour market. Every day, Nova Scotians make decisions about what education or training they should pursue, what type of career they are interested in, for whom they want to work, and so on. These decisions have life-long impacts and the consequences of misinformed decisions can be costly to individuals, their families, and communities.

Fortunately, Nova Scotians have access to career development resources, most notably, the Career Options web site. The web site provides viewers with a wealth of information on the following:

- career planning;
- universities, community colleges, private career colleges and adult education and apprenticeship training;
- industry and occupational trends and analyses;
- resume writing, career maintenance and job-search skills; and,
- workplace safety and related issues.

The web site also allows individuals to review job profiles and provides information on the education requirements and credentials of associative occupations.

The implementation of the Province's LMI Strategy, which aims to align and leverage the collection, analysis, and sharing of high quality LMI among stakeholders, will result in improvements to the Career Options web site throughout the remainder of 2010 and in the years following.

As a member of the Advisory Committee formed to establish LMI priorities, provide strategic advice and oversee the Strategy's implementation, the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, in particular through its Labour Market Partnership division, will play an active role in providing employers, jobseekers and other stakeholders with relevant career planning and labour market information, so as to sustain economic growth.

The Job Bank is an electronic listing of jobs provided by employers. The Job Bank was transferred to the Labour Market Partnership division as part of the devolution of federal LMDA programs. Three new employees have been hired and services are being offered in both official languages. Review is presently under way on how to enhance and/or integrate the Job Bank with other LMI initiatives.


*Strategic Goal:*

- 4) **Through flexible and responsive education and training programs, Nova Scotians will share in and contribute to the economic and social prosperity of Nova Scotia.**

*Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)*

- Engage and empower people who are traditionally under-represented in the workforce by addressing barriers to education, training and employment.
- Provide and ensure Nova Scotians have access to flexible and responsive continuing education, career development and training programs, encouraging their full participation at work, at home and in their communities.
- Undertake continuous improvement and development of the adult education and training system to ensure relevance, timeliness and responsiveness.

*Priorities for 2009–2010*

 **Contribute to the development of a pilot program for Occupational Health and Safety education/training for grade 9 students:**

As previously discussed under Strategic Goal 1, a total of 4,588 workers under the age of 25 in Nova Scotia reported workplace injuries in 2008. Recognizing that youth are at a high risk of experiencing workplace injuries, especially when they are new on the job, the Department has placed increased focus through 2009 and 2010 on preventing workplace injuries among this demographic.

In partnership with the Department of Education and the Workers' Compensation Board, the Department took a proactive stance to help prevent injuries before they occur by introducing a school-based program designed to educate youth in the principles of occupational health and safety, including their rights and responsibilities as working members of the Province.

The program was piloted to 330 Grade 9 students from across Nova Scotia this past academic year, with much success. In May of 2010, staff from the Department of Education convened with teachers from the Tri County, Cape Breton-Victoria, Halifax, South Shore and Annapolis Valley Regional school boards, to discuss the benefits of the program and identify necessary revisions. In the upcoming 2010–2011 academic year, as part of the compulsory Healthy Living 9 curriculum, eight hours of in-class instruction will be introduced into all schools throughout the Province.

It is the objective of the Department to ensure that Nova Scotia students upon leaving the education system, regardless of scholastic standing or career path, have an understanding of workers' rights and responsibilities and the fundamentals of injury prevention.

**✚ Integrate occupational health and safety training into the curriculum for adult learning.**

The OHS division and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) of Nova Scotia have been engaged in seeking out working relationships and partnerships with Nova Scotia educators. The primary objective of these partnerships is to ensure individuals involved in the province's education and training system have an understanding of workers' rights and responsibilities and the fundamentals of injury prevention.

Since February 2009, the division and the WCB have partnered with the Department's Adult Education division, which administers the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL), to undertake the inclusion of substantial OHS curriculum in NSSAL's Communications Level 4 (a course compulsory for graduation). Workplace communication is one of four major themes of Communications Level 4 and new OHS curriculum would be presented in that context.

The project allows the OHS division to continue fortifying existing partnerships between workplace health and safety professionals and educators. These partnerships will be central in our ongoing efforts to make Nova Scotia a healthier and safer place to work and live.

**✚ Deliver effective and efficient client services to improve the skills of the unemployed to assist them in achieving meaningful employment.**

On July 1, 2009, the federal government transferred the responsibility for Employment Benefit and Support Measures (EBSMs) to the Province of Nova Scotia under a new Labour Market Development agreement (LMDA). As a result, Nova Scotia became responsible for delivering EBSMs to those in direct receipt of and those eligible for Employment Insurance benefits. In accordance with the transfer, throughout the 2009–2010 fiscal period, the Province received \$78 million in direct programming as well as \$7.2 million for administration costs.

Under the federal Economic Stimulus Package, additional funds transferred in fiscal 2009-2010 and for one year hereafter will largely be invested in the Skill Development program to increase training opportunities for Nova Scotians. This past year, over 4000 students enrolled in the Nova Scotia Community College or in private career colleges and received educational funding through the Skill Development Program, which enables students to select, arrange for and pay for their own training via direct financial assistance.

Other programs funded through the LMDA include:

- Targeted Wage Subsidy (TWS), designed to assist eligible individuals to obtain on-the-job work experience;
- Self Employment (SE), through which financial assistance and business planning advice is provided to EI eligible participants to help them start their own business;

- Job Creation Partnerships (JCP), designed to support projects that provide valuable work experience for EI eligible participants;
- Employment Assistance Services (EAS), providing funding to organizations to enable them to provide employment services to unemployed persons; and,
- Labour Market Partnerships (LMP), which help employers, employees and/or employer associations, and communities to improve their capacity for dealing with human resources requirements and to implement labour force adjustments.

In addition, the 09/10 fiscal year represented the first full year of operation of the Labour Market Agreement or LMA. This funding agreement supports labour market programming for Nova Scotians not eligible for EI Part II benefits. In 09/10, LWD partnered with the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration and the Department of Community Services to invest \$16.3M in LMA-funded programs and services. These included:

- Skills development interventions
- Wage subsidies
- Transition supports for displaced workers
- Workforce attachment initiatives

Clients targeted through the LMA in 09/10 included African Nova Scotians, Aboriginal Nova Scotians, Acadian/Francophones, Immigrants, Youth at Risk, Women, Persons with Disabilities and low skilled, employed workers.

In 09/10, over 3000 Nova Scotians received LMA funded programs or services.

The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW), a federal-provincial cost-shared initiative that provides support to unemployed older workers (55-64) in communities affected by significant downsizing or closures, served 260 clients in 09/10 through an investment of \$1.3 million. Nineteen projects offered group interventions with activities tailored to the specific needs of an older demographic. Program components consisted of employment assistance services, essential skills training, prior learning assessment, mentoring, basic skills (including computer) upgrading, self-employment exploration, and work experience.

The One Journey: Work and Learn program is a joint partnership between the Departments of Labour and Workforce Development and Community Services that works with industries and community groups to address labour shortages. Participants are assisted with specialized skills training and on-the-job learning and access employment in high demand sectors as part of the program. Funding was enhanced in 2009-2010 through the Strategic Training and Transition Fund (STTF) and as a result 150 participants gained employment in the areas of Continuing Care Assistant, Professional Truck Driving and the tourism industry where skill shortages are being experienced and industry is challenged to find workers. Through the One Journey program industry was taken on as a full partner, participated in the selection and training process and obtained trained employees. The participants received professional designation, many professional certifications and most importantly a career.

The Department is working with four Employability Tables (Persons with Disabilities, African Nova Scotians, Acadian Nova Scotians, and Aboriginal Nova Scotians) with the objective of increasing the labour market attachment of under-represented groups. All four Employability Tables have established advisory committees, each with a terms of reference, articulated action plan and a hired provincial coordinator. Meetings with key departments have started and a review of the tables' role and objectives will be undertaken in the fall in order to better align community needs with the appropriate programs and services.

### **Develop and implement the Prior Learning and Recognition (PLAR) Policy Framework for the Department.**

The Department is committed to building greater system capacity for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) within industry, business, post-secondary institutions, immigration services and the public school system. Our intent is also to foster greater awareness among all relevant stakeholders to ensure a mutual level of knowledge, understanding and acceptance of PLAR.

PLAR is a comprehensive process for identifying, assessing, and recognizing the skills, knowledge, or competencies a person has acquired through formal, informal and experiential learning.

In the development of the framework, led by the Adult Education division, the Department has moved to 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL), which is a more inclusive term that includes all aspects of PLAR.

To date, the Department has implemented several RPL practices, particularly in the apprenticeship system. This past fiscal year, the Department allocated funding to the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Centre to conduct an environmental scan of current RPL programs and services being delivered across the province. The results of this scan will inform future RPL program planning and development, including the implementation of RPL practices into NSSAL and Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) programs.

The Department arranged for the delivery of a three-day workshop of the *Igniting the Power Within* program. This program was developed in Manitoba to meet the needs of First Nations and Metis communities and was designed by Aboriginal people with Aboriginal culture and learning traditions in mind. The program enables participants to clearly identify and describe the knowledge and skills they have acquired through family, community and work experience as well as formal schooling.

Workshop participants were comprised of Aboriginal community members, employment service providers and training staff from a variety of provincial organizations. The

primary focus of the workshop was to expand the understanding and use of RPL and the development of essential skills in the Aboriginal community.

**✚ Increase learning opportunities for adult learners across the province to help them gain literacy, essential, and employability skills.**

Nova Scotians need opportunities to continue to learn throughout their lives. As the labour market changes and our economy increasingly become knowledge-based, Nova Scotians will need to develop new skills, improve their literacy, and upgrade existing skills.

Research conducted on the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (IALLS) indicates that literacy and numeracy skills at level three or above are necessary to thrive in a knowledge-based economy, particularly to enhance opportunities for lifelong learning, which is essential in a changing economy. Individuals who improve their literacy and essential skills are also healthier and more productive in the sense that they are more able to think critically, be proactive and more fully participate in their workplace and community.

One measure of productivity improvement is a higher percentage of Nova Scotians achieving a literacy score of level three or above as defined by the IALLS. In order to achieve this, continued investment in literacy and essential skills programming is required.

The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) is the primary adult learning initiative within the Adult Education division. NSSAL funds and coordinates a continuum of tuition-free educational programs (in English and French) for adult learners ranging from basic literacy to high school completion. A number of initiatives have been undertaken this year by the Department to increase learning opportunities for adult learners across the province. They include:

- Partnering with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) and the Université Sainte-Anne to offer an innovative *Link Community Care*, the Department will provide an opportunity for adults to complete their high school diploma and the CCA Certificate at the same time and gain work experience in a health care setting. This two-year program was delivered at three NSCC campuses (Annapolis Valley, Truro and Marconi) for 30 students who graduated in June 2010. Seven students began the program at Université Sainte-Anne and are scheduled to graduate in June, 2012.
- Working with Literacy Nova Scotia to coordinate a project examining the needs of learners in the community-based adult education sector. The needs assessment has been completed with the final report due to be released shortly.

- Continuing to develop and pilot programs that combine the Adult Learning Program (ALP) with employment-related curriculum, job search skills and work experience.
- Developing programming to increase the recruitment and retention of under-represented groups. New programs were developed and implemented in the Potlotek (Chapel Island) First Nation community and the Afton-Paq'tnkek First Nations community.
- As part of the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET), the Department participated in a working group that is developing a literacy awareness campaign for the Atlantic Provinces to be launched in the fall of 2010.
- Continuing to develop curriculum that is responsive to learners needs. The following courses were piloted this year and implementation occurred during the spring of 2010:
  - ALP Level IV Academic and Graduate Communications
  - ALP Level IV Academic and Graduate Global Geography
  - ALP Level IV Academic and Graduate Global History
  - ALP Level IV African Canadian Studies.

Level IV Graduate and Level IV Graduate Science were partially implemented while Level IV Academic Math was piloted this year.

In addition to the NSSAL core programming, the Department also works with Aboriginal communities, the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), community learning organizations, the PLA Centre and the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) to develop innovative adult learning programs and pathways for adult learners in Nova Scotia.

The Workplace Education Initiative is an award winning program, recognized across Canada, which works in partnership with business, industry and labour to provide relevant learning opportunities to the current workforce. WEI supports the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce and as a result contributes to the social and economic development of the Province. WEI works through business, industry and labour organizations to administer a suite of customized learning programs and services, foster a learning culture in the workplace and create public awareness around the value of learning at work. Through the WEI model, the Department has developed relationships with many organizations throughout Nova Scotia including unions, individual employers and sector/economic development organizations such as chambers of commerce, industry associations, and Regional Development Authorities to provide non-traditional educational opportunities to individuals within participating organizations.

*Strategic Goal:*

- 5) **In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, we will anticipate and plan for the challenges and opportunities for a changing economy.**

*Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)*

- Assist employers and other stakeholders in adapting to workforce opportunities and challenges arising from a rapidly changing external environment.
- Respond to and support the transition to a service and technology-based economy and workplace.
- Support responsive regulatory requirements where protections are not compromised and where flexibility helps Nova Scotians to prosper and to compete.
- Make evidence-based decisions through policy excellence throughout the Department.

*Priorities for 2009–2010*

 **Streamline regulations and reduce administrative burden by implementing the *Technical Safety Act* and new regulations.**

Nova Scotia has enjoyed an excellent record in technical safety; however, industry sectors have indicated to the Department over the past few years a need to review existing technical safety legislation in light of advanced technology and modern standards. Some technical safety legislation has not kept up with changes in technology, industry, and the workforce. Without change, the legislation could become inflexible for current industrial and operational practices.

In response, the Department of Labour and Workforce Development embarked on a review of the current legislative framework. The focus of the Technical Safety Review project was on the creation of a broader framework and how it could be streamlined to reflect technological change, improve consistency, and meet the needs of a changing economy now and in the future, while ensuring that minimum regulated safety standards are achieved. The intention was to develop a flexible, risk-managed, and performance-based legislative framework which provides for clear responsibilities and accountability.

The *Technical Safety Act*, a consolidated Act for technical safety in Nova Scotia, was passed in the Spring 2008 session of the Legislature. The Act is subject to proclamation upon approval of regulations attendant to the Act. Once proclaimed, the Act will be implemented in phases. The Department has committed to meaningful discussions with stakeholders during the regulatory review process and a number of regulations are under development. The *Technical Safety Act* will eventually replace the *Amusement Devices*

*Safety Act, the Crane Operators and Power Engineers Act, the Electrical Installation and Inspection Act, the Elevators and Lifts Act, the Steam Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act and become the enabling legislation for the Fuel Safety Regulations (which are currently under the Fire Safety Act).*

Regulations under phase one which deal with matters involving power engineers, crane operators, boiler and pressure equipment, fuel safety, general matters, standards and fees will be approved in Fall 2010. These regulations will not take effect until the Act is proclaimed in Spring 2011 to allow industry to become familiar with the new legislation and prepare for implementation. Regulations under phase two which deal with matters involving elevators and lifts and amusement devices will be made in Spring 2011 but not take effect until Fall 2011. Regulations under phase three which deal with electrical safety will be made in Fall 2011 but not take effect until Spring 2012.

In partnership with the Department of Economic and Rural Development, the Department began development on a provincial Workforce Strategy designed to position Nova Scotia to effectively respond to its population and labour force challenges through the identification of strategic priorities aimed at maximizing the skills, performance, and earning potential of our labour force. It will assist Nova Scotians in preparing for, attaching to, and advancing within our labour force. It will strive to ensure Nova Scotians have the right education, training, and transferrable skills to attain higher-value jobs and maximize opportunities for economic growth. The strategy is expected to be completed in late 2010.

**✚ Reorganize policy functions and implement service level agreements to enhance policy and business services.**

As part of the implementation of the FileNet enterprise content management system, negotiations were held with the Chief Information Office on a service level agreement to cover the CIO's ongoing support of that system. At year end, negotiations were continuing.

In addition to its regular reporting requirements, the Department receives numerous ad hoc requests for updates on its work. Information regarding ongoing initiatives is currently contained in various locations and inconsistent formats. Managing and responding to an increasing number of requests has posed challenges in terms of time and resources.

In response, the Department has adapted a web-based initiatives tracking system that captures, tracks and stores information regarding the Department's most significant initiatives in a central and secure location. Staff and management will be responsible for updating initiatives for which they are responsible on a quarterly basis. Standardized and customized reports regarding those initiatives can then be easily generated by the system upon request.

The Policy and Planning division is responsible for rolling out and administering the initiatives tracking system. Initial testing of the system occurred in late 2009 and some additional testing is required before the system is ready to be rolled out. Presentations regarding the system have been made to senior management and an information session for other staff and management is scheduled for late June 2010. The goal is to ensure relevant staff and management receives hands on training prior to the end of the summer and that the system will 'go live' by September 2010.

**✚ Prepare and implement a plan for service delivery office locations for the Department throughout Nova Scotia.**

A longterm plan to rationalize office space and reduce rental and maintenance costs was prepared and approved. To be implemented as our various leases expire, the plan aims to maximize our operational efficiency by combining offices where such combinations do not adversely affect client service.

In 2009/2010, as part of the establishment of the Employment Nova Scotia Division, four offices were moved.

***Strategic Goal:***

**6) Labour and Workforce Development is a Preferred Employer.**

***Strategic Priorities (4-Year Plan)***

- Build a cohesive new departmental identity and engage staff in the process of identifying opportunities to collaborate and build new relationships within the Department.
- Introduce a talent management framework that will help optimize staff development, retention, engagement and attraction.
- Develop a culture of value and recognition by investing in a positive workforce culture which incorporates employee development and wellness.

***Priorities for 2009–2010***

**✚ Improve employee engagement on committees and cross-department project teams as a means of learning new skills and acquiring knowledge of the Department's operations.**

Following the creation of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development in 2008 and the devolvement of the Labour Market Development Agreement in 2009, a departmental committee was struck to address the changing culture of three distinct and separate organizations that were previously part of different Provincial and Federal

government Departments. This committee is referred to as the LWD Connection Network.

The committee was directed to identify ways to encourage and support interaction, generate enthusiasm and create networking opportunities among staff that will lead to greater collaboration across the Department and support the implementation of the strategic plan.

In the last fiscal year, the committee implemented activities and tools to share information, participated in a department-wide management meeting and regularly informed the Executive Team of successes and challenges.

The Human Resources Initiatives (HRI) Team consists of various representatives from across LWD working for a safe, healthy, supportive, and inclusive workplace, where everyone is respected and valued for their contributions in fostering the social and economic well being of Nova Scotians.

The work of the HRI Team relates to three areas:

- Diversity - The Diversity Team works to promote accepting and respecting individual differences. It organizes diversity workshops, lunch and learn information sessions, and events like the Amazing Race for Knowledge. These activities help people understand what diversity is and why it is important for the Department.
- Healthy Workplace - The Healthy Workplace Team works to ensure that health, wellness, and safety are part of everyday work life. It plans and organizes events like lunch time intramural sports, walking challenges, healthy eating and nutritional awareness, and activities around Healthy Workplace Month (October).
- Recognition - The Recognition Team works to make people aware that departmental employees are committed to making a difference for Nova Scotians. It plans and organizes the Minister's Award of Excellence, various milestone awards, and other events and tools which promote the building up of a recognition culture.

 **Develop a departmental Human Resource Strategy that will assist with succession planning and staff development.**

Human resources priorities for 2009-2010 will be aligned with the Corporate Employee Survey Results as well as the Public Service Commission Corporate Human Resources Plan.

This year the Department focused heavily on improving participation in performance management and career development planning. This area will be measured in the

*Learning and Development Opportunities and Opportunities for Growth and Advancement* sections of the Corporate Employee Opinion Survey.

As part of the Department's commitment to a positive workforce culture which incorporates employee development and wellness, it is important for all employees and managers to know how to resolve issues of harassment and discrimination as early as possible. Therefore, the Department continued to support the roll out of the Respectful Workplace Policy, ensuring that all employees attend training. This area is measured in the Diverse and Respectful Workplace section of the Corporate Employee Opinion Survey and LearnNet training registration/attendance.

 **Initiate training tracking system for employee development.**

In 2009/2010, Labour and Workforce Development hired a departmental Education Development Officer to coordinate and address pan-divisional training and development needs. This year, the new development program was able to offer expanded department-wide training related to respectful workplaces. This will be followed up in 2010/2011 with department-wide new staff orientations plus training in Microsoft Office 2007 and Introduction to Occupational Health and Safety.

As part of this training and development effort, the Department created a customized database that tracks all department-wide training.

## 5. Financial Results

<b>Labour and Workforce Development</b>			
<b>Program and Service Area</b>	<b>2009-2010 Estimate</b>	<b>2009-2010 Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(per cent)
<b>Ordinary Revenues</b>	4,845	4,898	1.1%
<b>Fees and Other Charges</b>	3,057	2,893	(5.4%)
<b>Recoveries</b>	129,461	117,934	(8.9%)
<b>TCA Purchase Requirements</b>	2,130	1,665	(21.8%)
<b>Program Expenses</b>			
Administration	717	510	(28.9%)
Policy, Planning & Professional Services	1,718	1,660	(3.4%)
Safety	18,621	16,230	(12.8%)
Labour Services	6,694	5,871	(12.3%)
Skills and Learning Branch	133,109	122,057	(8.3%)
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	160,859	146,328	(9.0%)
<b>Funded Staff (FTEs)</b>	270	244	(9.6%)

## 6. Measuring Our Performance

### Strategic Goal 1: Nova Scotians will have safe, healthy and supportive workplace and communities.

Safe, healthy and supportive communities and workplaces enhance Nova Scotia's ability to prosper and provide for a better quality of life for the people of this Province. Positive and productive relationships among employers, employees and unions are in place creating a culture of fairness, safety and equity throughout the Province.

**Outcome: Nova Scotians will lose less time from work due to workplace accidents or illness.**

#### The Measure: *The duration of lost-time claims*

##### What does this measure tell us?

Reported by the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and calculated using the composite duration index, a complex measure of how long workers are off the job due to injury, the duration of lost-time claims helps to indicate the severity of injuries occurring in the workplace. Usually, the longer a worker receives benefits, the more severe the injury. Other factors may influence this measure such as shifts in healthcare policies and practices.

##### Where are we now?

In 2008 the number of compensable time-loss claims registered was 95. In 2009, that number increased to 98.

Annual Data: (calendar year)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nova Scotia	114	105	102	95	98
Atlantic Canada	93	91.7	91.8	97.5	N/A
Canada	67.4	67.7	N/A	N/A	N/A

##### Where do we want to be?

Together with the WCB and other Workplace Safety Insurance System partners, the Department's target is to have the average five-year composite duration of lost-time claims in Nova Scotia below the Atlantic Canada average. The Department will continue to work closely with the WCB to identify high accident firms and sectors, and frequent types of accidents. The Department will use this information to target compliance promotion activities and inspections more effectively.

The index continues a downward trend towards the Atlantic Canada and national average but the target has not been met on an annual basis since 2000. The trend will continue to be monitored.

The national average includes only those jurisdictions that report on the measure to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada, from which this data comes.

**The Measure:** *New lost-time claims per 100 workers.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The number of new time-loss claims resulting from workplace per 100 workers represents the lost-time claims rate. This rate is calculated as the number of new lost-time claims times 100, divided by the total number of workers for the period.

**Where are we now?**

In 2008 the injury rate for time-loss claims per 100 covered employees was 2.5. In 2009, that number decreased to 2.2.

Annual Data: (calendar year)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nova Scotia	3	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.2
Atlantic Canada	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.9	N/A
Canada	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.1	N/A

**Where do we want to be?**

The target number for 2010 is 2.41 and the target for 2014 is 2.22. We are currently exceeding the target and may review the benchmark in the future.

**Outcome: Improve inspection and compliance systems**

**The Measure:** *Total number of inspectors with access to the ATS system.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The Department's Occupational Health and Safety division regularly interacts with its clients and workplace contacts throughout the Province. Such interactions involve inspections, investigations and prosecutions as well as business services (i.e., responding to requests for information and inquiries, hosting training sessions and promotional events, etc). To track these activities and also to allow access to the data, the division has established a computerized Activity Tracking System (ATS) in mobile and office-based versions.

An increase in the number of inspectors with access to the ATS system will improve consistency and effectiveness of information transfer to and from the Department and its inspectors.

**Where are we now?**

After review of the needs of the Alcohol and Gaming division, the Department has postponed the implementation.

<b>Outcome: Improve the protection of ticket lottery players.</b>
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**The Measure: *Compliance rate with the new Atlantic Lottery Regulations***

**What does this measure tell us?**

Monitoring compliance helps the Department to assess how well regulations are both understood and obeyed, and identifies specific problem areas so that resources can be used effectively.

The desired outcome of compliance with the new *Atlantic Lottery Regulations* throughout 2009 and 2010 is consumer protection. One of the Department's strategies to protect consumers and increase public confidence in the gaming services sector is to conduct site inspections and work with licensees to ensure they comply with all applicable Acts and Regulations. The new Regulations will also require approvals for all new lottery products and the internal operating procedures of the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.

**Where are we now?**

Amendments to the *Atlantic Lottery Regulations* came into effect on October 1, 2009. Within six months of this date, over 95 percent of ALC lottery ticket retailers in Nova Scotia were visited to explain their new responsibilities, and ensure that they had a copy of the Retailer Operating Procedures that were developed and distributed by ALC. Compliance was in question with about five percent of retailers, noting that they were unaware of the new Retailer Operating Procedures.

Also since these regulatory changes were implemented, ALC Internal Controls have been approved, and three technical standards have been developed for the approval of new lottery products.

No disciplinary actions have been taken to date.

## **Where do we want to be?**

In May 2010, the AGD began to conduct more detailed inspections of all ALC lottery ticket retailers in the province, to ensure a minimum of 95 percent compliance with the *Atlantic Lottery Regulations* and ALC Retailer Operating Procedures.

## **Strategic Goal 2: Nova Scotia has a fair, equitable and stable labour environment.**

Harmonious labour relations are an important part of Nova Scotia's competitiveness. Diversity, inclusion, information sharing and adaptability are critical elements in the creation and maintenance of a stable labour environment. Employers and employees will take responsibility for building relationships and for achieving a common understanding regarding their respective rights, roles and responsibilities.

<b>Outcome: A Stable labour relations environment.</b>
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**The Measure:** *Lost time due to strikes and lockouts.*

### **What does this measure tell us?**

The measure is an indicator of labour stability, an important factor for economic competitiveness. Comparison with national rates helps the Department monitor trends, set targets and determine priorities.

### **Where are we now?**

Our ongoing target has been to remain at or below the national average for percentage of work time lost. This has been accomplished through effective use of conciliation and mediation processes. In 2009, there were no strikes or lock outs in the province so the percentage of working time lost was 0% as compared to the national average of 6%. The Nova Scotia Community College strike that occurred in 2009 is not counted in these stats because the strike did not extend beyond an hour.

### **Where do we want to be?**

In recent years, Nova Scotia has shown a high degree of labour stability. Over the past five years, working time lost due to strike and lockouts in Nova Scotia has been consistently below the national average.

**Outcome: Timely dispute resolution process for employees and employers in non-unionized workplaces.**

**The Measure:** *Average time for Labour Standards Code complaints to be assigned an officer.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure provides an indication that staff are responding promptly to complaints and preventing accumulation of backlog. Reduction in the average time for complaints to be assigned an officer assists the Labour Standards division in achieving its vision as a provider of timely, impartial, respectful and knowledgeable dispute resolution services.

**Where are we now?**

In 2009/10, Labour Standards complaints were assigned, on average, within 16.15 calendar days of receipt. The Department did not meet its target due to staff vacancies within the Labour Standards division. We plan to have the vacancies filled this fiscal year and will meet our target in 2010/11.

**Where do we want to be?**

Labour Standards complaints are assigned to an officer within two weeks (14 calendar days) of receipt.

**The Measure:** *Percentage of clients satisfied with WAP service at the time of case closure will be at 80% or higher in 2009-2010.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Information is compiled from returned client satisfaction surveys which are distributed to all Workers' Advisers Program clients upon closure of each case file. The survey allows the client to provide anonymous feedback with respect to his/her level of satisfaction with the quality of service provided by staff.

**Where are we now?**

Statistics regarding the last five years indicate a consistently high satisfaction rating.					
Fiscal Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Closed Files	856	1342	1585	1165	866
Satisfaction rating	94.3%	86.4%	95.1%	93.7%	92.4%
Survey return rating	20.8%	17.1%	17.5%	19.1%	23.8%

The above noted data was reported in each of the annual reports. The satisfaction rating for the Workers' Advisers Program remains high.

**Where do we want to be?**

A client satisfaction rating of 80 per cent has been established as a minimum target. The Program will continue to strive for excellence in client service through an efficient intake system, training for Advisers and implementation of best practices.

**The Measure:** *Follow up on notices of plans with overdue contributions.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure reflects the Department's commitment to the timely investigation of overdue contributions, so as to safeguard pension plan contributors from possible misuse of assets.

**Where are we now?**

In 2009/10, we had 51 notices from financial institutions holding pension funds of non-remittance or under-remittance of pension contributions from plan administrators. All such notices were addressed by staff within an average of 7 working days.

**Where do we want to be?**

We want to maintain our standard of follow-up within 10 business days of receipt of a notice of non-remittance.

<p><b>Outcome: Timely remittance of contributions in a Defined Contribution pension plan.</b></p>
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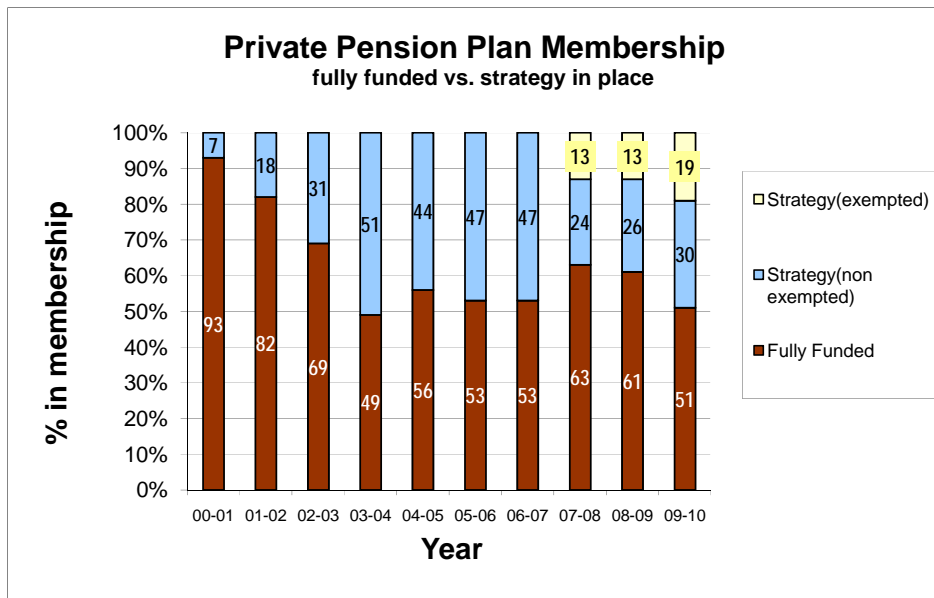
**The Measure:** *Percentage of registered pension plan members covered by pension plans that are 100% funded will be 50% or higher in 2009-2010; all others will have a strategy for full funding within 5 years.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Solvency funding is a market-based analysis of a plan's assets and liabilities to determine if the assets are sufficient to fund all of the liabilities. The measure tracks the percentage of pension plan members covered by private pension plans registered under the Pension Benefits Act that are 100 per cent funded, compared with the percentage of members of plans that have a strategy in place to achieve full funding within 5 years, or are currently exempted from the requirement to fund all solvency deficiencies over 5 years.

The level of funding for a plan is highly dependent on market fluctuations and is expected to vary from year to year. In addition, changes to the Pensions Benefits Regulations from 2004-2009 have modified pension plan funding requirements. Plans are no longer required to fund “grow-in” benefits payable on a plan windup under a solvency valuation. Additionally, solvency funding exemptions have been provided to universities, municipalities and specified multi-employer pensions plans (building trades’ plans) which may elect to take advantage of the funding relief provided. For these plans, full funding will be delayed as they are not making contributions to eliminate all solvency deficiencies within 5 years. Additionally, all plans have the option of funding solvency deficiencies identified in an actuarial valuation report prepared as at a date between December 30, 2008 and January 2, 2011 over 10 years instead of the normal 5 years. Such relief is only available if no more than 1/3 of the members object.

**Where are we now?**



**Where do we want to be?**

For 2010-2011, we expect to see a significant deterioration in the funded status of all plans. The decline in the financial markets in 2008 combined with a decrease in the rate used to determine solvency liabilities (thus increasing those liabilities) has resulted in significant solvency deficiencies under all defined benefit plans. For this reason, we have proposed to provide temporary solvency funding relief that would permit employers 10 years to bring a plan back to full solvency, rather than the 5 years currently in place. We will monitor the funding of the plans to ensure that all the required contributions for the elimination of solvency deficiencies are made.

**Outcome: Streamline functioning of agencies, boards, commissions and tribunals.**

**The Measure:** *Improved forms and ease of access.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Improved forms and ease of access help expedite information retrieval on the part of stakeholders and members of the public, and allow for faster service delivery on the part of the Department.

Making Department forms and all relevant information web-accessible as part of our wider initiative to streamline the functioning of agencies, boards, commissions and tribunals enables workplace stakeholders and members of the public to more easily understand and exercise their regulatory responsibilities, rights and contacts.

**Where are we now?**

The Conciliation and Labour Tribunals division is proposing administrative amendments to the regulations under the Trade Union Act that will remove forms from the regulations. This allows the division to respond to a changing environment more expeditiously.

**Where do we want to be?**

The Department will continue to explore opportunities to reduce the regulatory burden from the Department.

**The Measure:** *Improve the overall quality and efficiency of the employment adjudication experience in Nova Scotia*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Creating one Labour Relations and Employment Board (“LREB”) will achieve consistency in decision making and policies/procedures; reduce the time frames for scheduling matters and receiving decisions; and enhance accessibility, accountability, and transparency of adjudicative services.

In addition, the LREB will respond quickly and comprehensively to technological innovation, changing stakeholder demands, and a changing economy while taking a proactive approach to employment relations in Nova Scotia.

**Where are we now?**

Our proposal to streamline the existing labour relations boards and employment tribunals was approved by government. The Department will proceed with consultation over the

summer months (including the circulation of a Discussion Paper) and legislative amendments will be put forward this fall.

### **Where do we want to be?**

We want to consolidate the province's six tribunals under one board after consultation by way of a phased- in approach to implement all the required changes by the fall of 2011.

## **Strategic Goal 3: Nova Scotia is able to identify and respond to provincial workforce requirements.**

By combining assumptions regarding the changing nature of work across industry sectors and analyzing provincial and national labour market information, the Department is a champion for and a partner in workforce and human resource planning.

<b>Outcome: Modern trade certifications that reflect current standards.</b>
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**The Measure:** *Number of regulations updated.*

### **What does this measure tell us?**

This measure is reflective of the Department's efforts to maintain efficient government operation while improving service delivery regarding the trades and ensuring all trades people receive the training required to perform their work (i.e., training that meets or exceeds current standards).

### **Where are we now?**

Trade regulations need to be updated to coincide with current industry practice. The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board reviewed and made amendments within this fiscal year to the following eight (8) trades: Motor Vehicle Body Repairer (Metal and Paint), Instrumentation and Control Technician, Machinist, Industrial Mechanic (Millwright), Industrial Electrician, Floor covering Installer, Cook and Agricultural Equipment Technician.

### **Where do we want to be?**

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board will continue to review and make amendments to the following trades:

- Oil Burner Mechanic
- Plumber
- Boat Builder
- Welder

- Alarm and Security Technician
- Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic
- Landscape Horticulturist
- Automotive Glass Technician
- Ironworker
- Crane and Hoisting Equipment Operator (Mobile Crane)
- Bricklayer
- Automotive Service Technician
- Metal Fabricator (Fitter)

<p><b>Outcome: Reduce barriers to labour mobility.</b></p>
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**The Measure:** *Requirement imposed on workers certified in another jurisdiction.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure highlights the variance that exists among jurisdictions with regard to certification standards and the resultant administrative burden associated with cross-jurisdictional employment.

**Where are we now?**

Workshops and briefings were held in 2009-2010 to increase understanding of obligations to reduce barriers to labour mobility as outlined in Chapter 7 of the Agreement on Internal Trade. Meetings were held with 45 regulatory authorities to determine the variance that exists among jurisdictions with regard to certification standards.

Nova Scotia’s Fair Registration Practices Act was proclaimed.

The Pan Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications was introduced.

**Where do we want to be?**

We want to ensure there are the fewest possible barriers to labour mobility while ensuring public protection. In order to achieve this objective, we want to ensure our province has fair, transparent, impartial and objective processes in place to facilitate a better understanding of registration practices in the province and to create a fair and competitive labour market environment where immigrants have the opportunity to fully use their education, skills and work experience for their benefit and for Nova Scotia’s collective prosperity.

**Outcome: Increased usage of career planning and labour market information.**

**The Measure:** *Increased site traffic to the Career Options web site.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Increased site traffic to the Career Options web site is indicative of the rising need among Nova Scotians for high-quality career planning and labour market information (LMI) to support informed decision-making. The measure is also reflective of enhanced Department efforts to provide accurate, responsive, and accessible LMI.

**Where are we now?**

The average number of page views each month over the 6-month period from November 2009 through April 2010 was over 77,000.

The number of page views in each of the past 6-months has increased by an average of 20% over the same month in the previous year; surpassing this year's goal of a 15% increase in site traffic.

**Where do we want to be?**

Achieve an additional 5% increase in site usage (which often decreases in good economic times) over 2010-11.

**Strategic Goal 4: Through flexible and responsive education and training programs, Nova Scotians will share in and contribute to the economic and social prosperity of Nova Scotia.**

Social and economic benefits of workforce participation are clearly understood by individuals and through the communities across the Province. The Department will support and provide opportunities for greater workforce participation for those who wish to participate and for those who are encouraged to participate. The Department will support and encourage business and government working together to alleviate, reduce and prevent poverty in this province.

**Outcome: Improved delivery of LMA and LMDA services.**

**The Measure:** *Client satisfaction score.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The post-completion client survey asks clients/participants about their experience with LMA-funded programs and services, as well as their satisfaction with said programs and services. The resulting client satisfaction score is indicative of the Department's ability to tailor programs to provincial priorities and the needs of Nova Scotians.

**Where are we now?**

Clients of LMA-funded programs and services are asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the program or service that they received via a program completion form. A statistically representative sample of respondents indicates that in 09-10, 70% of clients rated their satisfaction with the program or service as being very good or excellent. A further 28% rated their satisfaction with the program or service as good and only 2% indicated that they were unsatisfied with the program or service and rated it poor or very poor.

**Where do we want to be?**

The overall goal of Employment Nova Scotia is to have all LMA clients (100%) rating their satisfaction with their LMA-funded program or service as good or better.

**The Measure:** *Number of EI Clients Served (LMDA).*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The number of EI clients served is an indication of the performance of the economy as it fluctuates, labour market demand and potential labour force participation.

**Where are we now?**

In fiscal 09/10, 11,795 EI clients were served through LMDA-funded programs or services. This means that 11,795 unemployed Nova Scotians increased their likelihood of a successful return to employment during this timeframe.

**Where do we want to be?**

In fiscal 10/11, Employment Nova Scotia aims to be in a situation to assist unemployed Nova Scotians who require supports and increase their likelihood of a successful return to employment through LMDA-funded programs and services. It is anticipated that a similar number of clients will be served in 10/11.

**The Measure:** *Number of EI Clients employed.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The number of EI clients employed indicates in part the effectiveness and efficiency of the LMDA employment benefits and support measures at both the client and program levels.

**Where are we now?**

A key measure of results for the LMDA and one prescribed by the Government of Canada is the number of EI clients who have returned to employment during the given fiscal year. In 09/10, 50% (5908) of Nova Scotian EI clients that were served through LMDA-funded programs or services reported that they had returned to employment.

**Where do we want to be?**

In 2010/2011, Employment Nova Scotia aims to help 6000 Nova Scotian EI clients succeed in returning to employment.

**The Measure:** *Savings to the Federal EI Account (LMDA).*

**What does this measure tell us?**

The incidence and speed with which EI clients become employed after their intervention directly corresponds to a savings to the Federal EI Part I account.

**Where are we now?**

In fiscal 09/10, \$30.03M was saved (not expended) in the form of EI payments as a result of Nova Scotian EI clients returning to employment after completing an LMDA-funded intervention.

**Where do we want to be?**

With the increase in the health of the Nova Scotian economy, it is expected that the potential burden on the EI Part 1 account will be less than in 09/10. Given this, ENS aims to increase the proportion of EI clients returning to work and the speed with which they do so.

**Outcome: Increase the number of Nova Scotians who achieve trade certification.**

**The Measure:** *The number of Nova Scotians who achieve trade certification.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure provides data on the number of individuals pursuing and obtaining certification in the designated trades. Certifying skilled trade professionals is critical to industry and the economic health of Nova Scotia. Under the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act*, the Department is obligated to provide access to training and certification in designated trades.

**Where are we now?**

The apprenticeship training and certification system continues to work with industry and other partners to ensure Nova Scotians get high-quality training that meets the needs of employers. Nine hundred and eighty-eight (984) Certificates of Qualification were issued between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 representing an increase of 133. Of these, 499 were issued to completed apprentices, and 441 were issued to trade qualifiers. The remaining 48 certificates were issued to Certificate of Qualification holders from other jurisdictions who qualified for Nova Scotia certification.

**Where do we want to be?**

Our target is to increase the number of participants and program completions.

**Outcome: Reduce accidents for young workers.**

**The Measure:** *Number of students receiving OHS training.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure is an indicator of the Department's success in incorporating OHS training into the Nova Scotia high school curriculum.

**Where are we now?**

The Departments of Education and Labour and Workforce Development and the Workers' Compensation Board developed the eight hours of in-class instruction, which is part of the compulsory Healthy Living 9 course. The program focusing on the importance of workplace health and safety was piloted to 330 Grade 9 students from across the province this past academic year.

At the high school level, workplace health and safety curriculum hours were increased within the Options and Opportunities and Community Based Learning programs. Department employees have worked on an initiative to increase available opportunities for workplace health and safety, as well as labour standards, education. These are compulsory for Nova Scotian students attending the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning.

### **Where do we want to be?**

The Department, and our partners within the Workplace Safety and Insurance System, would like to assure that every Nova Scotian has received some workplace health and safety system training before they leave the education system.

### **Strategic Goal 5: In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, we will anticipate and plan for the challenges and opportunities for a changing economy.**

In partnership with key stakeholders, the Department will seize the opportunity to influence and support Nova Scotia's future as a leader and participant in developing a workforce that will both adapt and excel in a changing economy.

<b>Outcome: Streamline regulations and reduce administrative burden.</b>
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### **The Measure: *Reduce administrative burden.***

#### **What does this measure tell us?**

This measure tracks initiatives undertaken by the Department to promote efficiency by streamlining regulations (i.e., adopting a systematic approach to the simplification of regulation) and reducing administrative burden, resulting in enhanced communication with stakeholders and target groups and increased use of digital solutions.

We continue to report on the administrative burden reduction as a combined total shared between both the Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) and Labour and Workforce Development as the Departments were joined for the first 3 years of reporting. The baseline data captured was for the previous Department of Environment and Labour, splitting the cumulative percentage would skew the numbers.

#### **Where are we now?**

Regulations under the Technical Safety Act covering power engineers, crane operators, boiler and pressure equipment, fuel safety, general matters, standards and fees will be forwarded for consideration in Fall 2010. These regulations will not take effect until the

Act is proclaimed in Spring 2011 to allow industry to become familiar with the new legislation and prepare for implementation.

As of end of fiscal year 2010, the total estimated reduction for the cumulative Departments of NSE and LWD is 16.5%.

**Where do we want to be?**

Full proclamation of the Technical Safety Act and all associated regulations by Spring 2012. Subject to proclamation of the Act, the Department will reduce administrative burden for businesses under the Technical Safety Act by 15 %.

The cumulative Departments of NSE and LWD would like to achieve the 20% reduction target by the end of 2010.

<b>Outcome: Improve policy service.</b>
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**The Measure:** *Per cent of clients that are satisfied with policy service.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Client satisfaction with policy service means that the Department has been effective in achieving a unified approach to realizing the goals of the Strategic Plan. Client feedback regarding the need for improvements in policy service provides the opportunity to enhance our policy architecture and promote better regulation and policy coherence.

**Where are we now?**

In 2009, the Policy and Planning division interviewed all clients to determine expectations. A performance plan was completed.

**Where do we want to be?**

In response to the identified needs of the clients, in 2010-2011 we will meet clients' needs 80% of the time.

**Strategic Goal 6: Labour and Workforce Development is a Preferred Employer.**

The Department is devoted to developing, retaining and attracting talented and skilled workers, further strengthening an inclusive, high-performing and engaged workforce. Our objective is to establish a corporate environment where people want to come to work, and where their contributions and creativity are valued and recognized.

**Outcome: Improved staff knowledge of Department programs and services.**

**The Measure:** *Per cent of staff who have completed the orientation program.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

An orientation program not only solidifies new employees' relationship with the Department, it equips them with the ability to perform their jobs effectively and safely and fuels their enthusiasm for achieving departmental goals and priorities.

An increase in number of staff members who complete the Department's orientation program translates into a reduction in start-up costs associated with learning on the job, as well as reduced employee anxiety and employee turnover. The severity and frequency of accidents in the workplace are additionally reduced through proper orientation.

**Where are we now?**

The Department developed the orientation plan in 2009/10. At this point, there are no statistics on how many staff have completed a formal orientation program.

**Where do we want to be?**

All divisions will be offered a new departmental orientation program in fiscal 2010-2011. We would like at least 50 percent of the Labour and Workforce Development staff to have completed a formal orientation program by the end of 2010/2011, with the remainder trained in 2011/2012.

In addition, the orientation training will be tracked on the new Training Tracking Database, allowing a permanent, searchable record to be kept of who has attended this training.

**Outcome: Staff has a Career Development Plan in place.**

**The Measure:** *Per cent of staff who have developed a Career Development Plan.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Career Development Plans help ensure greater focus on the Department's annual operational planning. Information provided within Career Development Plans is incorporated into the respective Divisional Operational Plans, which support achievement of the Department's mission, values and strategic goals through 2013.

### **Where are we now?**

72% of Labour and Workforce Development employees who completed the Corporate Employee Opinion Survey for 2009 were in agreement with the statement “I see a future for my career, working for the Government of Nova Scotia.” 39 % were in agreement with the statement “I have opportunities for career growth within my Department.” 43% of staff have completed career development plans.

### **Where do we want to be?**

We would like to see the number of employees who have career development plans increase by 25% during 2010-2011 fiscal. We will train employees and managers on how to complete a career development plan and the importance of doing so.

**The Measure:** *Per cent of staff who have had a performance appraisal in the past year.*

### **What does this measure tell us?**

The performance appraisal process is a process whereby employees and managers collaborate to develop work and career goals that will move both the individual and the organization forward. Goal-setting, continuous coaching and feedback and formal review are all components of a performance appraisal.

The Department’s commitment to the performance appraisal process ensures ongoing, open dialogue between employees and management. Articulation of employee achievements or the need for necessary adjustments results in effective project management and provides workers with the direction required to accomplish their goals and further their professional development while contributing to departmental objectives.

### **Where are we now?**

69% of Labour and Workforce Development employees in the 2009 Corporate Employee Survey indicated that they had participated in a performance appraisal review with their supervisor. This compared to 64% at a Corporate level. The Department is 7 points above the benchmark.

### **Where do we want to be?**

We would like to see this number increase to a minimum of 75% for 2011. This will mean further education for all employees, particularly supervisors, on the importance of the performance appraisal process.

**Outcome: French Language Services.**

**The Measure:** *Overall compliance with the French-language Service Plan at 80% or greater.*

**What does this measure tell us?**

Improved compliance with *French-Language Services Act and Regulations* is an indicator that in accordance with the 2009–2010 French-Language Services Plan, the Department has succeeded in building upon existing capacity to provide French-language services to our clients and promoting interest and involvement in service delivery among our employees.

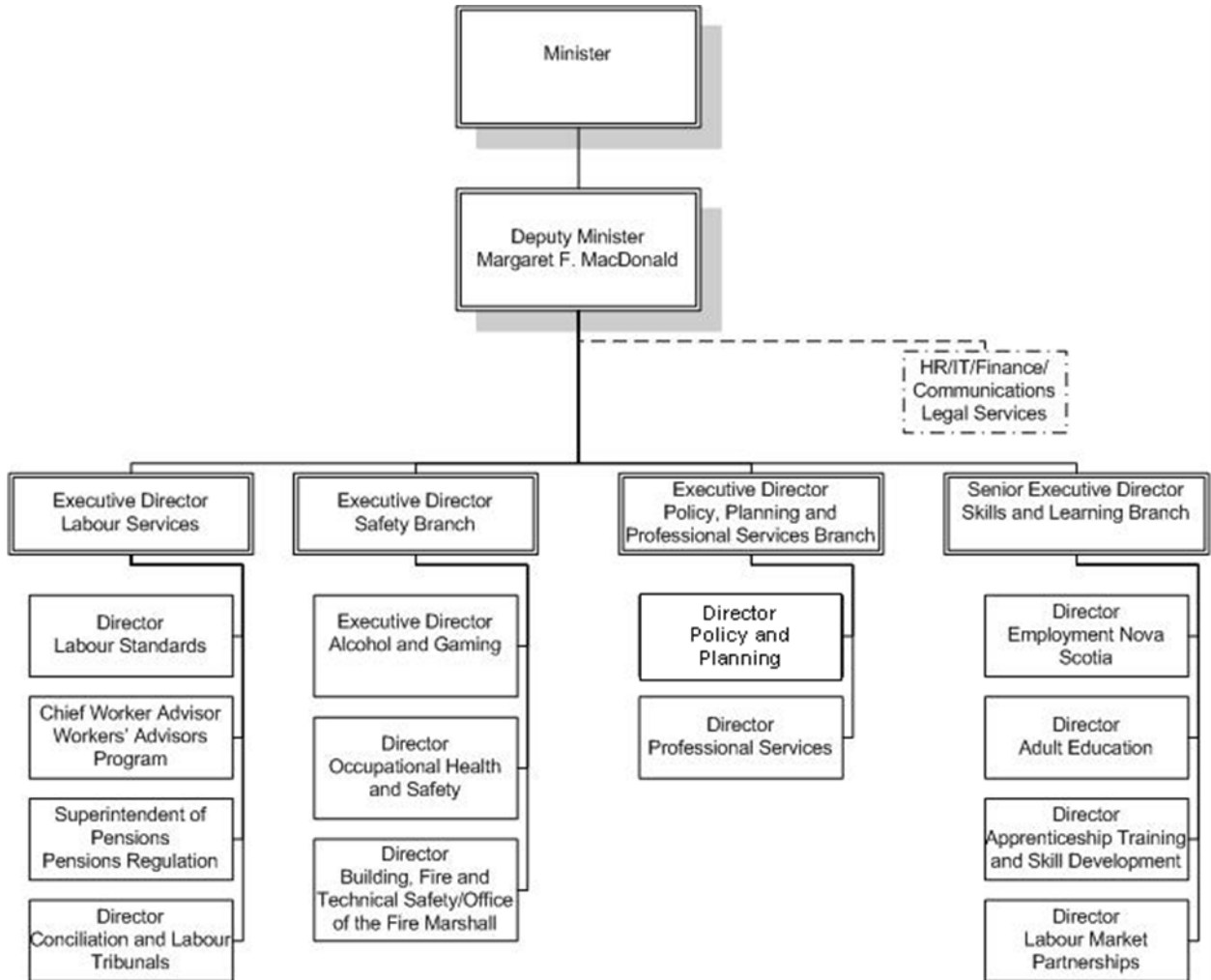
**Where are we now?**

Labour and Workforce Development complies with all French Language Policies. As well, we have accomplished 83 percent of the planned measures from the 2009/2010 French-language Service Plan.

**Where do we want to be?**

Moving beyond simple compliance with policies, we want to work towards concrete improvements. Thus, we will work to maintain our goal of overall compliance with the French-language Service Plan at 80% or greater.

# Appendix A – Organizational Chart 2010-2011



## **Appendix B - Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals**

### **13 Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals**

- Apprenticeship Board
- Construction Industry Panel
- Cosmetology Association of Nova Scotia
- Crane Operators Appeal Board
- Elevators and Lifts Appeal Board
- Film Classifiers
- Fire Safety Advisory Council and Fire Safety Appeal Board
- Fuel Safety Board
- Labour Relations Board
- Labour Standards Tribunal
- Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Council
- Occupational Health and Safety Appeal Panel
- Power Engineers and Operators Appeal Committee
- Registered Barbers Association of Nova Scotia
- Workers' Compensation Board

### **7 Legislated Committees**

- Arbitration Advisory Committee
- Crane Operators Examination Committee
- Fire Services Advisory Committee
- Minimum Wage Review Committee
- Nova Scotia Building Code Advisory Committee