

**Government of Nova Scotia
Public Service Commission**

**Accountability Report
2003/2004 Fiscal Year**



Table of Contents

Accountability Statement	1
Message from the Minister	2
Message from the Commissioner	3
Introduction	4
Public Service Commission Progress and Accomplishments	5
Priorities	5
Additional Significant Accomplishments	13
Financial Results	16
Actual Versus Budgeted Expenditures	16
Performance/Outcome Reporting	17

Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Public Service Commission for the year ended March 31, 2004, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Public Service Commission's Business Plan for the fiscal year 2003/2004. The reporting of the Public Service Commission's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Public Service Commission's management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Public Service Commission's senior 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 Public Service Commission's Business Plan for the year.

Minister:

Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister, Human Resources

Commissioner:

Richard (Rick) C.J. Nurse, M.H.Sc.
Commissioner, Public Service Commission

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the *2003-2004 Accountability Report* for the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission.

The Government of Nova Scotia has made a commitment to its citizens to set goals and to be accountable in how well we achieve against that plan. This report details the performance of the PSC in terms of last year's business plan.

The PSC has four important roles. It is responsible for the development and implementation of corporate human resource policy, programs, and services; it must ensure, through audit and evaluation, the quality and value of human resource management practices; it ensures a fair and effective hiring process; and it is government's agent for collective bargaining.

In October 2002, the PSC initiated the *New Directions and Opportunities* project to identify the structure, service delivery approach and core competencies that are required by the PSC to support its mandate. In 2003, we finalized this structure change.

In brief, our organization has moved from an operational to a strategic focus; from being activity-focused to being solutions focused; from being a manager to being a leader; from service provider to service partner; from an administrative to a consultative approach; and from being hierarchical to becoming more flexible.

I sincerely thank PSC staff and our partners across government for their commitment to delivering high quality service to Nova Scotians and for this contribution to a healthy, prosperous and self-sufficient Nova Scotia.

Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister, Human Resources

Message from the Commissioner

I am very pleased to have been a part of the delivery of the Nova Scotia's *2003-2004 Accountability Report*. We have tried to make this a straightforward account of our success in achieving the targets that we set for ourselves in last year's business plan.

One of the key achievements of the PSC in 2003, was the review of the PSC's role in occupational health and safety. The PSC requested this operational review to ensure that it was meeting its obligations, roles and responsibilities concerning OH&S within the public service.

The report also helped the Commission determine the areas where it should focus its resources and efforts to ensure that it contributes effectively and strategically to OH&S issues across government.

The report was completed in April of 2003. Nineteen recommendations were made and – I'm very pleased to say – the PSC accepted all 19 recommendations. To-date more than 60 per cent of these recommendations have been completed with the remaining 40 per cent in progress.

I am grateful to all the staff at the PSC along with the broader human resources community in government and our many partners. I look forward to continuing our work as we continue to support the development of a skilled, diverse and responsive public service.

Richard (Rick) C.J. Nurse, M.H.Sc.
Commissioner, Public Service Commission

Introduction

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to the principle of open and accountable government. Accountability is enhanced by regular reporting to the House of Assembly and the public on results relative to the goals and priorities outlined in the business plan at the beginning of each fiscal year. Annual business plans and accountability reports are essential tools for government and agencies to assess organizational performance. The report is intended to be a straightforward account of progress made on major goals and objectives for the year.

The Business Plan and Accountability Report 2003/2004

The Public Service Commission Accountability Report for the fiscal year 2003/2004 summarizes the activities, accomplishments and performance measures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004. This report should be read in conjunction with the NS Public Service Commission's 2003/2004 Business Plan. (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/BusinessPlan/2003-2004.pdf>)

Public Service Commission Progress and Accomplishments

This section outlines the strategic goals and priorities as outlined in the Public Service Commission's 2003/2004 Business Plan. Accomplishments and progress achieved during the year for each priority are described in this section. Information on pertinent human resource, information technology and finance functions of the Commission are also included in this section. Any significant accomplishments not anticipated in the original business plan but achieved in this fiscal year have also been identified.

Strategic Goals

Seven strategic goals were identified in the 2003/2004 Business Plan as key to the Public Service Commission's mission. They are as follows:

- Provide leadership and support to ensure strategic human resources planning is part of the strategic priorities and policies of government.
- Improve recruitment and retention policies and practices to maintain a professional and effective public service.
- Improve policies and practices that help us to manage, recognize and reward performance of public servants who contribute to government's goals and priorities
- Effectively co-ordinate collective bargaining processes for the civil service.
- Support the development of employees by offering and encouraging development opportunities.
- Improve policies and practices that promote a healthy and safe work environment and support the well-being of employees.
- Ensure effectiveness and compliance of corporate human resource policies and programs through evaluation and audit.

Priorities

Priority initiatives were identified in the PSC Business Plan for the fiscal year 2003/2004. These twelve (12) priorities were considered necessary to advance the strategic goals. Progress on these priorities is summarized by core business area below:

Core Business Area - Leadership and Coordination

Priority 1: *We will complete the implementation of the recommendations of the New Directions and Opportunities Report, as outlined in the Commissioner's response to the report in Jan. 2003.*

The Public Service Commission has shifted from a transactional to a strategic organization, moving operational transactions to line departments. This new structure will provide optimal service delivery to our clients.

In May 2003, the PSC senior management team developed a work plan for all 24 recommendations. Lead responsibility for each recommendation was assigned to staff.

- Of the 13 short-term recommendations (6 to 12 months), 8 were completed in the 2003/2004 fiscal year.
- Of the 10 medium-term recommendations (12 to 18 months), 3 were completed in the 2003/2004 fiscal year.

Of the recommendations completed, some changes implemented in this fiscal year include:

- The PSC has mapped existing competencies and expertise by completing career profiles for the senior management positions.
- New job descriptions were written and classified for the administrative staff.
- The leadership team has clearly defined their roles of accountability within each division of the PSC. The outcomes and deliverables, as well as the mechanisms for reporting have been established by each Senior Leadership team member.
- The PSC has improved the transparency with which it conducts its business. By setting examples of adhering to policies and best practices in human resource management, we are leading by example.
- The PSC has built up its audit and evaluation function by hiring a Director to lead this division. This Director reports directly to the Commissioner.
- The PSC has worked closely with the Deputy Ministers and HR CSUs to define 'minimum' capabilities that are required by the HR CSUs to allow them to appropriately fulfil their responsibilities.
- The HR Forum mandate was re-established and a new project charter was completed so they could have a more strategic focus. The HR Managers Forum was reactivated to provide an operational issues forum for HR professionals.

(An additional long term recommendation (24 months) was reviewed, and will be completed in 2005/2006.)

Priority 2: *We will develop a corporate succession management strategy that focuses on youth recruitment, development of feeder groups for key management positions and increased use of the electronic medium to support recruitment and training and development. This will include job shadowing for key positions to ensure transfer of corporate knowledge, enhanced skill development for specific professions and initiatives to provide managers with information and training to carry out their operational responsibilities.*

Government wide, effective workforce planning is needed to ensure that key positions in government are filled by qualified workers. A corporate succession

management strategy was presented to the HR Forum and Deputy Ministers to plan for the needs of the future. This corporate succession management strategy includes:

★ Career Starts

This program provides young Nova Scotians with practical employment experience and promotes the provincial civil service as a viable career path. It also offers Nova Scotia government departments, agencies, boards and commissions the opportunity to hire on a work term basis, funded by the Public Service Commission.

In 2003/2004, four youth and diversity employment programs were grouped together under the heading of the Career Starts Program to improve their administration and promotion. These programs were the Post Secondary Internship Program, Co-operative Employment Program, Summer Female Mentorship Program, and Summer Diversity Program.

A new promotional package was developed to improve the marketing of the programs, including an updated website, new brochures, promotional items, and a portable display. Also during this year a new initiative was implemented so that the internships were focused around target areas that were established as difficult-to-fill and critical to the future of the Government of Nova Scotia

(With respect to job shadowing, this was accomplished through the Career Starts Program)

★ Leadership Continuity Program (LCP)

This program was developed in early 2004 and is a key strategy for addressing a number of critical HR issues, such as aging of the workforce and increasing retirement rates.

Leadership continuity is achieved through the creation of high potential talent pools consisting of highly talented individuals who are being developed for non-specific leadership roles. In February 2004, 29 individuals were identified to be participants in the program: 23 at the mid-manager level and 6 at the senior level.

★ Executive Career Assignment Program (ECAP)
This program was launched in 2002 as a pilot program, and was completed in March 2004. There were 6 participants in the program who were given job assignments, typically lasting twelve to twenty-four months. All 6 participants are still in government, five of which are in new senior positions.

★ Career Assignment Program (CAP)
The purpose of this program, designed in partnership with the Federal Government, is to develop leaders for the future. Between August and November 2003, cross-departmental assignments were identified for each of the three participants. Throughout the remainder of the fiscal year, each participant has attended the training components and created their individual learning and performance plans.

★ Diversity Management
The PSC continues to work to make meaningful change in the area of diversity management through on-going education with a focus on targeting key leadership groups such as deputy ministers and line managers. Staff provided resources and consultation to staff of Correctional Services in the preparation of an Employment Systems Review Report, and also provided training for Diversity Trainers for Restorative Justice employees.

In 2003/2004 the following also occurred in Diversity Management:

- 66 participants in the Diversity For Leaders Program,
- 249 participants in the Diversity Equity Education Program, a one-day mandatory education program, and
- 20 placements of Affirmative Action group members in short-term casual employment

★ HR Strategy for Functional Communities.
HR strategies are being developed to address the specific HR needs of key government communities such as finance, HR, IT and policy. These strategies will result in customized HR tools and aids designed to enable these professional groups to better recruit, develop, manage and recognize their employees.

The first strategy undertaken was for the Financial Community, of which there are nine projects in total. In 2003/2004 a team was established to coordinate and initiate the development of an HR strategy, including

executive and steering committees. An external consulting group also conducted research (focus groups, interviews, and surveys). Their report was presented to the committees.

(This first strategy is scheduled to be completed by the end of December 2004.)

- ★ Leadership Development and Skills Training
Leadership development programs were held throughout the 2003/2004 fiscal year for executives, middle managers, frontline managers, and individual contributors.

Also, soft skills and computer application training programs are offered centrally through the Public Service Commission. In 2003/2004, 1,613 employees attended these training programs.

- ★ Executive Recruitment Program
The PSC has begun focusing recruitment efforts in areas of high need including executive level positions in government. There is also a need to ensure consistency across government when recruiting for executive positions. Work was conducted to develop an attraction and retention strategy that will promote the organization as a “preferred employer”. An on-line hiring managers tool kit was developed to assist in executive recruitment processes.

Priority 3: *The General Civil Service Regulations will be reviewed and updated to better correspond to modern employment practices.*

In June 2003, areas in the current Regulations were identified that required immediate change in order to ensure fairness and consistency of practice among all civil servants. On July 18, 2003, OIC 2003-325 approved amendments to the *General Civil Service Regulations* regarding pay in lieu of overtime, parental leave, adoption leave, leave for family death or illness and the Public Service Award.

In September and October 2003, the Review Committee met with Public Service Commission stakeholders to identify areas in the Regulations that require change to better reflect current practices and future policy directions.

In January 2004, the Review Committee began drafting changes to the Regulations with approval of amendments expected in 2004/2005.

Priority 4: *In collaboration with other central agencies, we will develop systems, processes and tools to support effective internal government-wide communications.*

The Public Service Commission worked with Treasury and Policy Board and Communications Nova Scotia in 2003/2004 to identify and promote ways to improve internal communications within the Government of Nova Scotia.

PSC staff participated in the steering committee to develop and monitor the project plan; they also took part in a working committee developing a manager's toolbox for internal communications.

The PSC developed some new training opportunities to help managers and staff across government improve their internal communications skills. A segment was added to the new management orientation program to introduce new managers to communications services within government. A new internal communications training program for managers was added in the annual course calendar; one session was held.

Core Business Area - Employee Relations

Priority 5: *Begin to prepare for collective bargaining for direct employees of government and corrections employees, as these collective agreements expire during the year.*

Preparations for collective bargaining with respect to civil service and adult corrections employees were undertaken and completed during the reporting period. Corrections bargaining commenced in November 2003 and civil service notice to bargain was received in February 2004, with negotiations to commence early in the next fiscal period.

Priority 6: *Advise government on collective bargaining issues in the broader public sector, e.g. for crown corporations and other provincially funded organizations such as school boards and health authorities.*

The Public Service Commission continued to advance issues of concern and respond to particular Government interests with respect to collective bargaining in the broader public sector. The Public Service Commission through consultation with Treasury & Policy Board, Department of Finance, and departments which provide significant funding to public sector entities, kept abreast of the status of a large number of collective bargaining processes, reporting to and consulting with senior managers and Government as appropriate.

Priority 7: *Improve, through training, the labour relations knowledge and skills of both managers and the HR community to give them a better understanding of employer obligations and employee rights.*

The Public Service Commission delivered labour relations training for the HR Community through a half-day labour relations training program on August 28, September 18, and October 21, 2003. (70 attendees)

The Public Service Commission also delivered labour relations training for managers through the following programs during the period:

- Labour Relations Training For Middle Managers on April 22, 2003 and February 4, 2004.
- Management Orientation on October 8, November 5, and December 17, 2003.
- Frontline Leadership Development Program on November 21, 2003, January 6, 2004, and January 15, 2004.

Priority 8: *Complete the classification phase of the Management Compensation Project and continue with additional steps toward implementation. The MCP project has been underway for two years.*

The classification phase of the project was not advanced during the 2003/2004 reporting period.

Priority 9: *Finish the job evaluation phase of the Civil Service Bargaining Unit Classification Project and continue with additional steps toward implementation.*

The results of the initial evaluations of 2,700 bargaining unit jobs were released in October 2003. Employees and managers had until mid-December to review the results and provide additional information if necessary. The Joint Job Evaluation Committee received approximately 1,200 additional submissions, 300 of which were for new or significantly updated jobs, the balance were requests to review the initial evaluations. The Committee completed its evaluation of the majority of these additional submissions by the end of the fiscal year.

(Steps towards implementation are ongoing)

Core Business Area - Strategic Human Resource Management

Priority 10: *Develop an employee wellness strategy to promote a healthy Government workplace. This project will include conducting a workplace environment survey to develop baseline data, promotion of healthy lifestyles and development of a proactive approach to disability management.*

The Public Service Commission completed the development of a Wellness Program initiative, in collaboration with the private sector and the Office of Health Promotion. In the 2003/2004 year, research and analysis was completed to determine the most appropriate framework.

A specific role with the responsibility to provide leadership to the workplace wellness program was defined and a description developed.

(This is an ongoing multi-year initiative with implementation to begin in the fall/winter of 2004)

Priority 11: *Continue to use and improve the effectiveness of the performance management strategy to help Government deliver on its goals.*

A key initiative for the improvement of the performance management strategy was the Competency Rationalization Project 2002 (CRP). The CRP involves a comprehensive review of the existing six core leadership competencies to determine if they are still valid for the success of the organization. The core leadership competencies are the mandatory skills and abilities that are required for management positions to achieve the government's business agenda, drive transformational change, and achieve effective performance and business goals. Assessment of the competencies constitute 50% of the overall performance management/appraisal rating.

The core leadership competencies were reviewed in the 2003/2004 fiscal year. Contracting was done with the Hay Consultancy Group to provide the PSC with a draft competency dictionary and competency development guide.

The PSC promoted the managers's use of the performance management system as follows:

- providing ongoing training sessions on Performance Management in the training calendar,
- providing Performance Management sessions in the Leadership Development programs.
- setting targets and reviewing performance;
- training and communication of new performance targets
- update training materials and provide to line departments
- provide a coordinated approach to delivery of training materials corporately.

Core Business Area - Leadership and Coordination - Evaluation and Audit

Priority 12: *Continue to build the evaluation and audit function and develop and implement an audit plan to ensure consistent application of human resource policies and procedures across government.*

Our priority to build the evaluation and audit function has been achieved with the recruitment of the Evaluation and Audit Director, and Program Evaluator. The establishment of the Evaluation and Audit Charter provided the evaluation and audit function with a firm direction and accountabilities.

Our priority to develop and implement an audit plan has been achieved with the approval of the Evaluation and Audit 2003/2004 Annual Plan. The Annual Plan identified areas of particular interest based on a risk assessment and consultation with the HR Community. These areas reflect the diversity of the PSC operations and are strategically focused on the three major themes: protecting and promoting fair hiring practices and the merit principle; information; and enhancing the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) audit process.

Progress towards its implementation is outlined below.

Protecting and promoting fair hiring practices and the merit principle.

- Merit Audit has been designed in winter 2003, and will be completed fall 2004
- Staffing Accountability Framework and Monitoring Activities have been outlined.
- Staffing Audit Guide has been produced
- Staffing Audit Tool has been produced.
- Comprehensive audit has been completed on the recruitment, and selection process for appointment to the Adjudicative Agencies Boards and Commissions.

Enhancing Information

- The 2004 Employee Survey was launched, and employee input was gathered (February 2004). The data will be analyzed and the results presented in a report format by Summer 2004.
- Information Privacy plan has been developed and will be implemented winter 2005.

Enhancing the OHS Audit Process

- OHS Corporate Audit Charter was approved.
- OHS Corporate Audit Tool was developed, and will be finalized based on the results of the pilots.
- OHS Corporate Audit Process was outlined, and will be finalized based on the results of the pilots.
- Two audits commenced in 2003/2004 to pilot the audit tool and process. (PSC was one of the pilot audits)
- OHS Audit Manual was drafted, and will be finalized based on the results of the pilots.

Additional Significant Events and Accomplishments

This section describes other significant events and accomplishments not identified as priorities in the Business Plan 2003/2004.

Planning and Coordination

1. The Atlantic Provinces Benchmark Classification Project, was initiated in 2003/2004, and provides an opportunity for the PSC to participate on an intergovernmental committee comprised of the four Atlantic provinces to gather information regarding position classification and benefits to be used for the purpose of collective bargaining and setting compensation policy. During this fiscal year, the project has gathered information and populated the information as it relates to identified benchmarked positions (e.g. Clerical positions).
(This is a multi-year project, which is anticipated to have a "live" database by March 2005.)

2. Launch of the Corporate HR Management Project (SAP-HR / Project eMerge) - This is a joint initiative between the school boards and the provincial government. It is the largest SAP initiative in the public sector in Nova Scotia, and is a multi-year project with several phases to be initiated. This system focuses on providing a new payroll and HR management system. The first phase involving a scoping document was completed January - February 2003. The blueprint phase (capturing business requirements) was completed through a series of facilitated workshops.
3. As part of a corporate initiative, the PSC developed and received approval of the Routine Access Policy in October 2003, which is designed to provide persons with an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without submitting a FOIPOP application.
4. Voluntary Unpaid Leave Policy, with salary deferral option was approved in November 2003, in support of government's commitment to assist employees with balancing their work and personal responsibilities. This is part of government's ongoing effort to provide employees with flexible work options.

Evaluation and Audit

Flexibility was built into the evaluation and audit plan to enable Evaluation and Audit to address specific areas of concern that arose during the year. The following list highlights some of the significant additional projects that were undertaken by Evaluation and Audit during the 2003/2004 fiscal period.

5. Project eMerge - advice was provided in areas such as the development of the Project eMerge, evaluation frameworks (process & outcome), and blueprinting stage. Statistical analysis was also provided for the Project eMerge survey results.
6. PICI (Program Inventory and Cost Initiative) Phase I - Began development of a list of PSC programs based on the common Treasury Policy Board provincial definition using the logic model as a guide. The list will outline the programs/services offered by PSC, noting whom the programs are for, their purpose, and what the intended outputs and expected results are.
7. HR Learning Needs Assessment Survey - Provided statistical analysis for the HR Learning Needs Assessment survey results for the Innovation and Growth Team.

Strategic Human Resource Management

8. Manager's Orientation Program - A draft program was developed and piloted in October 2003. This program is designed for both current and new managers and includes an overview of government, structure and processes, acts, manuals, legislation, financial management, HR management, OHS, labour relations and wellness. After the pilot session, four more sessions of the 2-day program were scheduled from November 2003 to March 2004.
9. Reactivation of OHS Audit Program at the Public Service Commission. The PSC Corporate OHS Audit Group carried out the following activities within the 2003/2004 reporting period:

a) OHS Program Development in Government Departments (Jul - Aug) - A review to assess whether government departments had a documented OHS Program.

b) Consultation with Stakeholders (Jul - Sept) - Consultations with both internal/external stakeholders to assess the level of support for an audit program initiated by the PSC.

c) Establishment of Advisory Committee (Sept - Dec) - Establishment of an Advisory Committee to assist with the development of an audit document for use when carrying out audits.

d) Implementation of Pilot Audits (Jan - Mar) - Initiated two pilot audits that allowed for the testing of the redesigned audit tool and audit processes. (Pilot audits were: Justice and Public Service Commission)

Financial Results

The Public Service Commission's primary expense is its staff who are needed to provide expertise in the delivery of the department's core business functions. The commission engages in an on-going review of its operations to identify opportunities for improved efficiencies and costs savings.

Actual Versus Budgeted Expenditures

In 2003/2004, the Public Service Commission had an approved budget allocation of \$4,940,000. Actual net 2003/2004 expenditures totalled \$4,234,399 (85.8% spent). Savings were realized through Program & Administrative efficiencies and due to savings in salaries and benefits as a result of vacancies maintained during the reorganization of the department. The following table provides a breakdown of authority versus actual 2003/2004 PSC expenditures.

Budget Context Chart Public Service Commission <i>(\$ thousands)</i>			
Program and Service Area	2003-2004 Estimate	2003-2004 Actual	Variance
Net Program Expenses			
Leadership and Coordination	\$1,434.5	\$1,378.8	(\$55.7)
Strategic Human Resource Management	\$2,241.6	\$1,834.8	(\$406.8)
Employee Relations	\$1,263.9	\$1,020.7	(\$243.2)
Total Net Program Expenses	\$4,940.0	\$4,234.3	(\$705.7)
Provincially Funded Staff (FTEs)	92	86.4	-5.6

Public Service Commission Performance Reporting

Introduction

The Public Service Commission, as the corporate entity for human resources for government, is responsible for corporate policies, programs and services to assist all government departments in meeting their respective HR needs and goals. Being accountable means the Public Service Commission must demonstrate that our resources are being used effectively and efficiently. The method used to track progress in achieving our desired outcomes is through performance measures.

Performance measures indicate to our stakeholders how well we are meeting our objectives. They provide a level of evidence that an activity/program is making a measurable difference to the HR community. These measures provide a link to the outcomes identified for each core business area, and to which the PSC has a reasonable degree of influence. The outcomes reflect the actual results we strive to achieved, as well as the benefit our programs, policies and services offer the HR community.

Selecting appropriate measures that are meaningful and informative should be balanced with the availability of resources to manage the measurement process, consistency in the information gathered, and the accuracy of the reporting in the measures. A more balanced set of measures will provide a clearer picture of how we intend to achieve our desired outcomes.

Performance Measures 2003/2004

Core Business Area: Leadership and Coordination

Outcome: High quality work environment

MEASURE: Absenteeism Rates

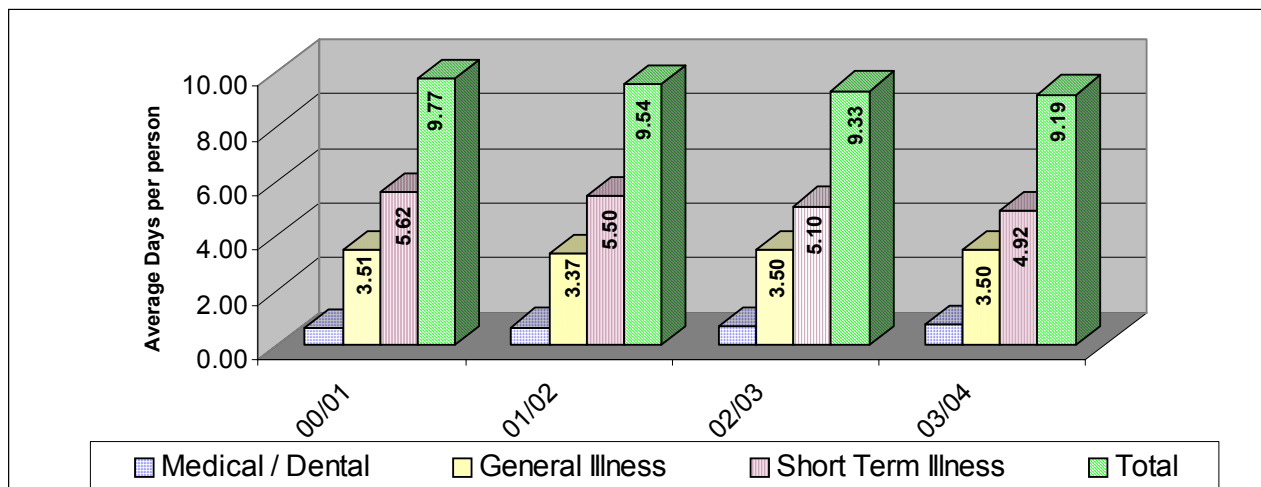
What does this measure tell us?

To achieve a high quality work environment, it is imperative to have a healthy work force. When employees are absent due to sick leave, their professional responsibilities either shift to other employees, causing increased workloads on their co-workers, “pile-up” for when they return to work, or result in increased costs for replacement staff.

High levels of absenteeism can lead to more stress in job demands or workload. Although as employers we can not prevent our employees from being absent from work, we need to manage the workloads when this occurs. Tracking absenteeism is a way for us to measure the part illnesses contribute in our quality of work, productivity, and stress levels. It is an indication of overall employee health.

The absenteeism rate is the average number of days lost per employee per year due to general illness, medical appointments and short-term illness.

- General illness is when an employee is unable to work due to illness or injury for a period not exceeding three consecutive days (to a maximum of eighteen days per fiscal year, unless stated by a collective agreement otherwise).
- Short-term illness is initiated when an employee is absent for more than five consecutive days, and may require proof of illness by a qualified medical practitioner (unless stated by a collective agreement otherwise).



Where are we now?

The absenteeism rate was 9.77 days per employee (civil servant) per year in 2000/2001. The rate in 2003/2004 is 9.19. There has been a consistent decline in the absenteeism rates for government employees. Notably, however, the main decline has occurred in short-term illness, with general illness holding consistent over the past two years, at 3.5 days per employee. (Source: HRMS)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our goal is to see a continual decline in the absenteeism rate, and to establish a target based on historical analysis and industry standard benchmarks. We will also continue to monitor, through other performance measures, such things as the incidences of work-related stress and employees' perception of stress.

MEASURE: Incidences of work-related stress (EAP utilization due to work-related stress)

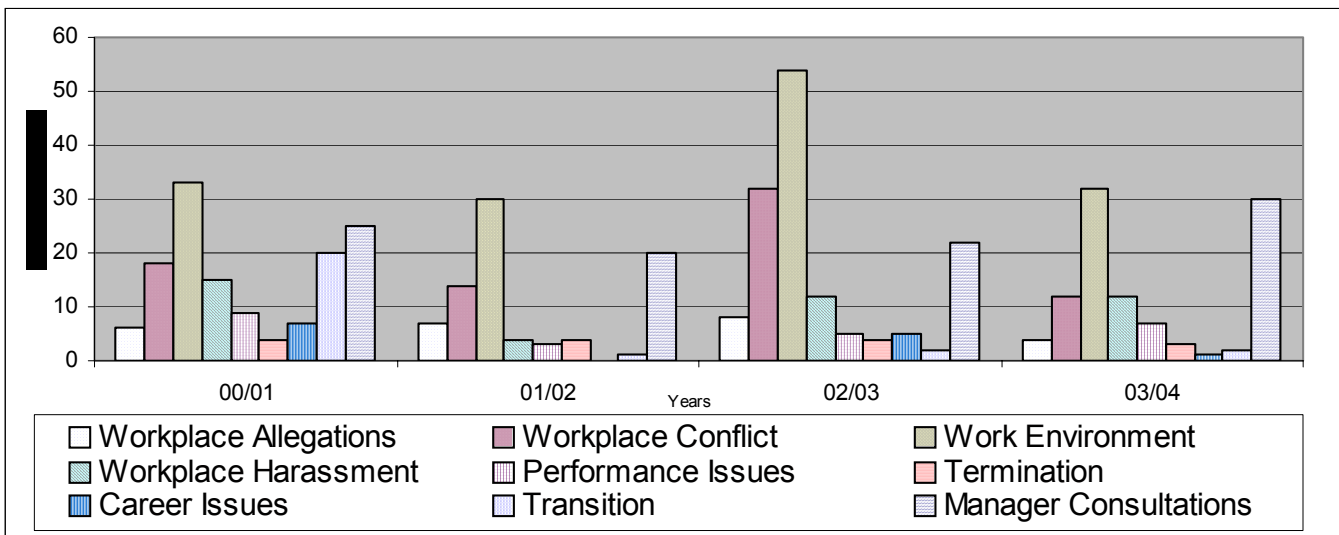
What does this measure tell us?

The Employee Assistance Program tracks the number and type of cases reported to them each time a new case is opened. The EAP facilitator identifies the type of case, such as workplace allegations, career issues, workplace conflict, and performance issues.

This measure offers an early indicator of stress levels and types of situations where we may not be meeting our “high quality” work environment desired outcome.

Where are we now?

The 2003/2004 rate of work-related stress was 11.9% of the total 865 EAP cases. The rate has seen a decrease since 2000/2001 (18.6% of the 735 EAP cases). (Source: EAP files)



Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our goal is to continue to monitor the EAP utilization due to work-related stress. We recognize that it is important to look behind the numbers. For example, an increase in EAP cases may be a positive outcome as more employees seek assistance rather than miss work due to an unaddressed work-related problem. An increase in usage of the program could also be reflective of increased awareness or greater comfort in bringing forth concerns. Alternatively, an increase in the number of cases reported could be indicative of an environment not acceptable for our employees. A review of policies and procedures may be part of a strategy to assist our employees.

MEASURE: Employee and Manager turnover rates / Voluntary staff turnover rate

This measure has been changed to “voluntary staff turnover rate” because it was not possible to determine manager turnover rates using the current HRMS system. HRMS does not distinguish between MCP classifications with or without management responsibilities.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure gives us an indication of why employees are leaving the Government of Nova Scotia on a voluntary basis. This is one of the many valuable measures in developing attraction and retention strategies for our civil service workforce.

High rates of staff turnover can result in a slow down in productivity, increased demand on management, increased training expenditures, and recruitment costs. All public and private sectors will have turnover rates, but prevention in the loss of valued employees is one of many critical factors in maintaining a high quality work environment.

Where are we now?

As of 2003/2004, our voluntary turnover rate for civil servants is 2.5%. This only takes into consideration resignations (e.g. other employment and to continue education) and relocations. This is a decrease from the base year 2000/2001 of 3.3% when 227 civil servants left to pursue other employment outside government.

In 2003/2004, 180 civil servants left government for other employment, however 217 new employees entered the civil service. (Source: HRMS)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to continue to track staff turnover rates and trends and to incorporate this information into our planning and decision-making processes. It is important to look behind the numbers to determine who is leaving and why. This measure will be analyzed with other measures when retention and recruitment strategies are being developed.

In the future for this outcome, we propose to develop new performance measures which will focus on such things as:

- **Merit hiring**
- **Work environment stress**
- **Effective work environment**

Core Business Area: Employee Relations

Outcome: Improved Collective Agreement Administration

MEASURE: Percentage of HR professionals who have received labour relations (LR) training.

What does this measure tell us?

HR professionals trained in labour relations will deliver more consistent labour relations practices across Government.

Where are we now?

The Public Service Commission delivered labour relations training for the HR Community through a half-day labour relations training program on August 28, September 18, and October 21, 2003. (70 attendees)

On average, there are 70 HR professionals in government, meaning 100% of the HR professionals were trained in 2003/2004. (Source: HRMS & PSC files)

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to continue to ensure that all HR professionals receive LR training. The Public Service Commission will continue to work with the departments HR CSUs to deliver this training.

MEASURE: Percentage of line managers (availability to those who require) who have received labour relations (LR) training.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

Line managers trained in LR will deliver more consistent labour relations practices across Government.

Where are we now?

The Public Service Commission delivered labour relations training for managers through the following programs during fiscal year 2003/2004:

- Labour Relations Training For Middle Managers on April 22/03 (27 attendees) and February 4/04 (27 attendees).
- Management Orientation on October 8 (23 attendees), November 5/03 (21 attendees), and December 17/03 (21 attendees).
- Frontline Leadership Development Program on November 21/03 (28 attendees), January 6/04 (26 attendees), and January 15/04 (26 attendees)

These managers (199 in total) participated in the labour relations training, however our current HRMS system tracks employees by classification not management responsibilities. Therefore it is not possible to determine the number of managers in government, nor those requiring LR Training.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to ensure that line managers, with supervisory duties, receive this training. The Public Service Commission will work with the HR CSUs to ensure these managers receive the LR training.

Core Business Area: Strategic Human Resource Management

Outcome: Ability to attract and retain the most suitable individuals

MEASURE: Percentage of employees and managers receiving performance assessment

What does this measure tell us?

Performance management is a strategic leadership tool for organizational effectiveness. It helps ensure that efforts of the Nova Scotia Civil Service are focused on the priorities and strategies outlined in the Government and Department Business Plans. Performance management is also a framework for developing competent leadership for the future

Where are we now?

The PSC is responsible for tracking the numbers of performance appraisals for the MCP management group. For fiscal 03/04, 1037 MCP evaluations were done. The Bargaining/Administrative employee system is tracked by line departments.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to ensure all Management Compensation Pay Plan (MCP) employees and managers receive annual performance assessments again in 2004/2005.

MEASURE: Number of employees and managers attending HR Development training

What does this measure tell us?

Programs offered by the Public Service Commission are designed to support organizational and individual development needs which, in turn, help civil servants meet the challenge of delivering quality services to Nova Scotians. All courses offered reflect the feedback and suggestions of employees across Government and focus on the skills we believe are most important for employees when delivering quality public service.

Where are we now?

A calendar of corporate training and development courses is provided to employees. This calendar includes courses in the following areas of study: diversity management, leadership skill development, personal development, records management, workplace skill development and computers. In 2003/2004, 1,613 employees took one or more courses provided by the Public Service Commission.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

We want to continue to provide courses and programs designed to provide civil servants with the skills needed to succeed in providing excellence in service delivery to Nova Scotians. This means maintaining or increasing the proportion of managers and employees who receive training and development in a cost efficient and effective manner.

MEASURE: Voluntary staff turnover rates

See Core Business Area: Leadership and Coordination

MEASURE: Number of Career Starts interns that continue to work for government upon completion of their internship

What does this measure tell us?

Career Starts provides young Nova Scotians with practical employment experience and promotes the provincial civil service as a viable career path. This measure would tell us how many interns in the Post Secondary Internship Program are retained after their internship ends.

Where are we now?

In the Spring of 1998, the Government of Nova Scotia established a new civil service internship program called 'Career Starts', which provides recent post-secondary graduates with an opportunity to develop their job skills, gain career-related experience, and work in the Nova Scotia Civil Service.

In the first six years (1998-2003), fourteen of the interns secured permanent work, while another twenty-one worked in either term or casual positions after their internship.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to increase the number of interns retained in permanent employment with the Province once their internship is completed.

MEASURE: Number of youth receiving placement at the end of internship.

See above measure "Number of Career Starts interns that continue to work for government upon completion of their internship"

In the future for this outcome, we propose to develop new performance measures to focus on such things as:

- **Employment attraction to the Government of Nova Scotia**
- **Employment retention in the Government of Nova Scotia**
- **Interest in post secondary internship programs**
- **Terminations within the first year of employment with the Government of Nova Scotia**

Outcome: Continuous learning opportunities for employees

MEASURE: Money spent by Government on corporate employee training and development.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure shows the level of investment in corporate employee learning and development opportunities provided by the Human Resource Development unit of the Public Service Commission.

Where are we now?

In 2003/2004 the PSC invested close to half a million dollars in employee training and development (\$447,205) (Source: SAP/TPB)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to maintain or increase the current level of investment in training and development in support of a professional public service.

MEASURE: Number of work experiences, co-op and internship placements.

What does this measure tell us?

The Career Starts program consists of the Post Secondary Internship Program, Co-operative Employment Program, Summer Female Mentorship Program, and the Summer

Diversity Program. This measure would tell us how many students and recent graduates are gaining experience within the Province

Where are we now?

There were thirty-three co-op placements in 2003-2004, including fifteen in the summer (May-August), thirteen in the fall (September- December), and five in the winter term (January-April). The Summer Female Mentorship Program employed twelve students and the Summer Diversity Program an additional six. There were sixteen interns in the Post Secondary Internship Program.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to maintain or increase the number of placements within the Nova Scotia Government so the new employees can gain experience and want to stay within government.

In the future for this outcome, we propose to develop new performance measures to focus on such things as:

- **Access to training opportunities**
- **Application of training to job assignment/daily duties**
- **Participation in annual performance appraisal/review**

Outcome: Workforce that values employee differences

MEASURE: Number of employees and managers who attended Diversity and Employment Equity Education Programs courses

What does this measure tell us?

The Public Service Commission offers two diversity in the workplace courses: Diversity and Employment Equity Education and Diversity for Leaders. These courses are designed to promote diversity in the workplace to all employees, and specifically to managers. The objective is to provide diversity awareness through education to as many employees as possible.

Where are we now?

In 2003/2004, sixty-six people participated in the Diversity For Leaders Program, and 249 people participated in the Diversity Equity Education Program, a one-day mandatory education program. (Source: PSC files)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

For fiscal year 05/06 awareness will be supported by a Diversity Implementation consultant to support line departments. Support and advice to enhance diversity management principles and action plans are the focus.

In the future for this outcome, we propose to develop new performance measures to focus on such things as:

- **Respectful work environment**
- **Valuing diversity as an organization**
- **Interest in diversity programs**

Outcome: Ensure departments are positioned to respond to emerging human resources needs.

MEASURE: Number of employees and managers attending leadership development training

What does this measure tell us?

The importance of leadership development and skills training as a key succession management strategy continues to be promoted to Deputy Ministers, managers, and employees through the Leadership Development Programs.

Where are we now?

Leadership development programs were held throughout the 2003/2004 fiscal year for executives, middle managers, frontline managers, and individual contributors. The PSC provided this intensive development as follows:

Leadership Development and Skills Training Program		
<u>Type of Group</u>	<u>Number of Groups Sessions</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>
Executive	1	23
Middle Management	2	54
Frontline Management	2	54
Individual Contributors	2	51
Total Participants in the LDP		182

(Source: PSC files)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

To continue to offer and improve on these programs in order to develop leadership capabilities across government.

MEASURE: Number of days to fill a position

What does this measure tell us?

This measure shows the level of efficiency in staffing Government positions including the ability to respond quickly to HR needs.

Where are we now?

The staffing function has now been decentralized to all departments and, while only an estimation, departments have indicated that they recognize a decrease in the time required to fill a position. (Source: CSUs/PSC files)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is an average of 20 days from the closing date of the job competition. This will be achieved with a streamlined staffing system designed to reduce the time to fill a position. This system has decentralized the staffing function to line departments. The Public Service Commission will, however, continue to support the staffing function by providing training, posting vacancies and helping ensure fair hiring.

An on-line recruitment tool kit has been developed and will be available to hiring managers and human resource professionals in the near future. This will assist us in reducing the length of time required to fill a position as it will provide current information on best practices, question banks, and required forms. Standard HR processes, including recruitment, will be identified and available for use which will also eliminate time that may be spent identifying process issues.

Outcome: An environment which supports the well-being of employees and managers

MEASURE: Employee Assistance Program (EAP) utilization rate

What does this measure tell us?

The measure indicates how many government employees are using the EAP program which offers confidential assistance to government employees, their partners and dependents who may be experiencing problems. An increase in the rate could indicate higher stress levels, however, it may also be seen as a positive outcome as more employees seek assistance rather than miss work due to an unaddressed workplace or personal problem.

It is critical to monitor and evaluate utilization rates. Quality service delivery depends on employee health, safety and wellness. However, using this measure alone should not be representative of how our organization measures the support we offer the employees to work/life balance.

The measure includes the number of employees experiencing the effects of: workplace allegations, career issues, workplace conflict, unhealthy work environment (i.e. workload, lack of respect, etc.), group bereavement, workplace harassment, performance issues, termination, workplace adjustment.

Where are we now?

The 2003/2004 utilization rate for EAP was 9.67%, representing an increase from the base year 2000/2001 where the utilization rate was 8.32%. (Source: EAP Office)

Note:

Utilization based on the total number of new EAP cases (865), and the employee FTE population (8,947), which includes civil servants, CUPE, Trades, OICs, and Statutory groups.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our goal is to continue to monitor the utilization rate of the EAP, and to determine the reasons for a significant increase or decrease in program usage.

MEASURE: Time lost due to general illness

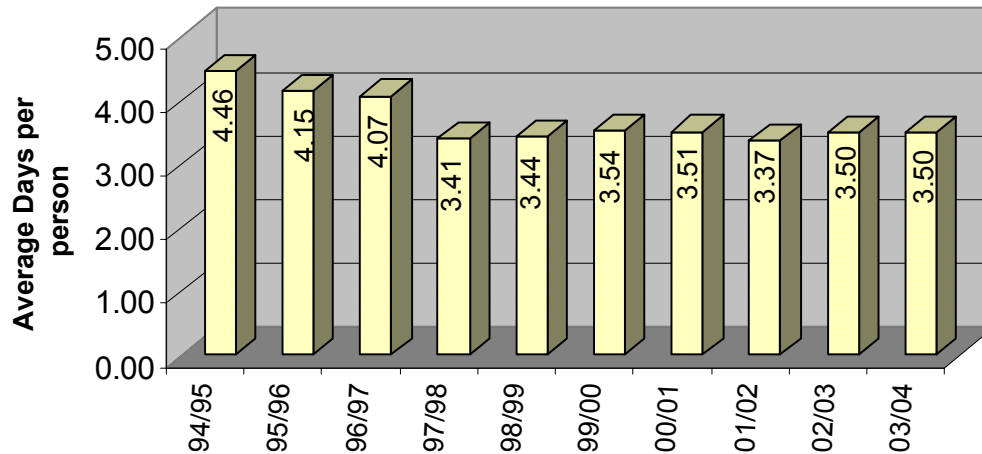
What does this measure tell us?

Absenteeism can be a significant cost to Government. General illness is an indicator of the general health levels of employees. This measure can be more useful as an indicator of a problem when the rates begin to rise, but cannot be used alone to indicate the wellness of our public service.

All public and private sector organizations will have absenteeism costs, however for an organization with an employee base over 7,000 and 4 days on average per employee of missed time due to general illness, it is a measure well-worth tracking and evaluating.

Excluded from this measure is short-term illness. Medical / dental appointments are also excluded from this measure because they could be considered more of a preventative measure. Reported in previous years was days missed per employee for general illness and medical / dental appointments.

**General Illness in the Civil Service Workforce
1994/1995 to 2003/2004**



Where are we now?

Government has consistently held the same level of general illness absenteeism per civil service employee, over the past two years at 3.5 days per employee. This also matches the 2000/2001 base year level. (Source: HRMS)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target is to maintain or reduce our current rate of time lost due to general illness.

MEASURE: Number of workplace accidents

What does this measure tell us?

This measure provides the number of workplace accidents across government departments in any given year, as well as the time lost as a result of these accidents and injuries.

Where are we now?

There has been a steady decrease in the number of lost time injuries over the past five years. In 1999/2001, there were 745 lost time injuries, which was reduced by 187 (25%) to 558 in 2003/2004. (Source: OH&S files)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Continue to work with line departments towards further reduction in accident/injury for 2004/2005.

MEASURE: Time lost due to accidents/injuries

What does this measure tell us?

This measure provides the number of workplace accidents across government departments in any given year, as well as the time lost as a result of these accidents and injuries.

Where are we now?

There has been a decrease in days lost from 18,854 days lost in 2002/2003 to 11,553 days in 2003/2004. (Source: OH&S files)

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Work with line departments to develop disability case management/early intervention programs to continue the reduction in lost time injuries.

In the future for this outcome, we propose to develop new performance measures to focus on such things as:

- **Work/life balance**
- **Safe working environment**