



Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Accountability Report 2009-2010

July 2010

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Annual Accountability Report For The Fiscal Year 2009-2010

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1. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The Accountability Report of the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations for the year ended March 31, 2010, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against this Department's business plan information for the fiscal year 2009-2010. The reporting of Department's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the Department's management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of the Department's 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's business plan for the year.

[Original signed by Minister]

Honourable Ramona Jennex
Minister

[Original signed by Deputy Minister]

Kevin Malloy, CA
Deputy Minister

2. MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

We are pleased to present the Accountability Report for Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. This document reports the department's progress with respect to the priorities outlined in our 2009-10 business plan. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations provides information on government programs and services to businesses, individuals and municipalities across the province.

In 2009-10, the Department continued its efforts to improve existing services, and to add new programs to continue to make life better for families in regions across Nova Scotia. A number of key activities in 2009-10 are highlighted below.

Major strides were made in addressing stability issues with the Registry of Motor Vehicles computer system, and work continues on the department website to improve online service options for individuals and businesses.

In 2009-10, several pieces of legislation were passed in the House of Assembly. This legislation will benefit municipalities, help the province combat illegal tobacco activity, and bring Nova Scotia's commercial laws into alignment with legislation across Canada. Many of our efforts in the past year have focused on addressing consumer protection issues. New gift card regulations, rules for payday lenders, and legislation regarding condominiums will benefit consumers.

Our department continued to support municipalities and make life better for families in every region of the province. In collaboration with our federal and municipal partners, we worked to maximize federal stimulus and infrastructure funding for communities. In addition, we supported municipalities in their completion of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans as part of the Canada-Nova Scotia Gas Tax Agreement.

Several of our rebate programs continued to help make life more affordable for Nova Scotians in 2009-10. The Heating Assistance Rebate Program and Your Energy Rebate Program were expanded to benefit more families. In addition, the New Home Construction Rebate program assisted up 1,500 families to build or purchase a new home, while providing construction and related jobs at home during the economic downturn.

We are proud of the progress made in improving our services to individuals, businesses and municipalities. We look forward to continuing our efforts to provide the highest quality of service to all Nova Scotians.

[Original signed by Minister]

Honourable Ramona Jennex
Minister

[Original signed by Deputy Minister]

Kevin Malloy, CA
Deputy Minister

3. INTRODUCTION

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) is the service delivery arm of government and lead government Department for improving access to government information and services for businesses, individuals, and municipalities. Information registries on motor vehicles, vital statistics, businesses and corporations, and land data are some of the information and services managed by the Department. The Department also provides advice, assistance, and program support to Nova Scotia municipalities. Other responsibilities of the Department include programs and services related to consumer protection, residential tenancies, driver safety, taxation, business practices, and the provision of geographic information.

The Department continues to evolve its integrated service delivery model, which means that information and services are offered in a way that makes the most sense for clients and through channels they choose. It also means that the Department collaborates with other provincial Departments and levels of government to make it a single point of access for all government services. The service delivery model and collaboration with other departments and governments needs to be supported by leading edge technology that helps streamline processes and ensure data privacy, security and access.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1. Partner with municipalities to promote effective local government and healthy and vibrant communities.

- a. Ensure Municipal Financial Sustainability
- b. Develop and Maintain Effective Partnerships

Goal 2. Improve accessibility and quality of government information and services in a cost-effective manner, while maintaining security, integrity and accuracy of records/data and revenues.

- c. Make it Easier to Interact with Government
- d. Ensure Financial Sustainability

Goal 3. Modernize Departmental programs and infrastructure to support citizen-based services and to address emerging issues.

- e. Proactively Engage Clients and Deliver Responsive Programs
- f. Optimize Investment in and use of Information and Related Technologies
- g. Ensure Program Compliance and Protect Public Interests and Safety

Goal 4. Provide a motivating work environment and develop staff to meet current and future Departmental needs.

- h. Be a Learning Organization
- i. Foster a Positive, Motivating Environment
- j. Build a Collaborative, Client-Centric Culture

Goal 5. Enhance the strategic decision making capacity in the department.

- k. Continuously Improve Processes
- l. Effectively Manage Risk

Need for Accountability

Publicly funded organizations are accountable for their declared actions over a specified period of time. They are accountable to the taxpayers on how their taxes are being spent; they are accountable for reporting to their decision makers on how well the organization's programs and services are operating and where adjustments may be required. Monitoring, measuring and reporting on programs is also a powerful driver for an organization focused on organizational excellence.

This Accountability Report provides a synopsis of the progress made against 2009-2010 Business Plan targets, as well as provides insight into how the department is fulfilling its strategic direction (mandate and mission). The scope of this report is focused on major new initiatives that Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations committed to moving forward in 2009-2010 and does not encompass the full breadth of programs and services offered by the department on an ongoing basis.

The measures at the end of each goal represent the quantitative progress that the department has made towards its strategic goals.

The dashboard presentation that follows each goal provides the performance measures identified in the 2009-2010 SNSMR Business Plan. The dashboard approach provides the reader with a clear and concise understanding of how it is progressing towards the target for each measure. The dashboard provides the measure, the formula used to calculate the measure, the target for the measure, the data source, the frequency with which the measure is tracked, the most recent status of progress toward achieving the target, the department initiative and strategic goal to which the measure is connected, department progress towards the target in previous years, a visual representation of the measure through a graph, and, where appropriate, a brief commentary on the results.

At the end of the report, the department's 2009-2010 budget allocation, its actual spending and reason for variances, and a summary of the funded staff employed by the department is also provided.

4. SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Many of the department's priorities for 2009-10 were focused on activities that would change how the departmental staff interact with their customers and stakeholders, whether part of a multi-year strategy or continuation of a previous year priority. Some of the highlights include:

- ▶ working with Infrastructure Canada and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, other departments of the Government of Nova Scotia, and municipalities to ensure that the Province and municipal governments maximize opportunities to leverage federal stimulus funds;
- ▶ working with municipalities and the Municipal Public Works Association of Nova Scotia to promote better asset management practices for municipal infrastructure;
- ▶ expanding the revenue collections services SNSMR provides to include municipalities;
- ▶ expanding BizPal to include an additional 10 municipalities;
- ▶ implementing a new registration system for the International Fuel Tax Agreement and the International Registration Program;
- ▶ implementing a new drivers license and photo ID with increased security features to help prevent identity theft;
- ▶ continuing to combat illegal tobacco activity; and,
- ▶ undertaking a number of consumer protection initiatives to address emerging issues and modernize regulatory oversight in areas such as Gift Cards, Homeowner Protection, Mortgage Brokers and Lenders, Payday Lenders, and Condominiums.

A more detailed discussion of the 2009-2010 achievements of the department is provided in the Department Progress and Accomplishments section below. Priorities are grouped within strategic goals, as identified in the department's 2009-2010 Business Plan.

5. DEPARTMENT PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal 1: Partner with municipalities to promote effective local government and healthy and vibrant communities

Priority: Ensure municipal financial sustainability

2009-2010 Initiative:

Accelerate infrastructure spending

- *Federal/Provincial Building Canada Program*
SNSMR will evaluate applications under the Communities Component of the Building Canada Fund (BCF)—\$37 million from each of the three levels of government—for a seven-year program that provides funding for municipal infrastructure projects. The program is intended to focus on “green” infrastructure, as has been the case with the last three federal/provincial agreements on municipal infrastructure. Municipalities with populations of less than 100,000 qualify for this program, which includes 53 of Nova Scotia’s 55 municipalities.
- *Gas Tax Program*
The Gas Tax Program is entering its fifth year in 2009–2010. Year five requires each municipality to prepare and submit an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) in addition to the updated three-year capital plan, outcome reports, and audited annual expenditure report. SNSMR will continue to work with municipalities to ensure proper reporting to meet the federal requirements under the Gas Tax Program. In 2008–2009, the department finalized negotiations with Infrastructure Canada to revise the Gas Tax Program and to extend it for another four years until March 31, 2014. In 2009–2010, SNSMR will work with Infrastructure Canada to identify areas that require additional revisions, based on the results of a joint evaluation.
- *Federal Stimulus Plan*
SNSMR will work with Infrastructure Canada and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, other departments of the Government of Nova Scotia, and municipalities to ensure that the Province and municipal governments maximize opportunities to leverage federal stimulus funds.

Result:

- *Federal/Provincial Building Canada Program*

The Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Secretariat (CNSIS) called for a second round of applications in March 2009 under the Building Canada Fund - Communities Component (BCF-CC). CNSIS developed application and evaluation forms and made recommendations for approval to both the Provincial and Federal governments. On April 30, 2009, 11 projects valued at over \$32 Million were approved and announced under BCF-CC. All of these projects were “green” as agreed to by the federal and provincial governments. All funds under BCF-CC have been committed and the program operation and processes continued.

SNSMR engaged in discussions with all the other stakeholders involved in the Building Canada Fund - Major Infrastructure Component (BCF-MIC) to establish an allocation for the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), which are eligible for funding under this program. It was determined that \$37 million from each level of government be set aside for projects in CBRM and HRM. As of March 31, 2010, two projects totaling \$25 million had been committed. An additional \$2 Million was also added to the budget to fund two projects outside HRM and CBRM.

- *Gas Tax Program*

SNSMR distributed Gas Tax Funding to all 55 municipalities by March 31, 2010, based on the municipalities meeting reporting requirements for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Municipalities continued to prepare Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs) and, in 2009-10, final reports were submitted by all municipalities.

In 2009-10, SNSMR prepared an Outcomes Report based on data submitted by municipalities over the first four years of the program. The report detailed the cumulative investments made in Nova Scotia and explained how the investments contributed to providing cleaner water, air, and reducing green house gas emissions. The report illustrated how the Gas Tax Program has made significant contributions to helping Nova Scotia meet environmental objectives established by the Canada/Nova Scotia Agreement. The report was delivered to the Federal Government in November 2009.

- *Federal Stimulus Plan*

The two year Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (ISF) Agreement was signed in May 2009, committing both the Federal and Provincial governments to \$19 million each in funding for municipal projects. SNSMR developed application and evaluation forms as well as operational processes and procedures for the administration of the program. By March 31, 2010, 39 projects valued at \$57.3 million were approved and announced under ISF. The ISF projects are to be completed by March 31, 2011 as part of the Federal Stimulus Initiative.

The Province amended the seven year Canada/Nova Scotia BCF-CC cost sharing agreement to include \$14 million top-up from both the Provincial and Federal governments. SNSMR developed application and evaluation forms as well as operational processes and procedures for the administration of the program. By March 31, 2010, 38 projects valued at \$42 million were approved and announced under BCF-CC Top-up. The BCF-CC Top Up projects are to be completed by March 31, 2011 as part of the Federal Stimulus Initiative.

Outcome:

- *Federal/Provincial Building Canada Program*

It is anticipated that the completion of the projects approved under the BCF-MIC program will improve core municipal infrastructure, provide employment and assist the Province in meeting several of the targets set within the Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity Act.

- *Gas Tax Program*

New municipal infrastructure is in place and more planned as a result of the Gas Tax Program. The Province has been successful in directing a substantial portion of this funding towards projects that support provincial initiatives such as the new drinking water standards and regional land fill operations. Completing ICSPs by April 1, 2010 was a prerequisite for municipalities to continue to receive Gas Tax Funding. In addition, these plans will allow Nova Scotia municipalities to continue to be more sustainable and a better place in which to invest and live. The ICSP process has created a higher awareness of the benefits from improved municipal planning at the local government level.

- *Federal Stimulus Plan*

It is anticipated that the completion of the 39 projects approved under the ISF will improve core municipal infrastructure, provide employment and assist the Province in meeting several of the targets set within the Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity Act. While not all of the projects were green, they did support municipal financial sustainability.

It is anticipated that the completion of the 38 projects approved under the BCF-CC Top-up will improve core municipal infrastructure, provide employment and assist the Province in meeting several of the targets set within the Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity Act. While not all of the projects were green, they did support municipal financial sustainability.

2009-2010 Initiative:

Municipal Financial Accountability

- *Financial Reporting Policy*

In 2009–2010, the department will implement a new financial reporting policy outlining due dates for key municipal financial and information reports.

- *Municipal Government Auditor General Function*

In accordance with amendments to the Municipal Government Act passed in 2008, SNSMR will work with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) in 2009–2010 to put into place a Municipal Auditor General for municipalities.

Result:

- *Financial Reporting Policy*

SNSMR implemented the Financial Reporting Policy in 2009-10. As a result, more financial reports due from municipalities were received on time than in previous years.

- *Municipal Government Auditor General Function*

SNSMR continued to work with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) and the Association of Municipal Administrators (AMA) on defining the parameters of the Municipal Auditor General position and funding formula. The responsibilities of this position would

include looking at municipal accountability for the quality of stewardship over public funds and for achievement of value for money in municipal operations. Due to a number of issues, the UNSM/AMA requested an extension to the time lines to have the Auditor General position in place. That extension was permitted to ensure all concerns were adequately addressed before proceeding.

Outcome:

- *Financial Reporting Policy*

Receiving financial reports on a timely basis has allowed SNSMR to improve turnaround times on various municipal reports such as the Annual Municipal Statistical Report, Municipal Indicators, and reports due to Statistics Canada.

- *Municipal Government Auditor General Function*

A Municipal Auditor General will make municipalities more accountable to their citizens for the use of public funds and provide for value-for-money audit functions.

Priority: Develop and maintain effective partnerships

2009-10 Initiative

- **Capacity Building**

- *Municipal Asset Management Practices*

SNSMR will continue to work with municipalities and the Municipal Public Works Association of Nova Scotia in 2009–2010 to promote better asset management practices for municipal infrastructure. The department will also explore opportunities to use federal cost-shared programs to advance the development of municipal knowledge and expertise in the provision and management of municipal services in Nova Scotia.

- *Grant-In-Lieu of Taxes Process*

The department will make changes to the grant-in-lieu (GIL) of taxes process so that information required to complete the GIL payment will be incorporated into information that municipalities are already required to submit by September 30th of each year in accordance with a regulation pursuant to the Municipal Government Act.

- *Climate Change MOU with UNSM*

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on climate change with the UNSM.

- *Partnering on Geographic Information Infrastructure*

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will expand its partnerships with municipalities to produce mapping to meet local needs for foundation geography used to support municipal administration. Additionally, SNSMR will continue partnering with municipalities to

maintain essential geographic information such as civic addresses that is required to support public service delivery and public safety.

Result:

- **Capacity Building**

- *Municipal Asset Management Practices*

SNSMR, either through its own resources or in conjunction with other organizations, hosted a variety of workshops and training sessions designed to build municipal capacity. It also continued to support the development of municipal Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs) as well as orientations for municipal employees. The Department worked with the Association of Municipal Administrators to improve capacities for working in the “e-world” and designing municipal websites. SNSMR supported the establishment of the Atlantic Municipal Advisors Group and IT Managers Association.

SNSMR held several workshops and training sessions relating to the Capital Investment Plan (CIP) in 2009-10. The Department made a presentation to the Municipal Public Works Association of Nova Scotia (MPWANS) annual meeting regarding the Nova Scotia Infrastructure Plan (NSIP). The Department also held a workshop for municipal finance staff on Public Sector Accounting Principles and consolidated financial reporting. SNSMR also conducted discussions with MPWANS on the need to improve asset management practices, including benefits from a detailed inventory and condition rating for municipal assets.

- *Grant-In-Lieu of Taxes Process*

SNSMR created new templates for municipalities to ensure they can submit Grant-in-Lieu data more efficiently through the online reporting system.

- *Climate Change MOU with UNSM*

In November 2009, the Province of Nova Scotia (Ministers of SNSMR and Environment) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on climate change with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM). This initiative provides a framework for co-operation and partnership between municipalities and the Province on climate change initiatives. The MOU currently outlines 10 existing and 13 new climate change related commitments. These endeavours are consistent with the Government of Nova Scotia’s Climate Change Action Plan. A committee involving SNSMR, Nova Scotia Environment’s Climate Change Directorate and UNSM staff are currently preparing a work plan with respect to these commitments.

SNSMR continued to implement a municipal response to climate change measures through the Federal Gas Tax Program. SNSMR will provide in 2010-11, a framework and best practice guide to municipalities in order for each municipality to develop climate change action plans by 2014. Municipal Climate Change Action Plans (MCCAP) will be a requirement of funding under the Gas Tax Program. SNSMR continued to conduct regional consultation workshops to

develop the MCCAP framework. MCCAPs will ensure proper design and development to mitigate damage and failure of municipal infrastructure as a result of severe weather conditions. Municipalities are expected to deliver MCCAPs as an amendment to the Integrated Community Sustainability Plans in 2014.

- *Partnering on Geographic Information Infrastructure*

In 2009-10, SNSMR completed large scale mapping for Kentville and area, as well as 50 sheets of resource mapping for Kings County. The department's Geomatics Center also continued to work on the creation and maintenance of the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF). The GeoNOVA Program also held two rounds of Municipal Geomatics Forums in 2009-10 with a focus on continued mapping improvements and Civic Addressing.

Outcome:

- **Capacity Building**

- *Municipal Asset Management Practices*

Such capacity building initiatives as those undertaken by SNSMR in 2009-10 are vital for assisting Nova Scotia Municipalities to provide good stewardship for citizens.

- *Grant-In-Lieu of Taxes Process*

The new templates were successfully utilized by municipalities to submit Grant-in-Lieu data through the online reporting system.

- *Climate Change MOU with UNSM*

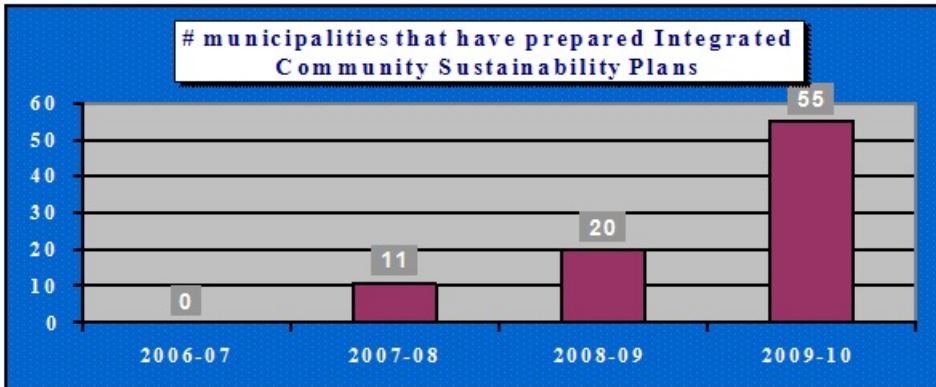
The Climate Change Action Plans have been well received by the municipalities and will support the goal of addressing climate change.

- *Partnering on Geographic Information Infrastructure*

The Town of Kentville was able to complete its business that required the updated mapping and continue to use it in their daily work related to taxation, municipal planning and engineering. All levels of government and the private sector now have access to the updated resources mapping. The NSCAF is now able to supply all levels of government and all users and stakeholders with current and accurate civic address and related data.

Municipal units have expressed satisfaction in working with the GeoNOVA Program and that their needs, concerns and issues are not only being discussed, but are also being documented and actions being defined accordingly. This is an ongoing effort and GeoNOVA will continue to dialogue and consult with municipal units seeking their input relative to geomatics needs and opportunities.

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
# Municipal units with Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (Cumulative)	0	11	23	55

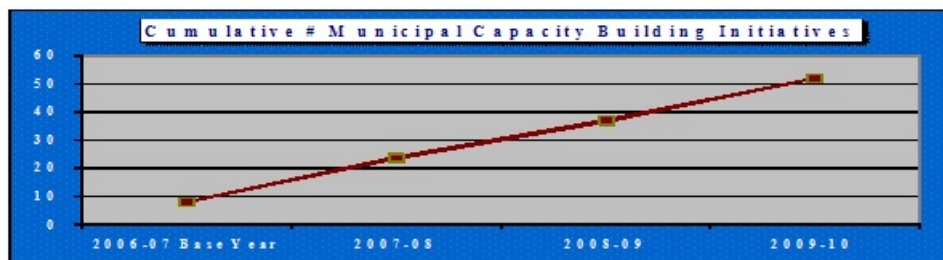


STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

SNSMR is cost sharing on studies and workshops that provide tools and best practice guides for municipalities regarding sustainability planning. SNSMR is working in conjunction with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) to provide municipalities assistance in developing energy sustainability plans (reduction to GHG emissions). SNSMR is part of the federal initiative through the Gas Tax Agreement to move municipalities towards the goal of integrated community sustainability planning.

MEASURE	# of municipalities that have prepared Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs)
FORMULA	Total number of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans in place.
DATA SOURCE	SNSMR Records as well as Reports to Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Secretariat (Gas Tax Agreement)
2009-10 TARGET	55 ICSPs in place
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Develop long-term framework for municipal infrastructure development
PRIORITY	Develop and Maintain Effective Partnerships
STATUS	Met target

	2006-07 Base Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
# municipal capacity building initiatives	8	16	13	15
Cumulative # municipal capacity building initiatives	8	24	37	52



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

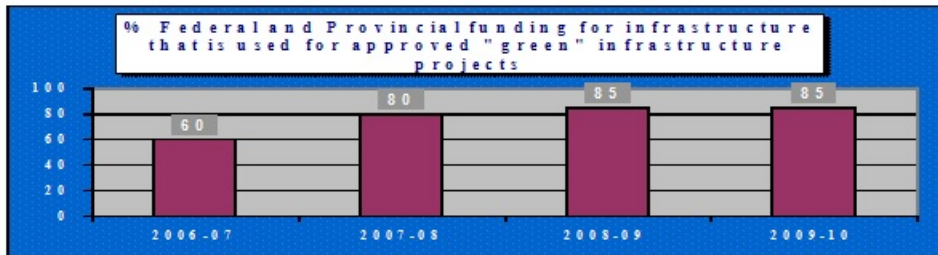
Continue to support requests for funding from municipalities and regional planning and development agencies to undertake studies and workshops that provide tools and best practices to municipalities. Work with municipalities and their associations to initiate capacity building activities. Continue work on asset management tools for municipalities to improve municipal infrastructure.

NOTE:

Capacity building is about providing educational opportunities, guidebooks, templates etc. to assist municipalities in providing excellent governance and administration to their citizens.

MEASURE	Number of Municipal Capacity Building Initiatives
FORMULA	Total number of municipal capacity building initiatives undertaken annually
DATA SOURCE	SNSMR and Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Secretariat records
2009-10 TARGET	10
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Develop framework to increase the capacity of local government to provide services and infrastructure.
PRIORITY	Develop and Maintain Effective Partnerships
STATUS	Met target

	2006-07 Base Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
% of Federal and Provincial funding for infrastructure that is used for approved “green” infrastructure projects.	60%	80%	85%	85%



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

Focus on green infrastructure requests from municipalities as a priority and especially where the request assists the province in promoting areas of provincial interest such as the clean water strategy. Provide information to the Minister and other elected officials (MPs, MLAs, Mayors and Councillors) to ensure they are fully aware of the significant infrastructure gap existing with regard to meeting environmental and public health standards in most areas across the province. Work with other government departments and municipalities to identify priority projects for funding to advance joint federal/provincial/municipal policies on clean water, clean air, clean earth and reductions to green house gas emission.

MEASURE	% of Federal and Provincial funding for infrastructure that is used for approved “green” infrastructure projects.
FORMULA	Total federal and provincial infrastructure funding used for approved “green” infrastructure projects/total federal and provincial infrastructure funding
DATA SOURCE	SNSMR and Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Secretariat records
2009-10 TARGET	minimum of 75% each year to 2009-10
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Develop long-term framework for municipal infrastructure development
PRIORITY	Ensure Municipal Financial Sustainability
STATUS	Met target

Goal 2: Improve accessibility and quality of government information and services in a cost-effective manner, while maintaining security, integrity, and accuracy of records/data and revenues

Priority: Ensure financial sustainability

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Expand Collections Services**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will expand the revenue collections services it provides to government. This expansion will include continuing to negotiate for new debts from the Department of Justice’s Maintenance Enforcement Review, reviewing government units and identifying areas to target as potential collections services clients, enhancing collections services to municipalities, and expanding collections services to the District Health Authorities (DHAs).

Result:

Collection services were expanded as indicated above and critical public services now have access to a highly specialized collections service that will mitigate bad debt accounts.

Outcome:

This will reduce government bad debts and increase revenue for critical public services.

Priority: Make it easier to interact with government

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **SNSMR Website Redesign**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will launch a new look and feel and a program-by-program approach to its website. The department intends to re-design about half of its web site pages during the year.

Result:

SNSMR’s redesign of its website is 46% complete. This includes Land Services & Information, Vital Statistics, Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC), Residential Tenancies, Life Events, Your Energy Rebate as well as new programs that were implemented in 2009-10 such as the New Home Construction Rebate and Nova Scotia Gift Cards. The French-language pages have also been published where applicable. Another 15% of the site is in progress including Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), Debtor Assistance, Nova Scotia Business Registry (NSBR), Access to Business and Special Move Permits.

Outcome:

The new website design has resulted in improved navigation and has made it easier for clients to find the information they require. All information that is published has been reviewed by program

owners for accuracy and relevancy. The online survey results provide support for these statements. Clients are finding the interface crisp, straight-forward, very intuitive, very user friendly and fast. They are also finding the homepage to be very well constructed for ease of navigation, clear, easy to access and living up to its name “Access Nova Scotia”.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Implementation of BizPaL**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will expand the BizPaL service to make it available to 80 per cent of Nova Scotia.

Result:

SNSMR began 2009-10 with 11 municipalities on-line with BizPal and reaching 55.5% of the population of Nova Scotia with over 470 business types available. At the end of 2009-10, SNSMR had an additional 10 municipalities on-line with a total reach of 64.1% of the province. SNSMR also had another 7 municipalities “in progress” that will give a total reach of 81.5%. BizPal also contributes to reducing the administrative burden to businesses of complying with regulations and has reduced the burden to 401,000 hours at the end of the 2009-10 fiscal year. The department is on track to meet its target of 390,000 hours for the end of the 2010 calendar year.

Outcome:

The expansion of BizPal is improving service to and reducing the administrative burden on businesses during their initial start-up by putting important information that they require in one place.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **GeoNOVA Portal Development**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will maintain and improve the ability of government, business, and the public to access geographic information and services online. Improvements will be made to the way that online access is provided and to the types and amount of geographic information that is available.

Result:

SNSMR held discussions around changing GeoNOVA’s web site to better align with the department’s web site redesign. It was acknowledged that GeoNOVA’s efforts go beyond the specific focus of SNSMR but that a site redeployment, and a citizen centric approach would be beneficial to all. The department has held discussions with the Base Mapping Agency and the Coastal Communities.

Outcome:

The impact of this change is very large and GeoNOVA’s offerings are beyond the scope of one department. This is a multi-year effort. Subject matter contributions have been positive and the change is seen as good for both geography professionals and the general public.

Client Satisfaction Rating with Services at Access Centres	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
% Satisfied	94%	90%	92%	92%	92%	94%	**	85%**



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

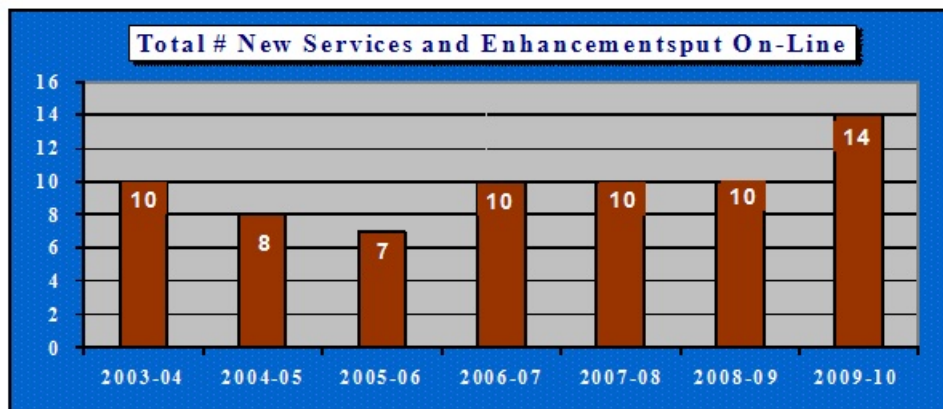
Continue to develop and implement a plan for integrated service delivery, a funding model for the plan and an integrated e-service strategy.

NOTE:

**Client surveys were not conducted at Access Centres or the Call Centre during 2008-2009 and 2009-10 due to a major system replacement that had significant impact on resources. SNSMR did participate in the Corporate Research Associates' Atlantic Quarterly Survey in 2009-10. In this survey, 85% of respondents said it was very easy/somewhat easy to obtain government information and services from SNSMR. Client surveys will resume in Fall 2010. The target will remain at 90%.

MEASURE	Client Satisfaction rating with services at Access Nova Scotia centres
FORMULA	# of clients rating service at Access Nova Scotia centres satisfactory or better/# clients responding to question
DATA SOURCE	Access Centre Client survey results
2009-10 TARGET	90%
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Develop a plan for Integrated Service Delivery
PRIORITY	Make it Easier to Interact with Government
STATUS	Did not meet target

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Total # New Services and Enhancements put On-Line	10	8	7	10	10	10	14



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

Develop and implement integrated e-service delivery strategy.

NOTE:

A service/enhancement is any interactive service function that is made available on the internet (to external clients) or the intranet (to internal staff).

MEASURE	# of new services and enhancements* put on-line each year
FORMULA	Total of all new services put on line annually
DATA SOURCE	Department Records
2009-10 TARGET	Average of 8 per year to 2009-10
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Develop a plan for Integrated Service Delivery
PRIORITY	Make it Easier to Interact with Government
STATUS	Met target

Goal 3: Modernize departmental programs and infrastructure to support citizen-based services and to address emerging issues

Priority: Proactively engage clients and deliver responsive programs

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Client Engagement**

As part of becoming an integrated service delivery organization that provides client-centred services, we will outline a framework for engaging clients. In 2009–2010, SNSMR will develop and design a client engagement framework and guidelines to be used in future service delivery and program design.

Result:

In preparation for the design and development of the client engagement framework and associated guidelines, SNSMR completed ten one-on-one interviews and six focus groups to gather feedback on services currently offered as well as new services that are being considered.

Outcome:

It is anticipated that the framework and guidelines will allow the department to proactively engage its clients in order to understand their needs and enable better decision making in the design and delivery of programs and services.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Facilities Management Plan**

SNSMR will continue to strategically link its facilities management with the department's Integrated Service Delivery Strategy. In 2009–2010, the department will develop a new facilities management plan based on departmental requirements for the next two to three years. The facilities management plan will enable better decision making in the design of the facilities from which the department's programs and services are delivered. This enhanced decision making will allow the department to better meet the needs of its clients.

Result:

Through more ongoing collaboration with all impacted groups throughout the department, SNSMR developed a short term facilities management strategy with robust discussion on options and decisions made on various locations throughout the province. In an ongoing effort to reduce cost in the long term, better understand demographic shifts and changing service needs as well as legislative impacts, SNSMR formed a committee with partners that included Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR), with the focus on developing a longer term strategy.

Outcome:

The short-term strategy and the committee to develop a long-term plan have resulted in better

communications among all process owners and has made all involved better informed of facilities-related issues and facilitated better decision-making.

Priority: Optimize investment in and use of information and related technologies

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- ***Point of Sale System (POS)***
Fiscal 2009–2010 is the final year of a multi-year initiative to implement a system to automate the fee payment processes within SNSMR. The focus in 2009–2010 will be to integrate POS into the new Registry of Motor Vehicle system.

Result:

2009-10 was intended to be the final year for the implementation of the Point of Sale System (POS). However, this was not accomplished as Registry of Motor Vehicle (RMV) stabilization was invoked as a priority project in June 2009. This severely impacted the availability of resources and ability to execute the POS project. The POS project was put on hold until the Fall of 2009.

The focus since the Fall of 2009 has been on an increased scope of integrating POS with the International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA)/International Registration Program (IRP) initiative so that this new application is integrated with POS at the time of implementation instead of retroactively. This will ultimately save work. Capital funds for the POS project were returned and re-requested for 2010-11.

Outcome:

The POS implementation for the RMV application scheduled for 2009-10 is now planned for 2010-11.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- ***International Fuel Tax Agreement/International Registration Program***
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will implement new registration systems for both IFTA and IRP. The current IFTA and IRP systems must be replaced with a new joint system to comply with IFTA, as well as to meet SNSMR's business processes and IT requirements and avoid sanctions against the province.

Result:

SNSMR successfully obtained a vendor to satisfy all business requirements of the IFTA/IRP project. As the first task in working with this vendor, the department completed a review of the business requirements and functionality between the system users and the vendor. The department permitted this invaluable process to take longer than originally scheduled in order to allow for the inclusion and satisfaction of all business requirements. This resulted in an increased amount of scope and funding envelope to meet the revised scope. Both the increased

scope and funding were approved. To accommodate the increase in requirements, both the time required for development and testing increased, which caused the project schedule to move into fiscal year 2010-11. The department requested and received funding for the project for 2010-11. The project is now scheduled to be completed in the Fall of 2010.

Outcome:

The Department was able to demonstrate substantial progress in remediating the deficiencies of the current system to the IFTA governing body. The progress satisfied the governing body and has allowed the project to continue. The governing body has now scheduled Fall 2010 to inspect the new system to ensure remediation of all deficiencies and endorse the Province as being compliant.

Priority: Ensure program compliance and protect public interests and safety

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Modernization of Legislation**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will continue to review its legislation—specifically, the Motor Vehicle Act and the Uniform Securities Transfer Act.

The department will also amend the Revenue Act and regulations to incorporate changes to the federal tobacco marking regime. Amendments to the legislation and regulations will make Nova Scotia’s tobacco marking requirements consistent with the new federal system stamp effective spring 2010.

Result:

Motor Vehicle Act

SNSMR continued a multi-year initiative to rewrite the Motor Vehicle Act during 2009-10. Approximately 65% of the Act has been redrafted. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in mid-2012.

Partnership and Business Names Registration Act

SNSMR introduced amendments to the *Partnership and Business Names Registration Act* during the Spring 2009 session of the House of Assembly. The amendments were passed and were proclaimed effective June 1, 2009.

Personal Property Security Act

SNSMR introduced housekeeping amendments to the *Personal Property Security Act* in the Fall 2009 session of the House of Assembly. The amendments were passed and received Royal Assent on November 5, 2009.

Securities Transfer Act

SNSMR put forward Requests for Legislation for the Fall 2009 session of the House of Assembly. The House rose prior to the draft bill being introduced for First

Reading. A Request for Legislation was put forward in January 2010 for the Spring 2010 session of the House of Assembly.

Revenue Act

Due to a delay in the passing of required federal legislation, the amendments to the *Revenue Act* and regulations respecting tobacco marking will occur in fiscal 2010-11.

Outcome:

When the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) Rewrite is completed, the Act will be a modernized document that will be easier to understand and any inconsistencies found in the MVA will be clarified.

The amendments to the Partnership and Business Names Registration Act enable Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) to be formed in Nova Scotia. Although the legislation was in place to allow for this previously, a requirement for insurance, which could not be obtained, effectively precluded their formation.

It is expected both the amendments to the Personal Property Security Act and the new Securities Transfer Act will be proclaimed in the Summer of 2010. Each of these further SNSMR's ongoing efforts to harmonize commercial laws across jurisdictions.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **The Atlantic Provinces Driver's Licence Project**
Through this project, SNSMR will implement common driver's licence that has been agreed to among the Atlantic provinces. Nova Scotia is the last province to implement the licence. In 2009–2010, the department will establish a project team to define, develop, and deploy the new solution. The department will work with an external vendor to implement the common licence and may need to make significant modification to the new Registry of Motor Vehicle application. This project will also upgrade the aging photo licensing stations.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR successfully defined and developed the solution for a modern photo licensing system and the Atlantic Provinces Drivers Licence Project. Deployment of the solution will be rolled out to the Access Centres over a period of two months ending in June 2010.

Outcome:

Nova Scotians will now have drivers' licences and photo ID cards with enhanced security features to help prevent identity theft.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Forms, Licences, Permits, Renewals and Certificates Project**

This project looks at providing easier access and improved turnaround time to the 182 different licences, permits, renewals and certificates (LPRCs) issued by the department. SNSMR is committed to a 10-day service standard 90 per cent of the time by 2010 and to reduce the paperwork burden to businesses applying for LPRCs by 20 per cent by 2010.

Result:

SNSMR took leadership responsibility for the Better Regulation Initiative in 2009-10. The department is on target to achieve 20% administrative burden reductions, both for the department and government as a whole. Further reductions are under active investigation in a number of program areas, including Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), Land Registration Programs, and within the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) program.

Also, SNSMR has established a project, which is in progress, to create an Access to Business portal that will provide information and assistance in identifying the government requirements to operate a business (generic or within a specific sector).

Outcome:

The projects within this initiative provide significant benefits to business clients including online submissions of applications and renewals for LPRCs required to operate a business, a "one-window" view into interactions with government, and the ability to manage corporate information, which will be shared across departments and levels of government using multiple means.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Tax Compliance**

- *Enhance Tax Compliance Assistance Program*

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will continue to monitor and update the tax compliance content of its website to ensure accuracy and timeliness of the information, provide more internal staff training on tax programs, and develop plain language guides and bulletins for taxpayers as the need arises.

- *Combat Illegal Tobacco Activity*

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will continue to combat illegal tobacco activity. The department continues to enhance its relationship with Crime Stoppers and develop more communication products concerning illegal tobacco activity. SNSMR will also expand distribution venues for public service announcements, work with other Government of Nova Scotia departments with a mandate to deal with tobacco issues, develop a broader

based social-marketing campaign concerning illegal tobacco activity, and continue to work with the federal government and other provinces to elevate the issue of illegal tobacco trade in Canada.

Result:

The Provincial Tax Commission website has been monitored on a continuous basis and updated where necessary. Details of new programs such as the New Home Construction Rebate Program were made available on the website in a timely fashion, including a counter for approved preliminary applications. SNSMR issued tax bulletins and guides were issued within 24 hours of legislative, regulatory or policy changes and appropriate sections of the website were updated. The department also provided training to all new audit staff respecting tax legislation and policy. Under the Your Energy Rebate Program (YERP), SNSMR provided access to property tax classification changes to bulk vendors so that they can update the eligibility status of their customers.

As a direct result of SNSMR's relationship with Crime Stoppers (C-Stoppers) the department was able to create new public service announcements (PSAs) under the C-Stoppers branding. The department also expanded the distribution venues for airing the PSAs. During the last year, SNSMR aired the PSAs on Global TV as well as on the SilverVision screen at various events at the Halifax Metro Centre. The department also distributed a brochure on illegal tobacco products to tobacco retailers, truckers, Access Nova Scotia offices and Crime Stoppers. SNSMR took every opportunity to elevate the tobacco smuggling issue with its federal and provincial counterparts, including presentations at regional Senior Management Committee meetings with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), Senior Revenue Officials Conference with CRA Headquarters and provinces, and the annual Interprovincial Tax Conference, as well as lower level committee meetings. The department also continued to share information concerning the illegal tobacco trade with the Departments of Justice, Finance, and Health Promotion and Protection.

Outcome:

These initiatives have improved access to tax information, created more knowledgeable and confident internal staff to administer tax programs, improved the quality of responses to internal and external enquiries about tax programs, improved the relationship with YERP bulk vendors and the Canadian Oil Heat Association.

SNSMR made progress in its efforts to combat tobacco smuggling. SNSMR's estimate of smuggled product was 27% two years ago and is now about 12%. Tobacco tax revenues for fiscal 2009-10 are up by over 9% or \$17M on a comparative rate basis from the previous fiscal year. The department also exceeded the department of Finance's initial estimate by approximately \$29M. The number of carton equivalents seized decreased from 37K in 2008/09 to 17K in 2009/10.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Tax Auditing and Enforcement**
- *Protect Fuel Tax Revenues*
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will develop a system to track the sale of tax-exempt marked fuel to consumers.
- *Implement Updated Audit and Enforcement Strategy*
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will implement its updated Audit and Enforcement Strategy to increase visibility among vendors and consumers through more audits, inspections, and investigations. While the emphasis of the strategy is on tobacco tax, the department will design and implement a strategy for realigning audit and compliance resources to increase visibility among all vendors who collect fuel, sales, and corporate capital taxes. The strategy will also focus on refunds/rebates, license/permit adjudications, gas price regulation and underground economy activities with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and update the ARAAMS reporting system.
- *Increased Collaboration with RCMP and Other Law Enforcement Agencies*
In 2009–2010, the department will develop and further enhance its co-operative partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Investigations Directorate and RCMP Customs and Excise. This will include staff secondments to RCMP Customs and Excise and joint forces operations, as well as partnerships with other law enforcement agencies to target specific tobacco investigations.

Result:

In 2009-10 SNSMR completed a business requirements analysis and review, and market survey was completed to determine the size and scope of potential solutions to track the sale of tax-exempt marked fuel to consumers, including estimated system cost. The department prepared and submitted a Tangible Capital Assets (TCA) proposal for 2010-11, but the proposal was rejected due to other priorities.

The updated Audit and Enforcement Strategy was developed and distributed to senior staff of SNSMR's Audit and Enforcement section and put into operation.

The department completed the Quality Assurance (QA) action plan for Audit and Enforcement concerning the ARAAMS reporting system and documentation of various programs outlined in QA. The department completed operational manuals for those programs identified in QA action plan. The department also expanded the manuals to other areas not identified in QA action plan. The development of the operational manuals for other programs is ongoing.

In 2009-10, SNSMR held eight joint meetings with RCMP Excise and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Special Investigations Directorate. SNSMR expanded this meeting to include the CRA Excise section and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). The department has delayed staff

secondments to the RCMP Excise unit pending the reorganization of SNSMR's Audit and Enforcement unit and the establishment of new position classifications to accommodate these secondments. SNSMR's Audit and Enforcement unit conducted 68 joint investigations with the RCMP and other law enforcement agencies in 2009-10. SNSMR also developed and signed an information sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with RCMP to allow them to share intelligence information with SNSMR's Audit and Enforcement unit.

In 2009-10, Audit and Enforcement staff training concentrated on mandatory courses required to be completed by staff. Over 100 courses were attended by Audit and Enforcement staff in 2009-10. As a result, work on the regulatory enforcement training was deferred.

Outcome:

The Audit and Enforcement strategy will enable and ensure compliance with all tax programs and protect public interest and safety by better targeting audits, inspections, and other enforcement activities towards higher-risk vendors and persons. Increased collaboration with law enforcement agencies, CRA and CBSA, and training will enable and ensure compliance with tobacco tax programs and protect public interest and safety, for the benefit of all Nova Scotians.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Consumer Protection**

SNSMR will undertake a number of consumer protection initiatives in 2009–2010 to address emerging issues and modernize regulatory oversight over evolving markets and new supplier offerings. A number of these initiatives began in 2008–2009 with extensive consultative and deliberative sessions with stakeholders and the public.

In the upcoming year, the department will implement a new licensing regime for payday lenders. It will protect consumers from exorbitant lending rates and require better disclosure of rate information by payday lenders.

SNSMR will also amend the Condominium Act and regulations and implement many of the amendments in 2009–2010. At the same time, initiatives will be undertaken to improve new homeowner protection, largely in the condominium sector, to address structural and construction issues. SNSMR will develop education and awareness materials for condominium owners, as well as warranty and registry proposals for condominiums. Other proposed changes to inspection procedures will be phased in over a couple of years.

The department will also develop and implement new regulations in 2009–2010 to govern the use of gift cards. In addition, the department will undertake a comprehensive review of its governance over the mortgage broker industry in the province. This is in response to the weaknesses in mortgage markets across North America as a result of the recent sub-prime crisis and to the rapidly evolving nature of lending mechanisms available in the market today.

As announced by the new Government, the department will transfer the responsibility to administer the regulations under the Petroleum Product Pricing Act from SNSMR to the Utility and Review Board. This transfer is expected to occur in the late summer or early fall as a number of processes have to be worked out by the UARB.

In 2009–2010, responsibility for motive fuel licensing will also be transferred from the Department of Environment to SNSMR.

Result:

Homeowner Protection

SNSMR continued to undertake extensive research and stakeholder consultations on homeowner protection in 2009-10, which was capped by discussions with home warranty insurers and other stakeholders in March 2010. Work on this initiative is expected to continue into 2011-12 with the ultimate goal of developing a “made in Nova Scotia” solution.

Payday Lenders

SNSMR implemented a new payday lender regulatory regime effective August 1, 2009. The new regime covers disclosure requirements, maximum rates on payday loans, signage requirements and prohibits certain harmful practices of payday lenders such as rollovers and setting loan due dates prior to the borrower’s next payday.

Condominium Act Amendments

On November 5, 2009, Bill 38, amendments to the Condominium Act, received Royal Assent. This was the culmination of years of SNSMR’s operational experience and the product of SNSMR’s consultations with stakeholders. The multi-stakeholder Condominium Act Review Committee issued its discussion paper and its proposals and the responses it generated led directly to the content of Bill 38.

SNSMR and the Department of Justice were actively developing regulations in support of the Bill and proclamation of the Act in 2009-10. The Minister announced that the plan for proclamation is May or June 2010 and staff have been working diligently to meet this target.

Gift Card Regulations

SNSMR announced gift card regulations in December 2009 and the regulations took effect on February 1, 2010. The regulations govern disclosures on gift cards, and prohibit expiry dates and fees (except customization and replacement fees) on all gift cards except gift cards for charitable or promotional purposes.

Mortgage Brokers

In 2009-10, SNSMR undertook stakeholder and public consultation on amendments to the Mortgage Brokers and Lenders Registration Act. The Discussion Paper on Proposals for amendment to the Mortgage Brokers and Lenders Registration Act is expected in 2010-11. Responses to the discussion paper will inform the content of amendments to the Act and regulations.

Petroleum Products Pricing Act

On October 1, 2009, SNSMR transferred responsibility for petroleum products pricing and related functions such as setting zones, allowances and margins to the Utility and Review Board. SNSMR retains legislative and regulatory authority, responsibility for compliance and enforcement, collection of the monthly assessment fee, and administration of opting-in and opting-out of the fixed wholesale price and retail mark-up by retailers. Promotions also continue to be administered by SNSMR.

The transfer of responsibility for motive fuel licensing from the Department of Environment to SNSMR is ongoing pending additional interdepartmental discussion and the finalization of certain approval processes.

Outcome:

Homeowner Protection

The “made in Nova Scotia” solution will improve consumer protection and increase the quality of new home construction in Nova Scotia.

Payday Lenders

Consumers of payday loans are better informed due to enhanced disclosure requirements and are protected from being charged exceptionally high rates and from the most harmful practices of payday lenders. Payday lenders now operate in a more stable and secure regulatory environment.

Condominium Act Amendments

The amendments to the *Condominium Act* and associated regulations will increase consumer protection and improve condominium governance.

Gift Card Regulations

The Gift Card regulations increase consumer protection through increased disclosure requirements and restrictions on fees and expiry dates. The value of consumers’ gift cards will also be protected over time.

Mortgage Brokers

Anticipated outcomes of consultation and the discussion paper on amendments to the Mortgage Brokers and Lenders Registration Act is updated legislation resulting in clearer, more modern industry guidelines for mortgage brokers and lenders in Nova Scotia. These guidelines will enhance consumer protection measures to help make life better for families across the province.

Petroleum Products Pricing Act

The transfer of responsibility for petroleum products pricing and related functions to the Utility and Review Board aligns Nova Scotia with other Atlantic Canadian provinces in terms of having an independent petroleum products pricing regulator.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **New Home Construction Rebate**

In 2009-2010, SNSMR will develop and administer the government's one-time new home construction rebate equivalent to 50 per cent of the provincial portion of the HST. The Department will develop details of the program in consultation with industry for late summer 2009.

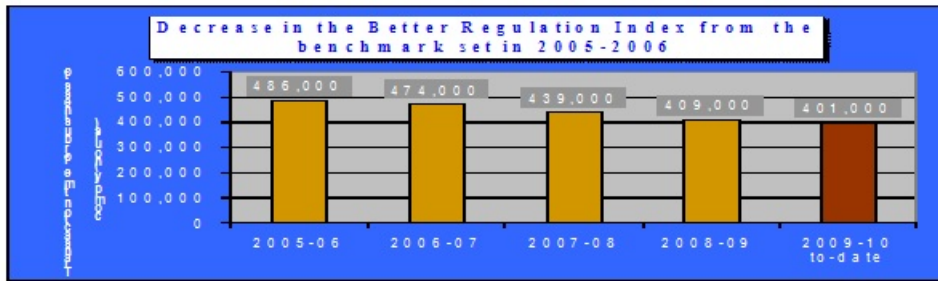
Result:

SNSMR held consultations with industry stakeholders in July 2009. The construction, real estate, legal and lending sectors participated along with the Better Business Bureau, Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, and the Urban Development Institute. In order to accommodate the 1500 cap on the number of rebates to be issued, the department established a two staged application process along with a counter on our website that the department updated at the end of each business day. The website counter displayed the number of applicants that met the first stage requirements. The department also developed a wait list and displayed and updated the number on this list on the website daily. The program reached the cap at the end of January 2010. All wait list applicants will be absorbed into the program because not all applicants who filed a first stage application, have filed a final rebate application. It is estimated that over 1400 rebates will be issued under this program.

Outcome:

The department's implementation and processing of rebates under this program was seamless and the number of rebates issued exceeded industry's expectations. The program was a key step in keeping tradespeople working and to strengthen Nova Scotia's economy. The program had positive effects on the construction industry and kept many skilled trades working. The rebate provided an incentive to buy a newly constructed home by making a new home more affordable.

	2005-06 Base Year	2006-07	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-10*
Better Regulation Index (Benchmark set in 2005-2006)	486,000 hours	474,000 hours	439,000 hours	402,000 hours	401,000 hours
Target for Index	486,000 hours	473,000 hours	438,000 hours	409,000 hours	390,000 hours



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

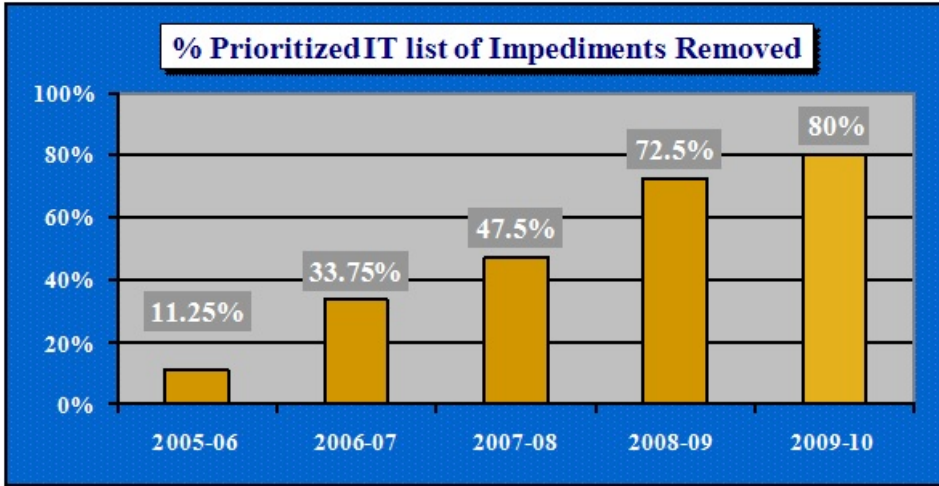
Each program manager has been given a tool kit to review the administrative requirements (ARs) in their program areas to identify opportunities to reduce the total compliance time for each AR. As opportunities are identified, program managers will develop initiatives to realize the opportunities to reduce compliance time, also known as paperwork burden.

NOTE:

The 390,000 hours target is for the end of the 2010 calendar year and the department is on track to meet that target by the end of December 2010.

MEASURE	Decrease in the Better Regulation Index from the benchmark set in 2005-2006
FORMULA	Total of the total transaction time for businesses to comply with each administrative requirement (AR). $BRI = \sum (\# \text{ of businesses} * \# \text{ of transactions/business/year} * \text{time/transaction}) \text{ for each AR}$
DATA SOURCE	Transaction data collected by program areas
2009-10 TARGET	390,000 hours
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Better Regulation Initiative
PRIORITY	Ensure Program Compliance and Protect the Public Interest and Safety
STATUS	Expect to meet target

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
% Prioritized IT List of Investments Achieved	11.25%	33.75%	47.5%	72.5%	80%



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

The Architecture Road Map (Gap Analysis) will identify total information technology investment required.

MEASURE	% of prioritized list of information technology investments achieved to improve the ease and speed of accessing services and information for clients
FORMULA	Information technology investments achieved during the year/total identified information technology investments list
DATA SOURCE	Information Management Services (IMS)
2009-10 TARGET	85%
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Information Technology Architecture Road Map
PRIORITY	Optimize investment in and use of information and related technologies
STATUS	Did not meet target

Goal 4: Provide a motivating work environment and develop staff to meet current and future departmental needs

Priority: Foster a positive, motivating work environment

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Leadership Climate Survey**
SNSMR will conduct a climate survey on leadership within the department in 2009–2010 and enhance leadership training as required. The department, through the Senior Management Team, will assign overall responsibility for employee engagement to a central contact who will be accountable for ensuring that each executive director funds engagement initiatives unique to their division.

Result:

The department initiated a leadership climate review process with members of the Executive Management Team. The department also created a Survey Response Committee comprised of a Chair and one representative from each Division in the department plus a Communications Advisor as an ex-officio to the Committee. Each Divisional representative is a lead on employee engagement for their division and working with their Executive Director, they are developing strategies to clarify issues and address concerns identified by staff in the survey. The department requires a quarterly update from Divisional teams. The department's Human Resources Advisory Council (HRAC) also has a role in promoting employment equity/succession management initiatives.

Outcome:

This is a multi-year initiative. The expected impact is a high-functioning Senior Management Team, improved perception of the senior leadership in the Department, and an engaged workforce achieved through improvements in areas of concern as identified in the 2009 "How's Work Going?" Survey.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Occupational Health and Safety**
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will monitor progress in occupational health and safety (OHS) through staff feedback and the development and execution of a plan to deal with any OHS gaps.

Result:

SNSMR conducted the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Checklist in November and December 2009. Sixty surveys were distributed and 44 (73%) were completed. The results of the survey indicate that our challenges are communication of occupational health and safety information from management to staff, OHS Training, and our Return to Work Program.

Outcome:

Understanding the gaps in SNSMR's OHS program helps the department's program owners focus their OHS activities in areas of need, thereby helping to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for employees that will impact positively on employee satisfaction and employee retention.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Violence in the Workplace**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will expand activities to promote awareness of violence in the workplace issues and to deliver training to staff in high-risk areas. This initiative will ensure that risks of violence in the workplace are mitigated.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR developed and printed a pamphlet on Violence in the Workplace (VIW) for distribution at orientation sessions for staff, VIW workshops and general information. The department also held a number of VIW workshops with staff who work in areas at high risk of experiencing incidents of violence.

Outcome:

Building staff awareness and preparedness helps reduce incidents of violence in the workplace and ensures a positive work experience and a safe and healthy work environment for SNSMR employees.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Employee Wellness**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will expand its employee wellness programming to encourage more involvement from staff in the regions as well as head office. This initiative promotes healthy lifestyle choices for employees.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR discussed a communication's strategy for the Employee Wellness program with Communications Nova Scotia (CNS) staff. The department asked all of its supervisors, managers and directors to hold, initiate, motivate or support their staff in wellness activities. The department also held lunch and learn sessions on wellness issues. The sessions were met with positive feedback and good attendance.

Outcome:

This initiative promotes healthy lifestyle choices for employees, ensuring a positive work experience and a safe and healthy work environment for SNSMR employees.

Priority: Be a learning organization**2009-2010 Priority Initiative**

**Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
2009-10 Accountability Report**

- **Performance and Career Development Plans**
In 2009–2010, all SNSMR staff who have completed their probationary periods will have a performance plan in progress, and all SNSMR staff will have a career development plan.

Result:

The Performance Plans were completed during fiscal 2008-09. All bargaining unit and MCP performance plans and reviews are underway, however, not all have been submitted for sign off for fiscal 2009-10. The sign-off period for 2009-10 is outside of the period for this report. Career Development Training has been completed for the majority of staff in the department, including regional staff.

Outcome:

The Performance Planning and review cycle is an ongoing, multi-year process. With the delays in the finalization of Business Plans in 2009-10, the ongoing implementation of the new Excluded Classification Plan (ECP) as well as delays in the confirmation of the variance and payment of the Pay for Performance incentives, there has been a delay in submitting the signed off reviews from 2008-09 and 2009-10 for MCP staff.

Priority: Recruit and retain a skilled, diverse workforce

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Employee Training and Development**
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will enhance the effectiveness of its staff through role-specific training and by developing web-based information resources for managers. SNSMR will also conduct a training needs analysis throughout the department, which will result in a strategic approach to training expenditures. The department will access training modules through the Public Service Commission, as well as developing department-specific training modules in recruitment and selection and labour relations.

Result:

SNSMR was granted access to three web-based/computer-based training programs developed by the Department of Justice: Coaching, Performance Management and Attendance Management. A modified training needs analysis is currently underway. Research into software and cost of new web-based training program development was completed during 2009-10. Staff participation in corporate training, including mandatory training, is ongoing.

During 2009-10, 31 employees successfully completed the Leadership Development Program as follows:

- Stepping Up to FrontLine - 13
- FrontLine Management - 10
- Stepping Up to Middle Management - 3

- Middle Management - 4
- Executive - 1

The Public Service Commission (PSC) Human Resources Corporate Services Unit (CSU) developed and delivered training as follows:

- The Manager's Role in the Probationary Period
- ABCs of Progressive Discipline
- Bullying in the Workplace
- Overview of the competition process

As well, SNSMR provided staff with mandatory and enhanced Occupational and Health and Safety training.

SNSMR's Municipal Services Division sponsored a Performance Coaching program which was attended by managers from three of the department's divisions.

Outcome:

This is a multi-year action. SNSMR's ongoing commitment to training and development for its staff enables the Department to recruit and retain a skilled workforce, which allows us to effectively respond to demographic impacts and the changing mix of skills required to meet the demands of our clients/customers.

	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09 Target		2009-10 Target	
	MCP	BU	MCP	BU	MCP	BU	MCP	BU
# Staff with Development Plans	51	176	83	453	**	**	**	**
# Staff who meet the measure criteria	98	697	83	610	**	**	**	**
% Staff with a Development Plan	52%	25%	100%	74%	90%	90%	100%	100%



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

The Department is in the process of developing the short-term strategy for identifying ‘at risk’ positions. The Human Resources CSU has contributed resources to develop a succession strategy framework and to help promote and provide guidance in support of this initiative. The Human resources CSU has developed a planning template for Senior management. The Public Service Commission also has succession planning templates and tools available to assist. A process to encourage the use of development plans for Bargaining Unit employees, is promoted. Uptake will be dependant on several factors and participation will be achieved over several years.

NOTE:

** numbers for development plans for 2008-09 and 2009-10 are unavailable at this time due to delays in submitting the sign-off development plans due to the ongoing implementation of the new ECP classification plan as well as delays in the confirmation of the variance and payment of the Pay for Performance incentives.

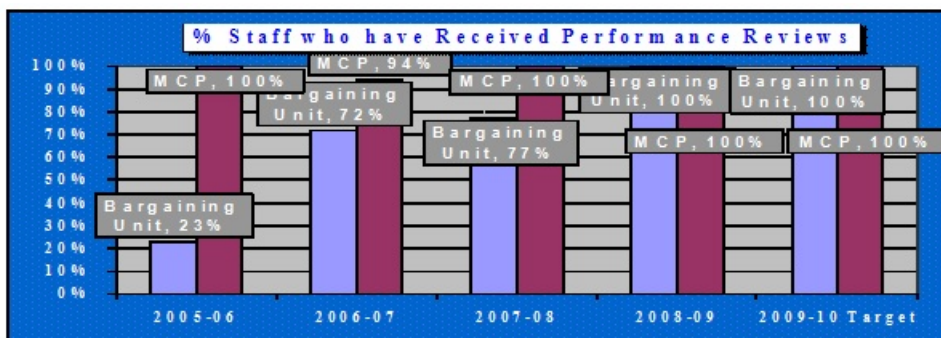
MEASURE	% of employees, who have been with SNSMR for at least one year, identified with development plans that meet Public Service Commission guidelines (for MCP classification and Bargaining Unit (BU) employees respectively)
FORMULA	Total number of development plans for MCP and BU employees respectively/total employees base
DATA SOURCE	Human Resource Corporate Services Unit (HR CSU) records
2009-10 TARGET	MCP = 100%; BU = 100%
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Implement succession management plan to address needs for key positions in the Department
PRIORITY	Be a Learning Organization
STATUS	Expect to meet target

	2005-2006 Base Year		2006-2007		2007-08		2008-09 Target		2009-10 Target	
	MCP	BU	MCP	BU	MCP	BU	MCP	BU	MCP	BU
# of Staff who meet the measure criteria	84	727	98	697	83	610	**	**	**	**
Total # Staff Receiving Performance Reviews	84	167	92	501	83	470	**	**	**	**
% Staff who have Received Performance Reviews	100%	23%	94%	72%	100%	77%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE:

** due to the transition to the new pay system for excluded employees, performance review documents are delayed for 2008-09 and 2009-10.

MEASURE	% of staff who have annual performance reviews on file (for MCP classification and Bargaining Unit (BU) employees respectively)
FORMULA	All staff who have annual performance reviews/all eligible staff
DATA SOURCE	Human Resource Corporate Services Unit (HR CSU) records
2009-10 TARGET	MCP = 100%; BU = 100%
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	Expand implementation of performance management process in MCPs and bargaining units
PRIORITY	Be a Learning Organization
STATUS	Met target



Goal 5: Enhance the strategic decision-making capacity and accountability of the department

Priority: Effectively manage risk

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Enterprise Risk Management**
In 2009–2010, the department will continue to monitor the use of the risk management tools developed in 2008–2009 for both strategic and operational risks and support staff training where required.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR monitored and reported on its risk indicators throughout the fiscal year to assist in the management of each risk. The department also revised its Strategic Risk Register in preparation for Business Planning for 2010-2011, as per the department's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Policy.

Outcome:

This initiative helps to lower the risk exposure of the department in key areas and provides opportunities for the department to explore and helps the department achieve its corporate objectives.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Business Continuity Management**
In 2009–2010, SNSMR will develop an action plan for implementing its Business Continuity Plan (BCP), which was developed in 2008–2009. The implementation plan will include developing appropriate training for regional response teams and communication of the plan to staff throughout the department. It will also include the integration of risks and potential mitigation strategies identified in the development of the BCP into operational risk treatment practices.

Result:

In August 2009, the SNSMR Senior Management Team approved the department's Business Continuity Plan, the 2009-10 implementation plan, and mitigation strategies for the H1N1 outbreak in the Fall/Winter of 2009-10. The department also established a Disaster Recovery Plans (DRP) for its information technology functions.

In 2009-10 SNSMR established a Divisional Business Continuity Management (BCM) Coordinators Committee, with representation from across the department, to provide input into BCM policy and planning. The Committee has met monthly since October 2009.

The department established a Business Interruption Information Line for staff to call for reporting information in the event of an after-hours interruption to the department's ability to operate.

Also, the department distributed a magnet with the Business Interruption Information Line number on it to all staff in the department in the Fall of 2009 in lieu of developing employee contact cards. The department also identified a potential software solution to the need for an emergency employee contact process.

The department developed a BCM Awareness Session for online delivery to all SNSMR staff. The department delivered BCM Awareness sessions and Regional Response Team training to the Regional Response Teams (OHS Committees) for Head Office (Maritime Centre) and Vital Statistics. The training established the response teams for the two offices indicated above. The department also developed a BCM orientation pamphlet for distribution to all staff in the department.

Overall, progress on BCM was slightly less than expected due a focus on strategies to combat H1N1 in the Fall/Winter of 2009-10.

Outcome:

BCM provides the department with mechanisms to continue through or recover in a timely and orderly fashion from an event that interrupts the department's ability to deliver its programs and services.

Priority: Continuously improve processes

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Quality Assurance**

In 2009–2010, SNSMR will continue to focus on Quality Assurance (QA) and develop a two-year plan to expand this focus on mapping /improving internal processes.

SNSMR will also continue to work internally and, where appropriate, other government departments on processes that deliver services to the public.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR developed a plan to map and improve internal processes resulting in the completion of a Master Inventory of SNSMR processes and process diagrams. The department has mapped 30% of these processes, which meets the year one target. SNSMR also continued to work with other government departments and completed six process improvement initiatives in 2009-10.

Outcome:

This initiative is helping to shift the department's culture to one of continuous quality improvement and improves our delivery of our services to our clients.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Regulatory Management**

In 2009–2010, as part of its commitment to the Government of Nova Scotia’s Better Regulation initiative, SNSMR will implement its own plan to enhance activity around policy development and to ensure that the department is adhering to the guiding principles and requirements of the government-wide regulatory management policy.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR monitored the policy analysis process and the different types of regulatory tools used by program owners in addressing policy issues.

Outcome:

This initiative ensures regulatory quality and that regulations make both a positive impact and the best use of the time and resources of businesses, citizens and government.

2009-2010 Priority Initiative

- **Rethink Initiative**

SNSMR will launch the Government of Nova Scotia’s corporate Rethink Initiative within the department. The activities under these programs will encourage and seek more environmentally conscious decisions in the workplace.

Result:

In 2009-10, SNSMR held various activities to focus staff’s attention on reducing greenhouse gas and encouraging energy efficiency. The department introduced waste sorting and purchased waste disposal bins, reduced the number of telephone books required by the department, held lunch and learns, held mugsporting activities, posted idle free signs around its facilities, and produced a DVD of the Rethink initiative.

Outcome:

This initiative is increasing staff awareness to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage energy efficiency and provide a healthy work environment for staff.

	2009-10
% success rate on designated program targets under Organizational Excellence	84.5%



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGET:

Organizational Excellence is being addressed by focusing on ongoing and new initiatives aimed at ensuring the department improves its past performance, protects itself against various risks and look for new opportunities going forward. Through the development of business tools, training teams on how to integrate these tools into their every day business practices, developing internal policies to sustain participation and monitoring, measuring and reporting on the change process, the internal capacity of the department is strengthened, which in turn enhances the strategic decision making capacity and program and service delivery. Quality Assurance will move into the second phase of implementation and Business Continuity Management and Regulatory Management implementation will be added to the organizational excellence activities for the first time.

NOTE:

New measure for 2009-10. Pending the completion of the Key Performance Indicators initiative, the targets for future years during the 2010-11 business planning process.

MEASURE	% success rate on designated program targets under Organizational Excellence*
FORMULA	Analysis of data collected for individual activities against targets
DATA SOURCE	Departmental Records
2009-10 TARGET	Average 65% success rate of individual program targets under Organizational Excellence
FREQUENCY TRACKED	Annually
RELATED ACTIVITY	1. Quality Assurance 2. Regulatory Management 3. Business Continuity Management
PRIORITY	Continuously Improve Processes and Effectively Manage Risk
STATUS	Met target

6. UNPLANNED ACTIVITIES

Revenue Act

The Revenue Act was amended to provide for new penalties that include the suspension of the person's driver's licence and vehicle permit upon conviction for tobacco tax offences, and denial of the renewal of their driver's licence and vehicle permit should they default on the payment of fines relating to tobacco or fuel tax offences imposed upon conviction. Additional housekeeping amendments were made to clarify ambiguous language within the tobacco penalty provisions.

The new penalties respecting the suspension of driver licences and vehicle permits will be a deterrent for those who are involved or who may be contemplating involvement in the illegal tobacco trade.

The denial of the renewals of driver's licences will be an incentive for people who have been convicted of tobacco tax offences to pay their fines.

Amendments were made to the Sales Tax Act Regulations to allow for the Household Energy Rebate, publicly referred to as 'Your Energy Rebate', to apply to all residential electricity usage and base charges effective October 1, 2009.

The application of the rebate to all residential electricity has made life more affordable for families.

Residential Tenancies

In winter 2010, SNSMR held consultations with select stakeholder groups to review a set of draft amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). Further consultations will occur in the Spring and Summer of 2010 to gain additional feedback regarding the previously proposed amendments and to investigate and receive feedback on new and/or expanded areas under the RTA.

Amendments to the RTA will result in greater efficiency in dispute resolution. Mobile home park rent increase requirements will be easier for landlords and tenants to understand. The amendments will also correct previous drafting errors which will limit unintended and undesired effects.

Client Engagement

SNSMR launched a municipal stakeholder survey on January 11, 2010. Between that date and March 31, 2010, there were 11 responses to the survey. The results from January 11, 2010 and March 31, 2011 will be used as the base year data to help establish targets for 2011-12 onward.

Launching this survey will allow SNSMR to receive direct feedback from our municipal partners. This will help us be more responsive to the needs of municipalities, and help enhance our relationship with our municipal clients.

7. YEAR END DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET SUMMARY

SNSMR - Estimated Budget Expenditures - Per 2010/11 Estimates Book			
	2009/10 Estimate	2009/10 Actuals	2009/10 Variance
	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands
Gross Program Expenses	300,194	278,665	(21,529)
TCA Cash Flow	1,157	905	(252)
Salaries & Benefits	51,041	49,107	(1,934)

SNSMR - Funded Staff			
	2009/10 Estimate	2009/10 Actuals	2009/10 Variance
Gross FTE's	887	788	(99)
Net FTE's	872	774	(98)

VARIANCE EXPLANATIONS

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations departmental expenses were \$21.5 million or 7.2 per cent less than budget. Lower than expected expenditures occurred in the following areas: \$15.1 million related to the Building Canada programs, \$4.0 million related to the Heating Assistance Rebate Program, \$5.5 million related to Federal Gas Tax Transfers, \$1.3 million related to Provincial Property Tax grants, and \$1.5 million in other grant programs. The reduction in spending was partially offset by increased spending of \$3.1 million in Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, \$2.5 million in Special Projects and \$.3 million increase in operating costs.