



NOVA SCOTIA

**Service Nova Scotia
and Municipal Relations**

Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2010-11

July, 2011

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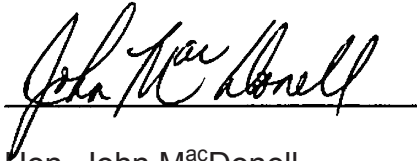
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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations for the year ended March 31, 2011 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year 2010-2011. The reporting of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations 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 Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations 2010-2011 Statement of Mandate.



Hon. John MacDonell
Minister



Kevin Malloy
Deputy Minister

Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the 2010-2011 Accountability Report for Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. This report summarizes the department's activities during the period ending March 31, 2011, and also highlights a number of significant achievements.

The department and its staff are committed to delivering effective and responsive programs to individuals, businesses, other government clients and municipalities. Making it easier for Nova Scotians to interact with government is a key priority.

In 2010-2011, some of the achievements in this area included:

- National Quality Institute recognition for Quality in the Public Sector (Program Management and Corporate Services division)
- a 2010 Premier's Award of Excellence for a project that integrates birth registration, application for a child's SIN and application for Canada Child Benefits
- a 2010 Premier's Award of Excellence for an e-accessible Land Registry
- the successful completion of the Better Regulations Initiative to help make it easier for Nova Scotia businesses to deal with government
- the addition of commercial vehicle renewals to the online vehicle renewal permit service
- the addition of an online service to allow clients to pay outstanding debts to the province
- transfer of the administration of the First Time Home Buyer Rebate program from the Canada Revenue Agency to SNSMR

The department also continues to partner with the province's 55 municipalities to keep communities great. The Towns Task Force, created in partnership with the UNSM, has been established to help address some of the issues that towns are currently facing.

Early in 2011, we welcomed the Alcohol and Gaming division as part of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. The division, previously part of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, has a staff of 60 and operates from offices in Dartmouth and Sydney.

All of these achievements have been possible because we have dedicated and talented staff located across the province who are committed to making Nova Scotians' business or personal interactions with government as simple and as rewarding as possible.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations continues to work hard to serve municipalities, businesses and individuals. We are proud of our achievements for 2010-2011, and look forward to another successful year working on behalf of Nova Scotians.

Significant Events and Accomplishments Achieved in 2010/11

The following section highlights events and accomplishments achieved by SNSMR in 2010/11 that were not mentioned in the *Statement of Mandate*:

National Quality Institute Recognition:

- The Program Management and Corporate Services Division of SNSMR achieved external recognition of excellence with the accomplishment of certification from the National Quality Institute Progressive Excellence Program for Level 1 for Quality in the Public Sector.

Combating Tobacco Smuggling:

- Between 2006/07 and 2009/10 tobacco smuggling has decreased from just under 33% of the Nova Scotia market to just over 11%. In 2010/11 it is anticipated that analysis will show smuggling reduced to close to 10%.
- The evidence is clear, the combined enforcement, partnership and social marketing efforts of SNSMR are taking their toll on tobacco smuggling operations.
- These activities support the government's efforts to promote safe communities by reducing the number of persons and organized crime involved in the illegal trade of tobacco.

First Time Home Buyer Rebate:

- Nova Scotia's First Time Home Buyer Rebate is a rebate equivalent to 18.75 % of the provincial portion of the HST or 1.31% of the purchase price of capital stock in a housing cooperative, up to \$1,500, on newly built homes.
- Effective July 1, 2010, the administration of the First Time Home Buyer Rebate Program was successfully transferred from the Canada Revenue Agency to SNSMR.
- This rebate is now payable directly to the home owner and is not assignable to the builder. The home owner is now assured that they will get the full benefit of the rebate.

Consumer Protection and Awareness:

- An Education, Information and Awareness initiative was launched to provide consumers with the tools to help themselves in the marketplace and to make it more efficient for consumers when interacting with government.
- The number of targeted inspections was exceeded (targeted 150 and completed 164) to improve compliance of regulated businesses thus ensuring consumers are better protected.

Legion Capital Assistance Program:

- Municipal Services developed and rolled out a new Legion Capital Assistance Program which will assist Royal Canadian Legions in Nova Scotia to upgrade their facilities. Grants will total 50% of the eligible project cost, up to a maximum grant of \$10,000.

Creation of a Towns Task Force:

- In conjunction with the UNSM, a Towns Task Force has been established to address some of the issues towns in Nova Scotia are facing. These include challenges related to demographics, service delivery and planning and development issues.

2010 Premier's Award of Excellence:

SNSMR was a recipient of the 2010 Premier's Award of Excellence for two projects:

- ***Bundled Birth Services Team:*** In the Spring of 2009, Nova Scotia was the first province to provide integrated birth registration, application for child's SIN and application for Canada Child Benefits for its citizens.

Due to its success, this same system has been adapted for use and is planned to be used with other provinces and programs. It has also paved the way for bundling additional services for citizens across Canada today and in the immediate future.

- ***Halifax E-Vault Team:*** The Land Registry guarantees basic ownership rights through a land titles regime, provides easy access to all public records relating to land parcels; and facilitates electronic access to, and registration of, land related information. Halifax County Land Registration Office is the first land registration district to become 100% e-accessible.

The Halifax E-Vault team transformed a paper driven public registry to a paperless registry, increased service to authorized users and citizens and created efficiencies in land transactions while protecting historic and original legal land records.

Their work has moved Nova Scotia and the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations forward in their vision of integrated service delivery, protecting the public interest and making it easier for business and citizens to interact with government.

Better Regulation Initiative:

- The Better Regulations Initiative (BRI) was launched in 2005 as a 5-year plan focused on making Nova Scotia business more competitive. Government met the Better Regulations Initiative (BRI) 5-year targets by the deadline of December 2010.

- The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) issued a Provincial Report Card (January 2011) grading progress on red tape reduction. Nova Scotia fared well receiving the second highest mark in the country (“B”).

Making it Easier to Interact with Government:

- SNSMR continues to make it easier for business and citizens to interact with government. In December 2010, the online vehicle permit renewal service was enhanced to allow many commercial vehicles to be renewed online.
- A new online service was implemented in December 2010 to allow payments to be made on outstanding debts owed to the province. The service permits clients to pay by Interac online or credit card and supports the Government’s strategy of making it easier to interact with Government.

Department Restructuring: Addition of Alcohol and Gaming Division

On January 11, 2011, departmental and ministerial changes were announced to ensure government continues to fulfill its commitment to improve health care, create good jobs and grow the economy. Government departments were restructured to ensure more effective service delivery to meet the needs of Nova Scotians and to help deliver on government's key commitments.

As part of this restructuring, the Alcohol and Gaming Division moved to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, from the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, as it conducts similar work in licensing, permits, enforcement and providing front-line service to the public.

The Alcohol and Gaming Division is the regulatory body charged with administering Part II of the Gaming Control Act, parts of the Liquor Control Act, and the Theatres and Amusements Act. The mandate of the Division is to license and regulate gaming, liquor and amusement activities in Nova Scotia, and ensure that these activities are conducted with honesty, integrity and in the best interest of the public.

The Division has a staff complement of 60, and operates from offices in Dartmouth and Sydney. Twenty-six Compliance Officers are located throughout the province, responsible for monitoring the regulatory compliance of approximately 20,000 licensees and registrants, as well as conducting compliance surveillance at the casinos. In addition, three RCMP officers conduct gaming supplier and employee security clearances, and 17 appointed Film Classifiers rate films and videos for release in Nova Scotia.

Financial Results

<i>Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations</i>		
	2010-11 Estimate	2010-11 Actual
<i>Program & Service Area</i>	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
<i>Senior Management</i>	481	436
<i>Service Delivery</i>	34,326	34,821
<i>Strategy, Innovation and Registries</i>	9,027	7,930
<i>Information Management Services</i>	16,423	15,786
<i>Program Management and Corporate Services</i>	32,788	25,533
<i>Municipal Relations</i>	219,259	208,124
<i>Total Program Expenses</i>	312,304	292,630
<i>TCA Purchase Requirements</i>	1,499	2,925
<i>FTEs (gross)</i>	892	779

VARIANCE EXPLANATIONS

Total Program Expenses

Actual expenditures were \$19.7M less than budget due to lower than expected spending of the Federal Gas Tax Transfer (\$8M) due to slower municipal project progress; fewer applicants for the Heating Assistance Rebate Program (\$4.4M); and reduced Federal and Provincial funding for the Building Canada Fund (\$1.6M) and Municipal Rural Infrastructure Program (\$1.3M). The Department realized a total net operational savings of \$4.4M.

TCA Purchase Requirements

New projects approved during 2010/11: Access to Business (A2B) (\$950k), Access for Citizens (A4C) (\$16k), Low Blood Alcohol Content (\$304k) and Amanda 5 upgrade (\$187k).

Funded Staff

Normal staff turnover and delays in filling vacancies

Measuring Our Performance

Performance Measure #1: Enterprise Risk Management Index

One of the Department's strategic objectives is to effectively manage risk. The SNSMR Enterprise Risk Management Framework allows the organization to consider risks in its business operations, from strategic planning and implementation to its day-to-day activities.

The program provides the tools and capabilities for the department to proactively identify, manage and report on risk with a focus on strategic planning, operations and financial management and program design and service delivery.

What does the Measure tell us?

The Enterprise Risk Management Index tracks the currency of the strategic risk register and the associated monitoring and measuring of the actions taken to ensure risk exposure is acceptable and compliant with Enterprise Risk Management policy requirements.

Where are we now?

The result for the Enterprise Risk Management Index in 2010-11 was a 97% compliance rate. This measure showed constant improvement throughout the year.

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

This was the first year this measure was used. The target for this measure was to reach 85% by 2012-13. This target was met in its first year and was readjusted in the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate with new targets of 90% in 2011-12 and 95% in 2012-13.

Performance Measure #2: Employee Engagement Index

One of the Department's strategic objectives is to maintain a skilled, diverse and motivated workforce.

What does the Measure tell us?

The Employee Engagement Index is based on a specific set of questions from the "How's Work Going?" Survey. This survey is distributed by the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission to all Province of Nova Scotia employees. This index measures the extent to which individuals feel connected to and involved in their job and their organization and their level of satisfaction and commitment.

Research shows that increased employee commitment, and satisfaction impacts citizens' level of satisfaction which positively impacts citizens' trust and confidence in government.

Where are we now?

Employee Engagement Index results for the 2011 survey were 68%, a decrease from the previous index score of 75% in 2009. Employee engagement survey results decreased across all of government in 2011.

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

The target for this index is to achieve a score of 76 by 2011/12.

Performance Measure #3: Program/Process Review Index

One of the Department's strategic objectives is to ensure programs are responsive and effective.

What does the Measure tell us?

The Program/Process Review Index is a percentage of planned/approved program reviews conducted and outcomes responded to. Successful program/process reviews lead to a reduction of administrative burden to clients; reduced operating costs; improved processes; and a department that is more responsive to the needs of its clients.

Where are we now?

The index result for 2010/11 is 94%.

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

This was the first year this measure was used. No target was set as the index result for this year will act as a base line for future targets. The ultimate goal is an index result of 95% or higher.

Performance Measure #4: Customer Interaction Index

One of the Department's strategic objectives is to make it easier for customers to interact with government.

What does the Measure tell us?

This measure is a composite index of customer and client feedback from three areas within the department – Access Nova Scotia (ANS), Municipal Services (MS) and Program Management and Corporate Services (PMCS).

The relative weights of each element are 80/15/5 for ANS/MS/PMCS respectively. The index measures the ratio of positive to negative customer/client perceptions as measured by specific feedback to survey questions.

Where are we now?

- 62.4/80 Access Nova Scotia Survey
- 11.85/15 Municipal Services Survey
- 5/5 PMCS – Collections Survey

The index result for 2010/11 is 79.25.

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

This was the first year this measure was used. No target was set as the index result for this year will act as a base line for future targets. This measure will be adjusted next year and PMCS Collections Survey will be removed.

Performance Measure #5: Responding to Municipal Needs Index

One of the Department's strategic objectives is to partner with municipalities to build strong communities.

What does the measure tell us?

This measure is a composite index of municipal capacity building initiatives with positive outcomes and Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP) claims processed within 60 days. The relative weights of each element are 50 / 50 respectively. The index measures the ratio of positive to negative responses as measured by specific feedback to survey questions and tracked data.

Where are we now?

- 40/50 Municipal Services Survey
- 50/50 PCAP claims processed

The index result for 2010/11 is 90%.

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

The overall target was set at 75 for 2010-2011, and 85 for 2012/13. These targets have already been achieved, and the goal is to maintain these results in the future.