



ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 – 2007



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FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 – 2007

Province of Nova Scotia

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Message from Premier Rodney MacDonald

In 2006–2007, our government committed to the vision of a stronger, safer, healthier Nova Scotia that inspires people to succeed here in the province. We built this commitment by making Nova Scotia's families our first priority.

With a focus on families, my government worked towards building quality health services and safe homes and communities. The new Department of Health Promotion and Protection has not only helped Nova Scotians make better health choices, but has also improved the province's emergency preparedness.

Progress towards improving the economic environment and maintaining fiscal responsibility was also made during the reporting period. A strong provincial economy coupled with the lowest unemployment levels in a generation have meant increased investment and trade, more competitive taxes, and an improving regulatory climate.

Our government's ongoing commitment to balance the province's budget and implement a debt reduction plan also remained strong. Despite the uncertainty of the Atlantic Accord in the spring of 2007, the province brought in its fifth consecutive balanced budget.

The details of these and other accomplishments are found in this *Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2006–2007*.

There is always more work to do, but this report shows that we are getting closer to a stronger, safer, healthier Nova Scotia, where successful families create secure communities in a modern, competitive society.



The Honourable Rodney MacDonald
Premier of Nova Scotia



Annual Accountability Report

for the fiscal year 2006–2007

Province of Nova Scotia

Contents

Introduction	7
Families and Communities	9
Health and Health Care	27
Education	51
The Economy	65
The Environment	91
Government Services	101
Appendix: Websites for Departmental Accountability Reports, 2006–2007	107

Introduction

The *Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2006–2007* outlines the government's activities and achievements during the reporting period April 1, 2006, to March 31, 2007.

These accomplishments are detailed within the six core business areas, which align closely with the province's priorities and serve as a framework for the central policy objectives of the government. The core business areas in 2006–2007 were

- Families and Communities
- Health and Health Care
- Education
- The Economy
- The Environment
- Government Services

Families and Communities

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:
Child Care Plan

In 2006–2007 the province will implement a 10-year Nova Scotia Child Care Plan. (Community Services)

In September 2006, the Department of Community Services created an additional 150 new subsidized, portable child-care spaces. The total number of new subsidized spaces is more than 3,000, of which, 760 are portable. These additional spaces make quality child care more affordable for families who need it the most, providing more flexibility for them to seek employment or training. An additional 250 fixed subsidized spaces were also converted to portable subsidized spaces. This conversion means that more families are able to access the child-care subsidy and to choose child care that best suits their individual circumstances.

During the reporting period, over \$5 million in funding for the Child Care Operating Grant was also made

available to licensed commercial and non-profit full-day child-care centres. In addition, \$1 million in repair and renovation funding was provided to 30 licensed non-profit and commercial child-care centres for energy upgrades and to improve accessibility for children with special needs.

PRIORITY:
Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

The province will develop a positive aging action plan. (Senior Citizens' Secretariat)

The Senior Citizens' Secretariat continued to lead the implementation of the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, released in December 2005.

In 2006–2007, an awareness campaign was launched to promote the strategy and to inform potential partners about it and encourage their collaboration in addressing the opportunities and challenges presented by Nova Scotia's aging population. Thirty-two speaking engagements were completed in the reporting year, reaching audiences such as municipal governments, district health authorities (DHAs), community health



Annual Accountability

boards (CHBs), chambers of commerce, seniors' groups, and service clubs.

Accommodating the many requests for speaking engagements and identifying new actions the secretariat would undertake to advance the strategy delayed further development of government's positive aging action plan in 2006–2007. This year, 15 provincial departments and agencies each appointed a representative to serve on the Action Plan for Positive Aging (APPA) Working Group, to focus on the action plan in 2007–2008

PRIORITY:
**Elder Abuse Awareness
and Prevention Strategy**

The province will implement a campaign to raise awareness of elder abuse.

(Senior Citizens' Secretariat)

During the reporting period, the Senior Citizens' Secretariat continued to promote the health and well-being of seniors through the implementation of the elder abuse awareness and prevention strategy, released in November 2005.

Increased awareness of senior abuse was created through activities such as Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the extensive distribution of information materials about abuse, and numerous speaking engagements throughout the province.

In 2006–2007, new information materials about financial abuse and the secretariat's Roundtable on Financial Exploitation of Older Adults served to raise awareness of this issue among stakeholders and the general public.

Plans to develop a senior abuse line in Nova Scotia were informed by a cross-country review of telephone-based support services. This year, the secretariat provided direct support, information, and referral to 59 individual seniors and others who called with questions and concerns about abuse.

The secretariat is supporting the development of local networks to bring together community groups and organizations with important roles to play in preventing and addressing senior abuse. In 2006–2007, Kings County and Cape Breton were selected as the first network sites, and work is under way to identify issues and priorities for action.

PRIORITY:
**Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)
Enforcement**

The province will deploy enforcement officers dedicated to OHV-related enforcement.

(Natural Resources, Health Promotion and Protection, Environment and Labour)

Implementation of the OHV Action Plan, the province's response to the 39 recommendations made by Voluntary Planning, saw tremendous progress in 2006–2007.

Twelve new OHV enforcement officers were deployed throughout the province. Regulations relating to safety training, closed course standards for children under 14 years, an infrastructure fund for a network of OHV trails, protection for vulnerable environmental areas, and the designation of snowmobile trails were established or amended. In addition, work was completed to prepare for new requirements for third-party insurance for OHV operators, effective April 1, 2007.

An OHV Ministerial Advisory Committee, representing a diverse cross-section of volunteers, was also appointed to advise government on OHV-related policy and trail development. An OHV website was established to provide access to information on new rules, and an OHV toll-free number was put in place to respond to the public's questions.

PRIORITY:
Consumer Protection

The province will increase consumer protection for prepaid funerals, cemetery services, collection agencies, and payday lenders.

(Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs)

In 2006–2007, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs hired three new consumer protection officers, resulting in increased inspection activity. A 67 per cent increase in inspections has improved voluntary compliance with regulatory requirements and also helped to identify non-compliance, thereby protecting the transactions of consumers.

PRIORITY:
United Way 211 Call Centre

The province will conduct a feasibility study for a United Way 211 call centre.

(Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs)

In 2006–2007, a feasibility study on implementing a United Way 211 call centre was conducted. No further action was taken.



PRIORITY:
**Political Participation
of Women**

The province will extend workshops on the participation of women in politics.

(Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

The Campaign School for Women continues to be a success, with a total of 58 graduates since the program began in 2004. Six of these graduates have since run for office.

In 2006–2007, the advisory council continued its work in this area by holding a workshop for women in politics in Yarmouth and a half-day workshop for the Association of Municipal Administrators and by making a presentation to the Municipal Council of Kings County. As well, council members and staff participated in the work of the Women in Local Government project of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, as follow-up to the Untapped Resources report. This resulted in the unanimous adoption of the recommendation that ongoing work be done to ensure that women make up at least 30 per cent of municipal candidates in the 2008 elections.

Further work to involve more women in electoral politics was initiated to lay the groundwork for the May 2007 Campaign School for Women, in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University.

PRIORITY:
Culture Sector Development

The province will increase investment in arts and culture.

(Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

During the reporting period, an additional \$850,000 investment in arts and culture was allocated for sustainability and growth potential. This incremental investment has allowed for a much-needed increase to cultural organizations and will continue to benefit organizations, as well as cultural activity in many communities across the province.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia received a \$361,000 boost in funding for operations and programming, as well as a commitment to support year-round operations at its Yarmouth branch.

In early 2007, the Interdepartmental Committee in Support of Culture was established with senior-level representation from 11 government departments and offices. This new committee will help provide a coordinated approach to cultural development and spending across government, as well as strengthening interdepartmental relationships.

PRIORITY:

Heritage Strategy

The province will continue the development of a province-wide heritage strategy.

(Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

Voluntary Planning released its interim report for a heritage strategy on June 26, 2006. The final report and recommendations for a heritage strategy were presented to government in December 2006. Fifteen departments and offices were directly and indirectly involved in the strategy development phase from December 2006 to June 2007. A communications plan and project charter were drafted. Key external partners, the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage, Voluntary Planning, and the Council of Nova Scotia Archives were engaged in the internal process wherever possible.

During this internal phase, the province identified the critical issues to be addressed to advance the heritage agenda. Research and analysis were conducted on 30 different heritage-related plans and strategies. The mandates of departments and offices that share the heritage agenda were analysed. A policy and communications workshop was held, and an “issues and opportunities” document was created and shared with partners to focus the critical issues into strategic directions.

PRIORITY:

**African Nova Scotia Affairs
Cape Breton**

In 2006–2007, the Office of African Nova Scotia Affairs will open a satellite office in Cape Breton.

(Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs)

The mission of the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA) is to assist, support, and enhance the provincial government’s delivery of services to African Nova Scotians.

A regional presence is an important component of this support, especially where there are large segments of the African Nova Scotian population. With an office already in Halifax, Cape Breton was identified as the obvious choice for the first regional office.

The Cape Breton satellite office, located in downtown Sydney, was opened in March 2007 with three permanent staff.



PRIORITY:
Mi'kmawey Debert

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs will work to protect the Mi'kmawey Debert site and develop a cultural centre.

(Office of Aboriginal Affairs)

In 2006–2007, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs continued to work with the Mi'kmaq in the development of the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre. A master interpretive plan for the facility has been completed, and staff hired to continue the development of the initiative.

With support from the provincial government, the Mi'kmaq initiated a comprehensive project to delineate the Debert area archeological site in an effort to facilitate the completion of land transfer discussions between Colchester County, the province, and the Mi'kmaq.

PRIORITY:
Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Negotiations

The province will continue work to formalize a negotiation process relating to Aboriginal rights.

(Office of Aboriginal Affairs)

On February 23, 2007, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia signed the Framework Agreement (FA) as developed under the made-in-Nova Scotia negotiation process. The agreement is an important milestone confirming each party's commitment to resolving Mi'kmaw rights issues through negotiation in a spirit of reconciliation. The FA establishes the process and topics for negotiation of issues regarding Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal title, treaty rights, and governance. The historic signing ceremony was held in the Membertou First Nation.

PRIORITY:
**First Ministers Meeting
on Aboriginal Issues**

*The Office of Aboriginal Affairs
will lead the follow-up on the
2005 First Ministers Meeting
on Aboriginal issues.*

(Office of Aboriginal Affairs,
Intergovernmental Affairs, Health,
Health Promotion and Protection,
Education, Community Services,
Office of Economic Development,
Environment and Labour)

Consistent with the objectives of the First Ministers Meeting outcomes of November 2005, the province has worked with the Mi'kmaq and the federal government to identify opportunities to reduce the disparity in social and economic outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia. Specifically, the province and the federal government agreed to enhance the work of the Mi'kmaq–Nova Scotia–Canada Tripartite Forum through the creation of a \$300,000 project fund along with the hiring of a project manager.

Projects approved to date focus on fostering economic development, enhancing Mi'kmaq cultural awareness and improving access to skills development opportunities to name a few. In addition, the Office of Aboriginal

Affairs worked with the Department of Health and Health Canada and with Mi'kmaq partners to develop a delivery mechanism for the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund. Joint work was also occurred with the Department of Community Services and Mi'kmaq organizations in development of a truly Nova Scotian approach to funding under the Aboriginal Off-Reserve Housing Trust.

PRIORITY:
**Integrating Newcomers
to Our Communities**

*Retain immigrants by helping
immigrant children at school
and teaching parents to speak
English or French and find
meaningful employment.*

(Office of Immigration)

In 2006–2007, over \$1.8 million in immigration funding was allocated, providing an additional \$300,000 over the previous year. About 30 per cent of the funding was allocated towards new rural, suburban, and outreach programs.

Language training programs that were funded included language training for engineers and English as a second-language (ESL) education in public schools. An ESL tutoring program was expanded.

Other programs funded included ESL tutoring at home and in classrooms, language training for medical



professionals and pre-employment workshops, and the advanced ESL training and introduction to post-secondary education program, which helps immigrants enter university or community college.

In addition, the Office of Immigration and the Department of Education provided \$550,000 in joint funding for ESL in public schools. Of this, the Office of Immigration provided \$250,000 to the Department of Education for ESL activities.

**PRIORITY:
Supporting Foster Families**

The province will increase base rates for foster care families.

(Community Services)

In November 2006, the department increased the base rates for foster families by 5 per cent, providing \$14.46 per day for children under 10 and \$21.02 per day for children over 10.

On February 1, 2007, travel rates for foster parents were increased.

**PRIORITY:
Increasing Income Assistance Rates**

The province will increase personal allowances for Nova Scotians on income assistance.

(Community Services)

In October 2006, the department increased monthly basic personal and shelter allowances to help people with the cost of meeting their basic needs. Monthly personal allowances increased by \$10, from \$190 to \$200. Shelter rates increased by \$15 a month for single persons and by \$20 a month for families.

**PRIORITY:
Additional Help for Employed Income Assistance Clients**

In 2006–2007, the province will amend income assistance regulations to provide incentive to maintain employment.

(Community Services)

In October 2006, the department amended the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) regulations to allow clients with income tax refunds to retain 30 per cent of the amount as an additional work incentive.

PRIORITY:
Affordable Housing

The province will commit funding from Phase 2 of the federal/provincial Affordable Housing Agreement.

(Community Services)

Funding under Phase II of the Affordable Housing Agreement gives the province approximately \$18.9 million to invest in affordable housing by 2010. In 2006–2007, the department accelerated the commitment of these funds, providing low-income Nova Scotians with access to more affordable homes.

In November 2006, the department issued a request for proposals inviting not-for-profit organizations and private developers to submit proposals to create new affordable rental housing for individuals, families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

The department also accelerated the release of the Home Preservation Program funds. Under this program, approximately \$1.6 million was committed in 2006–2007 to preserve 35 existing affordable housing units in need of major repairs.

In addition, the Affordable Student Housing Pilot Program was expanded to include 15 additional rent supplement units. Funds are now available to help up to 30 low-income, single-parent students with the cost of their rent while attending university full time.

As of March 31, 2006, the department had committed all of the \$37.26 million available under Phase I of the Affordable Housing Agreement. In 2006–2007, new affordable rental projects funded under Phase I were completed in Halifax, Truro, New Minas, Liverpool, Chester, Enfield, Arichat, and St. Andrews, while construction was under way on projects in Kentville, Wolfville, Bridgewater, Dartmouth, North Sydney, and Truro.

PRIORITY:
Housing Emergency Repair Programs

The province will help low-income Nova Scotians get home repairs and seniors adapt their homes for independent living.

(Community Services)

As part of a collaborative initiative, an additional \$1 million in funding was provided by the Department of Health in 2006–2007, enabling the department to invest a total of \$3.65 million in home repair programs. These programs provide funding for moderate- to low-income applicants over the age of 65 who want to remain in their own homes, but who are not able to afford necessary repairs such as roofing, plumbing, and heating.



PRIORITY:
**Pharmacare for Children
in Low-Income Families**

The province will implement a pharmacare program for prescription drug coverage currently available to children of income assistance families.

(Community Services)

Implemented on October 1, 2006, the Low Income Pharmacare for Children Program assists thousands of low-income working families with the cost of prescription medications for their children. Families must be receiving the Nova Scotia Child Benefit and have a household income below \$20,921. More than 8,500 families representing 15,000 children are eligible to receive pharmacare benefits.

PRIORITY:
**Youth Criminal Justice Act
(YCJA)**

In 2006–2007, the province will continue to call for action by the federal government to amend the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

(Justice)

Nova Scotia has been calling for changes to the Youth Criminal Justice Act since 2005 and continued to request those amendments at every opportunity during the reporting period. This included meeting directly with the federal Minister of Justice to discuss pre-trial detention provisions of the YCJA and raising the issue at various forums, including deputies' meetings, ministerial meetings, and meetings with senior officials.

Other provinces, youth criminal justice experts, and the public have repeatedly outlined required changes through the Minister's Task Force on Safer Streets and Communities and recommendations of the Nunn Commission. The federal government recently tabled Bill C-25 to respond to the calls for immediate legislative reform to the YCJA to address pre-trial detention and short-term protection of the public. Nova Scotia will continue to advocate for changes to better protect Nova Scotians and serve young people in conflict with the law.

PRIORITY:

Youth Attendance Centre

The Department of Justice is proposing to establish a non-residential attendance centre in Halifax for youth in conflict with the law.

(Justice)

In 2006–2007, the department expanded rehabilitative services for young offenders under community supervision with the opening of the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre in February 2007.

The centre provides one-stop access to programming for youth under court-ordered community supervision in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and includes a day school for 12 full-time students. Staff from the centre also provide evening, weekend, and summer programming at various locations for approximately 220 youth under court-ordered community supervision. Programs include education, counselling, job-readiness training, anger management, and addictions education. Key partners at this location include the IWK Health Centre and the Department of Community Services. In addition, the Department of Education is providing some monetary support for teacher salaries.

In January 2007 Correctional Services also launched services for youth bail supervision in HRM for eligible youth

who are subject to court-ordered judicial interim release orders. Services include intensive supervision and referrals to supports, including referrals to programs provided at the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre and other locations in HRM.

PRIORITY:

Nunn Commission

The Department of Justice will lead the response to recommendations arising from the Nunn Commission.

(Justice)

The Nunn Commission examined both the specific circumstances surrounding the release of a young offender from custody, as well as Nova Scotia's youth criminal justice system. The commission tabled its final report in late 2006, and the province continues to make steady progress on the implementation of all recommendations. This includes working with partners to determine ways to reduce the time it takes a youth's case to proceed through the courts. Investment in court-ordered assessments was made to help in the short term, while longer-term solutions continue to be explored.

The department is also consulting with the Associate Chief Judge and justices of the peace to develop a provincial training plan for police and other justice partners to ensure that criminal procedures and processes are well



understood. The department also continued to collaborate with Community Services, Education, Health, and Health Promotion and Protection on a strategy for youth at risk.

PRIORITY:
Children under 12 in Conflict with the Law

The Department of Justice will explore the possibility of a restorative justice program for children under 12 in conflict with the law.

(Justice)

During the reporting period, the department worked with community-based agencies to assess need and capacity issues related to children under 12 at risk and their families. It also supported an evaluation of a pilot project carried out by the Island Community Justice Society in Sydney and its application of a modified restorative justice process. An interim report is to be completed by August 31, 2007, with a final report due October 31, 2007. Consultation will follow.

PRIORITY:
Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act

The province will reintroduce the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act.

(Justice)

The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act was proclaimed in January 2007. Under the act, complaints from community members can result in court orders to close locations that are home to prostitution or illegal liquor, drugs, or gaming. A new Public Safety Investigative Section was established to work with communities on community enforcement orders. A complaint line for citizens (1-877-35-SAFER) has been activated.

PRIORITY:
Criminal Intelligence Services (CIS)

The province will improve on-the-ground intelligence to fight against crime.

(Justice)

Over 2006–2007, the department continued to invest in Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia (CISNS), spending \$6 million over four years (2005–2008) to bring municipal police forces and correctional services into a national system of intelligence-based policing.

CISNS offices throughout the province became fully operational in April 2006, and the organization released its first report in December 2006. The report provides details about organized crime in Nova Scotia and the criminal markets within which organized crime groups typically operate. The report is intended to raise public awareness and provide tips to all Nova Scotians on ways to identify and help fight organized crime in their neighbourhoods. A copy of the report is available at www.gov.ns.ca/just/publications/publications.asp.

**PRIORITY:
Additional Police Officers
and Aboriginal Policing**

More police officers to investigate violent offences and address law enforcement needs in aboriginal communities.

(Justice)

Responding to increasing concerns about violent crime and victimization, the province announced additional investment in enforcement with a commitment to fund 250 new police officers over four years starting in 2007–2008.

Consultation with law enforcement was undertaken in the fall to help determine distribution of additional officers. The allocation of the initial round of officers

was finalized in November 2006. A steering committee is in place to plan for the allocation of the remaining officers. Adding new officers is a key initiative as part of the provincial government's efforts to improve the safety and security of Nova Scotia's communities. The department also provided additional funding to support law enforcement needs in Aboriginal communities.

**PRIORITY:
Monitoring People on
House Arrest**

The province will pilot a project for offenders under arrest in HRM.

(Justice)

The department launched its monitoring initiative in May 2006, making Nova Scotia the first province in Canada to use a global positioning system (GPS) to monitor offenders.

The system consists of an ankle bracelet and a GPS recording device worn by the offender. The system tracks the wearer's movements and reports back to a central monitoring system. Movement of the offender is monitored 24 hours per day. The program has since been implemented across the province. The electronic supervision project is one of many justice initiatives meant to enhance the security of Nova Scotians.



Annual Accountability

Additional commitments were announced throughout the year to improve public safety. A highlight includes the province introducing the Protection from Illegal Drugs Act to ensure that Nova Scotia is in a position to act quickly should law enforcement identify gaps in with the system for the production and distribution of legitimate pharmaceuticals and instances of agricultural products being used for illegal purposes.

The department also established a provincial Rewards for Major Unsolved Crimes Program that offers cash rewards of up to \$50,000 for information leading to arrests and convictions in cases of unsolved crime. In October 2006, police agencies across the province were invited to refer cases to the program. Any member of the public who has information about one of the cases in the program can call a toll-free line. Details about the program can be viewed online at www.gov.ns.ca/just/divisions/polvs/rewards.

PRIORITY: Business Continuity Planning

EMO will lead the development of provincial governmental plans to ensure continuity of services in the event of a major emergency.

(EMO)

The Provincial Business Continuity Team is well into the development of protocols for government departments. Assistance is being provided to individual departments with their business continuity plans, and business continuity management templates have been developed and placed on EMO's website to help with uniformity in the development of departmental plans.

Finally, the EMO training unit, in conjunction with the BCP group, has approved the posting of a five-day Business Continuity Institute training program for delivery in June 2007.

**PRIORITY:
911**

The province will renew 911 technology to accommodate changes in information technology and the 911 telecommunications.

(EMO)

During the reporting period, EMO realigned all 911 training initiatives to meet the challenges associated with the introduction of new technology and the ongoing attrition occurring within the ranks of 911 call takers. By March 2007 all 911 call receivers had undergone a training program that enhanced delivery at the public safety answering points throughout the province.

Final acceptance of the new technology is scheduled for May 2007. Within 90 days of acceptance, 911 will undertake a survey of end-users to determine their level of satisfaction with the new technology.

To assist with the ever-increasing IT demands placed on the province's 911 system and to ensure appropriate business continuity strategies, EMO also hired new IT support in March 2007.

**PRIORITY:
Joint Operations, E-Team,
and Emergency Response
Capability**

The provincial and federal government will share the cost of a \$100,000 upgrade to the Emergency Operations Centre.

(EMO)

In 2006–2007, EMO orchestrated a significant restructuring project related to the Joint Emergency Operation Centre (JEOC). Assessments were conducted, and it was determined that significant changes were required to meet operational needs. Three priority areas were identified, with the electronic file management component obtaining the highest priority. To meet this challenge, EMO purchased E-Team, an emergency events management software program, and began an implementation strategy within government.

After consultation with both Public Safety Canada and the Halifax Regional Municipality, a project was approved.

In February 2007, the satellite acquisition process got under way, and by March 30, 2007, purchase orders were issued. Early in the new fiscal year this initiative will see EMO with satellite communications redundancy.



Annual Accountability

The next stage of implementation will involve air conditioning for servers and other vital equipment, as well as fire-suppression equipment. This project is nearing 90 per cent completion.

PRIORITY:
Training Infrastructure

EMO will train more staff for emergency management.

(EMO)

After receiving approval to proceed with EMO's business case for a relocation centre, a search of potentially viable provincially owned facilities began. Transportation and Public Works (TPW) identified a suitable facility at their Miller Lake site.

A multi-year strategic training plan was also developed and approved by EMO's senior management group.

PRIORITY:
Training Delivery

EMO will increase emergency training and develop awareness programs for vulnerable persons.

(EMO)

During the reporting period, EMO undertook the development of an awareness training package aimed at persons with disabilities.

This 45-minute presentation was completed with input from the Disabled Persons Commission and the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat and has been successfully piloted.

Full implementation of this awareness package is scheduled for fall 2007.

Families and Communities: Measuring Our Performance

INCOME ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS SECURING EMPLOYMENT

(Community Services)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure indicates the percentage of income assistance recipients participating in Employment Support Services who have wage income. Included in this calculation are individuals who are still receiving social assistance at a reduced amount because the wages they earn are not sufficient for them to completely exit the program.

Where Are We Now?

Many income assistance recipients are involved, through Employment Support Services, in programs that will enhance their skills and personal potential.

Individuals are enrolled in a variety of programs, including literacy and upgrading programs, as well as specialized courses for job-specific skills.

In 2006–2007, 30 per cent of these clients involved in employment support services had wage income. This is down slightly from the 2005–2006 figure of 31 per cent, but needs to be considered in the context that the Employment Support Services caseload is made up of individuals who are displaying anywhere from 6 to 12 barriers to employment. These barriers may include literacy issues, changing family circumstances, disabilities, and/or educational/training gaps. Overcoming such barriers means that additional time and support are required to help these individuals make the transition into the labour force.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The 2007–2008 target for recipients involved in Employment Support Services who have wage income is 32 per cent; the 2010–2011 target is 35 per cent. These targets take into account the multiple barriers that need to be addressed to help

these individuals make the transition into the labour force.

OVERALL CRIME RATE (Justice)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

The crime rate is a key indicator of social and economic well-being within a society. It indicates how many criminal incidents have been reported to the police for violent, property, drug, and other offences, excluding Criminal Code traffic offences. The number is standardized per 100,000 of the population so we can compare rates across communities.

Where Are We Now?

The overall crime rate in Nova Scotia dropped 2 per cent last year, following a 5 per cent decline in 2005. Small drops were reported for total violent crimes and property crimes, as well as “other” Criminal Code offences in 2006. The overall crime rate in Nova Scotia has decreased by about 20 per cent since peaking in 1991.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The goal is to reduce rates below the national average. Currently, Nova Scotia is below the national property crime rate.



Annual Accountability

During the past two years, the overall crime rate in Nova Scotia has been decreasing at relatively the same pace as the national level. However, we have generally been at or slightly above the national average over the past 10 years. Crime rate statistics are influenced by many factors such as reporting by the public to police and police practices. While the target is to reduce crime, increased police resources and public confidence could result in an increase in the number of crimes coming to the attention of police, which will have an impact on the official crime rate.

Health and Health Care

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:
**Public Health Review
Implementation**

In 2006–2007, the province will begin the multi-year undertaking to put the new Department of Health Promotion and Protection into full operation and lead a public health system renewal.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In April 2006, *The Renewal of Public Health in Nova Scotia: Building a Public Health System to Meet the Needs of Nova Scotians* was released, making public health system renewal a long-term priority for the province.

During the reporting period, Health Promotion and Protection was reorganized to fulfil the five core functions of public health: population health assessment, surveillance, health promotion, disease prevention, and health protection.

Work has been done in the development of a public health workforce, including recruitment for executive positions to support public health renewal and hiring of the first Chief Public Health Officer.

Progress was also made in the area of infrastructure for health laboratories. A consultant was hired to assist in the development of the framework for the Provincial Public Health Laboratory Network (PPHLN). A steering committee was established and identified three main areas of focus—communicable disease surveillance, prevention, and control; outbreak and emergency response to communicable diseases; and laboratory improvement and regulation. The emphasis of all work done by the PPHLN is on improving coordination, communication, and resources.

Information systems and organizational structures were also improved in 2006–2007. An environmental health review conducted by the Departments of Health Promotion and Protection, Environment and Labour, Agriculture, and Fisheries and Aquaculture resulted in a framework that will enhance how these departments will work together in the delivery of environmental health programs.



A pandemic influenza plan, outlining a coordinated response in the areas of communications, surveillance, public health measures, vaccines, antivirals, and health services was developed, and the flu monitoring system was also expanded.

The Pan-Canadian Public Health Communicable Disease Surveillance and Management Project (PANORAMA) is delivering a public health information system that will include modules on immunization and inventory management, communicable disease and outbreak management, and public health notifications. Nova Scotia completed Phase 1 in March 2007. Nova Scotia is preparing for commencement of Phase 2 (implementation) of PANORAMA in the province for late fiscal 2007–2008.

Finally, as a result of the public health review, a new Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Responsibility Centre was established, which will play a fundamental role in supporting evidence-based, informed decision making and public health practice.

PRIORITY: Tobacco Control Strategy Renewal

The province will renew the Tobacco Control Strategy to further reduce smoking rates.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

Following the adoption of Nova Scotia's comprehensive Tobacco Control Strategy in 2001, the province's overall smoking rate has steadily declined from 30 per cent in 2000, to 22 per cent in 2006.

An evaluation of the Tobacco Control Strategy was released during the reporting period, and the results are being used to generate recommendations for the renewed Tobacco Control Strategy.

In addition, Health Promotion and Protection hosted a Tobacco Control Summit in October 2006. District health authorities, school boards, health charities, non-governmental organizations, and other provincial and federal government departments were invited to participate. After this summit, working groups were established to consider changes to the strategy and will report their recommendations in winter 2007. These activities will inform the "renewed" Tobacco Control Strategy to be released in 2008.

PRIORITY:

Smoke-free Places Act

On December 1, 2006, the province will implement the strongest legislation in Canada to protect its citizens from second-hand tobacco smoke.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, Bill 225, the Smoke-free Places Act, was adopted, requiring all indoor workplaces and public places to be smoke-free effective December 1, 2006. This resulted in a ban on smoking in all workplaces and in licensed outdoor areas and patios, as well as the removal of designated smoking rooms in workplaces and public places. An exception was made for acute and long-term care facilities.

Information packages detailing the new legislation were distributed in October 2006, and a province-wide communications campaign took place in November and December 2006.

PRIORITY:

**Nova Scotia's
Smokers' Helpline**

As of April 1, 2006, the province will assume responsibility for the costs associated with call-volume charges. The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will also provide financial support for nicotine treatment programs.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

As of April 1, 2006, the province assumed responsibility for the costs associated with all charges for the Smokers' Helpline, originally provided by the Canadian Cancer Society. Costs had been covered by Health Canada.

From April to December 2006, 1,070 Nova Scotians used the helpline and the evaluation data indicates that the vast majority of tobacco users reported taking some action toward reducing or quitting with the intervention of the Smokers' Helpline.

DHAs received \$1.2 million to provide nicotine treatment services. Funding was used for nicotine treatment specialists in each DHA and to offer nicotine replacement therapies free of charge through each DHA.



PRIORITY:
Walking Initiative

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will develop a provincial walking initiative with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, the Provincial Walking Initiative Management Committee was formed, with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia as the lead organization and Health Promotion and Protection and the Ecology Action Centre as partnering members.

In the summer of 2006, the newly created walking initiative was staffed with a coordinator. Since that time, established walking programs in the province were identified, a stakeholder survey was conducted, a review of initiatives and best practices was completed, and sponsorship opportunities were negotiated.

PRIORITY:
Trail Maintenance Program

Health Promotion and Protection will introduce a trail-maintenance program to help Nova Scotians do more walking.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In 2006–2007, consultation began with government and non-government stakeholders to determine the best way to support the work of over 100 active trail groups throughout the province. A Trail Maintenance Program was introduced, and \$75,000 in funding was provided to 50 volunteer trail groups to address ongoing trail maintenance.

PRIORITY:
Dartmouth Harbourwalk Trail

The province will develop a unique harbourside public trail.

(Waterfront Development Corporation)

Dartmouth Harbourwalk, a multi-use pedestrian trail, is now 90 per cent completed and extends along the waterfront for 3 km between the Dartmouth and Woodside Ferry Terminals.

A pedestrian bridge over the Shubenacadie Canal and two railway crossings are proposed to be installed in the spring and summer of 2008, along with the completion of detailed design work for trail alignment through the Maplehurst apartment complex. Area residents and

students attending the new Nova Scotia Community College in Woodside use the trail extensively.

The \$2.5 million total cost of the trail is being shared by the Waterfront Development Corporation in partnership with Halifax Regional Municipality, Dartmouth Harbourfront Trails Association, and the Shubenacadie Canal Commission.

PRIORITY:

Nova Scotia Sport Plan

In 2006–2007, the Nova Scotia Sport Plan will be finalized and an implementation plan will be developed to improve quality of life through active participation in sport.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In 2002, the provincial and territorial ministers responsible for sport agreed to develop a sport plan for each province and territory that will complement the Canadian Sport Policy.

During this reporting period, HPP held a series of province-wide consultations that informed the development of a vision paper to reflect the four pillars identified by Sport Canada. They are participation, capacity, excellence, and collaboration. In 2007–2008 work will continue to identify priorities and next steps.

Part of the Sport Plan included making Halifax the host city for the 2014 Commonwealth Games, all related efforts focused on the preparation of the international bid that was to be lodged in May 2007, with a final decision to be made November 2007.

Unfortunately, feedback from consultants suggested a risk to the province resulting from higher-than-anticipated costs and a requirement for public funding. Although the budget was reviewed, possible reductions were limited, and the new cost estimates far exceeded the original estimates. As a result, both Cabinet and HRM Council decided against making a financial contribution to the Commonwealth Games bid.

The 2011 Canada Winter Games provincial bid process continued in 2006–2007 to advance three bids to the Canada Games Council's formal bid process.

After the Canada Games bid evaluation committee spent a day at each site touring venues and evaluating presentations, Halifax was announced as the successful host society in February 2007.



PRIORITY:
Health-Promoting Schools

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will continue to provide sustainable program funding for partnerships with school boards and district health authorities to continue the Health Promoting Schools program.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

The Health Promoting Schools program provides an overall framework for key school health initiatives in the province, including but not limited to healthy eating, physical activity, youth sexual health, tobacco reduction, addiction, injury prevention, and other student supports and services in the school community. Regional teams, co-chaired by representatives from district health authorities and the education system, were formed to coordinate a range of activities to promote school health.

Health Promotion and Protection provides \$700,000 in grants to school boards for Health Promoting Schools. In October 2006, the department assisted the Nova Scotia Education Leadership Consortium in hosting a symposium called Developing Comprehensive School Health.

PRIORITY:
Community Volunteers

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will work with its partners to find ways to build more volunteer resources in the physical activity, sport, and recreation sector.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In May 2006, the province announced a new Minister of Volunteerism and committed to developing a provincial strategy to support the volunteer sector.

During 2006–2007, the Nova Scotia Canada Volunteerism Initiative presented their consultative report, Talking with Volunteers: Recommendations for Government Action, to the Nova Scotia government. This document was used to coordinate the initial steps in the development of a government action plan to support volunteers and volunteer organizations across Nova Scotia. A draft action plan was established with the implementation continuing in 2007–2008.

Work was also completed on establishing a Volunteerism Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee, building partnerships with volunteer stakeholders, and holding a province-wide stakeholder consultation to determine the need and model for a provincial volunteer community advisory committee.

In addition, International Volunteer Day was also celebrated, and the Minister of Volunteerism recognized Nova Scotia's 377,000 volunteers and the \$2 billion they contribute to the economic well-being of Nova Scotia each year.

PRIORITY:
Emergency Preparedness

The Department of Health is developing plans for a comprehensive health sector emergency preparedness response.

(Health)

During 2006–2007, Emergency Health Services (EHS) completed the development of the Health System Pandemic Plan.

EHS was also involved in the departmental development of a business continuity plan for a comprehensive emergency preparedness response.

The Health Emergency Management Centre was successfully consolidated into a new organization, jointly funded by the Departments of Health and Health Promotion and Protection, to lead all emergency planning for both departments.

PRIORITY:
Wait Times

During 2006–2007, the Department of Health will collect wait-time data on a voluntary basis for consultations with specialists.

(Health)

The wait times website continued to be updated on a regular basis during 2006–2007, although, the department will need more data capture systems to support this properly.

The Wait Times Advisory Committee mandate concluded upon the creation and adoption of the strategic plan to improve access to health-care services. An executive director will be recruited to move this plan forward in 2007–2008.

The federal government has announced funding for projects to improve access to health-care services. These included funding for a radiation therapy guarantee; pilot projects in surgery in diagnostic imaging; and funding to support the creation of a national pediatric surgical wait list.



PRIORITY:
**Training More
Health-Care Staff**

The province will train and recruit health-care professionals.

(Health)

The department both encouraged young people to choose health-related careers and worked to implement a Health Human Resources strategy for allied health care and long-term care through its activities in 2006–2007.

Work has been completed to accelerate and expand the assessment and integration of International Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs). The IEHPs initiative is now in its third year and has expanded to include all four Atlantic provinces in partnership. The department continues to develop services to increase the capacity of IEHP in Atlantic Canada through collaborative projects.

The Nursing Strategy continues to support seat expansion at St. Francis Xavier University. It includes an accelerated 24-month nursing program, a three-year licensed practical nurse bridging program, and a joint four-year nursing education program between St. Francis Xavier and Cape Breton University. The Dalhousie University School of Nursing continues to receive support for the delivery of the Nurse Practitioner Program.

The department has also successfully funded a joint medical laboratory technologist initiative between the New Brunswick Community College and the Nova Scotia Community College. The initiative consists of three cohorts of students. The second cohort of 22 medical laboratory technology students will graduate in June 2008, with the final class scheduled to graduate in June 2009.

PRIORITY:
Primary Health Care Renewal

The province will continue its commitment to strengthen community-based care.

(Health)

The Primary Health Care Transition fund ended in September 2006. Nova Scotia's share of this fund was \$17 million, and many accomplishments were achieved over the four-year life of the fund, both in district health authorities and at the provincial level. This included the introduction of an electronic medical record in primary care, with over 25 per cent uptake in the first year; the development of diversity and social inclusion educational resources to assist stakeholders; a workshop for health literacy inter-sectoral action strategy planning; and the development of a final evaluation framework.

Over the course of this fund, district health authorities have developed new models of

care that have increased Nova Scotians' access to a number of primary health-care providers.

Sustainable funding for the district health authorities' leadership infrastructure was also secured for 2006–2007 and enabled the health authorities to establish permanent positions to support primary health care. In addition to these positions, targeted funding for physician engagement supported the continuing work required to prepare and support the new and expanded primary health care teams. In addition, district health authorities are working with physicians on the change management, consultation, and team development required to support change in primary health care.

PRIORITY:
Mental Health Standards

The Department of Health will continue to develop regulations and standards for a new mental health act, the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act, approved in the fall of 2005.

(Health)

During the reporting period, standards were approved, and additional funding has been identified at \$2 million per year.

The new Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act was approved; regulations are in the

final stages and anticipated to be proclaimed in spring 2007.

PRIORITY:
MRI Access

In 2006–2007, \$3 million in operating funds will support new magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners at four sites in the province.

(Health)

MRI services became operational in Yarmouth in September 2006, in New Glasgow in February 2007, and in Kentville in March 2007, and they are scheduled for Antigonish in April 2007.

The existing unit at the Victoria General Site in Halifax was replaced, and the new equipment became operational in March 2007. Site preparations for the installation of the second replacement unit at the Halifax Infirmary site are scheduled to open summer 2007.

Funding to support the operational costs of the four new sites was also established during the reporting period.



PRIORITY:
Continuing Care

The province will invest in initiatives designed to reduce wait lists for nursing homes and home care, expand the type of home care services available and increase the number of restorative and long-term care beds.

(Health)

The Continuing Care Strategy for Nova Scotia—Shaping the Future of Continuing Care—was released in May 2006. The 10-year strategy outlines the province’s direction to achieve its vision to have Nova Scotians live well in a place they can call home.

The strategy focuses on five key action areas: supporting individuals and families, supporting community solutions, investing in providers, strengthening continuing care services, and investing in infrastructure.

Since the release of the strategy, a number of initiatives have been completed to help increase access to services, including providing funding so that people with physical disabilities can employ care providers directly; transferring \$1 million to the Department of Community Services to build on current success of the Senior Citizens Assistance Program for home adaptations repairs; granting additional

funds to district health authorities for new community-based initiatives to address alternative levels of care pressures; implementing palliative home care services across the province; and initiating provisions for in-home oxygen and peritoneal dialysis programs.

During the reporting period, the province also announced replacement of nine long-term care facilities and the creation of 832 new long-term care beds across the province by March 31, 2010.

PRIORITY:
Health Information Management

The Department of Health will support information management initiatives that speed up the development of electronic health information systems to improve access to health-related services for patients, families, and health-care professionals.

(Health)

During the reporting period, collaborative opportunities were identified for a provider registry in the four Atlantic provinces. The Health Infrastructure Atlantic Provider Registry project was completed, and it was determined that the provider registry would be implemented by each provincial jurisdiction.

The Public Health Surveillance (Panorama) Phase 1 Planning project was completed in May 2007. Each provincial jurisdiction is responsible for determining their work and making decisions to begin Phase 2 of the project. The pan-Canadian project is currently undergoing a detailed review and delivery scope. Time is being negotiated by the pan-Canadian team, Infoway, and IBM as the service provider.

Operational support is being provided to all users of the Provincial Archiving System. As well, PACS (picture archiving and communication systems) storage was significantly upgraded to allow for the continued increased demand of storage capacity for diagnostic imaging images.

A planned expansion of the Nova Scotia Telehealth Network was completed in September 2006. This expansion provided over 50 new video-conferencing units across Nova Scotia. Planning of further telehealth expansion was undertaken. This includes expanding the NSTHN into new domains, including Long Term Care, Home Care, and First Nations communities in Cape Breton. Additionally, new and expanded clinical telehealth applications were undertaken in a number of areas, including autism, mental health, pain management and plastic surgery. The NSTHN also worked with a number of partners to plan the implementation of a telehealth visitation project. This project will allow hospital inpatients to virtually

visit with family members who are separated by distance through the use of videophones. It is expected that this project will be implemented in 2007–2008.

PRIORITY:

Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Strategy

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will fund opportunities relating to breastfeeding, children and youth, fruits and vegetables, and food security.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

Work continued on the four priorities of the Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Strategy: breastfeeding, children and youth, fruits and vegetables, and food security.

PRIORITY:

Breastfeeding

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will continue the implementation of the Provincial Breastfeeding Policy.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In 2006–2007, communication of the Provincial Breastfeeding Policy continued with presentations to government departments, stakeholders, and interdepartmental committees.



Two projects were completed by the Provincial Breastfeeding and Baby Friendly Initiative Committee: the development of a breastfeeding logo and publication of a how-to manual entitled *Creating a Breastfeeding Support Line in Your Community*, based on a successful peer support program in Yarmouth County.

A new early childhood nutritionist staff position to support this work was filled in June 2007.

PRIORITY:
Securing Healthy Food

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection, working with partners, will support all Nova Scotians having regular, affordable access to healthy food.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

In collaboration with the Nova Scotia Nutrition Council, several achievements made during the reporting period on a project called Working Together for Ongoing Food Costing and Policy Solutions to Build Food Security. They include a policy paper, a proposed sustainable food-costing model, and collection of food-costing data from 2004–2005 for comparison with 2002 data.

The 2004–2005 food-costing data results were released to stakeholders and the

public in June 2006. They showed that, on average, it costs \$617.42 per month to feed a family of four a nutritious diet. This is a 7.7 per cent increase since 2002. A detailed report of the results was released in March 2007.

Funding for the participatory food-costing model for the province was provided to Mount Saint Vincent University to hire a provincial food-costing coordinator. Training for food costers was completed around the province, and the food costing took place in June 2007.

The earlier planned food security nutritionist position within the department was also broadened to focus on health disparity reduction and the factors that cause differences in health status. A major focus of this new position will be on food security and income-related access to food.

Finally, the department continued its support of the Nova Scotia Food Security Steering Committee in relation to this pillar of the Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Strategy.

The School Food and Nutrition Policy was launched in September 2006. The policy consists of 12 directives and five guidelines, in addition to Food and Beverage Standards that provide nutrition criteria for school-food decision makers. The policy affects all students in the public school system, as well as individuals,

organizations, and businesses that serve or sell food to students in schools. Phase-in of the policy began in the 2006–2007 school year, with full implementation required by June 2009.

The department also provided \$250,000 to school boards to assist in the implementation of the policy in 2006–2007.

With a grant to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia (HSFNS) and the Canadian Cancer Society—Nova Scotia Division an environmental scan and literature review to support the Fruit and Vegetable priority area of the Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Strategy was completed.

A consultant was hired in fall 2006 to complete a survey with key stakeholders and review best practices and evidence for increasing access to and affordability of fruits and vegetables. The Fruit and Vegetable Working Group will continue its agenda-setting work.

PRIORITY:
Youth Health Centres

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will supplement existing funding to sustain youth health centres.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, \$800,000 was distributed to youth health centres to provide stability and assist them in meeting system-wide standards. Youth health centres continued operations throughout summer 2006, allowing better retention of staff, programs, and services and improving the ability of staff to work with communities to improve health services for youth.

Additionally, in 2006–2007, work began on the development of an evaluation framework, which includes the collection of standardized, province-wide data about the youth health centres.



PRIORITY:
**Community Health Board
Wellness Grants**

In 2006–2007, health boards will continue to receive Community Health Board Wellness Grants for local projects aimed at preventing chronic disease.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

Wellness Grants to the district health authorities were continued. Community health boards distribute these grants to local community organizations for local health promotion and illness prevention initiatives.

In 2006–2007, \$450,000 was allocated to district health authorities. A new public health funding approach was applied to the grants to make the distribution of public health resources more fair and to recognize regional differences.

In addition, chronic disease prevention positions were staffed in all district health authorities to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of a district chronic disease prevention strategy.

PRIORITY:
Children’s Immunization

The province will expand childhood immunization schedule consistent with the National Immunization Strategy.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, the province continued its expanded immunization programs in schools consistent with the National Immunization Strategy.

These programs provide immunization against chicken pox, group C meningococcal disease, whooping cough, hepatitis B, tetanus, and diphtheria.

PRIORITY:
**Injury Prevention in the
District Health Authorities**

The province will establish a grant to enable the development and implementation of an injury-prevention strategy based in district health authorities.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, grants were provided to district health authorities to support integrated planning around injury prevention and chronic disease. In total, \$50,000 was distributed among all nine district health authorities based on the public health funding formula.

**PRIORITY:
Preventing Alcohol and Risk-
Related Trauma in Youth
(PARTY)**

In 2006–2007, the province will expand the PARTY program.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During 2006–2007, the PARTY program was staged in 45 schools across Nova Scotia in both English and French. Nearly 6,000 students participated in the initiative, with the help of more than 150 facilitators from local communities. The program reached 10 new schools in 2006–2007 and was also made available to the Department of Justice's Youth Restorative Justice Program.

The PARTY program's four-phase evaluation project released its report on phase II in the fall of 2006 and a modified report in May 2007. Overall, the majority of Nova Scotian students who attended PARTY and participated in the survey indicated that the program would have a positive impact on their decision making, including identifying situations to avoid injury, the consequences of risky behaviour, personal responsibility, how injury affects family and friends, and the personal power to reduce risk.

**PRIORITY:
Injury Prevention Strategy**

Health Promotion and Protection will continue to support activities related to the Injury Prevention Strategy in the areas of seniors' falls, transportation-related injuries and suicide.

(Health Promotion and Protection;
Transportation and Public Works)

Health Promotion and Protection released the Seniors Falls Prevention Strategic Framework in March 2007. The department provided Community Links with \$300,000 over three years, beginning in 2004–2005, to deliver the Preventing Falls Together Initiative across the province. This includes developing a sustainable network of regional falls prevention coalitions to work with seniors, caregivers, health professionals, government, and other community organizations and to develop falls prevention strategies that address specific needs of their communities.

Health Promotion and Protection and Transportation and Public Works also completed work on an interdepartmental/inter-agency road safety campaign to complement other initiatives designed to reduce the number of transportation-related injuries and deaths in Nova Scotia. This road safety social marketing campaign had its initial focus on impaired driving by high-risk male



drivers between the ages of 20 and 35, with an emphasis on 20- to 24-year-olds. The impaired driving component of the campaign was launched in winter 2007 and included posters and film advertisements.

Funding for a Car Seat Safety Strategy led by the IWK Child Safety Link was another initiative implemented by Health Promotion and Protection and Transportation and Public Works to help prevent injuries. The strategy involves a comprehensive approach to education, support, and development of community-based car seat/booster seat coalitions, networking, and preparation and support for Nova Scotia's new car seat legislation. An awareness campaign was launched in November 2006 and is still running.

Finally, Health Promotion and Protection in November 2006 released the Nova Scotia Strategic Framework to Address Suicide. The 7- to 10-year plan for reducing suicide and attempted suicide is intended as a guide for policy makers, professionals, and communities that will be involved in its implementation. The Canadian Mental Health Association (Nova Scotia Division) received \$400,000 for the Communities Addressing Suicide Together (CAST) initiative to provide leadership and support to communities and to establish regional suicide prevention coalitions, provide networking supports, disseminate suicide prevention expertise, and build capacity to address suicide.

**PRIORITY:
Alcohol Strategy**

In 2006–2007 The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will continue to coordinate the development of the provincial alcohol strategy.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

An important step in the development of a province-wide alcohol strategy began during the reporting period. A roundtable on Changing the Culture of Alcohol Use in Nova Scotia was held in September 2006. The roundtable drew together 60 delegates to become familiar with the purpose of the strategy.

Their report, entitled *February 2006 Nova Scotia Alcohol Strategy Roundtable Report*, captured the discussion of stakeholders, who provided critical input on how to work together to achieve the goal of preventing and reducing harmful alcohol use in Nova Scotia.

In 2006–2007, the province also increased the capacity of the district health authorities' Addiction Services by hiring five district addiction services staff whose role is to focus on alcohol issues.

PRIORITY:

Problem Gambling

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will continue to implement seven initiatives from the Gaming Strategy.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, many accomplishments were made towards implementing Nova Scotia's first Gaming Strategy.

The \$1.4 million in additional resources given to district health authorities in 2005–2006 was continued in 2006–2007 to enhance prevention, early intervention, and treatment of problem and at-risk gambling.

A self-help manual was drafted and tested with problem gamblers who were actively trying to reduce or eliminate their gambling. The manual is scheduled for release in 2007.

In addition, work began on the development of a provincial gambling strategy to address the negative impact of gambling on individuals, families, and communities. The process, which involved four consultation sessions with key stakeholders and district health authorities, is to be released in fall 2007.

In 2006–2007 planning also began for the development of targeted education programs for youth and seniors. This included the development and implementation of a community-based prevention program that will increase public knowledge of gambling and problem gambling and help community leaders to address their unique problem gambling issues.

The Yellow Flag social marketing campaign was also launched in September 2006 and continued until March 31, 2007. The campaign targeted at-risk gamblers aged 19–34 with the objective of reducing problem gambling in the province. Print, television, and radio advertisements were used to appeal directly to the target audience. The Yellow Flag website, yellowflag.ca, was developed to host information on warning signs of at-risk gambling, tips on how to avoid gambling too much, and information on how to help a friend or family member.



PRIORITY:
**Socio-economic Study
on Gaming**

The province will track social and economic aspects of gaming activity in the province.

(Environment and Labour)

In early 2007, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour awarded a contract to Anielski Management of Alberta to conduct a socio-economic study of gambling in Nova Scotia.

The study will provide an analytical, factual, and objective snapshot of the social and economic impacts associated with gambling in the province. The study will take one year to complete and will cost \$212,000.

PRIORITY:
Renewal of 911 Technology

The province will upgrade the 911 emergency telephone service with voice-over-Internet protocols and cellular location technology.

(EMO)

During the reporting year, EMO realigned all 911 training initiatives in order to meet the challenges associated with the introduction of new technology and attrition occurring within the ranks of 911 call takers.

By March 30, 2007, all 911 call takers had undergone a training program that enhanced delivery at the public safety answering points throughout the province.

Final acceptance of the new technology is scheduled for May 2007. Within 90 days of acceptance, 911 will undertake a survey of end-users to determine satisfaction with the new technology.

To assist with increasing IT demands related to the 911 system and to ensure appropriate business continuity strategies, EMO also hired a new IT person in March 2007.

This priority continues to be actively managed and will remain top priority until fully implemented.

PRIORITY:
Business Continuity Planning

EMO will lead the development of provincial government departmental plans to ensure continuity of government services for Nova Scotians.

(EMO)

The provincial business continuity team is well into the development of protocols for government departments and is assisting individual departments with their business continuity plans.

Business continuity management templates have been developed and

placed on EMO's website to create uniformity in the development of department plans.

EMO training, in conjunction with the business continuity planning group, has also approved a five-day Business Continuity Institute training program for delivery in June 2007.

**PRIORITY:
Comprehensive Workplace
Health**

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection will lead the development of a comprehensive workplace health strategy.

(Health Promotion and Protection)

During the reporting period, Health Promotion and Protection led the development of a Comprehensive Workplace Health Strategy for the province. Action teams were formed to address each of the six strategic directions: leadership and partnerships; policy and incentives; communication and social marketing; training and education; tools and supports; and research and evaluation. These directions were endorsed at the 2005 provincial Forum for Building Capacity for Comprehensive Workplace Health. The strategy will be released in fall 2007.

A single-access portal website was established in 2007 to link employees, employers, and practitioners to comprehensive workplace health tools and supports.

Health and Health Care: Measuring Our Performance

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH AGED 15–19 WHO SMOKE

(Health Promotion and Protection)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure describes the percentage of youth (aged 15–19 years) in Nova Scotia and Canada who smoke. Habits adopted during the teen years tend to be maintained well into adult life. Therefore, this measure informs us about smoking among young people and predicts adult smoking rates in the future. Preventing or limiting smoking among young people has important long-term benefits such as reduced smoking among adults and the prevention of serious illness.



Where Are We Now?

According to the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey, in 2006, 15 per cent of Nova Scotia's youth (aged 15–19 years) smoked, compared to 25 per cent in 2000. In Canada, the smoking rate in youth declined from 25 per cent in 2000 to 15 per cent in 2006. This trend is a reflection of our sustained efforts to keep tobacco prices high and create smoke-free places and of the tremendous public attention being paid to the health issues associated with tobacco use.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

Nova Scotia aims to maintain or decrease the percentage of smoking among Nova Scotia youth so as to be equal to or below the national percentage by 2009–2010.

The Nova Scotia Comprehensive Tobacco Strategy will help to achieve this target. This strategy addresses seven key components:

- taxation
- smoke-free places legislation
- treatment/cessation
- community-based programs
- youth prevention
- media awareness
- monitoring and evaluation

This strategy is currently being renewed to take into full consideration developments in new approaches to tobacco control. Health stakeholders are helping to lead the renewal process.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN ACTIVE ENOUGH FOR HEALTH BENEFITS

(Health Promotion and Protection)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

A representative sample of Nova Scotian children and youth in grades 3, 7, and 11 wore a motion counter on their hip for seven days to assess current activity levels. Being an objective measure of physical activity, it eliminates some of the weaknesses of self-reporting or parent proxy measures.

For healthy growth and development, children need to accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate or greater intensity activity on five or more days of the week. According to Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Children, this has a range of benefits, including strong bones and muscles and achievement of a healthy weight. Documented increases in the body mass index (BMI) levels of children and youth in most Western nations is likely a result of a decrease in physical activity combined with poor dietary habits. It is also known that inactive children grow up to be inactive adults.

Where Are We Now?

In 2001, the percentage of children and youth who accumulated at least 60 minutes of moderate or greater physical activity during five days of the week was as follows:

Grade 3	90 per cent of boys and 92 per cent of girls
Grade 7	62 per cent of boys and 44 per cent of girls
Grade 11	12 per cent of boys and 7 per cent girls

A repeat of this study was completed in June 2005. Results showed the following:

Grade 3	97 per cent of boys and 96 per cent of girls
Grade 7	45 per cent of boys and 24 per cent of girls
Grade 11	10 per cent of boys and 1 per cent of girls

There are no comparable Canadian statistics, since Nova Scotia is the only jurisdiction to have objectively measured physical activity on a population basis.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

Nova Scotia's goal for 2009–2010 is to maintain the 2001 grade 3 activity levels and raise grade 7 and grade 11 levels by 10 percentage points:

Grade 3	maintain at 90 per cent for boys and 92 per cent for girls
Grade 7	increase to 72 per cent for boys and 54 per cent for girls
Grade 11	increase to 22 per cent for boys and 17 per cent for girls

The co-operation of family, school, and community will be required to achieve these goals. Initiatives such as the renewed Active Kids/Healthy Kids Strategy, Health Promoting Schools, and Sport Animators will contribute to reaching this goal. Data on physical activity of children and youth were analysed in light of the gender gap between boys and girls to determine what girls have identified as barriers to physical activity. A review of evidence and best practices to increase physical activity among girls will also be examined.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS REPORTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY THAT PROVIDES HEALTH BENEFITS

(Health Promotion and Protection)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Physical activity is an important contributor to both physical and mental health. Inactivity is one of the risk factors contributing to the high rates of chronic disease in Nova Scotia. The Canadian Community Health Survey classifies adults as active (30 minutes of physical



activity per day) and obtaining optimal health benefits; those who are moderately active (15–29 minutes of physical activity per day) and getting some health benefits; and inactive people (less than 15 minutes of physical activity per day) and getting very little, if any, health benefit.

Where Are We Now?

According to the CCHS conducted every two years, 46 per cent of Nova Scotian adults, 20 years of age and older, reported being active or moderately active, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2001. In this same time period, the national rate increased by 6 percentage points from 44 per cent in 2001 to 50 per cent.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

In 2000–2001, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Sport, Recreation and Fitness set a goal of increasing the number of Canadians active enough for health benefits by 10 percentage points by 2010. This means raising Nova Scotia's percentage from 42 per cent in 2001 to 52 per cent in 2009–2010.

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIAN POSITIONS FILLED IN UNDER-SERVED AREAS

(Health)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

One measure of the supply and distribution of health personnel is the percentage of family physician positions filled in under-served areas. Under-served areas are defined as those that have a history of recruitment and retention difficulties, where recruiting by local committees has been unsuccessful for more than six months, and where the medical needs of the community are not being otherwise served. Those areas that are designated as “under-served” have incentive programs to support physician recruitment. The total number of under-served areas can change over time.

Where Are We Now?

In 2006–2007, the percentage of family physician positions filled in under-served areas was 76 per cent, the same as 2005–2006. This figure is down slightly from 82 per cent in 2004–2005. The total number of family physicians in under-served areas changes rapidly because of natural fluctuations (deaths, retirements, and the voluntary relocation of providers within the province) and successful recruitment. Ongoing recruitment efforts

are required to maintain or exceed the provincial target (80 per cent).

The move towards enhanced use of nurse practitioners and broader care teams has an effect on this indicator. Where physicians may traditionally have been sought out to fill positions in under-served areas, nurse practitioners, in concert with existing physicians in those areas, can now effectively fill the service gap. In years to come, this measure will be adjusted to reflect the role of nurse practitioners.

This measure is not a stable measure. The number of under-served areas or hard-to-serve areas can increase and decrease each year. Therefore, the number of positions filled in one year is reflective only of that year's total number of positions available. In future years, the denominator could increase or decrease.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

Nova Scotia's target is to have 80 per cent or more of health human resource positions filled in under-served areas of Nova Scotia. The Department of Health has continued to support physician recruitment initiatives throughout the province through its Physician Recruiter and via website listings of vacancies, a recruitment guide, advertising, and incentives.

Education

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:
Reducing Class Sizes

The province will expand the Class Size Initiative from grades primary, 1, and 2 classes to cap grade 3 classes at 25 students.

(Education)

The class size initiative was expanded to all grade 3 classes in September 2006. Combined classes in grades 1–2 and 2–3 were capped at a maximum of 20 students or were provided with an additional non-teaching adult in the classroom.

Each school board submitted reports on compliance at the end September 2006.

The department also invested \$17,900,000 in this Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together initiative in 2006–2007.

PRIORITY:
Pre-primary Program

The Department of Education will continue to coordinate the pre-primary pilot program in up to 20 sites across the province

(Education)

The pre-primary pilot continued during the reporting period with collaboration from the Departments of Community Services and Health Promotion and Protection.

In 2006–2007, the second year of the pilot, the program was available in 19 sites across the province, serving 280 four-year-olds. The pilot sites provided access to full-day pre-primary programming and services in areas where access to other educational programs for four-year-olds is limited and where school space is available to deliver the program.

Funding for the Pre-Primary Program in the amount of \$1.3 million will continue for the 2007–2008 school year.



PRIORITY:
Higher Standards for Learning and Technology

The Department of Education will continue with the plan for school-improvement accreditation.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, 66 schools began the school-improvement accreditation process. Workshops for each participating school were conducted throughout the year. In addition, 66 external review teams were provided with training, and these teams worked with schools to conduct an external review. Regional Education Officers received the first annual progress reports from 49 schools across Nova Scotia that began the process in 2005–2006.

Support for enrichment opportunities for students was also given during the reporting period. An Artists in Schools Programs pamphlet was produced and distributed to schools. Funding was provided for partner organizations to expand WITS, Perform!, ArtsSmarts, and PAINTS programs. In partnership with the AGNS, the innovative ArtReach program was also implemented.

In 2006–2007, two public schools offered the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. An additional \$225,000 in grants to school boards was provided to support these two schools and additional

schools seeking authorization to become IB schools. The province also provided the services of a provincial IB coordinator to advise and support schools throughout this process. All 10 eligible schools received authorization in April 2007.

PRIORITY:
Professional Services for Students with Special Needs

The Department of Education will continue its multi-year commitment to increase funding for more speech pathologists, psychologists, resource teachers, and qualified guidance counsellors.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, funding was targeted to further enhance ratios in core professional services. The targeted ratios for school psychologists (1:2500) and speech language pathologists have been met (1:2000). The ratio of resource teachers per student was decreased from 1:200 to 1:168.

Targeted funding was provided to boards for 12 additional guidance counsellor positions. Targeted funding for 2006–2007 created a counsellor to student ratio of 1:794.

PRIORITY:

Accountability Reports

The Department of Education will release a newly expanded Minister's Report to Parents.

(Education)

The annual Minister's Report to Parents was released in March 2007. It continues the new format with more information and contains school-by-school results of the October 2006 Elementary Literacy Assessment.

The report published, for the first time, the results of Mathematics 12 and Advanced Mathematics 12 provincial examination results. The Minister's Report to Parents also included a section in which each school board reported on their progress with initiatives.

PRIORITY:

Mathematics and Literacy Resources

The province will provide more learning resources materials for students in both math and literacy.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, the province invested more than \$1.8 million in new math resources for grades primary to 12. In addition, \$1.5 million was provided to school boards for math mentors and math professional development for grades

primary to 9. Several French math resources were also distributed during the reporting period.

In the area of literacy, \$480,000 was provided to fund an additional five literacy FTE mentors, for a total of 15 toward the Learning for Life II goal of 50. A Literacy Mentors' Workshop and resources were provided for all teachers with mentor responsibilities. In partnership with the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium, the delivery of a Mentoring and Coaching training module for 68 math and literacy mentors was supported. Additional French literacy resources were also provided.

Additional support provided during 2006–2007 included resources for grade 8 classroom writing centres, support for literacy education in junior high, and summer institutes for teachers.

School boards received \$2.8 million to plan and implement literacy support plans for learners in grades 7, 8, and 9 who are not meeting expectations for achievement in reading and writing and for 2005 administration of the Elementary Literacy Assessment.

Finally, a student resource collection that included 44,240 books was distributed to high schools, and professional resources were provided for teachers. A strategy to develop online resources to support literacy development in identified subject areas was also developed.



PRIORITY:
Language Education

The province will continue French, Mi'kmaq, and Gaelic language training in 2006–2007.

(Education)

During the 2006–2007 reporting period, French, Mi'kmaq, and Gaelic language training was advanced with professional development for new and continuing teachers.

A Gaelic Language and Culture Workshop was conducted for 29 teachers, and a grade 10 teaching resource and new curriculum for Gaelic 11 and Gaelic 12 were completed.

A community consultation was undertaken to determine the most effective mechanism to support Mi'kmaq learners and communities. Many of the department's initiatives with respect to Mi'kmaq learners were deferred until the consultation process is complete.

Development of Mi'kmaq language curriculum continues to be a priority, and a request for proposals has been issued for the development of Mi'kmaq language curriculum for grade 8 and grade 9, as well as a shared learnings document to provide teachers with more opportunities to incorporate Mi'kmaq content into all subject areas.

The department has also partnered with the federal government and the Native Council of Nova Scotia to provide some enhancements to Aboriginal learners in the Nova Scotia education system.

PRIORITY:
Options and Opportunities for Student Success (O₂)

The Department of Education will fund the expansion of projects under the program known as O₂: Options and Opportunities for Student Success.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, Phase 1 of the program known as O₂—Options and Opportunities—began in 27 schools across the province. High school students who participate in the program get hands-on experience in a career academy and increased opportunities for community-based learning. All indications are that this program is having a positive impact on students, families, and schools. Student attendance and grades have improved, principals are reporting fewer discipline issues, and students are developing self-esteem and self-confidence.

During the reporting period, school boards received \$100,000 each for a community-based learning consultant to coordinate, promote, and support community-based learning and the O₂ initiative.

More than \$1.4 million was provided to 27 schools for implementation of the program between September 2006 and March 2007. This funding provided an additional 24.8 FTE staff for the grade 10 O₂ program and covered expenses such as student conveyance, co-operative education supervision, and materials.

Investment in Youth Apprenticeship and Increasing Learning Success: First Things First initiatives also support the Options and Opportunities program.

**PRIORITY:
BLAC Report**

The Department of Education will continue implementation of the Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report: Redressing Inequity—Empowering Black Learners.
(Education)

In 2006–2007, \$1 million was invested to support the implementation of the BLAC Report. This is part of the overall commitment to invest \$4.1 million in African Canadian Education over three years. Some of the key initiatives that were undertaken include piloting the ENG.12 African Heritage language arts credit and providing resources to school boards to continue implementation of the racial equity policy.

Funding was also provided to school boards for salary adjustments to address wage inequity. A workshop for student support workers and race relations coordinators was delivered. Three workshops were held for guidance counsellors on expectations for African Nova Scotian students and cultural competencies.

Additional learning resources were delivered to selected schools in Halifax Regional School Board with sizeable African Nova Scotian student populations. An additional grant was made to four boards to recruit and train parents as literacy support volunteers and to increase one-to-one support for identified students.

Scholarship amounts were also increased during the reporting period, and funding was provided to third-year students. Twenty grants were available for customized job training to increase participation in the trades.



PRIORITY:
Racial Equity Policy

The Department of Education will support implementation of the Racial Equity Policy in elementary schools across the province.

(Education)

A monitoring framework was developed in 2006–2007 to evaluate implementation of the Racial Equity Policy.

In-services were provided at the senior high school level, along with cultural competency training for guidance counsellors. An innovation configuration map was developed to assist boards with the implementation of the policy.

A student self-identification survey was also developed and distributed to approximately 45,000 students and parents in three boards (P–12).

Approximately 42,000 surveys were returned and will be analysed.

PRIORITY:
Assessment Programs

The Language Literacy Assessment program will be expanded in 2006–2007, from the Elementary Literacy Assessment administered in grade 6, to a Junior High Literacy Assessment in grade 9.

(Education)

The grade 6 literacy assessment was administered in English and French in the fall of 2006. Individual eight-page and four-page student reports were sent to schools. Parent reports were distributed to schools in March 2007.

Working with partners, the department drafted the grade 3 French and English literacy assessment. The program was expanded with the development of a new junior high French and English literacy assessment. The new assessment was administered to grade 9 students who had written the grade 6 literacy assessment in 2003.

PRIORITY:

School Libraries

For the second year, the Department of Education will provide additional funding to refresh school library resources and improve the ratio of school library technician staff to students.

(Education)

Funding to school boards for school libraries was increased by \$560,000 in 2006–2007.

The department also began developing standards, guidelines, and policies to help school boards and schools improve and enhance school libraries. School library resources were also provided to schools to support grades 7 and 8 social studies.

PRIORITY:

School Construction and Renewal

In 2006–2007, the province will continue to make major improvements to school buildings across the Nova Scotia.

(Education)

Three new schools were opened in 2006–2007. They were Sir John A. Macdonald, Barrington High School, and Rankin (Iona) School. Work on eight new school projects also began or continued in the reporting period.

Work on the 45 additions and alterations projects will be completed as funds are available. In 2006–2007, work was also carried out on 22 schools to varying degrees of completion. One school renovation project was completed, and work will take place on 21 renovation projects in 2007–2008.

PRIORITY:

Physical Education

The Department of Education will increase targeted funding for school boards to hire more physical education teachers and develop new curriculum.

(Education)

Targeted funding was increased by \$560,000 to enable school boards to hire 10 more physical education teachers for a total of 18 additional FTE physical education teachers for the 2006–2007 school year.

The department also worked with Health Promotion and Protection, school boards, and the Nova Scotia Fitness Association to promote and expand fitness training and certification for youth leaders. Youth Fitness Training, National Coaching Certification Program Certification, and High Five Training workshops were also conducted.

In addition, a Fitness Leadership 11 half-credit physical education course is under development.



PRIORITY:
Health-Promoting Schools

Over the next several years, the Department of Education will work toward achieving the objectives of the Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (2005) Strategy for children and youth.

(Education)

The Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools was officially released September 12, 2006. The policy is a key part of two provincial strategies: the Department of Education's new plan for education, Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together (2005) and Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (2005), which is being led by the Department of Health Promotion and Protection.

The policy and guidelines address a variety of issues including foods served and sold in school cafeterias, vending machines, and canteens; fund-raising; portion sizes; nutrition education; vulnerable children; and time to eat. The food and nutrition policy is being phased in over three years, beginning in September 2006. Boards report that the first year of implementation has been very successful.

PRIORITY:
Safe Schools

The Department of Education will implement a School Code of Conduct.

(Education)

To date, 298 schools have received training to support implementation of Positive and Effective Behaviour Supports (PEBS), the School Code of Conduct Guidelines, and a teacher resource, *Meeting Behaviour Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments*. Of these, 100 schools received the training in 2006–2007.

There are PEBS lead-teams supporting school implementation in all school boards.

PRIORITY:
Assistance to Universities and the Nova Scotia Community College

The province will work with universities to help cap tuition for undergraduate programs and help gather data on under-represented groups and the credit-transfer process.

(Education)

Tuition for Nova Scotia students studying in Nova Scotia was reduced by \$440 for full-time students and \$220 for part-time students in January 2007 through the Nova Scotia Student Bursary, using funding provided from the federal Infrastructure Trust Fund.

The 2007 budget provided \$12.45 million to all university students to offset the 3.9 per cent tuition fee increase allowed through the Memorandum of Understanding on Funding and Tuition Fees. At that time, \$11.6 million was also provided to enable a \$500 tuition fee reduction to Nova Scotia students studying in Nova Scotia.

A review of credit transfer information for students in the various provinces was conducted, and very preliminary discussions were held with selected university registrars to determine interest in developing a provincial online credit transfer database.

In addition, the parties to the memorandum of understanding with universities agreed to work together to address participation of under-represented groups in post-secondary education. Nova Scotia universities, through the Atlantic Association of Universities, have developed working relationships with leaders of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs and the Mi'kmaw Kina'matneway to better understand critical issues concerning access and persistence to graduation for Aboriginal learners, as well as the challenges of financing university education. A working group has been formed that will address the challenges facing Aboriginal learners.

As part of the four-year investment in the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), the Department of Education will work with NSCC to identify options for a long-term funding arrangement that will inform development of a memorandum of understanding.

During the reporting year, special project funding for a disability services website for the NSCC and an assistive technology course for disability services field staff was also provided. In addition, though the disability services memoranda of understanding, funding was provided to assist in the delivery of goods and services to students with disabilities on 22 Nova Scotia public post-secondary campuses.



PRIORITY:
Student Assistance

In 2006–2007, the province will increase debt-relief for students.

(Education)

To enhance the student debt reduction program, which was introduced in 2003, a new debt-relief initiative was made effective August 1, 2006. Now, students who demonstrate 50 weeks of full-time employment in Nova Scotia within the three-year period following their graduation can receive an additional 50 per cent of the amount of debt reduction they received at graduation. This was increased from 25 per cent in the previous year.

Also effective August 1, 2006, a student who makes 12 payments on their Nova Scotia Student Loan within three years of graduation will receive an additional 20 per cent of the amount of debt reduction that they received at graduation. This was increased from 10 per cent in the previous year.

In 2007–2008, the department will undertake a review of the Nova Scotia student assistance program, which will include public consultations. As part of this review process, the department will examine whether adjustments can be made to the debt reduction program to better serve students.

PRIORITY:
Extending Age Limits for the Bursary Program for Children in Care

The province will extend school incentive programs for children in the care and custody of the government to include young people between the ages of 21 and 24.

(Community Services)

In 2006–2007, extension of funding to youth aged 21 to 24 years of age was approved.

Youth who were formerly in permanent care and custody of the minister and who are enrolled in post-secondary education, are eligible to receive funds to cover tuition, books, and related costs, as well as food and lodging. With the benefit of a post-secondary education, risks such as unemployment or homelessness are reduced.

PRIORITY:
**Labour Market Partnership
for Career Development**

The Department of Education will further advance career development initiatives in the province.

(Education)

During 2006–2007, enhancing the Career Options website for adults and career practitioners was a major project, and career navigator quizzes were added to the site aimed at both students and adults.

In addition, Parents as Career Coaches workshops were delivered to O₂ schools. Labour market information workshops were delivered in five communities to approximately 150 career practitioners. Finally, 30 parents participated in three workshops that were offered to parents of students in the O₂ program in 2006–2007 school year.

PRIORITY:
Engaging Youth

The Department of Education will expand the scope and influence of the Youth Advisory Council and Provincial Student Education Council within government.

(Education)

During the reporting period, both councils developed strategic frameworks and pursued goals within those documents. Collectively, the councils provided input to 11 departments or initiatives within the province. Two qualitative research projects were undertaken, and work began on a branding exercise. An updated web presence for both councils was also initiated.

PRIORITY:
Apprenticeship

The province will fund a marketing and promotion strategy to promote apprenticeship to employers, students, and consumers.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, trades and apprenticeship were promoted through television, radio, and print media with home renovation expert Mike Holmes as spokesperson. In addition, information and promotional materials were developed and distributed to employers.



During the Spring Ideal Home Show in March 2007, over 250 people visited the apprenticeship booth where they were educated on apprenticeship and the benefits of working with qualified tradespeople.

Work continued in the area of promoting the skilled trades through a partnership with Techsploration, which works to increase the number of women working in skilled trades, technology, and science.

**PRIORITY:
Skills Development**

The province will fund a coordinator for the One Journey: Work and Learn Program.

(Education)

During the reporting period, over \$175,000 was provided by the Departments of Education and Community Services for the One Journey: Work and Learn Program, and a coordinator was established for the program.

This funding includes \$40,239 from the Department of Education and \$135,637 from the Department of Community Services.

**PRIORITY:
Adult Literacy and Learning**

The Department of Education will advance a number of adult learning and literacy strategies in 2006–2007.

(Education)

In 2006–2007, a Partner's Forum was held with stakeholders of the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning.

Work was undertaken towards the development of new courses for the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults. A Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum pilot was also conducted at six Nova Scotia Community College sites

Phase 2 of Histoire planétaire and phase 3 of Géographie planétaire, part of the Formation générale des adultes, were completed. Histoire planétaire will be piloted at the Université Sainte-Anne. Phase 3 of the Adult Learning Program Level II curriculum was completed.

An alternative delivery pilot project was also undertaken with the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board.

In addition, the department participated in the Health Literacy Intersectoral Action Strategy and health literacy training workshops with pharmacists. The department also worked with the Seniors

Secretariat to develop a seniors' literacy initiative. Local projects received grants in winter 2007 to implement local seniors' literacy initiatives.

Education: Measuring Our Performance

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

(Education)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

The graduation rate is the percentage of students receiving a high school graduation diploma compared with the number of students in grade nine three years earlier.

Education is a key variable in improved employment prospects and higher earnings. The successful pursuit of further education depends upon high school graduation. This is the foundation upon which an individual's future success is built.

Where Are We Now?

The 2006 graduation rate increased slightly from 84.3 per cent in 2005 to 85 per cent.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

Our target is to have this percentage continue to increase. Senior high students can choose course options that are consistent with their post-secondary plans, be they university, community college, trades, or the job market. It is expected that having opportunities to prepare for the various post-secondary pathways will keep students motivated to graduate from high school.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLACK LEARNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BLAC) REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

(Education)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure tracks the number of recommendations that have been implemented to date. Note that it does not indicate which recommendations are more important than others.

The Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education was completed in 1994. The report is intended to assist government in creating an education system that is equitable, accessible, and inclusive for all learners. Recommendations in the report encompass preschool through to post-secondary education, as well as adult



education. The Minister of Education's response to the 30 recommendations contained in the report was released in 1995. The department has reviewed the status of the BLAC Report and has developed a strategy for the full implementation of the recommendations. Implementation of the recommendations has resulted in a number of actions to address inequalities in educational access and outcomes for the African Nova Scotian population.

Where Are We Now?

As of 2006–2007, 28 of the 30 recommendations in the BLAC Report have been initiated and/or implemented.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

It is expected that by 2007–2008, all of the recommendations will have been initiated and/or implemented.

The Economy

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:

More Competitive Taxes

The province will create a favourable business climate and encourage economic growth.

(Finance)

The 2006–2007 budget announced a series of phased-in tax measures to provide tax relief for both businesses and individuals. The province's plan for tax reductions will be introduced over multiple years to ensure that the government can afford to provide this tax relief within its balanced budget and debt-reduction obligations.

In 2007, the province began an increase in the basic personal tax allowance of \$1,000, or 13.8 per cent, to be phased in over four years (\$250 per year). This tax relief is broadly distributed because the Basic Personal Amount is available to each individual taxpayer.

At the same time, the province will increase the value other non-refundable personal tax credits by 13.8 per cent over four years. After this increase, the government will index the credits and brackets of the personal income tax system starting in 2011.

The 2006–2007 budget also introduced a new Graduate Tax Credit that allows recent graduates to reduce their provincial tax burden by up to \$1,000.

In addition, the 2006–2007 budget introduced targeted sales tax relief through Your Energy Rebate. This initiative effectively removed the burden of the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax from the cost of energy.

As part of its current medium-term plan for tax relief, the province will continue to reduce the large corporations tax rate applied to business capital. The 2006–2007 budget announced that this tax would be eliminated by July 1, 2012.



PRIORITY:
Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity (2006)

The province will begin to implement a five-year economic development strategy.

(Office of Economic Development)

In 2006–2007, a full-time growth strategy development and implementation officer was hired to support Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity (OfSP) and facilitate intra- governmental coordination through a multi-department/agency implementation steering committee. This committee meets monthly to share ideas and best practices and to identify opportunities to link initiatives in each of the eight strategic focus areas of the strategy.

While individual departments and agencies are accountable for specific initiatives, such as increasing productivity, developing the Atlantic Gateway, and building a skilled workplace, the semi-annual OfSP progress reports provide a holistic look at the work being done across government in support of the strategy. The two progress reports for 2006–2007 are posted on the Office of Economic Development’s website (www.gov.ns.ca/econ/ofsp/). Effective tracking and measurement of progress is an important component of these reports.

In 2006–2007, the steering committee began developing a series of measurable targets, which, over time, will help the province understand issues, monitor progress, and inform decision making.

PRIORITY:
Better Regulation Initiative

The province will to work to improve business competitiveness and ensure regulations continue to protect the public, the environment and our communities.

(Environment and Labour; Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; Office of Economic Development; Treasury and Policy Board)

In 2006–2007, the Better Regulation Initiative achieved several important accomplishments to advance its goal of improving the province’s regulatory climate and making quality regulation an integral part of the corporate culture.

A pilot project was initiated to look at the approval processes needed to start up or operate an inn. Industry stakeholders and government identified the permits, licences, and administrative effort required to operate a typical inn in Nova Scotia. The results confirmed the regulatory burden and provided an understanding of the cumulative impact of regulation on business. The findings provided the basis

for a new website, developed and maintained by Service Nova Scotia, that helps businesses find information critical at every step of the business cycle.

Measuring the cost of regulation by measuring the time it takes a business to meet requirements was another deliverable in 2006–2007. The Better Regulation Index was developed, in consultation with business stakeholders, to measure the combined impact of administrative paperwork, which is projected at 615,000 hours per year.

During the reporting period, the Department of Environment and Labour also implemented a regulatory management policy that establishes principles for regulatory consideration and development.

Staff training was another area of focus. The Department of Environment and Labour worked with the Nova Scotia Community College to develop a training program for inspectors that provides fundamental and consistent knowledge and skill sets to various inspector groups.

**PRIORITY:
Atlantic Gateway to
North America**

The province will launch a Nova Scotia Gateway Strategy to capture a significant share of the surging growth in trade traffic between North America and Asia.

(Transportation and Public Works; Office of Economic Development; Nova Scotia Business Inc.; Intergovernmental Affairs)

During the reporting year, the Department of Transportation and Public Works engaged consultants CPCS Transcom to identify potential gateway opportunities for the province and develop an action plan to maximize those opportunities.

Throughout the year, the department has also cultivated relationships with various stakeholders, including Transport Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), and the Port of Halifax, and conducted presentations for the Senate and senior officials at Transport Canada.



PRIORITY:
Land Transportation

In 2006–2007, the province will invest a total of \$176 million in capital improvements for roads and highways.

(Transportation and Public Works)

Due to an additional allocation received by the Department of Transportation and Public Works during the reporting year, \$201.8 million was spent on capital improvements to roads and highways.

Work was completed on the five major highway projects identified in the 2006–2007 construction program, and most projects were open to the public by the end of 2006. Highway maintenance work included additional funding to upgrade signage, brush cutting, and guardrail improvement. A line-painting policy was initiated to formalize annual line painting on 100-series highways, trunks, and routes, improving visibility and contributing to safer roads.

Bridge project work was also completed in year four of the five-year Steel Truss Bridge Program.

PRIORITY:
Export Strategy

In 2006–2007, the provincial trade committee will continue to support the development of exports of Nova Scotia small and medium enterprises.

(Office of Economic Development; Nova Scotia Business Inc.; InNOVAcorp; Agriculture; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Energy; Environment and Labour; Intergovernmental Affairs; Natural Resources; Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

In 2006–2007 the Provincial Trade Committee provided advice and input into the development of the implementation plan for Going Global, Staying Local, Nova Scotia's export strategy. This plan has guided the collaborative efforts of the trade partners and will continue to provide direction on priorities over the course of the next two years.

The Office of Economic Development continued to work with partners in government at the provincial and federal level, as well as various not-for-profit organizations, to support the development of exports, especially those of Nova Scotia's small and medium enterprises. This was accomplished through a number of approaches such as new program funding, analysing Nova Scotia's trade

performance, stakeholder engagement, and business outreach in rural Nova Scotia.

Two export expansion programs were launched in January 2007: the ExportAbility program and the Go-Ahead program. Funding for these programs was provided by the Office of Economic Development and administered by Nova Scotia Business Inc. All provincial departments and agencies on the Provincial Trade Committee refer clients to the ExportAbility and Go-Ahead programs, as they are open to all business sectors.

**PRIORITY:
Trade Missions**

Nova Scotia Business Inc. will increase trade missions and market development programs by its export team.

(Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

The Nova Scotia Business Inc. trade development team had a record-breaking year in 2006–2007. The team arranged upwards of 1,200 selling/partnering meetings for Nova Scotia businesses looking to expand into export markets around the globe and led or facilitated a total of 20 trade missions and shows.

This work has assisted close to 250 businesses in expanding their markets. As a result of this activity, more than \$85 million in incremental sales were

reported from these clients in export markets across the globe.

In addition, the Nova Scotia Business Inc Trade Development team launched its new website, www.nsbitrade.com, to assist in promoting the calendar of upcoming trade-related events to current and prospective business clients throughout the province.

**PRIORITY:
International Business
Development Activity**

Nova Scotia Business Inc. will continue to take a targeted and aggressive approach to attract to the province businesses that have a strong fit with Nova Scotia assets.

(Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

An aggressive approach to investment attraction in 2006–2007 resulted in the conclusion of 14 transactions with some of the world's leading companies in industries including information technology and defence and aerospace. These businesses are projected to create up to 3,000 new high-paying and competitive job opportunities for Nova Scotians over the next five years.

A highlight was in financial services, a sector that has grown to include some of the world's largest financial services companies. Over the next five years, Citco Fund Services, Olympia Capital,



Annual Accountability

Marsh Incorporated, and Butterfield Fund Services are expected to create and maintain more than 1,100 new jobs.

Overall, the new jobs attracted to the province have an average salary of close to \$50,000, which is well in excess of the average salary in the province.

PRIORITY:

Ex-Pat Recruitment

Implement an ex-pat recruitment campaign in 2006–2007 to ensure a labour pool exists for further growth in the IT sector

(Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

In 2006–2007, Nova Scotia Business Inc., in conjunction with the province and the Information Technology Industry Alliance of Nova Scotia (ITANS), launched techportjobs.com, a dedicated information and communications technology (ICT) job site. The website links recent graduates, local professionals, and expatriates with employment opportunities in Nova Scotia. The site is a user-friendly tool, free to any Nova Scotia employer with ICT job openings. In addition to basic search and resumé posting, the site features information about living in and relocating to Nova Scotia, as well as ICT sector statistics and information on training and development programs.

In addition, a partnership between the Department of Education, the Information Technology Industry Alliance of Nova Scotia, and Nova Scotia Business Inc led to the creation of the Information Technology Opportunity Awareness program. The initiative was launched to show Nova Scotia high school students the many IT job opportunities available in Nova Scotia and, in turn, assist students in their career planning and decision making.

PRIORITY:

Strategic Investment Funds

In 2006–2007, Nova Scotia Business Inc. will give greater consideration to projects that fit existing eligibility requirements but may not meet the 50-FTE requirement.

(Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

In 2006–2007, NSBI gave greater consideration to projects that fit existing eligibility requirements but did not necessarily meet the 50-FTE (full-time equivalent) job creation guideline. Subsequently, NSBI revised the guideline from 50 to 20 FTEs, to better support business growth in areas of the province where the labour pool is smaller and business demands are different than in larger centres.

**PRIORITY:
Business Retention
and Expansion**

The Office of Economic Development will establish a rural business retention and expansion pilot project in six counties of mainland Nova Scotia.

(Office of Economic Development; Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

In early 2006, the Office of Economic Development, as part of a multi-stakeholder partnership that includes NSBI, ACOA, Service Canada, and the Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Authorities, launched a Business Retention and Expansion pilot project in six areas of Nova Scotia.

The project continued through 2006–2007, with priorities focused on the retention and growth of businesses located in rural areas. Account executives were hired to meet with local businesses in each pilot area to identify issues and work with economic development partners to find solutions. An evaluation process was developed and implemented and is ongoing into the 2007–2008 fiscal year. Results of the evaluation will assist in the decision to expand the pilot to other regional development agencies in the next fiscal year.

**PRIORITY:
Research and Development**

In 2006–2007, the Office of Economic Development will continue to support the operation of the Brain Repair Centre.

(Office of Economic Development)

The Office of Economic Development contributed funding to the operation of the Brain Repair Centre in 2006–2007. It also held \$3 million in the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust for the Brain Repair Centre's planned new home—the Life Sciences Research Institute.

InNOVAcorp is working to operationalize the commercialization of products and services that have originated in the Brain Repair Centre.

Further, InNOVAcorp and the Brain Repair Centre have been working to maximize synergies between the two organizations as part of Dalhousie's Life Sciences Research Institute initiative.



**PRIORITY:
Cluster Development**

InNOVAcorp will complete Phase I of the Woodside Knowledge Park to accommodate the Ocean Nutrition Canada micro-encapsulation facility.

(InNOVAcorp)

In 2006–2007, InNOVAcorp completed Phase I of the Woodside Knowledge Park by accommodating the Ocean Nutrition Canada (ONC) micro-encapsulation facility.

InNOVAcorp also continued to facilitate the development of the Mount Hope extension in Dartmouth. The completion of this valuable link will allow InNOVAcorp to recruit additional businesses to Knowledge Park, maximizing cluster synergies.

To strengthen established clusters, InNOVAcorp and NSBI continue to be active members of BioNova, Nova Scotia’s biotechnology and life sciences industry association, and ITANS, the Information Technology Industry Alliance of Nova Scotia.

**PRIORITY:
Mentoring**

InNOVAcorp will strength its expertise in key sectors, such as information and communication technology and life sciences and actively monitor emerging sectors to ensure appropriate levels of corresponding in-house mentoring.

(InNOVAcorp)

In 2006–2007, InNOVAcorp placed a heavy emphasis on strengthening its “go-to-market” expertise in key sectors, including information and communications technology and life sciences, and actively monitored emerging sectors.

During this time, InNOVAcorp staff worked with 106 Nova Scotia–based early-stage companies and 30 university research-level projects. Additionally, at fiscal year-end, InNOVAcorp’s business incubation facilities, the Technology Innovation Centre and the BioScience Enterprise Centre, reached 91 per cent occupancy.

InNOVAcorp also provided direct one-on-one support to entrepreneurs. Some of those organizations include BioNova, ITANS, and Entrepreneurs’ Forum.

In February 2007, InNOVAcorp’s High Performance Incubation (Hpi) business

model was formally recognized as a best practice technology commercialization approach by the National Business Incubation Association. This recognition is another important step towards realizing the vision of becoming “the most effective technology commercialization practice in North America.”

InNOVAcorp’s annual client satisfaction survey, conducted in February 2007, indicates that 92 per cent of clients are satisfied with InNOVAcorp’s services and that more than 90 per cent would recommend its services to other entrepreneurs. Clients are very positive in their endorsement of InNOVAcorp, as reflected in their overall satisfaction with its business services, the likelihood they would engage InNOVAcorp services again, and the likelihood they would recommend those services to others.

InNOVAcorp also provided technical and financial assistance to more than 20 business start-ups to take advantage of the Scientific Research and Experimental Development Program (SR&ED), a federal program that offers tax incentives to Canadian businesses of all sizes and in all sectors in an effort to encourage research and development.

PRIORITY:

Access to Seed Capital and Venture Capital

InNOVAcorp will continue to proactively look to invest in opportunities that offer the best potential for commercial success and financial sustainability.

(InNOVAcorp)

Nova Scotia-based companies raised \$24 million in venture capital financing in 2006, a 40 per cent increase over the previous year. InNOVAcorp continues to play a key role in this access to capital turnaround with an investment in 10 companies participating in 20 transactions in the past three years through the High Performance Incubation (HPi) business model.

Through the management of the Nova Scotia First Fund (NSFF), InNOVAcorp is an active and effective venture capitalist, managing seed and early-stage investments in emerging venture-grade technology companies with high growth potential.

Since the fund was recapitalized in 2003–2004, InNOVAcorp has approved and invested more than \$5.5 million in promising early-stage companies based in Nova Scotia. Over the last four years, the corporation helped attract more than \$20 million from angel and strategic investors,



financial institutions, and other seed and venture capital funds. Of this investment capital, \$10 million originated outside Atlantic Canada. For every \$1 investment made by the Nova Scotia First Fund, at least \$3 was invested by syndicated investors. As of March 31, 2007, the cumulative amount of investment made in client companies in which investments were made by the NSFF was more than \$93 million.

**PRIORITY:
Rural Innovation**

InNOVAcorp will increase support for rural innovation in 2006–2007 through co-management of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council's Proof-of-Concept Fund.

(InNOVAcorp)

InNOVAcorp continues to support rural innovation through co-management of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council's Proof-of-Concept Fund and by working closely with the province's regional development authorities.

In 2006–2007, InNOVAcorp created and managed the first I-3 Technology Start-Up Competition, which targeted Cape Breton innovators. The competition was designed to encourage and support Nova Scotia entrepreneurs. The initiative resulted in more than 75 inquiries and 18 formal

submissions. Entries came from across Cape Breton and from companies specializing in everything from medical devices, to information and communications technologies, to industrial and energy innovations. Furthermore, InNOVAcorp has actively worked with seven companies that entered the I-3 competition and are today local entrepreneurial success stories in Cape Breton.

In September 2007, InNOVAcorp will launch I-3 competitions province-wide, to foster and support the entrepreneurial spirit in the business community across Nova Scotia and to encourage the formation of new technology start-up companies.

InNOVAcorp has also played a key role in ensuring that all unserved areas of Nova Scotia gain access to broadband connectivity at service levels and prices comparable to those in urban Nova Scotia.

PRIORITY:
Agri-food and Seafood
Competitiveness

The Department of Agriculture and Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture will continue to support the efforts of the province's agri-food and seafood businesses to expand domestic and international markets.

(Agriculture; Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture)

In 2006–2007, the province partnered with the Atlantic BioVenture Centre at AgriTECH Park to secure \$6.8 million in bio-economy development projects that will be conducted at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College over the next three years. The projects will lead to the development of a number of innovative, value-added products and processing technologies for the Nova Scotia and Atlantic primary resource sector.

During the reporting period, the Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture continued to work with the federal government and other provinces on an aquaculture development strategy, in recognition of the opportunities this sector offers for Nova Scotia. The department also initiated a Saltfish Industry Study and a Seafood Processing Sector Study to address development opportunities in these areas.

The Department of Agriculture supported renewal efforts in several agricultural sectors. For example, the department provided financial assistance to the pork industry to explore opportunities for differentiated pork markets and to develop a Maritime brand pork product and provided assistance to the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers Association to research new market opportunities for apple bio-products. The department also provided communications and advertising support to Nova Scotia's wineries sector. This sector has tripled commercial grape production since 2000, and it is anticipated that the number of farm and cottage wineries will double by 2010.

The Department of Agriculture also worked with the Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network to promote growth in the organic sector. The number of farms reporting certified organic production in Nova Scotia increased by 265 per cent between 2001 and 2006.

During 2006–2007, the department approved a total of 18 projects for product and quality development program funding, resulting in the development of 25 new products, and nine new technologies. Significant industry funding was leveraged for these projects.



PRIORITY:
Lobster Support Program

Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture will conduct a year-round lobster-testing program in southwest Nova Scotia that will give harvesters information about lobster quality and allow them to modify their fishery if needed.

(Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture)

In 2006–2007, support continued for the lobster science research and lobster quality issues.

To ensure higher-quality lobster for existing markets, support was expanded for the Atlantic Veterinary College lobster science centre, which is addressing various issues related to lobster health and quality. There was also continued support for lobster molting and softshell projects being conducted in partnership with industry organizations.

Additionally, the department facilitated the development of an industry-operated lobster hatchery in Pictou, providing technical expertise and financial assistance. This hatchery stocks the Gulf of St. Lawrence lobster fishery and educates Nova Scotians about the industry. Beyond promoting increased harvesting and tourism opportunities, the hatchery has also led to increased

partnerships and research opportunities with academic institutions.

PRIORITY:
Safety and Security of the Food Chain

The Department of Agriculture and Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture will continue their work with federal and industry partners to identify and respond to animal, fish health, and disease prevention issues.

(Agriculture; Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture)

During the reporting period, a meat-processing training program, aimed at improving the safety and quality of processed meats, was developed through the Agricultural Policy Framework.

In addition, the new Health Protection Act now allows for a risk-based response to food safety, enabling government to focus resources on areas of greatest risk. As a result of inspection efforts, reports of consumer complaints have been reduced by 28 per cent, and reports of suspected food-borne illness have been reduced by 26 per cent over the last four years.

PRIORITY:

Laboratory Services

The Department of Agriculture will make enhancements to its laboratory services to benefit a broad spectrum of the agriculture industry.

(Agriculture)

Following an audit by the Canadian Standards Council completed in 2006–2007, accreditation was received for dairy, soils, and pathology labs for the next three years. The province now has the ability to analyse products in the department's own labs, thus improving turnaround times for clients.

PRIORITY:

Sustaining Prosperity from Offshore Energy

In 2006–2007 the province will work to increase offshore exploration that will lead to future developments and revenues.

(Energy)

In 2006–2007, activities focused on renewed exploration and development of the offshore energy potential, including building an increased understanding of onshore and offshore petroleum geology and supporting research initiatives to understand the relation of gas and oil activity to the marine environment.

Funding to post-secondary institutions, along with assistance to purchase equipment and building infrastructure, helped to support the expansion of energy sector opportunities.

A significant barrier to rejuvenating interest in Nova Scotia's offshore is the lack of reliable geoscience information and analysis. In 2006–2007 the Offshore Energy Technical Research Association received \$250,000 in additional government funding to help conduct three research studies worth \$300,000 each to advance geoscience knowledge by archiving and reformatting seismic reflection data and making the data available online through the Canada–Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board.

The Offshore Energy Environment Research Association also continued its important work on the interrelation of seismic testing and the marine environment. The association funded and managed a Strategic Environmental Assessment process for development of tidal power in the Bay of Fundy. This is the crucial stage needed to determine if in-stream tidal power development in Fundy should proceed. For this purpose, an additional \$250,000 from the province was granted. This funding supported management of the assessment process and research on the socio-economic impact of potential tidal projects in Fundy.



PRIORITY:
Promoting the Energy Sector

The Department of Energy will increase its efforts to identify potential investors and market Nova Scotia's petroleum resources and workforce.

(Energy)

In 2006–2007 the department increased its efforts to identify potential investors and market Nova Scotia's petroleum resource potential, including the province's business and workforce capacities.

To provide support for investment decisions by potential investors in offshore and onshore energy resources, the department worked on a number of initiatives, including partnering with Newfoundland and Labrador and the federal government to develop a model for goal-orientation regulation for offshore drilling production and conservation.

Work was also completed on an economic model to help offshore investors evaluate the opportunity in Nova Scotia, this includes revamping offshore rights issuance policies, a review of the need for policy regarding third-party access to existing pipeline infrastructure, and mitigated risk by investors who are examining our geology.

During the reporting period, Nova Scotia was actively promoted to potential investors. This effort included a multi-year

oil and gas investment attraction initiative to showcase the province's infrastructure, energy, and human resource opportunities to targeted companies. An additional \$600,000 has been allocated to implement this initiative for hosting international conferences and workshops, one-on-one meetings with exploration companies, and active participation at international trade shows and conferences.

Marketing events and activities were undertaken in 2006–2007, including PETEX in London, UK, NAPE in Houston, and other major offshore energy conferences.

Delegations of Nova Scotia companies were also present at industry shows or trade missions in Canada, United States, Trinidad, Tobago, and Spain.

The department also monitored economic activity resulting from local energy projects in order to identify, develop, and implement strategies that will increase Nova Scotia's market share.

PRIORITY:
Labour Services

In 2006–2007, the Department of Environment and Labour will introduce a new initiative to speed up arbitration for employers and unionized workers and to ensure that employers and unionized workers are fairly represented.

(Environment and Labour)

On October 1, 2006, the Trade Union Act was successfully amended. As a result, new processes were implemented that provide access to justice for unions, union members, and employers. Duty of fair representation complainants are now able to file complaints directly with the Labour Relations Board as opposed to proceeding through the court system. Expedited arbitration will deal with lengthy time delays in proceeding to arbitration and obtaining a binding award.

The Arbitration Advisory Committee was also established to advise the minister on arbitration selection and on matters related to arbitration in the province. This committee has equal representation from employers and trade unions, as well as a neutral chair.

PRIORITY:
Welcoming More New Nova Scotians

The Office of Immigration will continue to work with the federal government to advocate for more settlement funding as the number of immigrant continues to increase.

(Office of Immigration)

During the reporting period, the downward trend of immigration to Nova Scotia has reversed. In 2006, 2,585 individuals landed in Nova Scotia, which is an increase of 34 per cent over the previous year. The increase reflects a positive trend that began in 2003 with the introduction of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, whereby the province can nominate individuals to the federal government for permanent residency. In four years, there has been a 75 per cent increase in the number of new immigrants arriving in the province.

In 2006–2007, the Province of Nova Scotia participated in discussions on the allocation of federal settlement funding. As a result, the province received additional settlement funding from the Government of Canada, increasing the amount from \$2.1 million in 2005–2006 to \$2.7 million in 2006–2007 and \$3.3 million in 2007–2008.



PRIORITY:
French Immigration

The province will commit to promoting the development of its Acadian and francophone community and maintaining the French language.

(Office of Acadian Affairs)

In December of 2006, Executive Council enacted the French-language Services Regulations. The objective of these regulations is to ensure that there are improvements to the French-language services offered by the Government of Nova Scotia.

Support for francophone immigration during the reporting year included a number of initiatives, including providing assistance to a representative of Nova Scotia's Acadian community to participate in an immigration awareness tour in Québec, which was organized by the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

In 2006–2007, Acadian Affairs and the Office of Immigration shared in the translation costs of publications. The Office of Immigration also accessed French-language Services funds for the translation of web-based promotional materials and brochures to help promote immigration to French-speaking people.

Settlement funding in the amount of \$41,300 in was provided by the Office of

Immigration to the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse to conduct a public awareness and outreach project in eight Acadian and francophone regions of the province and to build capacity to promote, recruit, welcome, and integrate new French-speaking immigrants in these Acadian and francophone regions.

In addition, the Office of Immigration participated on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and consulted with the Acadian and francophone community to identify current settlement services available to French-speaking immigrants as well as gaps in service delivery.

PRIORITY:
Economic and Cultural Links with Louisiana

In 2006–2007, the Office of Acadian Affairs will lead development of a memorandum of understanding with the State of Louisiana.

(Office of Acadian Affairs)

During the reporting year, initial contacts were made by the Office of Acadian Affairs with government representatives of the State of Louisiana in respect to signing a Memorandum of understanding between that state and Nova Scotia. Conditions were not favourable for proceeding with the signature of the MOU during this fiscal year due to Louisiana's

having other priorities. Despite this, economic relationships were developed, and a few strategic initiatives were supported, which may contribute to a future accord of co-operation.

To further advance economic and cultural ties, the Office of Acadian Affairs and the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDÉNÉ) led an Atlantic delegation of 22 entrepreneurs and organizations to the Expo-Acadie 2006 trade exposition in Louisiana. This delegation met with Louisiana companies and associations in New Orleans and the Lafayette area to develop new partnerships and business opportunities at the international level.

A follow-up trade mission to Louisiana in March 2007 allowed the CDÉNÉ to meet with business, tourism, and government leaders to build on previous relationships and to encourage participation in the following Expo-Acadie, which will be held in Nova Scotia in June 2008.

PRIORITY: Come to Life

The province will work with the private sector to enhance Nova Scotia's pride of place and Nova Scotia's global presence.

(Communications Nova Scotia)

During 2006–2007, the private sector embraced the Nova Scotia Come to life brand and is working with government to enhance Nova Scotia's image worldwide and educate Nova Scotians about their province and its many attributes and opportunities.

The initiative is supported by government departments and agencies along with 89 charter members who represent the initiative's private-sector partners.

The goal of Come to Life is to increase economic growth by reinforcing Nova Scotia as a perfect place in which to invest, do business, visit, learn, live, and play. That message is being delivered to key influencers and decision makers in five key markets—Boston, Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, and Houston.

During the reporting period, a policy framework for the Come to life initiative was developed to ensure that future government policy recommendations contain and support the attributes of Nova Scotia Come to life.



Communications Nova Scotia has also worked to make the Come to Life attributes inherent in key strategies, such as the New Nova Scotia, Sustainable Prosperity, Atlantic Gateway initiative, and Opportunities Nova Scotia. All of these initiatives enhance and carry the Come to Life attributes and messaging.

**PRIORITY:
Tourism Sector Growth**

In 2006–2007, the province will work towards increasing tourism revenues by \$25 million, through the implementation of the 2006 Tourism Plan.

(Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

In 2006–2007, the province worked in collaboration with industry and the Tourism Partnership Council to implement the 2006 Tourism Plan and increase provincial tourism revenues. This collaborative effort helped the industry generate \$1.31 billion in total provincial tourism receipts, an increase of \$20 million over 2005 levels.

The department also invested an additional \$600,000 in enhanced tourism marketing activities and partnerships in core markets such as Europe and Atlantic Canada.

**PRIORITY:
Tall Ships 2007**

The province will plan to bring back the tall ships festival in the summer of 2007.

(Waterfront Development Corporation)

In 2006–2007, the Waterfront Development Corporation developed a business plan to support tall ships events in Nova Scotia well into the future and to build on their economic impact.

The development of the plan included a Tall Ships Nova Scotia brand that marks the commitment to a pan-provincial event, benefiting all Nova Scotians.

The festival was hosted at eight ports across the province on July 13–25, 2007. The event was very successful, and the economic impact to the province is an incremental \$27.5 million. The overall event attracted more than 600,000 people throughout the 10 days, with 60,000 visitors from outside the province. The event boasted an unprecedented 98 per cent public satisfaction according to research conducted across the province. Planning is under way for the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge 2009 race.

PRIORITY:

Community Development Policy

The province will continue to implement its community development policy in 2006–2007 to help communities lead their own development.

(Office of Economic Development)

The province's Community Development Policy was in the second year of an evolving multi-year implementation plan in 2006–2007. Accomplishments during the reporting period include a partnership with the Cape Breton County Economic Development Authority to host the second community development conference in September 2007 and support for the establishment of the Volunteerism Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee to develop a government action plan to support the volunteer sector.

In addition, a tool kit to help community groups use Community Counts, a web-based statistical information system, was developed in partnership with the Coastal Communities Network and the Pictou Regional Development Commission. A new community-based program to help local practitioners access learning opportunities and skills development was also initiated.

PRIORITY:

Community Infrastructure

In 2006–2007, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations will continue to administer the various federal/provincial programs supporting the development of infrastructure that strengthens our communities and provides for a cleaner environment.

(Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)

Nova Scotia was the first province/territory to submit the required reporting to the federal government and the first to receive 2006–2007 funding under the federal Gas Tax Transfer.

By the end of fiscal year 2006–2007, 52 of the Nova Scotia's 55 municipalities had received their funding. The department delivered approximately \$17.0 million of the total \$17.4 million to the municipalities and delivered federal gas tax transfers for public transit funding of \$11.4 million to eligible organizations. The Community Accessibility Program and the Community Transportation Assistance Program (CTAP) were fully committed in 2006–2007. The Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF), the Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program (C/NSIP) budgets for 2006–2007, and the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP) were also fully committed.



Annual Accountability

The majority of the funding was directed to green infrastructure projects that provide environmentally sustainable improvements to water, wastewater, and solid waste facilities in the province. The federal Gas Tax Transfer for Public Transit, the Community Accessibility Program, and the Community Transportation Assistance Program funding resulted in improved public transit services, which encourage greater access to and use of public transit and public facilities in the province. This is expected to help reduce traffic congestion in urban areas and improve access for seniors and people with disabilities in rural areas.

PRIORITY:
Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP)

Additional funding will be directed to PCAP in 2006–2007 to reduce the cost burden for municipalities to an affordable level.

(Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)

During the reporting period, \$4.25 million was directed to municipalities under the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP). This support was in addition to funding received under other municipal assistance programs.

The majority of the PCAP funding was directed to green infrastructure projects

that provide environmentally sustainable improvements to water, wastewater, and solid waste facilities in the province.

PRIORITY:
Road Weather Information System (RWIS)

The system will expand by three new sites in 2006–2007.

(Transportation and Public Works)

Two new road weather information system sites were installed in 2006–2007 at Lake Charlotte (Trunk 7) and Pugwash (Trunk 6). These additions bring the total number of highway cameras to 42.

PRIORITY:
Volunteer Fire Departments

The province will develop a strategy for standardized dispatch protocols that improve efficiencies and public safety.

(Environment and Labour)

In 2006–2007, an independent consultant was retained to conduct a survey of all volunteer fire departments to determine the state of volunteer notification and dispatch and to make high-level recommendations for any unacceptable risks.

The consultant filed a report in April 2007 that highlights several areas for improvement, including regionalized fire dispatch, provincial paging system,

formalized agreements, emergency call rerouting, and a security review and upgrade.

The Executive Summary of the report has been provided to the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia and will be discussed by the board of directors in September 2007. The outcome of that discussion will be reported to the Office of the Fire Marshal and the Public Safety and Field Communications office.

Enhancements to the volunteer fire system in 2006–2007 include long-service and bravery medals recognized in legislation, a grant of \$12,500 to the Fire Service Association to host training programs on the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters, and an annual grant of \$190,000 to fund the training programs at the Firefighters School in Waverley.

A threat-risk assessment was also developed to determine how volunteer public safety organizations notify and acknowledge first responder calls. The resulting study will be used to provide information for paging and dispatch service planning for municipal and volunteer organizations that provide fire, ground search and rescue, and emergency measures services.

PRIORITY: Workplace Safety

Employers, labour unions, and injured workers in Nova Scotia will benefit from improvements to our workplace safety and insurance system in 2006–2007.

(Environment and Labour)

Improvements in the Workplace Safety and Insurance System were achieved during 2006–2007, including the development of a set of key indicators to measure how well the system is working. Findings show 140,000 fewer days lost to injury, a reduction of 13 per cent from the previous year; a 7 per cent drop in the total injury rate; and improved return-to-work rates. These results have led to savings of \$4.5 million in short-term disability payments.

Other key activities conducted during the reporting period included employer workshops, a strategy to improve compliance with industry standards, a multi-year plan for regulation review, and a new service delivery channel providing employers with online access to claims data, assessment payments, and business tools.



**PRIORITY:
Opportunities for Sustainable
Prosperity (2006)**

In 2006–2007, the province will focus on four priority areas—increasing productivity, increasing renewable energy sources, developing the Atlantic Gateway, and building a skilled workforce.

(Economic Development)

In 2006–2007, the Office of Economic Development engaged in a series of research initiatives related to productivity and the productivity gap. Results of this analysis informed other work, such as the development of the provincial export strategy and research into labour force and demographic issues, and in recommendations for activities to support private-sector innovation. Building on these recommendations, the Office of Economic Development worked with InNOVACorp to develop programs and initiatives for implementation in the next fiscal year.

**PRIORITY:
Salt Management Plan**

The Salt Management Plan will continue in 2006–2007 with the objective of reducing any potential adverse effects of road salt on the environment.

(Transportation and Public Works)

In 2006–2007 work continued on the Salt Management Plan with the construction of four new salt storage facilities at Parrsboro, Port Hawkesbury, Strathlorne, and Margaree Forks.

Four new weigh scales were also installed at salt storage facilities in Londonderry, New Minas, Boulardarie, and Middleton. Construction on a fifth salt storage shed was deferred until 2007–2008.

**PRIORITY:
Leadership in Energy
and Design (LEED)**

The Department of Transportation and Public Works will work toward certification in Leadership and Energy Design (LEED).

(Transportation and Public Works)

Construction was completed on five school projects in 2006–2007, and all schools are expected to be LEED certified.

The Economy: Measuring Our Performance

BALANCED/SURPLUS BUDGET

(Finance)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure reflects government's effective management of the province's financial operating resources. This measure shows the status of the provincial budget. A balanced budget indicates that government can accommodate provincial spending within its revenue sources.

Where Are We Now?

The province had a surplus of \$182.4 million for the year ended March 31, 2007, as compared to the 2006–2007 budget estimate surplus of \$73.5 million. The surplus for the year ended March 31, 2006, was \$238.8 million (restated) as compared to the 2005–2006 budget estimate surplus of \$63.3 million. The target for future years is to meet the legislated requirements for a balanced budget, as well as the debt reduction plan. The debt reduction plan calls for the net direct debt to begin to reduce in fiscal year 2007–2008. To achieve this goal, the province must effectively control

expenditures while providing accurate forecasts for the various revenue sources. This involves a rigorous process of budgeting and in-year forecasting.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

We want to continue to produce balanced budgets and, starting in 2007–2008, produce surpluses sufficient to meet government's policy commitment to begin to reduce the net direct debt.

To assist government in achieving the target of a balanced budget, the Department of Finance works closely with Treasury and Policy Board to ensure that expenditures are closely monitored and continually enhances its fiscal models to improve in-house revenue forecasting.

PROVINCIAL NET DIRECT DEBT (NDD) AS A PERCENTAGE OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

(Finance)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Net direct debt as a percentage of GDP is an indicator of the fiscal sustainability and flexibility of the province. The higher the ratio, the greater the debt burden on the residents of Nova Scotia.



Where Are We Now?

As at March 31, 2007, the net direct debt to GDP ratio stood at 38.7 per cent. This represents a decrease from the ratio of 39.0 per cent at March 31, 2006 (2005—41.2 per cent; 2004—42.8 per cent; 2003—45.1 per cent).

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The province has targeted a continuation of this downward trend as its goal. Maintaining expenditure control throughout the government reporting entity is the primary strategy to achieve this target.

CREDIT RATING BY MAJOR RATING AGENCIES

(Finance)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

A credit rating is an independent evaluation of a borrower's ability and willingness to pay interest and to repay principal. Rating firms provide investors with these measures of the credit quality of bonds of other financial instruments. A credit rating indirectly affects the borrower's debt-servicing costs and the investor's expected rate of return, since an investor will demand a higher return on a more risky, lower-rated security.

Where Are We Now?

At March 31, 2007, the province's credit rating has been stable with all three major bond-rating agencies. Moody's Investor Services rated the province at "Aa2" with a stable outlook. Dominion Bond Rating Service placed the province at "A," also with a stable outlook. The rating by Standard and Poor's stood at "A+" with a stable outlook. All of these agencies have reconfirmed these credit ratings for the province of Nova Scotia.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The objective is to maintain and improve upon these ratings. To achieve this goal, the province will continue to make strong presentations to rating agencies on a regular basis that highlight our financial position.

**MARKET GROWTH—
AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES**

(Agriculture; Fisheries and
Aquaculture)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure indicates the market performance of Nova Scotia's agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture industries.

Where Are We Now?

In 2006, the province's aquaculture industry was valued at \$42.2 million, down slightly from \$44 million the previous year. The sportfishing industry, which contributes to tourism as well as to the government's health promotion agenda, was valued at \$91.6 million in 2006, up from \$82 million in 2000. The boatbuilding industry in Nova Scotia has undergone renewal in recent years. While domestic sales decreased from \$40 million to \$32 million between 2005 and 2006, export sales increased from \$33 million to \$42 million. Farm cash receipts in agriculture totalled \$452 million, down from \$461 million in 2005. Total exports of food manufacturing, agriculture, and fisheries products amounted to \$1.23 billion in 2006, down from \$1.32 billion in 2005 due to the rising value of the Canadian dollar. Fisheries exports alone accounted for \$984 million in 2006. Total capital expenditures in agriculture and fisheries amounted to \$114.5 million in 2006, up from \$112.8 in 2005.

**Where Do We Want to Be
in the Future?**

The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture will continue to foster economic growth in these industries through initiatives designed to increase exports and develop new product and value-added opportunities.

The Environment

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:
Environmental Home Assessment Program

In 2006–2007, the Department of Environment and Labour will begin a two-year pilot program to help 1400 households protect the quality of their drinking water and conserve water resources.

(Environment and Labour)

The Environmental Home Assessment Program (EHAP) made great strides in the reporting year with the public introduction of the program in October 2006.

Four environmental non-governmental organizations completed 400 home assessments in rural Nova Scotia. The four contracted organizations are ACAP Cape Breton, serving Cape Breton Island; Clean Nova Scotia, serving Central and Northern areas; Clean Annapolis River Project, serving the Annapolis Valley to Yarmouth; and Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation, serving South Shore to Yarmouth.

EHAP gave financial assistance to 70 low-income families that needed to repair or replace failing septic systems.

The program continues in year two with 1000 home assessments forecasted and up to 200 septic system repair grants to help more low-income clients.

PRIORITY:
Water Quality

The Department of Environment and Labour will build upon the success of the Drinking Water Strategy by addressing a broader range of water quality and water quantity issues.

(Environment and Labour)

Through 2006–2007, the Drinking Water Strategy was implemented and the Inter-Departmental Drinking Water Management Committee completed its review of the next steps required to effectively manage all water resources in Nova Scotia.

Recommendations for developing a more comprehensive water resource management strategy to deal with a broader range of water quality and quantity issues were approved in March 2007.



Water monitoring, reporting, and decision-making capacity was increased by adding 10 new wells to the groundwater observation well network and one new automated station to the surface water monitoring network. The Groundwater Observation Well Network web page was also launched during the reporting period to provide quarterly reporting to the public on groundwater levels across the province.

PRIORITY:
Air Quality

In 2006–2007, the Department of Environment and Labour will hire an additional air quality specialist and continue the program to protect our outdoor air quality.

(Environment and Labour)

In July 2006, an additional air quality specialist was hired to promote air quality management and develop an action plan to improve air quality.

The air-monitoring program was also continued with two new monitoring stations being added to the complement. Additionally, work was conducted in conjunction with the federal government to develop national standards in both measurement methods and air quality health indices.

PRIORITY:
Operational Response Capacity of EMO (Nova Scotia)

In 2006–2007, EMO will redesign the ergonomic and structural layout of the Joint Emergency Operations Centre (JEOC) and hire staff to manage the province's emergency information management system.

(EMO)

In 2006–2007, the Emergency Management Office (EMO) orchestrated a significant restructuring project related to the Joint Emergency Operation Centre (JEOC). Assessments were conducted, and it was determined that significant changes were required to meet operational needs. Three priority areas were identified, with the electronic file management component obtaining the highest priority. To meet this challenge, EMO purchased E-Team, an emergency events management software program.

To move this initiative forward, an experience events manager was acquired to steer EMO's operational vision, as well as develop a strategy for the implementation of events management within government.

PRIORITY:

Establishing the EMO Training Centre

In 2006–2007, the province will establish a full-time emergency management training centre in Nova Scotia.

(EMO)

In 2006–2007, a search began for a viable provincially owned facility to meet the criteria for an emergency relocation centre. The business case put forward envisioned a three-tier purpose for this facility, one of which would see the establishment of a full-time Emergency Management Training Centre.

PRIORITY:

Smart Energy Choices

The province will renew the Smart Energy Program for 2006–2007 with a budget of \$10 million.

(Energy)

Smart Energy Choices programs contributed to improving residential energy efficiency in 2006–2007 through numerous initiatives including the Provincial EnerGuide rebate, the incentive for EnerGuide audits, top-up for the audits and EnerGuide upgrades for modest-income homeowners, the incentive for new wood-pellet and EPA-rated wood stoves, and the incentives for energy-efficient oil furnaces and hot water boilers.

In 2006–2007 the following results were reported for energy efficiency utilizing Smart Energy Choices Program:

- 110 homeowners received a provincial EnerGuide rebate
- 100 modest-income homeowners received the \$400 EnerGuide top-up rebate
- 2100 homes received their first EnerGuide audit
- 2500 homeowners registered for a rebate for an energy-efficient oil furnace or hot water boiler.
- 3500 new wood-pellet or EPA-rated wood stoves were installed with the support of provincial incentives
- 320 new home plans were analysed for energy efficiency, and 30 homeowners had completed construction with upgrades and received the provincial government rebate.

During the reporting period, the Smart Energy Choices program has

- resulted in the installation of 3500 new wood-pellet or EPA-rated wood stove and 2500 new high-efficiency oil-fired boilers or furnaces.
- provided 1,450 provincial EnerGuide rebates, and over \$1.8 million in direct provincial EnerGuide payments to homeowners for energy efficiency upgrades



Annual Accountability

- conducted 1,600 first EnerGuide audits
- delivered approximately 65,000 energy saving kits to Nova Scotia households
- distributed more than 200,000 compact fluorescent lights to Nova Scotians

From its inception in 1997 to the end of March 2007, the EnerGuide program has involved more than 10,600 Nova Scotia homeowners.

The Smart Energy Choices program and its funding was transferred to Conserve Nova Scotia in January 1, 2007.

PRIORITY: Green Plan

The Department of Environment and Labour will continue to implement and build upon the Green Plan: Towards a Sustainable Environment (2003), which makes key links between green values and economic growth.

(Environment and Labour)

Bill 146, the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, was introduced on March 22, 2007. This piece of legislation builds on the foundation established by the original Green Plan and *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity*.

It marks the beginning of an important new phase in the province's commitment to become a leader in the clean and green economy.

The act sets out 21 specific, measurable goals that government must report on annually. There are also two overarching objectives: having one of the cleanest and most sustainable environments in the world by the year 2020 and improving our economic performance to a level that is equal to or above the Canadian average by the same year.

The 21 specific targets range from a 35 per cent greenhouse gas reduction, to protecting 12 per cent of our land mass, to ensuring that at least 18.5 per cent of our electricity comes from renewable sources.

A Deputy Ministers Forum on Sustainable Prosperity has also been formed to help guide the implementation of the act.

PRIORITY: Climate Change Impact Analysis

The Department of Natural Resources will prepare an analysis of the potential impacts of climate change for each of the department's areas of responsibility.

(Natural Resources; Energy)

A departmental review concluded that a basic level of information on the potential

impacts of climate change on forests, minerals, parks, and biodiversity was already available, so a more detailed and specific analysis in key areas was deemed to be the appropriate priority.

A proposal to identify the potential impact of climate change on tree species growth and distribution was developed and will proceed in fiscal year 2007–2008. Project findings will help to enable climate change impacts to be taken into account in the provincial wood-supply forecasts and will support the analysis of climate change impacts in other forest-related areas, such as reforestation, tree improvement, silviculture, fire/insect/disease, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity.

PRIORITY:
**Conserved Lands/
Protected Areas**

In 2006–2007, the province will continue to work towards a comprehensive system of protection areas for Nova Scotia.

(Environment and Labour)

During 2006–2007, a process to develop a comprehensive system of protected areas for Nova Scotia was initiated. The first step, under way since July 2006, includes working with Nova Scotia Natural Resources and partners through the Colin Stewart Forest Forum (CSFF) on

identifying high-priority areas for potential protection using science and best practices. The CSFF is also looking at creative ways to mitigate impacts of new protected areas on wood supply for the forest industry.

In July 2006, the government designated five properties under the Special Places Act as nature reserves. In March 2007, the province acquired 10 050 ha of land from Bowater Mersey and committed to conserve 100 per cent of the land. The province also acquired four private land holdings in existing wilderness areas for protection.

PRIORITY:
Ducks Unlimited Centre

In 2006–2007, the Department of Natural Resources will add four seasonal staff to the new Ducks Unlimited wetlands/interpretive centre at the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park.

(Natural Resources)

Ducks Unlimited Canada officially opened the Greenwing Legacy Project, located at the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park, in August 2006. The project includes a 465-m² state-of-the-art interpretative centre featuring interactive displays, hands-on wetlands exhibits, and classrooms. The Greenwing Legacy Project is within a 60-minute drive of approximately 100 schools, and its focus is to provide conservation education



Annual Accountability

for children. The project, with its interpretative centre, wetlands, and trails, helps to provide visitors with an awareness and understanding of the benefits that wetland ecosystems provide to the environment and to the health and enjoyment of people.

The Department of Natural Resources provides ongoing operational support for the interpretative centre facilities and walking trails. Four seasonal employees staffed the interpretative centre during 2006–2007.

PRIORITY:
**Park Maintenance
and Restoration**

In 2006–2007, funding will go towards the restoration and repair of infrastructure within the provincial park system,
(Natural Resources)

In 2006–2007, \$250,000 was allocated to each park project for McNabs Island, Campsite Redevelopment, and Beach Access.

The McNabs Island project included roof replacement to three historic buildings, removal of a condemned wharf, and the preparation of designs for the replacement wharf. Battery Provincial Park and Five Islands Provincial Park were allocated funds for the construction of new campsite loops to meet the demands of today's

campers. Shoreline access at seven different locations throughout the province was also upgraded or replaced to ensure a sustainable and safe access for beach goers.

The annual parks budget was also increased in 2006–2007 to provide for up to \$800,000 in expenditures on park improvement activities. These additional funds covered work at more than 30 provincial parks and encompassed a wide range of infrastructure improvements and repairs, such as building repairs, trail development and repairs, solutions to water and septic-related problems, and many other smaller items. In addition, upgrades at the Provincial Wildlife Park in Shubenacadie were made, and we were also able to contribute to the development of the new Greenwing Legacy Centre.

The Environment: Measuring Our Performance

DRINKING WATER QUALITY

(Environment and Labour)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Approximately 60 per cent of Nova Scotians obtain their drinking water from municipal water supplies. Health Canada, together with provincial ministries of health and environment, has established the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*. This document specifies the health-based criteria for a number of parameters, including bacteria content. NSEL tracks the proportion of people served by municipal water supplies who have access to drinking water that meets the health-based criteria for bacteriological quality. This measure helps to provide an overall picture of access to quality drinking water. It also helps to gauge the effectiveness of NSEL *Guidelines for Monitoring Public Drinking Water Supplies* and the Water and Wastewater Facilities and Public Drinking Water Supplies Regulations.

Where Are We Now?

NSEL's boil-water advisory database provides a tracking system for municipal water quality based on the health-based criteria for coliform bacteria (in the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*). In 2006, 98.7 per cent of the population served by municipal water supplies received water meeting the health-based criteria for bacteriological quality at all times during the calendar year. This is comparable to 2005 results and shows improvement over the results obtained in the previous four years (2001: 96.5 per cent; 2002: 96.5 per cent; 2003: 95.7 per cent; 2004: 98.4 per cent; 2005: 98.0 per cent; and 2006: 98.7 per cent).

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

Our ongoing target is to maximize the percentage of the population served by municipal water supplies that meet the health-based criteria for bacteriological quality. NSEL is contributing to this outcome by continuing to implement Nova Scotia's drinking water strategy, supporting development of municipal water supply protection plans, and enforcing the Water and Wastewater Facilities and Public Drinking Water Supplies Regulations, including NSEL *Guidelines for Monitoring Public Water Supplies*.



SULPHUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

(Environment and Labour)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) is a prevalent and potentially harmful air contaminant that affects air quality. It is a major contributor to acid rain and smog and can have significant effects on human health if concentrations are elevated. Improved air quality is therefore partly dependent upon reducing SO₂ emissions. By reducing SO₂ emissions, we are effectively working toward our clean air outcome.

Where Are We Now?

Sulphur dioxide emissions have fluctuated over the past six years. In 2004, approximately 161 000 tonnes of SO₂ (actual) were emitted in the province, primarily through electricity generation. In 2005, this had lowered to 126,500 tonnes (actual). This is below our target of 141 750 tonnes per year.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The Air Quality Regulations were amended in March 2005 and included lowering the provincial SO₂ emission cap to 141 750 tonnes per year. Reductions will be accomplished by working with major industries and establishing a requirement to reduce SO₂ emissions through the use of lower-sulphur fuels and process upgrades.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

(Environment and Labour)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Communities share responsibility for environmental management through efforts like managing solid waste responsibly. Nova Scotia is working actively to ensure community participation in reuse, recycling, composting, and other waste management initiatives. The average amount of waste discarded by each person per year is an indicator of the level of participation in waste diversion programs. Low disposal rates suggest that more material is being diverted from the waste stream, either through reduction at source, reuse, recycling, or composting. By comparing disposal rates in Nova Scotia with those of the Atlantic region and Canada as a whole, we can assess Nova Scotia's performance, relative to the rest of Canada.

Where Are We Now?

Statistics Canada reports provincial solid waste disposal data every two years with a delay of approximately two years. As the graph indicates, the national per capita disposal rate in 2004 was 772 kg per person. In Nova Scotia, we disposed of slightly more than half of this amount in 2004, at 427 kg per person. This figure gives Nova Scotia the lowest provincial disposal rate in Canada.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

We will continue to maintain a disposal rate below the national disposal rate. In fiscal 2006–2007, Nova Scotia committed to an even more ambitious disposal target of 300 kg of waste per capita by 2015. The department will support this goal through industry/product stewardship, promotion of best management practices, research and development, continued public education, and ensuring compliance with the Solid Waste-Resource Management Regulations.

ENVIRONMENT FARM PLANS (Agriculture and Fisheries)

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

In this measure the number of farmers participating in the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) initiative is expressed as a percentage of all registered farmers under the Nova Scotia Farm Registration Act.

Where Are We Now?

As of March 2007, 947 farms had completed, had enrolled in, or had an initial visit with respect to the EFP. This represents 40 per cent of the province's farms, using a base of 2400 registered farms. This meets the target of 40 per cent in the 2006–2007 fiscal year.

Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?

The Department of Agriculture aims to have 50 per cent of all registered farms participating in the EFP program by 2007–2008. The EFP may need to be broadened in the future to include smaller scale of part-time farming operations.

Government Services

Priorities for 2006–2007

PRIORITY:

French-language Services

In 2006–2007, the Office of Acadian Affairs will expand and promote its translation and other services offered to government. The province will also pursue joint opportunities for increasing the level of French language services available from government.

(Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations;
Office of Acadian Affairs)

In 2006–2007, the Office of Acadian Affairs cost-shared the development of French-language services through Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations with funds from the Canada/Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services. The total cost of the initiative was \$461,700.

The Office of Acadian Affairs promoted its translation services within government

through regular communications with the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and other interdepartmental contacts. A brochure was created to explain the translation service and distributed throughout government.

The total number of words translated grew from 643,000 in 2005–2006 to over 1,000,000 words in 2006–2007.

Another service coordinated by the Office of Acadian Affairs was the offering of French-language classes for public servants.

In 2006–2007, 231 seats were made available to provincial public servants compared with 188 in 2005–2006. These courses allow government to build on its French-language capacity and better serve the French-speaking public. Funding was provided from the Canada/Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services (\$67,700).

In 2006–2007, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations undertook several initiatives to expand its French-language services.

Providing French-language training to its employees was made possible with the help of the Office of Acadian Affairs.



Courses were offered at Université Sainte-Anne locations across the province, and a limited number of spots were accessed in the federal government's language forums within Nova Scotia. The department now has bilingual employees offering French-language service in its Call Centre, Dartmouth Access Centre, Yarmouth Access Centre, and head office.

The department has translated the *Nova Scotia Driver's Handbook* into French and made it available for purchase at Access Nova Scotia offices, through the government's online bookstore, and from the Service Nova Scotia website. The department also translated and made written driver learner and motorcycle tests available at offices that offer written testing.

In addition, new French content was added to websites including Vital Statistics, Registry of Motor Vehicles, Gas Regulations and Pricing, Your Energy Rebate Program, Graduate Tax Rebate, Service to Business, Vital Statistics, Registry of Motor Vehicles, Registry of Joint Stock Companies and Cooperatives, and related permits and licences.

PRIORITY: Healthy Workplace

The province will build the capacity to champion the creation of supportive work environments for its 9,000 employees.

(Public Service Commission)

In 2006–2007, a significant amount of work took place to advance the Healthy Workplace agenda across the public service. A corporate Healthy Workplace policy was implemented to help champion the creation of a safe and supportive work environment.

In recognition of the province's work in the developing a healthy workplace, it attained Level 1 certification from the National Quality Institute's Healthy Workplace Progressive Excellence Program in late March 2007.

During the reporting year, seven Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) courses were identified to be provided corporately with facilitators from the OH&S Forum. This move will ensure that employees across the system receive consistent OH&S training. In addition, comprehensive flexible work option guidelines were approved by the Public Service Commission's Executive Team. Approval was granted to conduct a pilot at the Public Service Commission in 2007–2008, which would inform a broad roll-out across the system.

PRIORITY:

Valuing Diversity

In 2006–2007, the Public Service Commission will work to bring more attention to diversity management.

(Public Service Commission)

In 2006–2007, 49 successful candidates from the Diversity Talent Pool were placed with client departments and agencies (an increase of approximately 15 per cent over the previous year). A feedback survey was conducted, and improvements were made to the processes associated with the talent pool. A database has now been developed and is in the testing and implementation phase. Further enhancements to the talent pool were contingent on additional resources, which did not become available through the year.

The development of an Executive Talent Pool, which was to be initiated in 2006–2007, was not completed. Looking ahead, the Public Service Commission anticipates such a talent pool would become part of a broader talent management centre, if approved.

Enhancing the skills of HR practitioners on best practices in recruitment and hiring for merit and diversity was achieved in the 2006–2007 fiscal year through training, piloted in January

2007. This module will be built into a two-day recruitment and selection training module.

The values module has been woven into the Learning Development Program and is the catalyst for the organizational climate survey.

Also in the 2006–2007 fiscal year, the *Affirmative Action (Diversity) Progress Report* was completed. The report provides an overview of the progress that has been made at the Public Service Commission and outlines a three-year plan to advance the diversity and affirmative action agenda. The Public Service Commission is also responsible for writing the annual corporate report, which was tabled in the Legislature in November 2006.

Finally, a Steering Committee has been established and is expected to announce the Aboriginal Workplace Initiative in 2007–2008.



PRIORITY:
**Third-Party Entity Governance
and Accountability**

In 2006–2007, Treasury and Policy Board will work to strengthen governance and accountability policies and procedures among third-party entities that are consolidated in the province’s financial statements.

(Treasury and Policy Board)

This multi-year initiative continued in 2006–2007. In consultation with departments and third-party entities consolidated in the province’s financial statements, Treasury and Policy Board continued working on strengthening governance and accountability policies and procedures for government’s third-party entities.

In February 2007, Treasury and Policy Board released a corporate orientation program entitled *Governing in the Public Sector: A Guide for Province of Nova Scotia Government Agencies*.

PRIORITY:
**Program Inventory
and Costing**

Updates to the program inventory web-based application will allow improvements such as archiving and better reporting ability.

(Treasury and Policy Board)

The Program Inventory and Costing Initiative (PICI) is an ongoing project that will enable government departments and agencies to define, develop, and maintain a corporate list of programs based on common provincial definitions.

In 2006–2007, Treasury and Policy Board and the PICI Project Managers’ Forum met monthly to create new business processes, definitions, tables, web applications, and administrative tools and to design a new inventory system.

The new inventory system/database development will be complete in 2007–2008. A program-costing methodology will be developed after the PICI project has completed its operational phase and will be based on the recommendations of the various stakeholders.

PRIORITY:

**Processing Drivers Licences
and Birth Certificates**

*The systems that run the
Registry of Motor Vehicles,
Vital Statistics, and Motor
Vehicle Tax will be modernized.*

(Service Nova Scotia and
Municipal Relations)

In 2006–2007, the design of a modernized Vital Statistics and Registry of Motor Vehicles system was completed. The development and roll-out of the system is expected to be complete in the 2007–2008 fiscal year.

Mainframe modernization will allow the Registry of Motor Vehicles and Vital Statistics to better share information. This will position the department to address new requirements, such as online submissions, with greater agility.

The department also rolled out the point-of-sale system, which consolidates financial functionality and data into one system. This provides improved financial controls for the department.

Appendix: Websites for Departmental Accountability Reports, 2006–2007

The Provincial Finance Act requires the Government of Nova Scotia to publish an annual *Government Accountability Report*. By policy, government also requires departments, agencies and Crown corporations in the consolidated financial statements to produce accountability reports of their own.

Both the Government Accountability Report and the Crown Corporation Accountability Reports are available to the public in hard copy or can be downloaded from the Government of Nova Scotia website: www.gov.ns.ca.

Complete accountability reports for departments and public service vote entities are published online. Department and public service entity accountability reports can be found through their specific websites at the addresses listed here.

Departments

Agriculture
www.gov.ns.ca/agri/
(Click on The Department)

Community Services
www.gov.ns.ca/coms/
(Click on Publications & Reports)

Economic Development
www.gov.ns.ca/econ/
(Click on Publications)

Education
www.ednet.ns.ca/
(Click on Document Depot)

Energy
www.gov.ns.ca/energy/
(Click About the Department)

Environment and Labour
www.gov.ns.ca/enla/
(Click on Publications)

Finance
www.gov.ns.ca/finance/
(Click on Publications & Reports)

Fisheries and Aquaculture
www.gov.ns.ca/fish/
(Click on Statistics & Publications)



Annual Accountability

Health

www.gov.ns.ca/health/
(Click on Reports)

Health Promotion and Protection

www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/index.asp
(Click on 2006–07 Accountability Report)

Intergovernmental Affairs

www.gov.ns.ca/iga/
(Click on Publications)

Justice

www.gov.ns.ca/just/
(Click on Publications)

Natural Resources

www.gov.ns.ca/natr/
(Click on 2006–07 Accountability Report)

Public Service Commission

www.gov.ns.ca/psc/
(Click on Reports & Publications)

Senior Citizens' Secretariat

www.gov.ns.ca/scs/
(Click on Publications)

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs

www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/
(Click on What We Do)

Tourism, Culture and Heritage

www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/
(Click on 2007–08 Business Plan)

Transportation and Public Works

www.gov.ns.ca/tran/
(Click on Publications)

Public Service Entity

Aboriginal Affairs

www.gov.ns.ca/abor/
(Click on Business Plan)

Acadian Affairs, Office of

www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/
(Click on Publications)

African Nova Scotia Affairs, Office of

www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/
(Click on Accountability Report 2006–07)

Communications Nova Scotia

www.gov.ns.ca/cmns/
(Click on Accountability Report 2006–07)

Emergency Management Office

www.gov.ns.ca/emo/

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office

www.foipop.ns.ca/
(Click on Publications)

Human Rights Commission

www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/
(Click on Publications)

Immigration, Office of

www.novascotiainmigration.com/
(Click on Publications and Resources)

Ombudsman, Office of

www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/
(Click on Publications)

Public Prosecution Service

www.gov.ns.ca/pps/
(Click on Publications)

Appendix

Status of Women, Advisory Council on
women.gov.ns.ca/
(Click on About Us)

Sydney Tar Ponds
www.tarpondscleanup.ca/
(Click on Library)

Treasury and Policy Board
www.gov.ns.ca/tpb/
(Click on Publications)

Utility and Review Board
www.nsuarb.ca/index.html
(Click on About Us)

Voluntary Planning
www.gov.ns.ca/vp/
(Click on Publications)

Crown Corporations

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/

Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission
www.hdbc.ca/index.asp

InNOVAcorp
www.innovacorp.ca/

Nova Scotia Business Incorporated
www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/

Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock
Insurance Commission
www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/

Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board
www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/

Nova Scotia Film Development
Corporation
film.ns.ca/corp_report.asp

Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture
Loan Board
www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/

Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation
www.nsgc.ca/

Nova Scotia Housing Development
Corporation
www.gov.ns.ca/coms/

Nova Scotia Liquor Commission
www.thenslc.com

Nova Scotia Municipal Finance
Corporation
www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc/

Trade Centre Limited
www.tradecentrelimited.com

Waterfront Development Corporation
Limited
www.wdcl.ca



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