

Our Goal

“To strengthen the capacity for policy development within government so that policy makers have access to the best available information, analysis, and advice to inform their decision making, thus ensuring Nova Scotia as a centre of policy excellence.”

For Further Information

The full report, *Policy Excellence and the Nova Scotia Public Service: Review Report*, is posted on the Treasury and Policy Board intranet site at <http://iweb.tpb.gov.ns.ca/>.

For further information about the report or the Policy Excellence Initiative, contact the Policy Branch at [424-7751](tel:424-7751).

iweb.tpb.gov.ns.ca



Nova Scotia
Treasury and Policy Board



Policy is central to

government operation: policy determines what a government does and how it does it. Therefore, it is crucial that the public service has the capacity to make good policy in an environment of increasingly complex issues, heavy workloads, and limited resources.

In recognition of this, the Policy Excellence Initiative was established to explore ways to strengthen the capacity within the Nova Scotia public service to develop policy. A working group drawn from the government-wide Policy Advisory Council (now known as the Senior Policy Executive Forum) and Treasury and Policy Board has conducted a review of policy making within the provincial government and in other jurisdictions to identify best practices and strategic directions.

The working group has published a report on this review, Policy Excellence and the Nova Scotia Public Service. It provides a roadmap on how to get started, setting down the working group's recommendations in five key areas of policy excellence:

- Leadership
- Strategic Visioning and Planning
- Policy Coherence
- Information and Knowledge
- Policy Skills and Workforce

Leadership

1. Develop a five-year plan for Policy Excellence that advances the key recommendations of the report and that focuses on building policy capacity across the system:
 - Delineate roles to ensure that cross-departmental and corporate work is conducted in a collaborative environment through a well-described horizontal policy model.
 - Create a policy environment and process that intentionally links longer-term strategic priorities to annual planning cycles.

Strategic Visioning and Planning

2. Develop an understanding of the importance of strategic, longer-term visioning and planning.
3. Create an environment that enables and supports strategic longer-term visioning and planning.
4. Improve capacity to define issues of strategic importance and guide the process of developing longer-term and horizontal policies.

Policy Coherence

5. Create and sustain a culture of working collaboratively within and outside of government
6. Increase policy networking opportunities across government.

Information and Knowledge

7. Coordinate and harness the research capacity across government in order to identify gaps and plan strategically for future government needs.
8. Ensure that leaders at all levels have the information and tools they need to support an environment conducive to the development of policy within the public service.

Policy Skills and Workforce

9. Clarify and communicate the role of central agencies in supporting policy development at the departmental level.
10. Create a plan to ensure the capacity of government to attract and retain people with the policy skills it needs for this decade and beyond.
11. Expand professional development opportunities for the public service in the area of policy skills development.