



Treasury and Policy Board

Business Plan 2008/2009

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A. Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Treasury and Policy Board office Business Plan for the 2008/2009 fiscal year.

Since its creation in 2001, Treasury and Policy Board has continued to provide excellent service for a streamlined executive and public service. Treasury and Policy Board is now in its fourth year of a new structure implemented in 2005 to help improve the way it fulfills its mandate to provide administrative support and advice to Executive Council.

The Treasury and Policy Board office has three branches: the Treasury Branch, the Policy Branch, and Executive Council Operations. This structure allows us to make improvements in the way we analyse government's annual and longer term expenditures; to enhance our leadership on cross government policy development and capacity and strengthened governance for third party entities to better respond to government's interest and needs.

As we head into a new fiscal year, with our structure now firmly in place and a full complement of professional staff, we look forward to continued improvements in the way we manage the Province's expenditure and policy decisions and ensure they are managed in a professional and accountable manner. Our key priorities for 2008/2009 will focus on continued strong fiscal management, a superior policy process and excellent policy analysis.

The Honourable Jamie Muir
Chair of Treasury and Policy Board

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B. Vision

Public policy excellence, which promotes the sustainable social, economic and fiscal prosperity of the Province.

C. Mission

To support the Premier and Executive Council (Cabinet) through effective administration, analysis of proposals, communication of decisions; and through corporate leadership in the development of policy capacity and expenditure management.

D. Link to Corporate Path (the New Nova Scotia)

Treasury and Policy Board Office (TPB) in its role in providing policy and expenditure support and analysis to the Executive Council and its committees, will seek to ensure that Government's policy and expenditure decisions are consistent with the directions provided in the New Nova Scotia: A Path to 2020 as well as the two coordinating frameworks which guide the path to 2020: Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity; and Social Prosperity - Weaving the Threads: A Lasting Social Fabric.

E. Planning Context

TPB is entering its fourth year under the current structure. The organization has been successful over the last three years to focus strategically and bring continuity.

The Treasury Branch is responsible for supporting Executive Council's, and TPB's (a subcommittee of the Executive Council) financial decision making. The branch will enhance its ability to provide analysis and advice on the Province's longer term investment opportunities within the context of the New Nova Scotia.

The branch will continue its responsibility for allocating and monitoring provincial operating and capital expenditures. As well, the branch will concentrate on better understanding the annual expenditures of government agencies, and continues to lead the annual business planning and accountability reporting processes.

The Policy Branch is responsible for supporting Executive Council and its committees including the Legislative and Regulatory Review and various issues committees as required. In collaboration with government agencies, the branch identifies significant short- and long-term policy challenges and, in some cases lead cross government policy development. The branch will ensure that Executive Council has the information and options it requires to discuss the issue in an informed manner. On a more operational level, the branch analyzes most submissions to Executive Council. Additionally, the branch reviews all presentations to Executive Council and its committees, excluding the TPB. In collaboration with the sponsoring agency, the branch analyzes and makes recommendations for both policy and financial considerations to ensure they are consistent with government priorities, including the New Nova Scotia.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) is responsible for meeting weekly to address very complex and highly confidential matters. To function effectively, Executive Council requires support to

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ensure its decisions are properly recorded and executed. TPB is Executive Council's secretariat. As such, it is a vital link that ensures government functions effectively. The Executive Council Operations Branch is non-departmental in function and purpose. It serves the Executive Council and its committees, TPB's executive team as well as departments, agencies, boards and commissions. The Branch aims to ensure that the business of Executive Council and its committees is conducted in a timely efficient way and that proper collective information is provided. The ECO Branch will work to improve agenda management for Executive Council and its Committees, strengthen governance and accountability for government's third party entities and develop policies and procedures for more efficient and effective operations of the machinery of government. The Branch also coordinates government's ABC appointment process, and processes requests under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for the Executive Council Office, Premier's Office and TPB.

F. Strategic Goals

- Support Executive Council's informed decision-making by consistently providing accurate, concise, and timely information.
- Provide leadership to advance Government's agenda.
- Provide leadership to advance government's capacity to work horizontally by supporting the development and coordination of corporate strategies and initiatives.
- Improve governance and accountability of government agencies.
- Provide effective and efficient administration of Government by continually improving systems, processes and procedures.

G. Core Business Areas

1. Support to Executive Council and its sub-committees

A key responsibility of the TPB office is managing submissions to, and follow-up from Executive Council, TPB, the Legislative and Regulatory Review Committee, and Executive Council's Issues Committees. The office develops the Executive Council agenda and provides critical analysis of policy and expenditure proposals. The analysis, which accompanies submissions to the Executive Council and its committees, serves as background to the decision-making process and helps ensure decisions are based on complete and accurate information and a full understanding of corporate policy and financial implications.

The TPB office also supports the work of the Legislative and Regulatory Review Committee by identifying policy issues that should be referred to Executive Council, TPB or the Executive Council committees for review and decision and provides advice on draft legislation to ensure policy objectives are met.

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2. *Strategic planning, budgeting and accountability*

Strategic Planning

The TPB office assists the ECO in developing and communicating corporate priorities, such as the New Nova Scotia, and develops processes to ensure funding allocations are consistent with policy direction and priorities. The office analyzes and advises on department and agency budgets to ensure that allocations support priorities, suggesting modification when necessary.

The TPB office is the Government of Nova Scotia's central planning agency. Responsibilities include preparing the Government of Nova Scotia Business Plan publication and coordinating the publication of annual business plans for departments, agencies and crown corporations.

Budgeting

While primary responsibility for the provincial budget rests with the Minister of Finance, the TPB office works closely with the Department of Finance to prepare the provincial budget. The office coordinates the development of the expenditure component of the budget and monitors government expenditures throughout the year to ensure that expenditure targets are achieved. TPB is also responsible for the capital budget and leads the Tangible Capital Asset Prioritization Committee.

Accountability

The TPB office is responsible for the preparation of the Government of Nova Scotia's Annual Accountability Report publication and coordinating the publication of annual accountability reports for departments, agencies and crown corporations.

An important role of the TPB office is to improve the accountability and performance reporting practices of Government, departments/offices, certain government agencies and crown corporations. Building on the progress made in recent years (annual business planning including performance measures and accountability reporting), work is being conducted to implement monthly financial reporting by all government agencies. In support of this core business area, the Treasury and Policy Board is undertaking a number of priorities as outlined below including the "*Consolidated Entity Governance and Accountability Initiative*" and "*Better Regulations - Everyone's Business*".

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3. *Provide leadership to advance the development of policy capacity and horizontal government.*

The office identifies major corporate policy issues and coordinates policy development with departments and agencies on issues that cross departmental boundaries. The TPB office initiates, and sometimes leads, corporate projects.

4. *Supporting Effective Corporate Administration of Government*

The TPB office continues to work to improve the administration of government by developing new policy, issuing and communicating guidelines and standards, advising on government structure and programs and by supporting senior leadership development.

H. **Human Resources Plan**

In 2006, a comprehensive human resource strategy was adopted for the civil service employees of the TPB office. Implementation of the strategy will continue in 2008/2009 including initiatives related to diversity in the workplace and employee health and safety.

I. **Priorities**

1. *Policy Excellence and Policy Capacity*

TPB provides high-quality analysis and recommendations to the Executive Council, and its sub-committees, and provides corporate leadership to government agencies. A key element of TPB's corporate leadership role is to continually improve policy analysis and build policy capacity across the public service to ensure sound fiscal management, a superior policy process and excellent policy analysis. Key initiatives include:

- *Policy Excellence Report:*
 - develop a five-year plan for *Policy Excellence* that advances the key recommendations of the July 2007 report. The five-year plan will:
 - Delineate roles to ensure that cross-departmental and corporate work is conducted in a collaborative environment through a well-described horizontal policy model; and
 - Create a policy environment and process that intentionally links longer-term strategic priorities to annual planning cycles.
 - continue to advance government's capacity to work horizontally by increasing inter-departmental coordination and developing and managing a horizontal policy agenda that identifies government's significant opportunities and challenges and, in certain cases, leading cross government policy development.

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- take a leadership role in the implementation of government priorities such as the New Nova Scotia by working with departments and agencies to communicate government priorities, aligning departmental business plans with corporate priorities and working with Executive Council to ensure decisions align with government priorities.
- increase coordination of the annual budget allocation process by taking a “year long” approach to integrating policy, budget, TCA, business planning, and accountability reporting.
- improve agenda management of submissions to Executive Council and its committees by providing a quality assurance role, ensuring submissions meet requirements established by Executive Council and improve record keeping and management of Executive Council documents and records of decision.
- communicate the role of TPB across government to assist and improve the submissions process
- increase analysis and planning for government’s longer term expenditures and opportunities for investment (sharpening the “business case” for investments)
- strengthen governance framework for third party entities to better respond to government’s interests and needs
- Work with external organizations, including other governments, academia and business/professional organizations to share ideas, knowledge and learning that enhances the policy capacity of government

2. *Improve Government Accountability*

Program Inventory and Costing

The Program Inventory and Costing Initiative (PICI) is an ongoing initiative that will enable all government departments and public service entities to maintain a corporate list of government programs based on common provincial definitions. During 2007/08 the information was collected and entered into a government designed system. It is now operational and will provide support for Government and departments in improving program planning and program management while using a horizontal approach.

For 2008/09, the Treasury Branch will work with all departments and public service entities in educating them to better understand the PICI system and its uses as a valued management tool in improving program planning and program management . In addition, as the PICI system moves into the operational stage with the various stakeholders and user groups, it will continue to be enhanced throughout the year.

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Review and document internal processes to support the core business areas of budgeting and monitoring of fiscal performance

The Treasury Branch plays a key role in preparation of the provincial budget and monitoring of government expenditures throughout the year. Internal processes have been developed to support these roles but there is a need to review these to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible, and to ensure that the most appropriate information technology and software are being used. Processes will also be documented to ensure consistency and continuity in the event of staff turnover.

Improve communications with government departments

Achievement of appropriate fiscal accountability and expenditure management depends on effective two-way communication between the Treasury Branch and financial staff throughout government. TPB requirements need to be clearly conveyed to appropriate management and staff, and there needs to be on-going dialogue between TPB and the departments. The Treasury Branch will be reviewing how its requirements are conveyed to government management and staff with a view to standardizing communications and protocols. This may take the form of a procedures manual for government financial staff, or a standard series of communications to be issued at key points in the annual expenditure management process to set out expectations, timelines and procedures to be followed.

"Better Regulation - Everyone's Business"

The Better Regulation Initiative (BRI) is Nova Scotia's comprehensive approach to regulatory reform. The goals are to improve the competitive position of Nova Scotia business and also improve protection for the public and the environment.

TPB chairs the government-wide steering committee and implements and coordinates the priorities identified by that committee. All departments are engaged in developing and realizing plans to reduce administrative burden for business; improve service; streamline regulation where appropriate; improve compliance with regulation; and improve the overall quality of regulation. TPB is committed to measuring progress and to report publicly at least every year on results achieved.

In 2008/2009, TPB will lead the implementation of a government-wide policy containing principles to improve the way regulation is considered, developed, implemented, enforced and evaluated. To support staff in applying the policy, TPB will assist in developing and support training for appropriate policy and program staff across departments. TPB will also support the objectives of this policy by encouraging departments, offices and agencies to address all requirements of the Better Regulation Initiative in their regulatory proposals.

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Other priorities for Better Regulation in 2008/2009 include further reducing the administrative burden for business overall and for specific sectors, implementing service standards for licenses, permits and approvals, assisting businesses to comply with regulation, measuring progress and releasing an annual progress report.

To measure progress and mark successes of the Better Regulation Initiative, establishment of measures and targets is critical. The following targets have been established for the Initiative. Additional measures will be developed to track other Initiative milestones.

- Reduce administrative burden by 20% by 2010
- Ensure applications for licenses, permits, approvals turned around within 10 business days (excluding exemptions) by 2010
- Provide training for all inspectors by 2010
- Federal, provincial, municipal requirements for 80% of sectors and 80% of municipalities available through BizPal by 2009

Consolidated Entity Governance and Accountability - This multi-year corporate initiative will continue in 2008/2009. In consultation with departments and consolidated entities in the province's financial statements, TPB will continue working on strengthening governance and accountability policies and procedures for government's consolidated entities. Implementation of improved governance and accountability processes is expected to provide clear direction and support for the entities to work toward shared outcomes with departments and a more effective and efficient use of public funds.

The following milestones have been achieved:

- 2005 - Executive Council approved a multi-year plan for implementation of corporate governance and accountability initiatives.
- Initiatives were customized for each consolidated entity.
- 2006 - Personal Services Contract Regulations were developed.
- 2007 - Development of a Corporate Orientation Manual outlining responsibilities to shareholders.
- Measures were taken to ensure sufficient internal capacity for supporting Initiatives and Ministers of Consolidated Entities.

In 2008/09 an Appointment Processes Manual will be produced and made available to all ABC (Agencies, Boards and Commissions) coordinators in all departments. This manual will outline the roles and responsibilities of organizations and individuals involved in non-adjudicative appointments.

3. *Improve Government-Wide Systems, Processes and Procedures* Agencies, Boards and Commissions Database

The ECO branch corporately administers the appointments process for both Adjudicative

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and Non-Adjudicative agencies, boards and commissions (ABC's) on behalf of the Executive Council. To improve efficiency and facilitate information sharing with departments who play a large part in the appointments process, the ECO branch will continue work started in 2007/08 to implement a new database to track the status of applications and appointments made to ABC's.

Liaison with Department and Consolidated Entities

Maintain liaison with departments and consolidated entities of the Province in relation to matters of concern to the Executive Council. This includes, but is not limited to, such things as defining roles and responsibilities between central agencies and departments and entities, providing explanations/clarifications on policies and procedures emanating from central agencies, assisting with document searches of a corporate nature, participating on committees requiring a corporate perspective, developing and maintaining a Business Continuity Plan for Executive Council and Standing Committees of the House of Assembly, creating and maintaining the working relationship between the Executive Council Office and the Office of Lieutenant Governor.

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J. Budget Context

Treasury and Policy Board - Estimated Budget Expenditures			
	Estimates 2007/2008	Forecast 2007/2008	Estimates 2008/2009
	(\$000's)	(\$000's)	(\$000's)
Total - Gross Current	\$3,230.0	\$3,155.0	\$3,475.0
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,637.0	\$2,671.9	\$2,987.0
Funded Staff (FTEs)	29.0	28.4	31.0

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κ. Performance Measures

(Results from the 2007/08 Client Survey will be available soon.)

The following performance measures are based on the four Core Business Areas:

1. Support to Executive Council and its sub-committees
2. Strategic planning, budgeting and accountability
3. Provide leadership to advance the development of policy capacity and horizontal government.
4. Supporting effective corporate administration and governance

Core Business Areas 1: Support to Executive Council and its sub-committees				
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET- 2008/2009	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Quality information and advice to Executive Council and TPB	Overall satisfaction with the process of submitting documents to Executive Council and its committees.	85% overall satisfaction level with the Executive Council document submission process (2005-06), an 8% increase over 2003-04 base year	Maintain overall satisfaction of at least 85%	Implement 2008/2009 business plan and continue to maintain high quality analysis and advice

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Core Business Areas 2: Strategic planning, budgeting and accountability				
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET-2008/2009	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Improved financial and business planning and accountability reporting	Overall satisfaction with: - budget process; - business plan process; and - accountability reporting process.	Overall satisfaction based on 2005 Survey: - budget process - 66% (1% increase over 2003 base year) - business plan process - 78% (13% increase over base 2003 year) - accountability reporting process - 80% (17% increase over 2003 base year)	Increase overall satisfaction above 2005 levels	Build on successful relationships with the Departments at the Senior and staff levels.

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Core Business Areas 3: Provide leadership to advance the development of policy capacity and horizontal government.				
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET-2008/2009	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Increased understanding of Government's priorities	Client survey: Percentage of survey respondents who said they have a good understanding of Government's priorities and goals	Percentage of survey respondents who said they have a good understanding of Government's priorities and goals based on the 2005 Survey (base year): - 88%	Maintain at 88%	Use the Policy Excellence initiative to promote government priorities. Increase TPB presence on inter-departmental initiatives.
Collaborative policy development	Client survey: Percentage of survey respondents agreed that TPB provides good leadership in coordinating corporate policy efforts.	Percentage of survey respondents agreed that TPB provides good leadership in coordinating corporate policy efforts based on 2005 Survey (base year): 67%	Increase to 70% or above.	Move ahead with the Policy Excellence Initiative.

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Core Business Areas 4: Supporting effective corporate administration and governance				
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET-2008/2009	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Apply useful administrative policies that facilitate efficient government administration	Client survey: Percentage of survey respondents satisfied with the Management Manual updating process.	Percentage of survey respondents satisfied with the Management Manual updating process based on 2005 Survey (base year): 70% (a decline of 13% from 2003)	Return satisfaction rating to 80% or above.	Continue and improve promotion of Management Manual update process and work with senior management of departments to promote the use of and updates to the manuals.