

Accountability Report 2017–2018

Office of the Premier
Executive Council Office
Office of Strategy Management

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Accountability Report 2017–2018

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A. Accountability Statement

Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management for the year ended March 31, 2018 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management 2017-2018 Business Plan.

Original signed by:

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
President of the Executive Council

Original signed by:

Laura Lee Langley
Clerk of the Executive Council
Deputy Minister to the Premier

Original signed by:

Bernard F. Miller
Deputy Minister, Office of Strategy Management

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B. Message from the President of the Executive Council

I am pleased to present the Accountability Report for the 2017-2018 fiscal year for the Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) acts as a secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet) and serves and supports it and its committees. It aims to ensure the business of Executive Council and its committees is conducted in a timely, efficient manner.

ECO provides non-partisan advice and information to the Premier, Cabinet and its committees; administers government's decision-making process; develops and advances corporate priorities and plans; and provides advice and support on the governance of, and appointments to, agencies, boards and commissions. It also provides administrative and operational support, including human resources and budgeting, to the Office of the Premier.

The Office of Strategy Management was created in 2017 to ensure successful implementation of government priorities. It is responsible for communicating and managing priority objectives and working across departments to advance government's policy agenda. The goals set by The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy, intended to help our province achieve its economic and demographic potential, remain at the forefront of the office's mandate. New and Better Ways, an Innovation Strategy for Nova Scotia, also guide and inform policy direction.

Original signed by:

The Honourable Stephen McNeil, President of the Executive Council

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C. Financial Table and Variance Explanation

	2017-2018 Estimate	2017-2018 Actuals	2017- 2018 Variance
Executive Council Office	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Executive Council Office	5,200	4,408	(792)
Total: Departmental Expenses	5,200	4,408	(792)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	0	0	0
Fees and Other Charges	0	0	0
Ordinary Recoveries	0	0	0
Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries	0	0	0
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	0
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	41.0	36.9	(4.1)
<u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to vacancy and operating savings			
<u>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:</u> Temporary vacancies			

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D. Measurement of Performance

The Office of the Premier/The Executive Council Office/Office of Strategy Management routinely speak with clients and stakeholders to improve processes and communication. For the 2017-18 fiscal year, the offices discontinued the use of the client survey in favour of meaningful conversations with clients and stakeholders.

Executive Council Office:

Feedback from conversations with policy analysts, Cabinet, clients and stakeholders is generally positive and noted improved collaboration between the Executive Council Office and departments through the Cabinet process. An area of development identified is to continue to increase the efficiency of Cabinet and Treasury and Policy Board processes.

The implementation of the new online Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABC) application system in September 2017 has made it easier for applications to review current opportunities, submit applications and track the status of applications and appointments. The system has also enabled government to screen applications more quickly and effectively, more accurately track the diversity of applicants and appointees, and match candidates from diverse backgrounds with suitable opportunities.

Time Frame	# of Applicants	# of Applications	# of Reapplications
Spring 2015	185	241	50
Fall 2015	261	388	84
Spring 2016	223	337	60
Fall 2016	277	350	95
Spring 2017	191	256	60
Fall 2017 (September 8, 2017 – March 31, 2018)	417	566	102

*Spring Campaigns runs from April 1st – August 31st each year

*Fall Campaigns run from September 1st – March 31st each year

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Office of Strategy Management

In fiscal 2017-2018, the Office of Strategy Management (OSM) supported articulation and communication of the priorities of the current government through efforts including 70 presentations to hundreds of senior officials, departmental staff, and partners. It aided in fostering clarity of roles and accountabilities, and contributed to alignment of departmental work and corporate processes. This work included ensuring alignment of Ministerial Mandate, business plans, budgets, strategies, and accountability reports with consideration to government priorities. OSM, through its support for Deputy Minister Committees and priority file areas also facilitated inter-departmental collaboration and innovation to advance progress in complex areas.

OSM tracks and regularly reports on the progress of specified priority areas as identified by the Premier and Executive Council through mechanisms including the One Nova Scotia dashboard www.onens.ca

Highlights for this year include:

Population

Nova Scotia's population levels reached historic highs.

The number of immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia has increased over the past four years, from 2,243 between July 1, 2012 and July 1, 2013, to a recent high of 5,442 between July 1, 2015 and July 1, 2016, and 4,356 between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017. Although 2016 numbers were elevated by the one-time influx of Syrian refugees, 2017 numbers remained high by historical standards – the second highest number in a single year. Immigration into the province has steadily increased over the past three years, even excluding refugees. New immigration streams and pilot programs are expected to continue the trend.

Nova Scotia has seen a decrease in the number of people leaving for other provinces, particularly Alberta. Between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017, Nova Scotia saw a net gain of 314 people between the ages of 18 and 64 from other provinces. This is the second consecutive year of net positive interprovincial migration.

Fiscal Sustainability

In March 2018, the Province achieved a third consecutive balanced budget. Net-debt to GDP declined four percentage points since 2013, and is on track to achieve 30 percent by 2024. Provincially, GDP growth is modest, but steady (2012, 1.0% to 2017, +1.2%). The Halifax Regional Municipality has emerged as one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

Economic Growth

Like all modern economies, innovation is the single most crucial component of long-term economic success for Nova Scotia. Economic development in the province has shifted toward a regional innovation ecosystem approach. This collaboration-based approach spurs growth

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by bringing together the collective efforts necessary to deliver new ideas to markets all over the world. The unprecedented level of collaboration among business, entrepreneurs, post-secondary institutions, venture capitalists, and governments in 2017-2018 resulted in crucial wins such as the federal Ocean Supercluster bid.

Capital is vital to start a new business, and new entrepreneurs and their businesses are essential to economic growth. From 2013 to 2017, available venture capital per capita in Nova Scotia grew by 323 per cent; a rate surpassing the rest of Canada. Nova Scotia now has the fourth most active venture capital scene in the country. First quarter results from 2018 show a continuation of this trend. For the first time, Nova Scotia surpassed Waterloo – often considered a hub for innovation in Canada – in venture capital deals in Q1 2018. The 2017 expansion of Volta, attraction of the first Creative Destruction Lab east of Montreal, new Innovation Districts in Halifax and Sydney and rural Innovation Hubs, the creation of Research Nova Scotia, as well as the launch of the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Enterprises (officially opened in Q1 2018) are aimed at continuing this positive trend.

Connected Communities

Today, innovation can come from anywhere and brought to new customers across the globe if businesses are digitally connected. In fiscal 2017-2018, a \$120 million trust was established to expand high-speed internet so more Nova Scotians living in rural areas can take part in economic opportunities.

Exports

Non-energy exports abroad grew 44 per cent from 2010 to 2017, driven mainly by the doubling of seafood exports since 2010 and a 22% increase in tire manufacturing. At the same time, natural gas exports declined by 99 per cent since 2008. However, Nova Scotia has diversified its exports to the extent that the decay in natural gas exports have been offset.

Education

Based on a growing body of global research providing compelling evidence that the early years of a child's life are the most critical determinants of lifelong physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and language development, and thus future success, Nova Scotia launched pre-primary classes in 2017-2018. Curriculum in our school systems also added focus to competencies and experiences such as Brilliant Labs & other experiential learning, needed for children to eventually thrive in modern economies. Such future skills include math, reading recovery, coding, data analytics, big data, entrepreneurship, and social enterprise. Skilled trade centres were also expanded at the high school level and the Apprenticeship Agency was launched.

Employment Attachment

Economic growth is important in that it provides more meaningful opportunities, including entrepreneurial experiences that allow Nova Scotians to live a high quality of. Growth also enables stronger public services. Nova Scotia's unemployment rate is well below long run averages and full-time employment is near the all-time highs recently achieved. Programs

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designed to help more Nova Scotians -particularly youth, and visible minorities -access meaningful employment opportunities including Graduate to Opportunity and Innovate to Opportunity, START, and Now! NS, launched, expanded, and continued in fiscal 2017-18.

Health

Modern healthcare is transitioning toward a team-based approach to ensure patients receive the best, most integrated care possible. This change involves patients more in their care, increases access to medical professionals, and improves outcomes for patients and their families. It also creates an atmosphere where medical professionals are better able to support each other – something particularly attractive to younger doctors. From December 2017, an additional 22 collaborative care centres were enhanced or opened, bringing Nova Scotia's total to 57 centres throughout the province. Healthcare is also shifting toward the quality of life and improved health outcomes seniors enjoy when they can safely stay in their homes with the right support. About 600 more Nova Scotians are eligible to receive financial assistance for providing care to adults living at home through the expansion of the Caregiver Benefit Program.

New initiatives were launched to attract more doctors to the province and entice them to stay. In addition to the tuition relief program, the family medicine bursary, and the debt assistance program, a \$6.4 million trust fund was established this fiscal to encourage doctors to take on new patients. A new immigration stream also aims to attract more international doctors and specialists. Nova Scotia is the second province to offer a dedicated immigration stream for doctors.

The QEII redevelopment moved forward in 2017. The project includes expansion and renovations at the Dartmouth General Hospital, and improvements to the QEII Health Sciences Centre's Halifax Infirmity site and Hants Community Hospital that will support the eventual closure of the Centennial and Victoria buildings on the Victoria General campus. Surgeries are now being performed at a new operating room at Hants Community Hospital in Windsor, doubling the number of annual procedures and allowing for the movement of services out of the aging Victoria and Centennial buildings.

In fiscal 2017-2018, the number of people wait list for hip and knee surgeries declined by 4.6%. To deliver care to patients faster, a \$16 million investment over two years will place greater focus on pre- and post-surgery wellness and recovery, create a centralized intake process and earlier assessments, and add more orthopedic surgeons. To eliminate the waitlist, 470 new spots were created in the opioid treatment program, and 4,000 naloxone kits were distributed free of charge.

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E. Annual Report Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labour Board.

A wrongdoing, for the purpose of the Act, is:

- a) A contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) A misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) An act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health, or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) Directing or counseling someone to commit a wrongdoing.

OP/ECO/OSM have no items to report for 2017-2018.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2017-2018
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a