



Accountability Report

2018–2019

*Office of the Premier/Executive Council
Office/Office of Strategy Management*



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Accountability Report 2018–2019

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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 (the “Offices”) for the year ended March 31, 2019 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Offices’ Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments, and the opinions of the Offices.

The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Offices’ 2018-2019 Business Plan.

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
President of the Executive Council

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

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 2018-2019 fiscal year for the Offices.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) acts as a secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet) and its committees, and ensures its business is conducted in a timely and 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 articulated in both the "Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy" and "New and Better Ways, Innovation Strategy for Nova Scotia" are intended to help our province achieve its economic and demographic potential. The Office of Strategy Management continues to use the outcomes identified in these reports to guide and inform policy direction.

The Honourable Stephen McNeil, President of the Executive Council

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C. Financial Table and Variance Explanation

	2018-2019 Estimate	2018-2019 Actuals	2018-2019 Variance
Executive Council Office/ Office of the Premier	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Executive Council Office/ Office of the Premier	4,315	3,772	(543)
Total: Departmental Expenses	4,315	3,722	(543)
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)	35.0	30.8	(4.2)
<u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to vacancy and operating savings			
<u>Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to vacancy and operating savings			
<u>TCA Purchase Requirements Variance Explanation:</u>			
<u>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to vacancy savings			

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	2018-2019 Estimate	2018-2019 Actuals	2018- 2019 Variance
	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Office of Strategy Management	1,086	935	(151)
Total: Departmental Expenses	1,086	935	(151)
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)	8.0	7.5	(0.5)
<u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u>			
Variance due to operating savings			

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D. Measurement of Performance

The Offices discontinued the use of the client survey in 2017 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 submission process. An area of development identified is to continue to increase the efficiency of the Cabinet and Treasury and Policy Board submission process.

Governance and Accountability Unit:

In July 2018, the Executive Council Office formed the Governance and Accountability Unit (GAU) in order to centralize certain aspects of the Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABC) appointments and governance process, to ensure that appointments are made in a timely way, and to develop and implement strategies to promote diversity and inclusion. In addition to coordinating the appointments process, the goals of the GAU are to develop performance indicators for monitoring new policies and processes regarding appointments. GAU fields calls from many applicants on an almost daily basis to assist them through the application process and to help them better understand the corporate process.

Agencies, Boards and Commissions online web application system:

The implementation of a new ABC online web application system in September 2017 has made it easier for applicants 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. Applicant and application numbers for the 2018 recruitment campaigns indicate the online system has been well received and appears to be increasing both the number of applicants and applications as compared to previous years.

In February of 2018, the ABC Database was upgraded to provide better tracking of the timelines of the process from application submission to appointment of members to ABCs. Additional features were added to create better communication with applicants, in an effort to assist them in submitting comprehensive application packages. This communication also includes providing applicants with feedback from the non-partisan screening panels on their applications.

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Time Frame	# of Applicants	Total # of Applications ¹	# of Applications for reappointment ²
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	417	566	102
Spring 2018	381	493	56
Fall 2018	503	788	76

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

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

OFFICE OF STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

The Office of Strategy Management is responsible for communicating and managing the priority objectives of Executive Council and working across departments to advance government’s policy agenda. It works closely with departments and agencies to translate government’s priorities into policies, programs, and initiatives intended to produce measurable results. Core activities include:

- Work with Executive Council (Cabinet) to establish government priorities.
- Articulate government’s policy priorities to departments and agencies.
- Foster engagement with the priorities.
- Inform and support departmental and agency planning and implementation.
- Align efforts or initiatives of government to enable the achievement of priority objectives.
- Encourage and inform horizontal collaboration and initiatives to advance progress on complex challenges.

¹ The number of applications is frequently greater than the number of applicants because some applicants apply to more than one ABC.

² A reappointment is a situation in which an applicant is applying to be reappointed to the same ABC.

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- Work with the One Nova Scotia Collective to manage, measure, and publicly report on collective progress toward the 19 goals set out by *The Nova Scotia Commission on Building our New Economy*.
- Monitor organizational performance.

The Executive Council Office, Office of the Premier and Office of Strategy Management routinely speak with stakeholders to improve processes and communication.

The Office of Strategy Management also regularly reports on the progress of priorities identified by the Ivany Commission through the OneNS dashboard <https://onens.ca/>.

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E. Annual Report Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* (the “Act”) was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The Act allows government employees 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 disclosing employees 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