

**Office of Aboriginal Affairs**

**Annual Accountability Report**

**Reporting for the Fiscal Year 2006-2007**

**Issued by: Office of Aboriginal Affairs**

**Date: September 21, 2007**

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## **Accountability Statement**

The accountability report of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs for the year ended March 31, 2007, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Office of Aboriginal Affairs business plan information for the fiscal year 2006-2007. The reporting of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs' outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs' 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 Aboriginal Affairs business plan for the year.

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Honourable Angus MacIsaac  
A/Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

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Judith Sullivan-Corney, Deputy Minister/CEO  
Office of Aboriginal Affairs

## Message from the Minister

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs celebrated a number of outstanding achievements in the last fiscal year.

After almost five years of discussions and detailed work at the band level, eleven chiefs and councils, the federal and provincial ministers signed a Framework Agreement to mark the start of full negotiations in the Made-in-Nova Scotia negotiation process on treaty and rights issues. The signing at Membertou First Nation was a historic event in the relationship between the Mi'kmaq and the province because it was the first time in more than 250 years that the Crown and the Mi'kmaq had agreed to joint talks on such fundamental issues.

In another example of significant co-operation and relationship building, the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The work of the Forum's seven committees has drawn the attention of other jurisdictions in Canada who want to emulate this unique model. The appointment of a project manager will bring a more outcome-oriented focus to the work of the forum.

To further public understanding of the Mi'kmaq and the contribution they are making to the life of this province, OAA completed a second film *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn Part II*, which portrays the hopes and aspirations of the province's first people. This film, along with *Wabanaki people of the Dawn Part I* and *A Meeting of Nations*, prepared for the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs and a curriculum guide was sent to high schools throughout the province to support grades 10 and 11 Mi'kmaq studies and history. The curriculum guide was prepared by a committee of Mi'kmaq educators. *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn Part I* was selected as the recipient for the 2007 Premier's Award of Excellence.

OAA also commissioned a series of stories on Mi'kmaq life which were offered to weekly newspapers around the province. During Mi'kmaq History Month, OAA presented the documentary films to large audiences at several venues throughout Nova Scotia, and this resulted in requests for the films from libraries, schools and organizations interested in expanding their knowledge of the Mi'kmaq. OAA organized an Open House during which many Mi'kmaq leaders and government officials toured our offices.

For the fourth year, public servants were offered Aboriginal perceptions training and the program continues to draw an enthusiastic response.

Our small, dedicated staff continues to achieve remarkable results. Please examine this document and contact the Office of Aboriginal Affairs with any questions

Honourable Angus MacIsaac  
A/Minister

## **Introduction**

This accountability report, which is the sixth for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, is a report card on the progress and accomplishments of the Office during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. This report is based on the goals and priorities as outlined in the 2006-2007 business plan for the Office.

The main body of the report provides a review of achievements during the fiscal year. In addition the report provides an overview of financial results and performance measures.

Throughout the year, the Office has worked hard to help departments and agencies build the capacity to work with Aboriginal communities and organizations. Also, a significant milestone has been reached in the area of negotiations, with the signing of the Framework Agreement by the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, Canada and Nova Scotia, marking the beginning of negotiations on treaty and rights issues.

Additional information on the activities of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs can be found at our web site [www.gov.ns.ca/abor/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/abor/) .

## Department Progress and Accomplishments

The following section provides an overview of the progress and achievements of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. These achievements are organized around the core business areas of the Office as outlined in the 2006-2007 business plan.

***Core Business Area: Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations - This area includes working collaboratively with Aboriginal communities and organizations and other levels of Government to coordinate Aboriginal and tripartite initiatives, develop strategies, and build and maintain a sustainable foundation for First Nation-Government relations***

### PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### Follow up on Fall 2005 First Ministers Meeting On Aboriginal Issues

- In November, 2006, The Premier of British Columbia hosted the first National Summit on Aboriginal Health. This event brought together both leaders and health practitioners from across Canada to talk about Aboriginal health and discuss best practices with a national audience present. Co-chaired by the BC Premier and National Chief Phil Fontaine, this event set the stage for a second National Aboriginal Health Symposium to be held in Manitoba in 2008. The Honourable Chris D'Entremont, Minister of Health, led Nova Scotia's delegation along with several participants from the Mi'kmaq community.
- The Province of Saskatchewan, along with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Clarence Campeau Development Fund hosted the National Symposium on Aboriginal Economic Development in January, 2007, entitled "Excellence in Action". This event showcased innovative economic development practices in First Nations and brought together field leaders to help initiate and inspire economic development across Canada. The province sponsored the participation of both a Mi'kmaq youth as well as a Native Women's Association representative to attend.
- In preparation for the Summer, 2007 National Aboriginal Women's Summit hosted in Cornerbrook, NL, the Office along with partner organizations (NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the NS Native Women's Association) prepared for our province's participation in this inaugural event by way of a pre-summit workshop highlighting Nova Scotian Aboriginal Women's Issues.

## **Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum**

The Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum stands as a remarkable example of how we can all successfully work together to address issues of common concern in a manner that is based on partnership, respect and commitment.

2006/07 was a year of renewal for the Tripartite Forum. With agreement of all partners, the Forum adopted a new strategic direction and implemented a project management approach. This new approach is supported by the creation of the Tripartite Forum Project Fund for Social and Economic Change. Within this \$300K fund, each working committee will have the opportunity to access these funds in order to execute and in some cases expedite the work of their committee. More specifically, updates from several of the forum's committees include:

- In November, 2006, then INAC Minister Jim Prentice and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Michael Baker met with their Executive Committee colleagues (comprised of NS First Nation Chiefs) to ratify the Forum's renewed strategic direction and approve the Forum's \$300K project fund budget.
- The Forum held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Assembly in Annapolis Valley First Nation with more than 70 participants from all sectors and working committees. This two-day event provided an opportunity for the forum as a whole to discuss the outcomes of the St. Mary's University evaluation and scope out some strategic, cross-cutting priorities as outlined by the group which include Individual and community capacity; youth; community; and relationships. In an effort to create better information flow between the work of both the Forum as well as the Made-In-Nova Scotia Negotiations Process, representation from all three negotiating parties presented to Forum participants and offered their insights into the value of continued dialogue between the two mechanisms.

Each of the seven working committees has been advancing their own individual workplans in an effort close the social and economic gaps that exist between the Mi'kmaq and the rest of Nova Scotia. Some examples of their work includes:

- The protection of the Bedford Barrens has remained an important focus for the Culture and Heritage working committee. As a result, the Forum's project fund approved the committee to host an elder's gathering at the Bedford Barrens site along with the production of the short video documenting the information captured during the gathering.
- The Sport and Recreation working committee established the Kji Keptin Alex Denny Memorial Sports and Education Scholarship program and awarded the scholarship to three deserving applicants for their outstanding achievements in both athletics and academics.

- The Economic Development working committee has a proven track record of project success and this year was no different. By supporting projects around Aboriginal tourism development, skills and labour market development and the promotion of web-based communication ([www.mns-firstnet.ca](http://www.mns-firstnet.ca)), the committee is well placed to support the Forum's broader strategic priorities of relationships development and community capacity building.
- The Health working committee continues to engage Aboriginal health practitioners in the prioritization of the working's committee's foundational document "Providing Healthcare, Achieving Health". In moving ahead, the committee's spearheading work in exploring the gaps that exist in mental health services, prescription drug abuse/misuse and making stronger linkages between First Nation community health practitioners and their District Health Authority neighbours.

### **Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network (MLSN)**

The Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network (MLSN) was established in 2003 as a Tripartite Forum initiative to develop an umbrella organization with a broad mandate to build sustainable legal support services for aboriginal persons. The MLSN currently provides two core programs for Aboriginal persons in conflict with the law, in addition to a number of short term projects. The Mi'kmaq Courtworker Program provides court support services to aboriginal adults who are involved with the legal system. The Mi'kmaq Customary Law Program offers a range of services for youth aged 12 to 17 under the Extra Judicial Sanctions and Conferencing provisions of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act( Canada)* as well as sentencing circle processes for adults. Both of these programs are fully supported by operational grants which are co-funded by provincial and federal partners

MLSN is currently working to deliver the Customary Law Program and Aboriginal Courtworker Program, both of which are cost shared by the federal Department of Justice, the Provincial Department of Justice and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. Having expanded its services since its inception, MLSN is also working with federal and provincial partners to deliver court translation services for Aboriginal persons and developing services for Aboriginal inclusion in community healing and re-integration processes.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs provides both in-kind and financial support to MLSN. Financial support is realized through the 50/50 cost share agreement with the Federal Department of Justice and the provision of funding for MLSN's core operations. The Office of Aboriginal Affairs also provides in-kind support through facilitation and capacity building.



## **Aboriginal Housing**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, The Government of Canada announced the establishment of a \$300 million National Aboriginal Off-Reserve Housing Trust with Provinces and Territories. Here in Nova Scotia, that translates to a total of \$7.8 million to be spent over three years to address the housing needs of those Aboriginal individuals/families living outside of First Nation reserves. Senior leaders from both government and the Aboriginal community met and established a technical committee to identify the needs of Aboriginal Nova Scotians living off reserve and to aid in the development of an appropriate and effective delivery strategy. By supporting this Department of Community Service led initiative, the office is working with the Native Council of Nova Scotia, tribal councils, the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Tawaak Housing, the NS Native Women's Association to ensure a collaborative and inclusive approach is taken to the delivery of the trust.

*Core Business Area: Corporate Aboriginal Affairs Administration - This business area includes providing corporate policy and strategic advice to departments and agencies concerning matters related to Aboriginal people while achieving departmental and corporate goals and objectives through planning, budgeting, reporting and communication.*

## **PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Consultation**

As part of the June 2002 Umbrella Agreement, the Province agreed to discuss and develop measures to assist in establishing consultation processes with Nova Scotian First Nations. Tri-party discussions are now underway to develop terms of reference on consultation with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. Governments across Canada have a legal responsibility to consult with First Nations on matters affecting their claimed Aboriginal and treaty rights.

### **Mi'kmawey Debert**

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs continued to work with the Mi'kmaq in the development of the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre. Progress has been made with the completion of a Master Interpretive Plan for the facility and hiring of staff to continue the development of this important initiative. In addition, with support from the provincial government, the Mi'kmaq initiated a comprehensive archaeological site delineation project of the Debert area in an effort to facilitate the completion of land transfer discussions between Colchester County, the province and the Mi'kmaq.

## **First Nation Gaming**

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs followed up on the commitments made in the Nova Scotia Gaming Strategy (2005) by initiating negotiations with a number of First Nation communities with the objective of reducing the number of video lottery terminals available to First Nation communities. These agreements remain a vital revenue source for First Nations in Nova Scotia providing over \$40 million in revenue during 2006-07.

## **First Nation Emergency Measures**

In partnership with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), the Office initiated an environmental scan to determine the emergency preparedness levels of Nova Scotia's 13 First Nations. In conjunction with the funding that INAC provided to perform the scan, OAA offered its expertise through staff time to gather data and formally present the scan's findings to INAC's senior management in their Atlantic regional office (Amherst) as well at the NS Emergency Measures Organization.

## **Enhancing Public Awareness**

OAA completed a second film on the lives of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, their hopes and aspirations. **Wabanaki: People of the Dawn Part II** features four portraits of the Mi'kmaq as they are today. This follows Part I which dealt with the history and culture of the tribes that made up Wabanaki Confederacy. Both films along with a Curriculum guide and a film on the treaties entitled, Meeting of Nations, was sent to all Nova Scotia high schools in September.

The **Aboriginal Perceptions Training** course has become the most attended course in the provincial government. The course is offered through the Public Service Commission calendar but has become so popular that many departments have booked sessions exclusively for themselves. So far, almost 2,100 individuals have completed this one day session which is designed for two purposes: first, it is a valuable asset for employees who work with Aboriginal communities as a result of their department's work; second, it will help prepare employees for the experience of having Aboriginal co-workers in the Nova Scotia Civil Service.

2006 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of **Treaty Day** celebrations. With renovations occurring at Province House throughout the fall, the awards ceremony was relocated to the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront. This larger venue allowed for a record-breaking attendance for the ceremony. The 2006 Mi'kmaq history month poster recognized and chronicled the Mi'kmaq Grand Council and its leadership over the centuries.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the Office held an *Open House* and inviting Mi'kmaq Chiefs, Tripartite Forum participants, previously held roundtable discussion participants, public servants and other key individuals from within the Mi'kmaq community. Several cultural "stations" were set up

throughout the office including a display of Mersey River artifacts with archaeologist Bruce Stewart as well as works of Mi'kmaq artisan Todd Labrador.

In Nova Scotia, October is recognized as **Mi'kmaq History Month**. In celebration of this, a series of events were hosted including: several screenings of the documentary *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn* around Nova Scotia; public servant Lunch-n-learns regarding the Mi'kmaq involvement in archaeological research; a contest held in association with schools across the province in an effort to promote Mi'kmaq cultural centre visitation by students; a public lecture on making the connection between Aboriginal traditional knowledge and archaeology and; the above noted OAA Open House. This year, the office made a special attempt to further enhance and promote Mi'kmaq History month beyond Treaty Day and is looking forward to continuing to build a busy agenda for the Mi'kmaq History Month in 2007.

***Core Business Area: Negotiations - The Office of Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for coordinating provincial departments in intergovernmental, bilateral and tri-party negotiations while working to create stable and respectful relationships to reconcile the respective rights and interests of the Parties.***

## **PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Negotiations and Related Issues**

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs, in conjunction with its respective partners in the Made-in-Nova-Scotia Process, has engaged in the following activities:

- On February 23, 2007 the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, Canada and Nova Scotia signed the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia Framework Agreement for the Made-in-Nova Scotia Process. The Framework Agreement is an important milestone as it confirms each party's commitment to try to resolve Mi'kmaq rights issues through negotiation in a spirit of reconciliation. It establishes the process and topics for negotiation of issues regarding Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal title, treaty rights and governance.
- The negotiation teams have been jointly engaged in scoping of all negotiation topics, in order to review background information, the current information and to assess which specific issues will require further discussion.
- The negotiation teams are jointly proceeding to establish a number of working groups to explore in more detail specific topics, such as forestry, land, and fisheries. The moose working group has been in operation for two years and continues discussions on the management of the Cape Breton moose harvest.

- Continued to meet with various stakeholder organizations to keep them updated on treaty negotiations and begin identifying issues of interest and exploring mechanisms to obtain their input
- The Mi'kmaq, Nova Scotia and Canada have continued to discuss Terms of Reference for a consultation process to address the requirements of governments to consult with Mi'kmaq. The parties expect these to be finalized in the next fiscal year.
- Government's Engagement/Coordination in Negotiation Discussions - Ongoing involvement of departments to remain informed and have input into the negotiations through the Senior Officials Committee for Treaty Negotiations and Aboriginal Issues, the Deputy Minister Advisory Committee on Negotiations and through various consultations with individual departments.

## **Financial Results**

### **2006-2007**

The following table outlines the budgeted and actual spending for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. Overall spending came in at \$5.232 million, approximately \$2.129 million more than the authorized budget of \$3.103 million.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget (\$ '000)</b>	<b>Actual (\$ '000)</b>	<b>Variance (\$ '000) (over budget)</b>
Salaries and Benefits	942	958	(16)
Travel	51	62	(11)
Professional and Special Services	491	627	(136)
Supplies and Services	48	56	(8)
Other	187	206	(19)
Grants and Assistance	1,977	4,202	(2,225)
<b>Less:</b>			
Chargeables to Other Departments	5	208	203
Less Fees and Other Charges	0	6	6
Recoveries	587	665	78
<b>Total Net Expenses</b>	<b>3,104</b>	<b>5,232</b>	<b>(2,129)</b>
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>

- *Salaries and Benefits* were higher than estimated mainly due to Pay for Performance and increased administrative support.
- *Travel* expenditures were higher than estimated due to increased travel within the province in support of Aboriginal community relations.
- *Professional and Special Services* were higher than estimated mainly due to an increase in professional services (ie. funding for position housed within the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq).
- *Supplies and Services* were higher than anticipated mainly due to increase in miscellaneous office expenses, IT op-date centre, telecommunications and advertising.
- *Other* was over-expended due to an increase in staff training and equipment upgrades.

- *Grants and Assistance* payments were higher than estimate due to the province agreeing to pay the full cost of the Tripartite Forum with the federal government transferring their contribution to NS and for community transition agreements with Wagmatcook, Waycobah and Bear River First Nations.
- *Recoveries* were higher due to increased payments from the Government of Canada in support of the Tripartite Forum's Project Fund, the development of the documentary film *Wabanaki; People of the Dawn*, the Mi'kmaq Courtworker Program and some salary recovery due to staff interchange opportunities.

## REPORTING ON OUTCOMES

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The following section of this report provides an overview of OAA's outcome measures. Each outcome measure relates to a core business area, and this section will measure OAA's progress in fulfilling its core business areas. This accountability report reports on the revised measures (as reflected in the 2006-2007 business plan), as they more accurately measure progress towards achieving our outcomes.

### KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

#### **Core Business Area – Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations**

This core business area includes working with Aboriginal communities and organizations, and other levels of government to coordinate Aboriginal initiatives, develop strategies, and build and maintain a sustainable framework for First Nation-Government relations.

This core business area contains two outcomes: *1) To effectively represent the interests of Nova Scotians in Federal, Territorial, and Aboriginal relations; and 2) Improved relations between the Government of Nova Scotia and Aboriginal communities and organizations.* For each outcome, one measure has been identified.

**Outcome 1 - To effectively represent the interests of Nova Scotians in federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal relations.**

**Measure 1 – Percentage of government departments and agencies who agree that OAA effectively represents Nova Scotians' interests in federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal relations.**

#### *What does this measure tell us?*

This measure demonstrates the percentage of provincial clients that feel OAA effectively represents the interests of Nova Scotians' in federal, territorial, and Aboriginal relations.

#### *Where are we now?*

In October 2004, the OAA Client Satisfaction Survey Results were compiled with a number of positive findings. With respect to Measure 1 noted above, 96% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that OAA represents Nova Scotians' interests effectively in intergovernmental, bilateral, and tri-party initiatives and negotiations.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

Using the above noted survey as a baseline for results, we will work to maintain and/or improve the level of client satisfaction in this area. A second survey will be conducted in 2007.

**Outcome 2 – Improved relations between the Government of Nova Scotia and Aboriginal communities and organizations.**

**Measure 1 – Assessment of government departments and agencies satisfaction with their working relationship with Aboriginal communities and organizations.**

***What does this measure tell us?***

To improve relations between the Government of Nova Scotia and Aboriginal communities and organizations, it is important to determine how satisfied government departments and agencies are with their working relationship with Aboriginal communities and organizations.

***Where are we now?***

According to the results from the 2004 Client Satisfaction Survey, ALL of those surveyed agreed that OAA facilitates and supports a coordinated approach within Government on matters related to Aboriginal issues. Also related to this, of those who responded, ALL either strongly agreed or agreed that OAA is building a sustainable framework for First Nation-Government relations.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

Using the 2004 survey as a baseline for results, we will work to maintain and/or improve the level of client satisfaction in this area. A second survey will be conducted in 2007.

**Core Business Area – Corporate Aboriginal Affairs Administration**

This business area includes providing policy and strategic advice and support to departments and agencies on issues relating to Aboriginal people. The office also works with departments and agencies to develop and implement the government's overall approach to Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia.

The outcomes for this core business area is: ***Effective coordination and advice being provided to government departments and agencies and to enhance awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.***

**Outcome 1 - Effective coordination and advice being provided to government departments and agencies.**



**Measure 1 – Government departments and agencies satisfaction with the services and advice provided by OAA.**

***What does this measure tell us?***

Addressing Aboriginal issues involves a significant level of coordination. Key to designing effective and sustainable corporate practices and solutions is the support and involvement of other departments and agencies. One measure of our success is how satisfied government departments and agencies are with the services and advice provided by OAA.

***Where are we now?***

With over half of clients (52%) indicating that they have contact with OAA on at least a monthly basis, 75% of clients were very satisfied with OAA's promptness in responding to their needs and 92% were very satisfied with the professional and courteous nature in which OAA responded. Most notably, 75% of clients were satisfied with the advice and support provided by OAA, while 25% of clients were somewhat satisfied.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

Now that we have baseline data, our main goal will be to increase the satisfaction rate of clients with respect to advice and support. A second survey will be conducted in 2007.

**Outcome 2 - To enhance awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.**

**Measure 1 - Increase in Nova Scotian's who feel informed and knowledgeable of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.**

***What does this measure tell us?***

This measure provides a snapshot of the public awareness of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.

***Where are we now?***

42% of Nova Scotians feel informed about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia. (2005 Omnibus Survey).

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

Through the measures articulated in our annual business plans, OAA hopes to continually increase the level of awareness within the general population.

**Measure 2 - Percentage of government employees who strongly agree that OAA enhances awareness of Mi'kmaq culture.**

***What does this measure tell us?***

This measure provides OAA an understanding of the success we are having within government in raising the level of awareness of Mi'kmaq history and culture.

***Where are we now?***

33% of departments and agencies “strongly agreed” that OAA enhances the awareness of Mi'kmaq culture, while 67% “agreed”.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

While the agreement with this statement is very high, OAA seeks to continually improve and expand our efforts to enhance the knowledge base, capacity and understanding of Mi'kmaq history and culture.

**Measure 3 – Qualitative assessment of Government employees satisfaction with Aboriginal Perceptions Training.**

***What does this measure tell us?***

This measure is based on qualitative feedback from course participants. Participants are asked to provide the instructor with comments on what they liked most about the training and areas for improvement. It is important for government employees to have an increased understanding and awareness of Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia. More than a thousand employees have taken the Aboriginal Perceptions course, this measure will provide us with a level of understanding of how successful the training has been.

***Where are we now?***

An overwhelming majority of participants who have completed the Aboriginal Perceptions Training Course provide extremely positive feedback regarding the course and its instructor. Of the negative feedback to note, most point towards the need to expand the course as it is perhaps too concentrated. While over 1,500 employees have taken this course, in the coming year OAA will survey a selection of these participants to better understand how this course has changed understanding, attitudes and perceptions as it relates to Aboriginal people and communities.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

in the coming year OAA will survey a selection of these participants to better understand how this course has changed understanding, attitudes and perceptions as it relates to Aboriginal people and communities.

## **Core Business Area – Negotiations**

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for coordinating the negotiations process and representing the province's interests in negotiations and related discussions with the Federal Government and Mi'kmaq.

The outcome for this core business area is *progress toward resolution of treaty-related issues in a manner that reconciles the interests of Nova Scotia, Canada, and the Mi'kmaq, and promotes positive working relationships*. The following will provide information on each of the three identified measures.

### **Measure 1 – Framework Agreement**

#### ***What does this measure tell us?***

On June 7, 2002, Nova Scotia, Canada, and the Mi'kmaq formally signed an Umbrella Agreement, committing the parties to working together in good faith to resolve mutual issues. The agreement highlights the development of a Framework Agreement as one of the key aspects to the relationship between the Mi'kmaq, Nova Scotia, and Canada. The Framework Agreement is significant as it represents the commitment of all three parties to work together to resolve issues related to treaty rights, Aboriginal rights and Aboriginal title through negotiation rather than litigation.

#### ***Where are we now?***

The Framework Agreement has been approved and was signed on February 23, 2007.

#### ***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

With the signing of the Framework Agreement, the parties will examine the list of topics for negotiation and will identify priority topics to focus on first.

**Measure 2 – Public Participation** - Processes for information sharing and input by public and stakeholders regarding negotiations.

#### ***What does this measure tell us?***

Informing and engaging Nova Scotians regarding treaty and Aboriginal rights issues will be essential for obtaining public support for future agreements.

#### ***Where are we now?***

Informal discussions have been held with various groups and organizations to give them updates on the process.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

More formal information sharing and engagement mechanisms will be developed. Agreement will also be reached about coordination with the federal government regarding public participation activities.

**Measure 3 – Consultation Terms of Reference** - To address consultation between the Mi'kmaq, Canada and Nova Scotia for government approvals and activities that may impact Aboriginal or treaty rights.

***What does this measure tell us?***

The development of terms of reference for a consultation process was also a commitment under the June 2002 Umbrella Agreement. Government have a legal responsibility to consult with First Nations on matters affecting their claimed Aboriginal and treaty rights, and completion of the terms of reference will establish common expectations on how consultation will be carried out.

***Where are we now?***

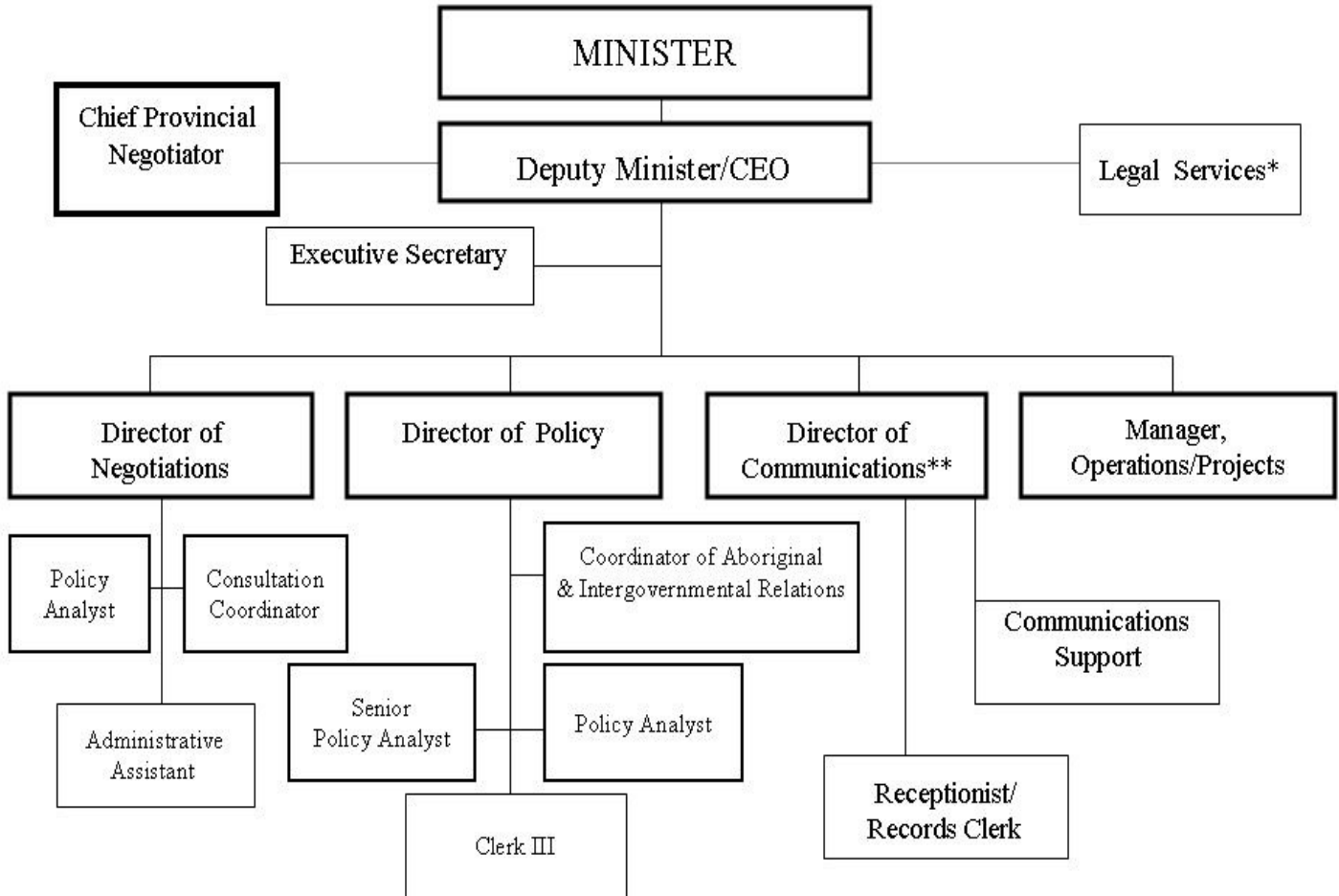
Draft terms of reference have been developed and are being reviewed by the parties.

***Where do we want to go/be in the future?***

Finalize and begin using the process under the terms of reference

**APPENDIX A**

# OFFICE OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS



\* Legal services for the Office are located at the Department of Justice  
\*\* Director of Communications FTE counted under Communications Nova Scotia

2007