

Office of Aboriginal Affairs

Annual Accountability Report

Reporting for the Fiscal Year 2007-2008

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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs for the year ended March 31, 2008, 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 2007-2008. 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.



Honourable Michael Baker, QC
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs



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

Message from the Minister

Since the 2002 signing of the Umbrella Agreement, Nova Scotia has developed a unique government to government relationship with the Mi'kmaq of this province and our federal counterparts. Together, these three parties have established a long-term process to negotiate the definition, recognition and implementation of Mi'kmaq rights and title. Government and Mi'kmaq leaders are now focusing on resolving outstanding treaty issues through a peaceful and collaborative process. These negotiations provide an opportunity to build upon our common learning and our shared interest in building a strong Nova Scotia and a strong Canada – both culturally and economically.

One area of particular significance from the past year that I would like to highlight is the set-aside of lands located in the Debert Air Industrial Park for the Mi'kmaq. Given the archaeological significance of this site and the keen interest of the Mi'kmaq to realize their vision for the Mi'kmaq cultural and economic development within the area, the negotiation to reach the land set-aside truly demonstrates everyone's interest in supporting Nova Scotia's Mi'kmaq community.

In addition to its work in the area of negotiations, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs is also involved in a wide range of initiatives extending across government. Most importantly, these efforts reflect on the strong foundation we have collectively created through the Made-In-NS negotiation process and the Mi'kmaq-NS-Canada Tripartite Forum.

Members of the Tripartite Forum are dedicated to improving the lives of the Mi'kmaq and recognizing the contributions they bring to the province. The Forum is built on a foundation for prosperous and vibrant Mi'kmaq communities through partnership, commitment and respect. Again, each of the three levels of government are working in common purpose toward the goal of closing the gap in social and economic circumstances between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

While we respect the past, the future is even more important. It includes continued, productive discussions between the Mi'kmaq, our office, other levels of government, and social, health, economic and justice organizations. These efforts will lead to a greater mutual understanding, respect and lasting relationships - with a common interest of building the future of Nova Scotia.

Honourable Michael Baker, QC
Minister

Introduction

This accountability report, which is the seventh for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, is an annual report on the progress and accomplishments of the Office during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. It is based on the goals and priorities as outlined in the 2007-2008 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/.

Department Progress and Accomplishments

The following section provides an overview of the progress and achievements of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. These achievements are organized around the core business areas of the Office as outlined in the 2007-2008 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

Federal-Provincial-Territorial-Aboriginal Discussions

As part of an on-going series of national Aboriginal summits and forums, the Office remained committed in supporting a Nova Scotia delegation to two national events: the National Aboriginal Women's Summit in St. John's, NL as well as the second National Aboriginal Health Summit hosted in Winnipeg, MB.

Through the leadership of INAC along with various provinces, NS has participated in the planning and participation in a number of F/P/T information sharing sessions regarding consultation, legal issues relating to Aboriginal relations and information/data management. These events continue to catalyze an on-going F/P/T relationship based on issues of mutual interest.

Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum

The forum's most significant change was the institution of a project fund (Tripartite Forum Fund for Social and Economic Change) in 2007, bringing \$300,000 in annual funding that's drawn a tremendous influx of positive initiatives that support the strategic objectives of the Forum. The on-going commitment and participation of over 100 Mi'kmaq, federal and provincial technicians and experts along with Canada and Nova Scotia's collective annual investment of \$1 million make this forum a leading example of First Nation-Government collaboration in Canada.

In the 2007-08 fiscal year, approximately \$260,000 in funding flowed to various projects which are making significant impacts in Mi'kmaq communities. Whether in the area of Aboriginal health research or Mi'kmaq culture and tourism, the fund and the associated projects have quickly become a core element of the Tripartite Forum's evolution and ultimate success.

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

A new MLSN and MCLP agreement was signed in March, 2008. This new agreement will see a total contribution toward MLSN and MCLP of \$2.2 million over the next five years by both Canada and Nova Scotia. New funding under this agreement totals \$550,000. In addition, to the new funding, this agreement provides long-term stability to the Courtworker Program (MCP) and MCLP. MCP is expected to receive \$1.1 million over the next five years, for a total federal-provincial commitment for MLSN and its constituent programs of \$3.3 million over the next five years.

Canada and NS in collaboration with the MLSN have also put in place a three year pilot project to complete a needs assessment and to develop a specialized model of service delivery that addresses the unique needs of Aboriginal victims of crime with a focus on the development of culturally-supportive victim services that encourage the participation of Aboriginal victims in the justice process. Over \$380,000 has been committed to this initiative over the next three years.

Through the Tripartite Forum Justice Working Committee, significant efforts are also underway to improve access to Mi'kmaq cultural practices in Nova Scotia's correctional facilities.

Aboriginal Housing

In 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.

To date, approximately \$1.1 million of this fund has been spent with the majority of this funding to be expended over the coming year.

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

Significant efforts were made in 2007-2008 to put in place new processes of consultation between the provincial government and the Mi'kmaq. In June, 2007, the Mi'kmaq, federal government and the Province agreed to a one year pilot of a Consultation Terms Of Reference (TOR). The completion of the TOR was a significant milestone since it was a major commitment under the 2002 Umbrella Agreement. In support of the new consultation processes, the Province took a number of steps, including:

- developed an Interim Consultation Policy
- established a permanent consultation strategist within the Office
- developed and delivered a 2-day training course to approximately 100 people
- conducted active consultation on over 25 issues over the fiscal year
- along with Canada, provided core funding to assist the Assembly of NS Chiefs to coordinate consultation efforts

Consultation is a major new initiative for provincial departments, and all parties are learning from their experiences over the reporting period. A joint evaluation is being conducted on the TOR by the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative (KMK), Canada and Nova Scotia.

Mi'kmawey Debert

Along with the resolution of land issues in the Debert area, noted later in this report, during 2007-08, provincial financial support to this initiative assisted in the completion of a *Plan for Visitor Experience and Schematic Layout of Interpretive Strategies*. There was also continued work on the further delineation of the archaeological sites in the area as well.

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. 2007-2008 saw Mi'kmaq communities benefit from over \$45 million in video lottery terminal revenues and the distribution of \$2.5 million in monies from the Sydney Casino.

Heritage and Culture

In February 2007, Nova Scotia released its first ever Heritage Strategy. A number of priorities will have a direct and tangible benefit to the Mi'kmaq in terms of the protection and promotion of Mi'kmaq history, culture and language. In collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, the Office will be working closely with Mi'kmaq communities, organizations and leaders to implement this strategy in the future.

The Province also supported the creation of the Mi'kmaq Cultural Tourism Network (MCTN) in 2007-08 and will continue to support this structure in the future. This initiative, which is being implemented through the Mi'kmaq Association of Cultural Studies in association with the Tripartite Forum, will see the ongoing creation of capacity in the cultural tourism sector in the Mi'kmaq community.

To date, over 2,000 civil servants have received Aboriginal Perceptions Training. Given the enormous popularity of this program, we are also looking at expanding the variety of cultural sensitivity training programs available to Nova Scotia government employees in 2008-2009. For instance, in collaboration with the Public Service Commission, the Office facilitated the introduction of a new online training program designed by Millbrook Technologies Inc.

In the fall of 2007, OAA held the first ever Public Servants Symposium on Aboriginal Matters. This symposium brought together over 100 civil servants to discuss Aboriginal issues and hear about progress being made in other Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia related initiatives.

Beyond the annual Treaty Day celebrations and promotion of Mi'kmaq history and culture during Mi'kmaq History Month (October), the office also has engaged in a number of culture-promoting activities, including:

- The development of a video to help inform Nova Scotians of the Mi'kmaq perspective on western democracy through the Democracy 250 initiative, as well as the work on the production of a third *Wabanaki* documentary film featuring 4 distinctive Mi'kmaq youth.
- The creation and distribution of a learning guide to accompany *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn* part one to public schools across Nova Scotia.
- The wide distribution of *Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq* to public school as well as within government.

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

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

- Working groups under the negotiation umbrella have been established on priority topics, including moose management, fisheries, forestry and lands, as well as the development of a number concept papers, outlining the issues and principles that will guide the subsequent discussions.
- More specifically on moose management, which was identified as an early priority in the process, the three parties share a common vision to work together to ensure a sustainable

moose population in Cape Breton. Some of this groups progress and accomplishments include:

- Funding to the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) to engage Mi'kmaq communities in the discussion.
- Cooperation in enforcement, including improved communication between DNR and UINR and the creation of three permanent Aboriginal Liaison Officers by the Province.
- Improved hunter safety practices and reduced hunter complaints/conflicts.
- Improved communication and relationship building between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal hunters.
- Better collaboration on research initiatives by DNR, Parks Canada and the Mi'kmaq.

The most significant accomplishment in the last year was marked by the announcement in Debert regarding the Mi'kmaq Debert Archaeological Initiative. Three years of discussions under the Made-In-NS process resulted in a unique arrangement that promotes economic development for the Debert Air Industrial Park, provides archaeological protection, and paves the way for the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre. This arrangement is particularly significant because it protects and promotes Mi'kmaq culture, recognizes the importance of economic development in any community's development and created a new era of partnership not only with the Province but also with the Municipality of Colchester County.

Financial Results

2007-2008

The following table outlines the budgeted and actual spending for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Overall spending came in at \$4.252 million, approximately \$1,600.00 less than the authorized budget of \$4.254 million.

Description	Budget (\$ '000)	Actual (\$ '000)	Variance (\$ '000) (over budget)
Salaries and Benefits	1,050.8	991.2	59.6
Travel	50.7	47.5	3.2
Professional and Special Services	490.6	681.3	(190.7)
Supplies and Services	48.0	74.3	(26)
Other	186.5	194.1	(7.6)
Grants and Assistance	3,019.4	3,115.2	(95.8)
Less:			
Chargeables to Other Departments	5	181.2	176.2
Less Fees and Other Charges	0	0.3	0.3
Recoveries	587.0	669.7	82.7
Total Net Expenses	4,254.0	4,252.4	1.6
FTEs	14.5	14.5	0.0

- *Salaries and Benefits* were lower than estimated mainly due to temporary vacancies.

- *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 and the Mi'kmaq Courtworker Program.

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 2007-2008 business plan), as they more accurately measure progress towards achieving our outcomes.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

Core Business Area – Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations
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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 2008.

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 2008.

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 2008.

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 2,000 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?

A Terms of Reference were developed and were piloted for one year in Nova Scotia.

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

With the Terms of Reference successfully piloted and extended for another year, we are looking to evaluate the success of the process and begin addressing gap areas.

Measure 4 – Interim Consultation Policy - The policy, in coordination with the Consultation Terms of Reference, addresses 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 the interim consultation policy as part of the broader consultation process was part of the June 2002 Umbrella Agreement commitment. Government have a legal responsibility to consult with First Nations on matters affecting their claimed Aboriginal and treaty rights, and the presence of a formal policy will establish common expectations on how consultation will be carried out.

Where are we now?

The policy was developed and put in place on an interim basis while the Terms of Reference are being piloted.

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

In coordination with the successful piloting of the Terms of Reference, we are looking to evaluate the success of the process, begin addressing gap areas and eventually make the policy permanent within government.