

Office of Aboriginal Affairs
Annual Accountability Report

Reporting for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009

Issued by: Office of Aboriginal Affairs

Date: August 17, 2009

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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs for the year ended March 31, 2009, 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 2008-2009. 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.

Darrell Dexter
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

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

Message from the Minister

Nova Scotia has continued its unique government-to-government relationship with the Mi'kmaq of this province and our federal counterparts. These efforts are supported through the Made in Nova Scotia negotiation process, the Tripartite Forum and our consultation efforts.

This year marked the historic 'first' joint meeting of the provincial Cabinet and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs. Hosted by Eskasoni First Nation, it provided the opportunity for frank and open dialogue on our shared interest in building a culturally and economically strong province. The meeting also served as a bridge to a stronger level of political engagement between the leadership of the Mi'kmaq and the province. Both parties committed to hold these joint meetings on an annual basis.

Through the Made in Nova Scotia negotiation process, federal, provincial and Mi'kmaq governments are focusing on resolving outstanding treaty issues through a peaceful and collaborative process. These negotiations provide an opportunity to build upon our shared interest in building a culturally and economically strong province and country.

In October, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs also hosted a Duty to Consult Aboriginal People Learning Seminar to help lawyers, industry representatives and government leaders gain a better understanding of the ever-changing legal landscape of Aboriginal law -- and to understand their role in Aboriginal consultation.

The Office, in conjunction with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, also completed its third documentary film following on the success of Wabanaki: People of the Dawn Parts I and II. Wabanaki III profiles several Mi'kmaq youth and their respective achievements. It was made available to key OAA audiences and stakeholders.

Over the coming year, we will continue to respect the past and prepare for the future - one that builds on our common interest in creating a prosperous province for all Nova Scotians.

Honourable Darrell Dexter
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

Introduction

This accountability report, which is the eighth for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, is an annual report on the progress and accomplishments of the Office during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. It is based on the goals and priorities as outlined in the 2008-2009 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, this year marked the historic 'first' joint meeting of the provincial Cabinet and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs.

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 2008-2009 fiscal year. These achievements are organized around the core business areas of the Office as outlined in the 2008-2009 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.

Joint Meeting of the Assembly of Mi'kmaq Chiefs and Cabinet

2008-2009 marked an historic first for the Province of Nova Scotia. On September 25, 2008, the Nova Scotia Cabinet met with the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs in Eskasoni. This meeting set a foundation for the evolving government to government relationship between the Province and the Mi'kmaq. Both parties committed to a similar meeting on an annual basis.

Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum

Remaining a uniquely Nova Scotia vehicle for dialogue, the Tripartite Forum continues to evolve and achieve results that lead to lasting changes in Mi'kmaq communities. The second year of the incorporated project fund (Tripartite Forum Fund for Social and Economic Change) has fundamentally given working committee's an opportunity to convert their working relationship into tangible results.

More than \$300,000.00 of project related funding has flowed through the hard work and dedication of the Forum's working committees. Not only does has the collaboration lead to several successfully completed projects, but it also builds the foundation for further joint development initiatives that go beyond the reaches of the forum. Successes in the areas of Mi'kmaq cultural development and preservation as well as research in the areas of Aboriginal health and justice allow communities to keep building with a solid foundation and understanding of the challenges they face.

The Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum continues to demonstrate progress on a wide range of areas. Some examples of the projects undertaken through the Forum in 2008-2009 include:

- Mi'kmaq Cultural Tourism Network;
- Measuring physical activity levels of Aboriginal children and youth in Nova Scotia;

- Bedford Barrens historical data research;
- 400th Anniversary of the Baptism of Chief Membertou (2010 celebrations);
- Unanma'ki Procurement Officer;
- Indian Brook/Millbrook outreach program; and
- MLSN (Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network): transition from program to independent entity.

Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network (MLSN)

As part of a broader community wellness approach, OAA and the Department of Justice continued to support the Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network. MLSN, created in 2002-2003, is an administrative structure designed to support current and future justice programs and services directed toward Nova Scotia's Aboriginal community. The province provided approximately \$291,000 in support of the MLSN and its constituents.

Mi'kmaw Cultural Tourism

The Office continued to work with the Mi'kmaq in developing the Mi'kmaw cultural tourism sector in Nova Scotia. During the year OAA provided \$75,000 to the Mi'kmaq Association for Cultural Studies (MACS) in support of the Mi'kmaq Cultural Tourism Network (MCTN). The MCTN is a working committee under MACS mandated to develop and strengthen the Mi'kmaw heritage, tourism, and cultural sector.

The contribution is to build capacity and sustain the implementation of cultural and tourism priorities of MCTN including:

- Mi'kmaw tourism readiness strategy;
- Mi'kmaw cultural tourism branding strategy;
- Mi'kmaq cultural tourism summit in June 2008; and
- Mi'kmaq and Maliseet artisans' contribution to the Vancouver Winter Olympics.

The Tripartite Fund for Economic and Social Change provided \$45,000 for the completion of a proposal to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the baptism of Grand Chief Membertou.

Waycobah School

In September 2008 Waycobah First Nation opened a new school which would serve both students from primary to grade 12 and the community. The province assisted with the completion of the final stages of furnishing and equipping the school so that the school would be open on time and provide similar educational opportunities as other provincial schools.

Eskasoni Youth at Risk

In December 2008, the Eskasoni First Nation requested the help of government and community to help them address important issues related to the health and well-being of their youth. The provincial government through the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Health and the Cape Breton Regional Health Authority, worked collaboratively with federal agencies to provide both financial and technical assistance to provide help for youth-at-risk, and in particular support for counselling and prevention initiatives organized by the Eskasoni community.

North American Indigenous Games (NAIG)

The 2008 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) were hosted in Cowichan, British Columbia, from August 3-10, 2008. The largest games of its kind in North America, it is a premiere venue for Mi'kmaq athletes to compete at an elite level and participate in activities which enrich their lives through the spirit of competition and physical activity.

Working with Health Promotion and Protection, the Office provided support to Team Mi'kmaq to attend and participate in NAIG 2008. Team Mi'kmaq Nova Scotia won 27 medals at the North American Indigenous Games including seven gold, nine silver and 11 bronze medals. OAA provided \$23,000 to Team Mi'kmaq Nova Scotia, comprising of \$20,000 towards the team's participation in NAIG and \$3,000 for a Team Mi'kmaq Nova Scotia rally and dinner in Halifax.

Labour Market Development

Labour market development and skills training has been identified as a key priority of the Tripartite Forum. This was reinforced at the joint meeting of the Assembly and Cabinet in September of 2008. Within this context and with the federal government devolving labour market programs and services to the province, Nova Scotia continues to work with the Mi'kmaq to identify collaborative approaches that support greater Mi'kmaq participation in the Nova Scotia labour force.

The Department of Labour and Workforce Development (LWD) sponsored, via OAA, a Labour Market Agreement (LMA) contribution to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre's Active

Partnership Strategy. The strategy is to support aboriginal workforce participation, primarily in the Halifax area, through the implementation of an Active Partnership Coordinator. A contribution of \$7,822 was provided for the initial stage of their strategy. An LMA contribution for the 2009-2010 fiscal year was committed by LWD to continue the Active Partnership Strategy.

LWD, working in cooperation with Nova Scotia Economic and Rural Development (ERD), has funded the Nova Scotia Aboriginal Labour Market Strategy Coordinator to work with the Mi'kmaq groups and government to better support and facilitate the development of the Integrated Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy for Nova Scotia. The coordinator is also to facilitate a more effective use of associated programs and services to the Aboriginal community. The overarching vision of the Integrated Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy is to increase labour market attachment of aboriginal people in Nova Scotia. The successful implementation of the strategy will require identification, creation, and support of programs and services to help train, educate, and prepare Aboriginal people for the workforce.

Urban Aboriginal

During 2008-09, the Office worked with the Micmac Native Friendship Centre and the federal government to explore opportunities for collaboration on urban Aboriginal issues. In addition, during the year, the Tripartite Forum Officials Committee agreed to extend an offer of membership on Tripartite Forum committees to the Friendship Centre to ensure an adequate reflection of urban issues in the work of committees. Note: funding initiative under Labour Market Development.

Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program (AAEDIRP)

The Office contributed \$25,000 to the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat (APFFNC) towards the AAEDIRP. This integrated program links the needs of Aboriginal communities and organizations with university resources to build Aboriginal capacity in research in the field of Aboriginal economic development.

The AAEDIRP is one of the vehicles for action in the Atlantic Chief's *Atlantic Economy Building Strategy* May 2007. Five research projects have been approved under AAEDIRP, with *A Study of the Atlantic Post-Secondary Labour Force* and *A Study of the First Nation Fishery* to have been completed by early 2009.

Aboriginal Women's Issues

The Office worked collaboratively with other government departments to host the second NS Aboriginal Women's Summit in Millbrook on June 23, 2008. Over 50 women attended the day

long event which resulted in the identification of issues and priorities for NS Mi'kmaq women in the areas of health, safety and wellness; equality and empowerment; strength, balance and honour. In followup to the provincial Summit, the Office provided an opportunity for a representative from five Aboriginal organizations to attend the second National Aboriginal Women's Summit which was held in Yellowknife, NWT in July 2008.

The office continued to work on a variety of issues relating to Aboriginal women, including chairing the Tripartite Justice Working Committee tasked with researching family violence in Mi'kmaq communities; and ensuring that the needs of Mi'kmaq women were incorporated into the Report of the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee Working Group which is scheduled to be submitted to the Deputy Minister's Leadership Committee on Family Violence in June 2009.

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.

Consultation

Significant efforts were continued in 2008-09 to implement new processes of consultation, initiated in 2007-08, between the provincial government and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. In August 2008, the Mi'kmaq, federal and provincial governments renewed the pilot of a Consultation Terms of Reference (ToR) for an additional year. A full evaluation of the ToR consultation process was conducted in 2008, and improvements to the process are being implemented.

In support of the Province's new consultation management regime, OAA took a number of steps, including:

- assisted individual departments to develop their own guidelines for consultation, in accordance with the ToR and the Province's Interim Consultation Policy, and their business lines. This is a requirement of the Interim Consultation Policy;
- continued the delivery of a 2-day Aboriginal Consultation training course to approximately 100 people.;
- organized a learning seminar on Aboriginal consultation and accommodation with over 180 participants from government, academia, the private sector and Aboriginal communities;
- provided strategic risk assessment advice and conducted active consultation on over 25 issues during the fiscal year; and
- along with Canada, provided core funding to assist the Assembly of NS Mi'kmaq Chiefs to coordinate consultation efforts through the KMK (Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative).

Mi'kmaaway Debert

OAA continued to work with the Mi'kmaq and other provincial and federal partners to further the work of Mi'kmaaway Debert. The aim of this initiative is to protect valuable and unique archaeological sites while developing opportunities to share the history and culture of the Mi'kmaq. With the completion of land discussions and the financial support of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, MDCC has developed a site plan for the proposed location of the Centre. In addition, a communications and fund-raising strategy have been initiated to support the development of the Centre. Also, during 2008-09, the Office supported continued work on delineating the archaeology of the site. This continues to add knowledge and understanding of the history of the area.

First Nation Gaming

Gaming revenues continue to be an important source of funds for First Nation economic and social development initiatives with the total value of the revenue from both gaming on reserve and sharing of the profits from the Sydney Casino approaching \$50 million in 2008-09.

Heritage and Culture

With the release of the heritage strategy in 2007-08, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, in partnership with other departments and the Mi'kmaq, continued to support the implementation of the strategy in 2008-09. For example, the Office supported public education and awareness through Treaty Day, Mi'kmaq History Month and the release of the third in a series of videos on the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. In addition, OAA in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Mi'kmaq initiated a cross-cultural education outreach program in public schools across Nova Scotia.

Healthy Workplace

During 2008-09, OAA continued its involvement on the government wide Health Workplace Committee. The Office also partnered with Intergovernmental Affairs to create a joint committee which met bi-monthly. Activities for this period included lunch and learns as well as staff health risk assessments

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.

Negotiations and Related Issues

Discussions on Aboriginal and treaty rights and Mi'kmaq governance continue as per the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia Canada Framework Agreement, signed in 2007. The Main Table met monthly over the last year and working groups are in place for moose management, forestry and fisheries. Negotiation-related activities included:

- OAA continued to provide funding for the Mi'kmaq Moose Management Initiative (\$75,000). This included support for a Mi'kmaq gathering on moose management, where representatives from all 13 communities participated and discussed key management issues that will form the basis of Mi'kmaq-specific moose hunting guidelines. The funding also maintained the Mi'kmaq Moose Management Coordinator position. This position has been instrumental in providing Mi'kmaq expertise and leadership on moose management and keeping Mi'kmaq communities, government agencies and provincial wildlife organizations informed.
- The Main Table also lent its support to begin a pilot project to examine the possibilities of adopting Mi'kmaq customary law/restorative justice approaches for hunting and fishing-related offences. A program is already in place through the Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network for certain criminal matters, and the parties are interested in exploring the feasibility of expanding the program.
- On lands, OAA has put in place a senior land strategist position to work with the office and the Mi'kmaq on land matters. This has included beginning the implementation of the agreement reached in the previous year regarding lands for the proposed Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre near Truro.
- With respect to forestry, work has begun to develop a policy that provides the Mi'kmaq access to wood for domestic purposes, in keeping with a recent decision by the Supreme Court of Canada (Sappier and Polchies).
- Efforts continued to inform Nova Scotians about negotiations. In addition to meetings with interested groups and organizations, a series of speaking engagements were held by Danny Graham, lead negotiator for the Province, and Dan Christmas, a senior Mi'kmaq leader from Membertou.

Core Business Area: Public Education and Awareness- The Office will take steps in an effort to better educate the public regarding Nova Scotia's first people. Through various media, Aboriginal Affairs will attempt to increase Nova Scotians' awareness of the Mi'kmaq culture. This business area includes promotion of Aboriginal awareness and importance of relationship building with other government departments and agencies.

The Office has undertaken steps through various mechanisms to better educate Nova Scotians of the Province's first people including a focus on relationship building with other government departments and agencies. To enhance public understanding and awareness of the Mi'kmaq and the collaborative work of governments and communities, OAA focused its efforts on the following over the past fiscal year:

www.gov.ns.ca/abor

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs continued to update and improve upon its website and increase its breadth of information in terms of the work of the Office, culture information on the Mi'kmaq, information on the communities and organizations we engage with and additional resources for website visitors.

Kekina'muek

This is an educational resource entitled *Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia* produced by the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq. OAA distributed this publication to grades 7, 10, and 11 students throughout the province. An electronic version of *Kekina'muek* can be found on OAA's website.

Building Departmental Awareness

In our continued effort to improve departmental awareness and promote relationship building with the Aboriginal community, the Office conducted informal information sessions with interested departments and agencies.

Aboriginal Perceptions Training

2008-09 was the fifth year of the Aboriginal Perceptions Training course. To date, approximately 2,000 people have attended this course which was designed to be a valuable asset for employees who work with Aboriginal communities as well as help prepare employees for the experience of having Aboriginal co-workers within the civil service. During 2008-09, the design and delivery of the Aboriginal Perceptions Training was transferred to the Department of Education, Mi'kmaq Liaison Office.

Wabanaki: People of the Dawn III

The Office, in conjunction with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, completed its third documentary film following on the success of *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn* Parts I and II. *Wabanaki III* profiles several Mi'kmaq youth and their respective achievements. It was made available to key OAA audiences and stakeholders.

Treaty Day Celebrations and Mi'kmaq History Month

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs also leveraged opportunities associated with Treaty Day and History Month to profile the Mi'kmaq's rich culture and history. Activities around both of these important celebrations attracted attention from news media outlets throughout the province. During the Treaty Day ceremony, the premier and several Nova Scotia cabinet ministers presented awards to Mi'kmaq elders and young people -- demonstrating the Province's support and commitment to Mi'kmaq of all ages.

Financial Results

The following table outlines the budgeted and actual spending for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Overall spending came in at \$4.499 million, approximately \$105,400.00 more than the authorized budget of \$4.394 million.

Description	Budget (\$ '000)	Actual (\$ '000)	Variance (\$ '000) (over budget)
Salaries and Benefits	1255.8	1308.9	-53.1
Travel	50.7	61.7	-11
Professional and Special Services	627.4	687.5	-60.1
Supplies and Services	67.6	62.3	5.3
Other	203.6	175.5	28.1
Grants and Assistance	2193.9	2515.2	-321.3
Less:			
Chargeables to Other Departments	5.0	311.7	306.7
Less Fees and Other Charges	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Gross Expenses	4394.0	4499.4	-105.4
FTEs	16.00	15.65	0.35

- *Salaries and Benefits* were higher than estimated mainly due to additional casual Provincial Land Strategist, term Policy Analyst positions, and salary increases as a result of the wage settlements and merit pays.
- *Travel* expenditures were higher than estimated due to increases in travel, airfare/accommodations out-of-province, and kilometers travelled within the province
- *Professional and Special Services* were higher than estimated mainly due to increase in professional services for conference costs and legal services.
- *Supplies and Services* were lower mainly due to decrease in miscellaneous office expenses, IT op-date centre, telecommunications and advertising.
- *Other* was lower due to decrease in office rentals, IT hardware, subscriptions and periodicals.
- *Grants and Assistance* payments were higher than estimated mainly due to one-time funding for the Eskasoni Youth at Risk Initiative, the Waycobah School construction, Eskasoni Governance Initiative, and additional funding for the Cross Cultural Awareness program.

- *Chargeables to Other Departments* were higher due to recoveries from Economic Development and Education for grants paid to Aboriginal Organizations, recoveries from Intergovernmental Affairs, Environment, Energy, Aboriginal Law and Duty to Consult learning seminar, and salary recoveries for wage settlements and pay for performance.
- *Recoveries* were higher due to increased payments from the Government of Canada for 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 2008-2009 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.

NOTE: The survey referred to in the 2008-09 Business Plan was not conducted. A survey is planned for the 2009-10 fiscal period.

The outcomes for this core business area are: *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.*

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 2009.

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 2009.

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 are: *(1) Effective coordination and advice being provided to government departments and agencies and to enhance awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia; and (2) Improved consultation between the provincial government and the Mi'kmaq.*

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 2009.

Outcome 2 - Improved consultation between the provincial government and the Mi'kmaq.

Measure 1 - 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?

This measure tells us that the Province is serious about meeting its commitment to address the duty to consult with the Mi'kmaq. NS is the only province in Canada with a consultation protocol between all First Nations in the province and the provincial government.

Where are we now?

The Province is involved in consultation on more than 30 issues. This is a small percentage of issues that require consultation. In 2008-09, the ToR for the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Consultation process was implemented.

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

Through the finalization of the ToR, and increased use of the process by provincial government departments, consultation with the Mi'kmaq will be well-coordinated, efficient, effective, and a regular course of business for decisions that may impact Aboriginal or treaty rights.

Measure 2 - Interim Policy Guidance on Consultation

What does this measure tell us?

This measure provides internal guidance to provincial employees on how they should address the Crown's duty to consult; as well as direction to departments that deal with natural resource issues to develop their own guidelines for consultation based on their own business lines, and consistent with the ToR and the Interim Policy.

Where are we now?

Two out of five departments have developed their own guidelines.

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

All five departments will develop their own guidelines, and OAA will lead the development of a final consultation policy.

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.*

Outcome 1 - Progress toward resolution of treaty-related issues

Measure 1 – Progress on substantive negotiations of priority topics

What does this measure tell us?

Experience from other jurisdictions indicates that these are long-term discussions, typically taking more than 10 years to reach a final agreement. In the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia Framework Agreement, the parties committed, where possible, to work towards interim progress to provide tangible results of the parties' efforts at an earlier date. Therefore, assessing progress on priority issues is an important measure.

Where are we now?

As outlined in the previous section, work has begun on priority areas such as lands, fisheries, forestry and moose management. Progress has been made towards the establishment of Mi'kmaq moose harvesting guidelines, an approach to provide access to wood for domestic purposes and land has been set aside for a major cultural centre.

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

Continue to seek interim measures on priority topics while developing a long-term understanding of rights and governance issues.

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?

Information is made available via the OAA website and informal discussions continued with various groups and organizations to update them on the process. In addition a number of more formal speaking engagements were held.

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

More formal information sharing and engagement mechanisms will be developed as negotiations on specific subjects reach a more advanced stage.

Core Business Area – Public Education and Awareness

The Office has undertaken steps through various mechanisms to better educate Nova Scotians of the Province's first people including a focus on relationship building with other government departments and agencies, and to enhance public understanding and awareness of the Mi'kmaq and the collaborative work of governments and communities.

The outcome for this core business area is: *To enhance awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.*

Outcome 1 - 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?

41% of Nova Scotians feel informed about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia. (2009 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

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.