

OFFICE OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS
BUSINESS PLAN 2008-2009

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Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

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A. Message from the Minister

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs has again undertaken a number of initiatives that will ensure that it advances its mandate of building mutual understanding, respect and a lasting relationship with the Mi'kmaq in 2008-2009.

A year after the Framework Agreement was signed, setting the three parties on a course of full negotiations, the Made-in-Nova Scotia Process has a number of committees working on issues such as moose hunting, fisheries and forestry. In conjunction with that process, OAA now has staff working to ensure that government departments are using the interim consultation guidelines currently in place. Building on the positive outcomes of the Province's first public servant symposium on Aboriginal affairs, we are looking forward to continue raising the profile of Nova Scotia's first people within the public service.

This year marks the 250th anniversary of parliamentary democracy in Canada with its birth here in Nova Scotia. Aboriginal Affairs is capturing the Mi'kmaq perspective on the role of Canada's founding people through the production of a documentary featuring the Mi'kmaq. We look forward to broad distribution once complete.

Each year, I encourage and support staff from the Office to continue growing the activities held on Treaty Day and most importantly during Mi'kmaq History Month. This year I am challenging civil servants and all Nova Scotians to become more aware of the rich Mi'kmaq culture that exists in every part of the province and will encourage my colleagues to do the same within their departments and constituencies.

The Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum is a leading example of First Nation-Government collaboration on social and economic matters. With the creation of a project fund to support the work of the Forum, communities are now benefitting from the collaborative work of the Forum.

As in the past, I want to again acknowledge the dedicated work of our staff and ask that you contact the Office of Aboriginal Affairs with any questions regarding their business plan or any of the work ahead in 2008-2009.

Michael G. Baker, Q.C.
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

B. Vision

The vision of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) is:

Partnership. Negotiation. Direction.

On our journey toward fair and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal Peoples, we strive to build an inclusive, informed and prosperous Nova Scotia.

C. Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs to:

Lead Nova Scotia in Aboriginal Affairs by building mutual understanding, respect and a lasting relationship.

D. Link To The Corporate Path

The mission and strategic goals of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs are aligned closely with the Nova Scotia Government's Corporate Path. As indicated in the Government of Nova Scotia's Business Plan, the Corporate Path lays out a foundation for a prosperous Nova Scotia by setting a direction that focuses on *Creating Winning Conditions, Seizing New Economic Opportunities, and Building for individuals, Families and Communities*. The Office of Aboriginal Affairs fosters and maintains conditions for opportunities through its involvement in the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum, the Made-In-Nova-Scotia Negotiation Process, as well as many intergovernmental and bilateral initiatives. OAA places a strong emphasis on relationship building and collaborative approaches with respect to the Aboriginal community as these are at the roots of successful progress for Aboriginal people and the Nova Scotia community at large. In the long term, strategic and smart investment within Nova Scotia's Aboriginal community benefits the province and its economy as a whole.

E. Planning Context

Nova Scotia has 13 Mi'kmaq First Nations with community populations ranging from 233 in the Annapolis Valley First Nation to 3,807 in the Eskasoni First Nation. In total, there are 13,518 registered Indians in Nova Scotia and of these, 4,555 live off-reserve. The Registered Indian population in Nova Scotia is represented through a series of 13 band councils and two tribal councils, the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq and the Union of Nova Scotia Indians. The Union of Nova Scotia Indians tribal council represents the five First Nation communities within Cape Breton (We'koqma'q, Wagmatcook, Membertou, Eskasoni, and Chapel Island First Nations) along with two First Nations located in mainland Nova Scotia (Indian Brook and Acadia First Nations). The remaining six communities are represented by the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (Bear River, Annapolis Valley, Glooscap, Millbrook, Paq'tnkek, and Pictou Landing First Nations).

Other Aboriginal organizations include the Native Council of Nova Scotia which provides a range of services, primarily to Aboriginal people living off-reserve and the Native Women's Association which provides Aboriginal women with a voice in the social, cultural and economic development of the Aboriginal community. The Micmac Native Friendship Centre offers a host of social programs aimed to improved the safety and well-being of Halifax's urban Aboriginal population.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs has a leadership and coordination role within government on Aboriginal issues. Delivering on this mandate is done in the context of a number of factors:

- The Umbrella Agreement (June 2002) outlines the Province's primary commitments and mechanisms by which we will address issues with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Canada, namely the development and signing of a Framework Agreement (Aboriginal and Treaty Rights); completion of a Terms of Reference with respect to consultation and; a re-commitment to the Mi'kmaq - Nova Scotia - Canada Tripartite Forum.
- The Framework Agreement (February 2007) sets out the process and the subjects to be discussed in full negotiations that fall broadly under the categories of land, resources and governance.
- The Mi'kmaq - Nova Scotia - Canada Tripartite Forum continues to offer a unique forum for dialogue and shared problem solving. Meaningful progress continues to be made on a number of existing and new projects that have resulted in positive changes in areas of culture and heritage preservation, access to justice, economic development, health and healthy lifestyle promotion, to name but a few.
- The Province's two overarching frameworks outlining Government's long term vision for Nova Scotia, ie. Nova Scotia 2020, "Our Framework for Social Prosperity; Weaving the Threads" and "Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity" emphasize the need for the social and economic priorities of government programs and services to intersect, ensuring that government's horizontal and collaborative approach leaves no one behind. For example, departments and agencies have collaborated on the development of several strategies in 2007-2008 (Child and Youth, Crime Prevention, Heritage and Poverty to name a few) in an effort to bring focus to how government achieves success in its "Nova Scotia 2020" vision. In 2008-2009, OAA will work with government departments and agencies to ensure that the priorities identified under both the frameworks and the Tripartite Forum are reinforced and are addressed in a coordinated way.
- Building on work done in 2007-2008, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs continues to work collaboratively with other departments of government and the Mi'kmaq to develop and implement consultation policies, protocols and approaches. The impetus for this work

rests with recent Supreme Court of Canada decisions (Haida, Taku River and Mikisew Cree) that outlined the obligations provinces have with respect to consultation with Aboriginal peoples.

- In Nova Scotia, as in the rest of Canada, the Aboriginal population is much younger than the rest of the population. The median age of the First Nation population in Nova Scotia is 25.4 compared to 41.6 for the population as a whole. The Aboriginal population is also increasingly inclined to live off-reserve and in urban areas of the province. According to the Community Well-Being Index prepared by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nation communities remain the poorest in Canada. Based on this index in Nova Scotia the bottom 9 communities were First Nations and not one First Nation community was rated higher than 62nd out of the 86 communities compared by the index.

F. Strategic Goals

1. To facilitate and support a coordinated approach within Government on matters related to Aboriginal people.
2. To work collaboratively with the Mi'kmaq, and other federal/provincial agencies to foster economic and social development as well as community capacity building.
3. To enhance Nova Scotians' awareness and understanding of issues related to the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.
4. To continue to build and maintain a sustainable foundation for Aboriginal-Government relations.
5. To represent the interests of Nova Scotians in intergovernmental, bilateral and tri-party negotiations and initiatives.

G. Core Business Areas

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs carries out its responsibilities through the following three core business areas:

1. **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 Aboriginal-Government relations.

2. **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.
3. **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 in order to reconcile the respective rights and interests of Parties involved.
4. **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 increase Nova Scotians' awareness of the Mi'kmaq culture. This business area also the Office's promotion of Aboriginal awareness and importance of relationship building with other government departments and agencies.

H. Priorities 2008-2009

1. Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations

Nova Scotia continues to work with the federal government and the Aboriginal community to strengthen relationships and close gaps in the outcomes of Aboriginal health, housing, education, economic opportunities and relationship building. Our commitments are based on the fundamental principles of partnership, respect and commitment. As such, Nova Scotia will work with the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and the Government of Canada to improve the health, education and economic conditions of Mi'kmaq people in Nova Scotia. The key actions in 2008-2009 are identified below.

The Tripartite Forum is a key mechanism in Nova Scotia for addressing issues affecting Mi'kmaq communities. With the project management approach firmly in place and a full-time project manager on-board to assist forum participants in their endeavours, there is a growing list of projects being undertaken by the Tripartite Forum. A full list of current projects is contained in Annex A to this plan.

In 2007-08, the Mi'kmaq introduced a new, coordinated approach to developing the Mi'kmaq cultural tourism sector in Nova Scotia titled the Mi'kmaq Culture and Tourism Network (MCTN). In a partnership between the Mi'kmaq and Aboriginal Affairs, Economic Development and Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Nova Scotia will support capacity development in this sector so that Mi'kmaq communities can take advantage of the growing cultural tourism market.

The 2008 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) will be 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. Government will work collaboratively with Mi'kmaq leadership to ensure that Mi'kmaq athletes are adequately supported during their participation at the event and are empowered to represent Nova Scotia.

As part of a broader community wellness approach, support will continue to be given to the *Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network* (MLSN). 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. In 2008-09, Nova Scotia will work with the federal government and the Mi'kmaq to develop and implement a new agreement to more effectively support the MLSN and its constituent programs, Mi'kmaq Courtworker Program and the Mi'kmaq Customary Law Program.

Labour market development and skills training has been identified as a key priority of the Tripartite Forum. Within this context and with the federal government devolving labour market programs and services to the province, Nova Scotia will continue to work with the Mi'kmaq to identify collaborative approaches that support greater Mi'kmaq participation in the Nova Scotia labour force. For example, in 2008-09, a new Aboriginal apprenticeship initiative will be introduced with the target of certifying 100 Aboriginal apprentices over the coming three years. In addition, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs will continue to support the Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program in partnership with the federal government and the university sector.

With an expanding young, urban Aboriginal population, the Office will strive to further engage departments and agencies to better support the work of the Micmac Native Friendship Centre. The Centre delivers a host of programs and services to an ever-expanding client base and the Office will work to improve linkages with appropriate government partners wherever possible.

Outcome Measures for Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations:

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Data 2004/05	2008/09 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
To effectively represent the interests of Nova Scotians in inter-governmental, tripartite, and bilateral initiatives and negotiations.	Percentage of government departments and agencies who agree that OAA effectively represents Nova Scotian's interests in intergovernmental, tripartite, and bilateral initiatives and negotiations.	32% of respondents strongly agreed and 64% agreed that OAA represents Nova Scotian's interests effectively in intergovernmental, bilateral, and tri-party initiatives and negotiations. A new survey will be conducted in June of 2008	To increase the % of respondents who strongly agree.	-Ongoing participation and coordination of provincial role in the Mi'kmaq-Canada-Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum. -Ongoing participation and involvement in national and regional initiatives, such as the development of an Aboriginal Labour Market Skills Strategy and the continued implementation of the Nova Scotia Aboriginal Health Blueprint.
Improved relations between the Government of Nova Scotia and Aboriginal communities and organizations.	Percentage of departments and agencies who are satisfied with their working relationship with Aboriginal communities and organizations.	15% of respondents were very satisfied with their working relationship with Aboriginal communities and organizations, and 65% were only somewhat satisfied.	To increase the % of respondents who are very satisfied.	-Ongoing identification and coordination of cross-departmental Aboriginal issues. -Continuation of strategic advice and policy analysis to departments and agencies. -Working with departments and agencies to apply national strategies to provincial approaches.

2. Corporate Aboriginal Affairs Administration

OAA will continue to work closely with departments and agencies to provide advice and support in defining various approaches to addressing Aboriginal issues. In particular, during 2008-2009, the Office will focus on the following key areas:

Consultation

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in key cases (Haida, Taku River, Mikisew Cree) on the obligations that provincial governments have with respect to consulting with Aboriginal peoples on decisions that may affect their interests. Over the coming fiscal year, OAA will work with provincial government departments and the Mi'kmaq to implement the Province's Interim Consultation Policy, and provide advice and support on coordination of consultation efforts.

The June 2002 *Umbrella Agreement* included a commitment for the parties to develop terms of reference to address consultation between the federal and provincial governments and the Mi'kmaq. The Canada-Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq Consultation Terms of Reference has been completed and is now in a one-year trial implementation period. The goal is to continue with a collaborative approach on consultation issues.

A two day training program was developed by OAA on Consultation with First Nations and delivered to government employees in 2007. In 2008-2009, OAA will continue to deliver the course, and it is expected that employees will become familiar with the Interim Consultation Policy and the Canada-Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq Consultation Terms of Reference, and know how to apply them.

Mi'kmawey Debert

OAA will continue to work with the Mi'kmaq and other provincial and federal partners to further the work of Mi'kmawey 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 development of the master interpretive plan, the project will continue to progress in 2008-09. OAA works closely with line departments to facilitate and foster cooperation with the Mi'kmaq on this initiative.

Gaming

First Nation gaming continues to be an important source of revenue for First Nations in Nova Scotia. Gaming agreements between Nova Scotia and the thirteen First Nations generate approximately \$40 million annually in revenues. These revenues, in turn support social and economic development in First Nation communities. OAA will continue to work with First Nations communities in Nova Scotia to ensure that First Nation gaming is being implemented in a manner consistent with the provincial Gaming Strategy.

Healthy Workplace

In support of all of OAA's challenges, the Office puts a high value on ensuring that all staff have the necessary training to carry out the tasks assigned. Both individual and joint training of staff will be pursued in 2008-2009. As part of our continued effort to promote healthier workplaces, October 2007 saw a very successful walking campaign which coincided with Healthy Workplace Week. In 2008-2009, our Office will continue its involvement on the government wide Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee and will continue to provide opportunities for employees to learn about ways to improve their total health and create a healthy work environment.

Outcome Measures for Corporate Aboriginal Affairs Administration:

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Data 2004/05	2008/09 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
Effective coordination and advice being provided to departments and agencies.	Departments and agencies satisfaction with the advice and support provided by OAA.	75% of departments were “very satisfied” with the advice and support provided by OAA. A new survey will be conducted in June of 2008	80%	-Provide research and policy advice that is timely, accurate and useful.
Improved consultation between the provincial government and the Mi’kmaq.	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).	Approved Terms of Referencee	Implement/ operate under TOR for one-year trial period.	Coordinate/facilitate consultations between the Mi’kmaq and various provincial departmenton key projects.
	Interim Policy Guidance on Consultation	Draft Interim Policy Guidance has been approved. Put in place consultation coordinator to oversee implementation. Developed training to advise departments of policy.	Continue to provide training sessions.	-Provide advice to departments on consultation efforts. -Develop Proponents engagement guidelines. -Develop risk analysis framework. -Assist departments to develop internal procedures that are consistent with the Interim Policy and the ToR.

3. **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 in order to reconcile the respective rights and interests of Parties involved. Key activities are noted below.

Through collaborative work with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and the federal government, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia Framework Agreement was signed on February 23, 2007. This Agreement is a commitment under the June 2002 *Umbrella Agreement*, that formalizes the establishment of a negotiations process on matters related to Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal title, and treaty rights. Negotiations are continuing in a spirit that is interest-based and inclusive, with a commitment to increasing opportunities for the Mi'kmaq to meet their full socio-economic potential and ultimately contribute to the prosperity of Nova Scotia. Discussions have now begun and will continue on substantive topics outlined in the Framework Agreement.

Negotiation topics outlined in the Framework Agreement are extensive. The focus has been on exploring these topics in terms of background information and key issues to be addressed, as well as defining the negotiation process through work planning. Working Groups have been established to address priority topics, enabling the beginning of substantive discussions in areas such as moose, fisheries, forestry, and land.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs is committed to citizenship engagement and providing meaningful and relevant opportunities for Nova Scotians to contribute to the Made-in-Nova Scotia Process. For the negotiation process, this means building widespread awareness and engagement in the Process, continuing to take steps to provide information to the public, municipalities, interest groups and stakeholders, and establishing appropriate advisory mechanisms.

Outcome Measures for Negotiations:

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Data	2008/09 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
Progress toward resolution of Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title and treaty-related issues.	Progress on substantive negotiations of priority topics.	Base Year is 2007-08 Priority topics identified. Establishment of Working Groups.	With the other two parties, develop concept papers and key issues for each priority negotiation topic. Where appropriate develop interim measures.	-Continue negotiation table meetings. - Continue Working Group meetings
	Public Participation (processes for information sharing and input by public and stakeholder regarding negotiations).	Series of informal meetings and presentations about negotiations to key stakeholder groups. Completed survey in 2007-08 to obtain input from interested groups and organizations about the level of participation they are interested in.	Continue to meet with interested groups and organizations about the Process. Develop communication and engagement strategy.	- Provide regular updates about the negotiation process on OAA website. - Develop information material, including background and fact sheets, about each priority negotiation topic

4. 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 mechanisms, Aboriginal Affairs will attempt to increase Nova Scotians' awareness of the Mi'kmaq community. This business area also includes the Office's promotion of Aboriginal awareness and importance of 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 will pursue the following priorities in the coming fiscal year:

www.gov.ns.ca/abor

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs website was revamped early in 2008 and now contains a wealth of information about the Office, the work we do and information on the communities and organizations we engage with. In 2008-09, we will continue to populate the website with current and relevant information which we hope website visitors will find helpful.

Kekina'muek

An educational resource publication called *Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia* produced by the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq can be found electronically on our website. It shares stories and information about Mi'kmaq life and history -- past and present. We have distributed the publication to grades 7, 10 and 11 students throughout the province and will continue to build on resources for school-age children and youth to learn about Nova Scotia's Mi'kmaq community

Building Departmental Awareness

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

Aboriginal Perceptions Training

2008-2009 will be the fifth year of the Aboriginal Perceptions Training course. To date, close to 1,700 people have attended this course 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. The course is being delivered in every region of Nova Scotia, so all public sector employees can take part. The course is also being provided in a limited way to organizations outside the provincial public service as well.

Wabanaki: People of the Dawn III

The Office, in conjunction with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, is completing a third documentary film following on the success of *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn Parts I and II*. This film profiles several Mi'kmaq youth and their respective achievements and will be distributed to junior high school students throughout the province. It will also be made available to key OAA audiences and stakeholders.

Public Servants Symposium on Aboriginal Matters

The Office brought together provincial government employees from across the province for a one-day symposium dedicated to exploring Aboriginal issues. Held in late October, 2007, the objectives of the Symposium were as follows:

- Lay the groundwork for improving collaboration and enhancing relations across many departments between the Province and the Mi'kmaq
- Raise awareness of the relevance of current OAA initiatives to participants' work
- Increase the understanding of Mi'kmaq issues and concerns

The event attracted 150 employees from across Nova Scotia and throughout the coming year, the Office will work towards addressing outcomes that were identified through the event's evaluation.

Heritage Strategy

With the release of the heritage strategy in 2007-08, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, in partnership with other departments and the Mi'kmaq, will support the objectives of the strategy in 2008-09. For example, the Office will enhance efforts to support public education and awareness through Mi'kmaq History Month. OAA in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Mi'kmaq will be supporting a cross-cultural education outreach program in public schools across Nova Scotia. In addition to providing direct support to Mi'kmawey Debert, the Province will work with other communities through the Mi'kmaq Cultural Tourism Network to build the capacity of the Mi'kmaq to interpret their history and tell their own stories through a growing network of cultural facilities. Government will also examine more effective ways in which to support the retention and use of the Mi'kmaq language in Nova Scotia.

Outcome Measure for Public Education and Awareness

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Data	2008/09 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
To enhance awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	Percentage of Nova Scotian's who feel informed and knowledgeable of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	40% of Nova Scotians feel informed about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia. (2003 Omnibus Survey)	Increase of 10% in Nova Scotians who feel informed about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	-Develop and implement strategies to enhance Nova Scotian's understanding and awareness of issues related to Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia.
	% of government employees who strongly agree that OAA enhances awareness of Mi'kmaq culture.	33% of departments and agencies "strongly agreed" that OAA enhances the awareness of Mi'kmaq culture, while 67% "agreed". (2004-05 base year. A new survey to be conducted in 2008)	Increase in the % of government employees who strongly agree.	-Develop and implement strategies to enhance employee's understanding and awareness of issues related to Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia.
	Qualitative assessment of Government employees satisfaction with Aboriginal Perceptions Training.	Evaluation of participants in the the training session generally rated the course as excellent. (note: information in this particular box provided qualitatively, no quantitative or percentage information available).(2007-08)	We hope to continue on the success already achieved by responding to the comments and suggestions of future participants.	-Develop a program that can be fluid according to the needs of the participants.

I. Budget Context

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS			
	2007-2008 Estimate	2007-2008 Forecast	2008-2009 Estimate
Program and Service Area	(Sthousands)	(Sthousands)	(Sthousands)
Total Program Expenses:			
Aboriginal Affairs	\$4,841	\$4,914	\$4,394
Total Program Expenses	\$4,841	\$4,914	\$4,394
Provincial Funded Staff (FTE's)	14.0	12.1	15.0

ANNEX A

SUMMARY OF TRIPARTITE FORUM STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY PROJECTS FOR 2008-09

Strategic Direction - Individual and community capacity: building the capacity of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq. Outcomes linked to this are increasing the skills of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, increasing participation of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq in the labour market, increasing employment of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq youth, and increasing Mi'kmaq language retention opportunities.

- **Court Translator Modules Development Project (Justice Working Committee)**
The Court Translator Module Development is a partnership between the Nova Scotia Department of Justice, the Nova Scotia Community College and the Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network to create and standardize Court Translator training modules for use in training new and existing Court Workers to help support First Nations Clients.
- **Environmental Scan of Human Resources in Early Childhood Programs in Mi'kmaq Communities in Nova Scotia (Education Working Committee)**
This project involves an environmental scan of present and future human resource needs for early childhood programs and services in twelve Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia.
- **Social Data Network Deployment Plan (Social Working Committee)**
The Social Data network and data collection system is designed to be operated from a web browser through a secure network located and operated via Atlantic Policy Congress. The Network will be designed to support the First Nations Policy Manual as well as Case Management Assessments. This is a pilot project which will run in two Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Communities.
- **Mi'kmaq Language and Band Operated and Nova Scotia Provincial Schools: An Assessment and Implementation Initiative (Education Working Committee)**
This project is focused on the preservation of the Mi'kmaq language. This longitudinal research is a collaborative works between the community-based expertise on Mi'kmaq Education and McGill University's professional expertise in First Nations education, linguistics, student learning and assessment.

Strategic Direction - Youth: ensuring the success of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Youth on their path of life-long learning. Outcomes linked to this are increasing youth participation on issues and solutions, increasing the number of healthy active youth, increasing youth governance development opportunities.

- **Development of Youth Entrepreneurship (Economic Development Working Committee)**
Examine alternative methods for supporting entrepreneurship efforts in First Nation communities based on community dialogue and prior experience through the Open for Business initiative.

- **Physical Activity Data Collection, Mi'kmaw Students PHASE 1 (Sport and Recreation Working Committee)**
Phase 1 of this project will focus on Training Teachers and partners on the use of gaining/obtaining physical activity Data from Mi'kmaw students in the classroom setting. In Phase 2 Pedometers will be used in the classroom for the purpose of monitoring students and their physical activity levels over the course of a school year.

Strategic Direction - Community: ensuring the work of Tripartite Forum is inclusive of communities. Outcomes linked to this are ensuring all work is inclusive of and linked to the communities' needs, priorities and plans, as well as increasing community participation and input.

- **Family Violence & Aboriginal Communities: Building Our Knowledge and Direction through Community Based Research and Community Forums (Justice Working Committee)**
The main objective of this research is to find and develop culturally appropriate and effective intervention models that address family violence within the context of Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia.
- **Moving Forward Together on Health Priorities: Increasing Government and Community Capacity to Take Strategic Action on Providing Health (Health Working Committee)**
The key focus of the project is to build awareness and capacity of all parties to improve the health of Mi'kmaq communities and individuals through the prioritization of the 56 recommendations stemming from Providing Health Care, Achieving Health Aboriginal Health Blueprint document.

Strategic Direction - Relationships: building relationships among all partners for today and tomorrow. Outcomes linked to this are maintaining links between the work of the Tripartite Forum and that of Kwikmug Maw-Klusuag - Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative, achieving jurisdictional clarity when required, and ensuring the work of the Tripartite Forum considers Mi'kmaq cultural realities.

- **Place Names Database & Website Development Study (Culture and Heritage Working Committee)**
This project will provide a development strategy for a website on Mi'kmaw place names, including requirements for database amalgamation, website design and maintenance, educational and public applications, and partnerships.