

OFFICE OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**STATEMENT OF MANDATE
2012-13**

April 1, 2012

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Statement of Mandate - 2012-13, for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Nova Scotia government works with the Mi'kmaq at the local, provincial and national levels to increase economic opportunity and social inclusion. Our growing relationship respects the rich culture and history of Nova Scotia's Mi'kmaw people.

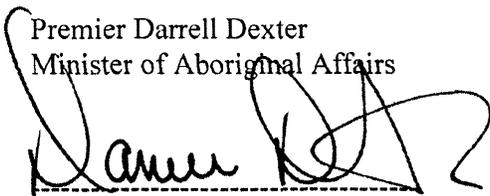
This summer, I will host other Premiers and the leaders of the five national Aboriginal organizations. This will give Nova Scotia and the Mi'kmaq a wonderful opportunity to highlight how strong partnerships and a willingness to move forward together can improve the lives and well-being of First Nation communities.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs focuses on working with the Mi'kmaq to ensure they are part of Nova Scotia's future prosperity. We are taking action to support communities as they seek economic opportunity and good jobs for Mi'kmaw people. We are taking action to resolve long-standing issues associated with Aboriginal and treaty rights. And we are taking action to support healthy communities through stronger integration of provincial, federal and Mi'kmaw health services and supports.

In the short term, these efforts support the priorities of government and will help the Mi'kmaq in building strong and sustainable communities. In the longer term, our efforts will help to build an inclusive, informed and prosperous Nova Scotia.

Wela'lin

Premier Darrell Dexter
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

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Message from the Deputy Minister

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs performs a vital role by supporting strong and stable relations between the Mi'kmaq and the government of Nova Scotia.

Progress continues on addressing Aboriginal and treaty rights through the Made-in-Nova Scotia negotiation process, through consultation where major projects could affect Aboriginal or treaty rights or title, and through intergovernmental relations and public education. As well, the Tripartite Forum between Mi'kmaw communities and organizations and governments continues to foster collaborative solutions on social and economic matters.

In the coming year, this office will bring a strong focus to finding practical solutions to the challenges and opportunities we face. OAA will work with the Mi'kmaq and the private sector to ensure that the Mi'kmaq are able to take advantage of opportunities such as the Irving Shipbuilding contract, the growing opportunities in the renewable energy sector and other growing areas of the Nova Scotia economy.

OAA will continue to partner with other provincial departments, the federal government and Mi'kmaw communities and organizations to address gaps or barriers that may exist in programs and services. The Mi'kmaq should expect what all Nova Scotians expect from their government, one that is responsive to their needs and focused on improving the well-being of their community.

I look forward to a productive year working with all our partners.

Catherine Blewett
Deputy Minister, Aboriginal Affairs

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Mandate, Mission and Vision

The *Mandate* of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) is to promote a coordinated approach within government on matters related to Aboriginal people, represent the interests of the Province in intergovernmental, multilateral initiatives and negotiations and provide research, analysis and policy advice to government on Aboriginal issues.

It is the *Mission* of the OAA to lead Nova Scotia in Aboriginal Affairs by building mutual understanding, respect and a lasting relationship.

The *Vision* of the 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.

Government Priorities

Government has set a clear path with three key priorities. This section outlines how OAA will support these priorities in the coming year.

1. Get back to balance and ensure government lives within its means

Like all departments and agencies of government, OAA is reducing spending over the next three years to help government get back to balance. A key measure being taken by OAA to assist in meeting these targets is the co-location of the agency with the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. This co-location has resulted in on-going savings in salaries and benefits and operational efficiencies. In the coming year the OAA will work to identify more operational efficiencies.

2. Make health care better for you and your family

OAA will continue to work with our Mi'kmaq partners, other provincial departments and the federal government to improve health outcomes for Mi'kmaq people in Nova Scotia through the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum. The current health priorities are Mental Health and Addictions, Continuing Care, Cultural Safety and Training, Relationships and Collaboration, and Youth. These priority areas are being addressed through initiatives pertaining to Mi'kmaq physical activity and recreation; building professional development and networking opportunities in promoting healthy lifestyle. Specific examples include the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative; Doctors NS to strengthen healthy eating and lifestyle choices; continued participation and support of Aboriginal Track and Field Championships and development and support of Mi'kmaq Lacrosse program in Nova Scotia.

In addition, our office also continues to support the Halifax Aboriginal People's Network (HAPN), which is a community-driven volunteer-based network. This network is designed to address local needs and priorities identified by members of the urban Aboriginal community. Health is one of core priorities of this network.

3. Create good jobs and grow the economy

Mi'kmaw communities have the youngest and fastest growing population in the province. With half the population under the age of 25 there is no question that government understands the need to work closely with Mi'kmaw communities and organizations to improve employment and economic outcomes. To that end, OAA is pursuing a number of priority actions to support this work.

With respect to creating good jobs, OAA will work in cooperation with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) and our Mi'kmaw partners to continue the work of the Aboriginal Employability Table and ensure the necessary supports are in place for this young and growing segment of Nova Scotia society. Beginning in 2012-13, the Province, through LAE will be providing \$640,000 over two years to support the efforts of the Una'maki Economic Benefits Office.

In the coming year the Office of Aboriginal Affairs will also work with the Mi'kmaq and Irving Shipbuilding to identify employment and business opportunities for Mi'kmaw people and communities within this \$25 billion project.

The Province, through its support in 2010-11 of a Mi'kmaq Major Resource and Energy Fund and the development of a Mi'kmaq Renewable Energy Strategy, has created a foundation for future economic opportunity for the Mi'kmaq in the renewable energy sector. OAA intends to build on these efforts with a specific focus on addressing access to capital for Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw communities.

The consultation terms of reference signed in August of 2010 provides a framework for a streamlined consultation process that formally integrates Mi'kmaw interests and concerns in government decision-making. It has and will continue to facilitate economic development opportunities by linking First Nations with business interests in Nova Scotia.

The Province will also identify opportunities to link our objectives of improving economic opportunity to measures taken through the Made in Nova Scotia negotiation process.

We will also continue to support economic development in individual Mi'kmaw communities through First Nation gaming agreements. These agreements provide approximately \$50 million annually to Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia which in turn are used to support economic and community development.

OAA will work through a variety of forums and with a number of organizations to improve economic outcomes. For example, the Tripartite Forum Economic Development Committee will focus their efforts in the following areas in 2012-13: youth entrepreneurship, Aboriginal procurement and partnership development. The Province will also support the Native Council of Nova Scotia in implementing its economic strategy.

Performance Measures

Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations				
Outcome	Measure	Data	2012/13 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
The interests of Nova Scotians in inter-governmental, tripartite, and bilateral initiatives and negotiations are effectively represented	Increase in the percentage of government departments and agencies who agree that OAA effectively represents Nova Scotians' interests.	Inter-departmental Survey 2010 - 92% strongly agree/agree 2005 - 96% strongly agree/agree	To increase the % of respondents who strongly agree/agree to 96%.	-Ongoing participation and coordination of provincial role in the Mi'kmaq-Canada-Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum and the Made in Nova Scotia negotiation process. -Ongoing participation and involvement in national (Aboriginal Affairs Working Group) and regional initiatives.
Improved relations between the Government of Nova Scotia and Aboriginal communities and organizations.	Increase in the percentage of departments and agencies who are satisfied with their working relationship with Aboriginal communities and organizations.	Inter-departmental Survey 2010 - 91% were satisfied/somewhat satisfied 2005 - 80% were satisfied/somewhat satisfied	To increase the % of respondents who are satisfied/somewhat satisfied to 95%.	-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.

Coordination and Policy Advice				
Outcome	Measure	Data	2012/13 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
Coordination and advice being provided to departments and agencies that is effective.	Departments and agencies satisfaction with the advice and support provided by OAA.	Interdepartmental Survey 2010 - 75% were satisfied 2005 - 75% were satisfied	To increase the % of respondents who are satisfied/somewhat satisfied to 80%	Development of a Aboriginal Policy Framework for Nova Scotia Provide research and policy advice that is timely, accurate and useful.

Negotiations				
Outcome	Measure	Data	2012/13 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
Enhanced clarity on Mi'kmaq rights, title and treaty-related issues; improved and stable relations; and reduced social and economic disparity for the Mi'kmaq.	All parties remain committed to the 2007 Mi-kmaq-Nova Scotia Framework Agreement and make progress, including interim arrangements on priority negotiation topics.	Work plans and progress reports	Conclude arrangements with the Mi'kmaq on a number of topics.	Monthly Main Table meetings with federal and Mi'kmaq negotiation teams, and working groups on key topics

Public Education and Awareness				
Outcome	Measure	Data	2012/13 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
An enhanced level of awareness and understanding of Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	An increasing percentage of Nova Scotians who feel informed of and knowledgeable about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	Regular survey data 41% of Nova Scotians feel informed (2009 base year)	Increase of 10% in Nova Scotians who feel informed about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	Strategies include: -comprehensive communications before, during, and after the meetings between premiers and national Aboriginal leaders in July 2012. - communications during and after Treaty Day, in October - communication related to Aboriginal and treaty rights and title - an enhanced website for the Office of Aboriginal Affairs - ongoing cooperation with Aboriginal and federal partners
	An increasing percentage of government employees who feel informed of and knowledgeable about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia.	Interdepartmental survey 2010 - 35% strongly agreed. 2005 – 33% strongly agreed	Increase in the percentage of government employees who feel informed of and knowledgeable about Aboriginal issues in Nova Scotia to 40%.	Strategies include: - communication supporting consultation education - enhanced communication across government in support of Treaty Day

Consultation

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Data	2012-13 Target	Strategies to Achieve Target
The provincial government has consistent and effective mechanisms for consulting with the Mi'kmaq and coordinating with the federal government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation Terms of Reference • Canada-NS MOU on Consultation Cooperation • New consultation policy • Department-specific guidelines for consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation Terms of Reference formally signed in August 2010 • Interim consultation policy developed in 2007 • Final draft of Canada-NS MOU on Consultation Cooperation has been completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign Canada-NS MOU on Consultation Cooperation • Begin developing the new consultation policy • Begin developing department-specific guidelines for consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify date for MOU signing • A project charter will be developed and approved for the policy development • OAA Consultation will work closely with departments to develop their consultation guidelines
Provincial departments rely on advice from OAA Consultation and are effectively supported in their consultations with the Mi'kmaq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departments receive timely and consistent consultation advice • Consultation advisors assist departments in maintaining their consultation records • Legal risk associated with consultation is managed effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey data (to be collected in early 2012-13) • 59 active consultations in 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey data reflects positively on the role of OAA Consultation • Performance indicators will be defined and used to develop an annual performance report • The provincial government meets its legal obligations to consult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In early 2012-13 a baseline survey of client departments will be completed to measure timeliness and consistency of consultation support from OAA • Annual surveys will be completed every January for ongoing measurement • Each department is assigned a consultation advisor • Consultation advisors utilize common tools when advising departments • Consultation advisors maintain complete consultation records

<p>Provincial government employees and the public understand why government consults with the Mi'kmaq and how to conduct that consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial employees receive Aboriginal consultation training • Hosting a learning seminar with public participation • Learning resources are available to provincial employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2011 - 91 ○ 2010 - 31 ○ 2009 - 62 • Learning Seminar participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2011 - 154 ○ 2010 - 242 ○ 2009 - 185 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 training sessions (25-30 provincial employees per session) • 1 Learning Seminar (150-200 participants) • Develop resources and make them available to provincial employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sessions will occur approximately every 3 months • Learning Seminar will take place in November 2012
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Budget Context

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS			
	2011-2012 Estimate	2011-2012 Forecast	2012-2013 Estimate
Program and Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Total Program Expenses:			
Aboriginal Affairs	\$4,195	\$4,159	4,094
Total Program Expenses	\$4,195	\$4,159	4,094
Provincial Funded Staff (FTE's)	16.0	16.0	16.3