

Accountability Report 2017–2018

Service Nova Scotia

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Contents

- Accountability Statement 2
- Message from Minister 3
- Message from CEO 4
- Financial Results 5
- Measuring Our Performance 6
 - Priorities 6
 - Core Responsibilities 7
- Supplemental Information and Appendices 9
 - Interesting facts about Service Nova Scotia 9
 - Annual Report under Section 18 of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* 10

Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Office of Service Nova Scotia for the year ended March 31, 2018 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Service Nova Scotia Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of Service Nova Scotia's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Service Nova Scotia management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Service Nova Scotia 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 Service Nova Scotia 2017-2018 Business Plan.

Original Signed By

Hon. Geoff MacLellan
Minister

Original Signed By

Joanne Munro
Chief Executive Officer

Message from Minister

It is my pleasure to present the Accountability Report for the Office of Service Nova Scotia. This document reports on the Office's activities as outlined in our 2017-18 Business Plan.

As government's main client-facing channel, Service Nova Scotia is responsible for delivering a wide range of programs and services to citizens. There are approximately five million client interactions each year. The team at Service Nova Scotia is committed to service excellence in everything that they do. The breadth of the work speaks to the ample opportunities the Office has to help build a stronger Nova Scotia and contribute to the province's economic growth.

The following pages highlight some of our innovative and transformational accomplishments over the past year, including a government-led modernization of the major registries, continuing to improve the client experience at Access Nova Scotia Centres, using new ways to design and improve services across government, and playing a critical role in cutting red tape for the business community. Service Nova Scotia plays an essential role in the development of a digital strategy to give Nova Scotians the opportunity to interact and transact with their government online. By leveraging innovative technologies and working in collaboration with key departments, we are continuously striving to provide the highest quality of programs and services to the citizens and businesses of Nova Scotia.

From managing the Access Nova Scotia Centres and government's customer contact centre, to issuing driver's licenses, licensing permits and business registrations to ensuring that Nova Scotian consumers are treated fairly and are protected, our work has an important role in the lives of all Nova Scotians.

I continue to be impressed with staff, and their ability to deliver an extensive list of programs and services to Nova Scotians efficiently and effectively. I am looking forward to the year ahead.

Original signed by

Honourable Geoff MacLellan
Minister of Service Nova Scotia

Message from CEO

As CEO of Service Nova Scotia, I am pleased to join Minister MacLellan in introducing our 2017-18 Accountability Report.

I am so proud of what staff have accomplished this past year to enhance our service offerings to Nova Scotians. They continue to focus on innovative ways to deliver better service, while supporting our vision to be a recognized leader in service excellence and public protection that delivers trusted, accessible and modern programs.

This past year alone, staff served more than one-million clients at 13 Access Nova Scotia Centres and seven Registry of Motor Vehicle Offices, answered more than 350,000 public calls at the Government Contact Centre, helped 42,079 Nova Scotians through the enhanced Heating Assistance Rebate Program, issued more than 1,600 lottery licenses and more than 4,800 lottery permits.

We are focused on modernizing the programs and services we deliver to make them more convenient and efficient for our clients. We are transforming the way citizens access government services by continuing to develop client-centric, digital self-serve options that provide easy and convenient access to many government programs and services. We are committed to cutting red tape to help reduce the burden on businesses and help them grow and prosper.

From modernizing the Residential Tenancies program, introducing our Client Experience Commitment of being respectful, fair, responsive and inclusive for everyone interacting with us, and introducing a new, highly secure driver's licence and photo ID card, Service Nova Scotia is having a positive impact on the lives of Nova Scotians.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our highly skilled, dedicated and passionate staff, as we continue to work together to serve Nova Scotians with excellence.

Original signed by

Joanne Munro
CEO of Service Nova Scotia

Financial Results

Office of Service Nova Scotia			
	2017-18 Estimate	2017-18 Actual	2017-2018 Variance
Program & Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
CEO Chief Executive Office	380	360	(20)
Strategy and Corporate Services	10,733	10,513	(220)
Client Experience	37,845	38,659	814
Program Modernization	30,044	29,101	(943)
Total: Departmental Expenses	79,002	78,633	(369)
Ordinary Revenue	719,138	713,967	(5,171)
Fees and Other Charges	8,478	8,248	(230)
Ordinary Recoveries	1,525	437	(1,088)
Total: Revenue, Fees, And Recoveries	729,141	722,652	(6,489)
TCA Purchase Requirements	6,940	799	(6,141)
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	642.0	641.1	(0.9)

Departmental Expense Variance Explanation:

Service Nova Scotia expenditures were \$0.4 million or (0.5%) lower than estimate, primarily due to delayed Petroleum Product Volume Tracking project of \$1.2 million partially offset by net grant, operating and salary expenses \$0.8 million.

Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Variance Explanation:

Service Nova Scotia's revenues were \$6.5 million or (0.9%) lower than estimate, primarily due to decreased Tobacco Tax \$9.4 million, delayed Petroleum Product Volume Tracking project \$1.2 million offset by increases in Passenger Vehicle Registrations \$2.2 million, and Levy on Private Sales for Used Vehicles \$1.9 million.

TCA Purchase Requirements Variance Explanation:

Service Nova Scotia's Tangible Capital Asset purchase requirements were \$6.1 million or (88.5%) lower than estimate due to project timing of deliverables being revised and change cash flow requirements.

Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:

Delays in filling vacancies account for lower than expected (0.9) FTE's.

Measuring Our Performance

The annual Accountability Report for the Office of Service Nova Scotia (SNS) reports on the progress achieved in meeting the outcomes, commitments and targets outlined in the 2017-18 Business Plan. SNS tracks service standards and progress on key initiatives that support Government's priorities using a balanced scorecard comprised of internal and external key performance indicators.

Priorities

By leveraging innovative technologies and continuous improvement to achieve sustainable delivery of programs and services and reduce red tape, we strive to provide the highest quality services to the citizens and businesses of Nova Scotia.

Accomplishments

Registries Transformation

- Continued the government-led transformation of the major registries - Land, Joint Stock Companies, Motor Vehicle and Vital Statistics - with significant activities to move the multi-year project forward as well as continuing to improve service for all registry clients,
- Upon completion of a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, we selected a vendor to replace our existing Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) IT system. A new system will improve client service and make the process of registering more efficient,
- This is the beginning of the implementation phase for the RJSC modernization and is expected to be fully complete during the 2019-20 fiscal year. Concurrent with the RFP process, SNS has been conducting user experience/needs research to better understand the requirements of our users,
- Work is well underway on the other three registries - Motor Vehicles, Land and Vital Statistics - with the next phase for the Land and Vital Statistics registries expected to commence in the next fiscal year.

Enhancing Digital Services

- In collaboration with the Department of Internal Services, launched a Digital Service Delivery Innovation Team to provide the expertise, tools and supports necessary to drive a government wide digital program to provide better, more efficient services, and improve client interactions with government.

Reducing Red Tape

- Worked closely with the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness to better serve the citizens and businesses in Nova Scotia, and contribute to government's goal of cutting red tape to help businesses and the economy grow,
- Supported the public good and reducing red tape, through several red tape reduction initiatives and changes to legislation and regulations, affecting such areas as consumer

protection, solemnization of marriage, liquor licensing, and place of business requirements.

Delivering for Nova Scotians

- Increased the minimum qualifying income thresholds for Heating Assistance Rebate Program (HARP), resulting in 1,235 new approved applicants. SNS also introduced digital enhancements including online applications and direct deposit resulting in quicker application turnaround times for applicants,
- In collaboration with our partner Atlantic provinces, introduced a new, highly secure driver's licence and photo identification card issued by a central shared facility. This initiative creates efficiencies while reducing the risk of identity theft, fraud and forgery for Nova Scotians.

Core Responsibilities

In addition to our commitment to provide excellent services to Nova Scotians every day, SNS accomplished the following during the 2017-18 fiscal year:

- Introduced our Client Experience Commitment of being respectful, fair, responsive and inclusive for everyone interacting with Service Nova Scotia,
- Continued work to modernize the Residential Tenancies program, including but not limited to implementing telephone hearings province wide and creating program efficiencies leading to reduced wait times,
- Continued to utilize the Human Centred Service Design approach to designing and improving services, highlighted by an "Ask the User" project in partnership with the Department of Early Education and Childhood Development and the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions,
- Helped advance the Open Government initiative by increasing the cumulative number of new datasets from SNS to 51,
- Awarded bronze level certification in the Excellence, Innovation and Wellness Standard from Excellence Canada, a non-profit organization,
- Continued to improve the client experience at Access Nova Scotia Centres, including improving infrastructure and adopting more efficient operational processes,
- Increased the prize value limit for a ticket lottery permit under ticket lottery regulations to make fundraising easier and more affordable for teams, legions, churches and other charitable and non-profit community organizations.

Measure	Baseline FY 14/15	Target FY 17/18	Results FY 17/18
Annual percentage increase in debt collection	0.58%	3%	4.5%
Cumulative number of Service Nova Scotia open data sets available online	n/a ¹	40	51
Percentage of in-person clients at Access Nova Scotia centres served within 20 minutes	72%	80%	87.5%
Percentage of Government of Nova Scotia contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	46%	70%	70.2%
Annual percentage increase in online transactions	n/a ²	5%	4.8%
Percentage of digital uptake for online vehicle permit renewal services	32%	40%	36.4%
Percentage variance of period 10 budget forecast to year-end actuals	1.53%	<2%	0.4%

Notes:

¹ Last actual (baseline) is zero as the initiative was not yet implemented.

² Baseline data not available due to change in calculation and tracking.

Supplemental Information and Appendices

Interesting facts about Service Nova Scotia

- Service Nova Scotia has over 50 datasets on the Government of Nova Scotia Open Data portal. Examples of information include popular baby names, active condominium corporations, fishing license vendors and provincial gaming activity,
- More than 1,000,000 clients were served at 13 Access Nova Scotia Centres and seven Registry of Motor Vehicle Offices,
- In 2017 iPads were introduced to all Access Nova Scotia Centres to enhance our ability to serve people in the language of their choice,
- Introduced a direct deposit option to the Heating Assistance Rebate program, which meant 81% of eligible low-income applicants got their rebate faster,
- The Government Contact Centre, administered by SNS, answered over 350,000 calls,
- Conducted 18 tobacco seizures in 2017-18 that netted 8901 cartons of illegal cigarettes,
- Issued 176 Chase the Ace Ticket Lottery licenses in 2017-18, and since 2012, there have been 991 licenses issued in Nova Scotia,
- SNS team members were participants in the Halifax Connects event in September, helping under-served members of our community obtain photo identification cards and birth certificates. There were over 200 transactions performed.

Annual Report under Section 18 of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*

The Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011.

The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labor Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

- a) a contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) an act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

The following is a summary of disclosures received by Service Nova Scotia.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2017-2018
The number of disclosures received	None
The number of findings of wrongdoing	None
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A