



# **Accountability Report**

## 2023–24

---

L'nu Affairs



© Crown copyright, Province of Nova Scotia, July 2024

Accountability Report 2023–2024

ISBN 978-1-77448-663-4

Contents

Accountability Statement..... 2

Measuring Performance..... 3

Financial Results..... 6

Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act ..... 7

## Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Office of L'nu Affairs for the year ended March 31, 2024, is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. The reporting of the Office of L'nu Affairs outcomes necessarily include estimates, judgments, and opinions by the Office of L'nu Affairs management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of the Office of L'nu 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 L'nu Affairs 2023-24 Business Plan.

*Original signed by*

Honourable Brian Wong

Minister responsible for the Office of L'nu Affairs

*Original signed by*

Justin Huston

Chief Executive Officer, Office of L'nu Affairs

## Measuring Performance

The Office of L'nu Affairs (OLA) continued to work jointly with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, promoting a well-established, collaborative approach in responding to opportunities and challenges for Indigenous peoples in Nova Scotia. L'nu Affairs led the rights-based Made-in-Nova Scotia Negotiation Process related to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and the Federal Government; coordinated and facilitated consultation between the Provincial Government and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia; fostered greater awareness of Mi'kmaw and Indigenous culture and history; and provided strategic policy advice to government while exploring options to help foster social and economic prosperity with Indigenous communities.

### Negotiations – Advance tripartite Mi'kmaq/Provincial/Federal work on Mi'kmaw Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Nova Scotia.

- In 2023-24, OLA continued to collaborate with provincial departments to represent Nova Scotia's interests in the tripartite negotiations related to Mi'kmaw Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, focused on exploring interim and incremental approaches to bring greater clarity and predictability to the exercise of those rights in Nova Scotia.
- Negotiations continued on Mi'kmaw self-governance over social programs including Mi'kmaw Child and Family Services (Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq) and enhanced social assistance (Ta'n Etli-tpi'tmk).

### Consultation – The Province has consistent and effective, legally sound mechanisms for consulting with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia when contemplating conduct that may adversely impact Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

- Given the intricate and evolving legal framework and fluctuating representation of Mi'kmaw Bands by Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK) for consultation purposes, it is vital for government to comprehend and fulfill its legal responsibilities regarding the duty to consult with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. In 2023-24, OLA continued to provide policy leadership, guidance, advice and training to provincial departments on the process to fulfill consultation obligations on decisions or actions that may adversely impact Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.
- OLA continued to provide advice to project proponents regarding Mi'kmaw engagement and delegated aspects of consultation.

Policy and Intergovernmental initiatives – Productive collaborations with provincial departments, Federal/Provincial/Territorial governments, Mi'kmaw organizations and other external partners.

- OLA continued to provide ongoing horizontal coordination, guidance, and strategic advice to government on Indigenous matters, including engagement with the Mi'kmaq, both formally through forums such as the Senior Officials Advisory Committee on Indigenous Affairs, the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas Coordination Committee, and Tajikeyimik Strategic Health Partnership Committee, and informally through issue coordination and management with provincial departments.
- OLA continued to support Mi'kmaw communities in facilitating connections with provincial departments to navigate policies, programs, and service requests in response to community needs.
- OLA collaborated with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) and other partners to establish the Mi'kmaw Language Committee and is actively engaged in developing a language revitalization strategy pursuant to the *Mi'kmaw Language Act*.
- OLA continued to offer support to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development in the review and enhancement of curriculum and establishment of a governance model for P-12 education incorporating content on Indian Residential Schools and the integration of Indigenous perspectives into education policy and decision-making processes.
- OLA continued to offer support the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in their mandate to position Nova Scotia as a global leader in sustainable development.
- OLA provided capacity funding for consultation, together with direct and leveraged support for major Indigenous initiatives to advance social and economic outcomes for Indigenous people in Nova Scotia. This included funding for Mi'kmaw language revitalization, Treaty Education and Treaty Day scholarships, Mi'kmaw cultural tourism, Mi'kmaw participation in moose management, programs for Indigenous women, Indigenous economic research and support for Indigenous youth in sport and youth employment opportunities that promote a low-carbon economy and sustainable environmental practices.
- OLA continued to work in partnership with all provincial departments and Mi'kmaw leadership and organizations to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice. This included support for the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG), hosted in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Sipekne'katik and Millbrook in July 2023. NAIG was the largest multi-sport event ever hosted by Nova Scotia. The celebration of sport and culture brought together 756 Indigenous nations and left a legacy of development and growth for the Mi'kmaw nation.

- In partnership with Canada and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, OLA sustained its leadership, funding, and active involvement in the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum, aimed at fostering collaboration and enhancing outcomes on mutually significant issues.

Public education and awareness – Mi'kmaw culture and history provides a foundation for reconciliation and positive relations.

- In collaboration with provincial partner departments (Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, Education and Early Childhood Development, and the Public Service Commission) and the Mi'kmaq, OLA continued to provide public education and awareness through the [Treaty Education Nova Scotia](#) initiative including development of a [Treaty Education booklet](#), originally created as a resource for all 2023 North American Indigenous Games participants, and now broadly available for all Nova Scotians.
- OLA continued to collaborate across provincial departments and with Mi'kmaw partners to further the objectives of Treaty Education by supporting and hosting quarterly Treaty Education Implementation Committee meetings.
- October is Mi'kmaq History Month and OLA continued to support increased awareness of Mi'kmaq History Month through strategic planning and capacity development to bolster the success of October's series of events. Treaty Education supported lunch-and-learn sessions in October and featured daily "Did You Know Mi'kmaw Facts" [social media](#) posts, which were viewed and shared over 800,000 times.
- OLA co-coordinated the annual Treaty Day celebration with the Mi'kmaq on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The celebration commemorates the role of Treaties in the relationship between Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and the Crown. In 2023-24 the provincially hosted events were held at the Lieutenant Governor's house and the Provincial Legislature.

## Financial Results

Office of L'nu Affairs	2023-24 Estimate	2023-24 Actuals	2023-24 Variance
<b>Program &amp; Service Area</b>	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Office of L'nu Affairs	4,393	4,253	(140)
<b>Total: Departmental Expenses</b>	<b>4,393</b>	<b>4,253</b>	<b>(140)</b>
TCA Purchase Requirements	<b>1,000</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>(830)</b>
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	<b>17.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>

**Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:**

Office of L'nu Affairs expenses were \$140 thousand lower than estimate due to temporary salary savings, and other operating savings.

**TCA Purchase Requirements Variance Explanation:**

Actual TCA spending was lower than estimate due to timing and results of ongoing land purchase negotiations.

**Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:**

FTEs were lower than estimate due to temporarily vacant positions.



## *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 Labour Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

- a contravention of Provincial or Federal laws or regulations;
- a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets;
- 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
- directing or counseling someone to commit a wrongdoing.

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Office of L'nu Affairs.

<b>Information Required under Section 18 of the Act</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2023-24</b>
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A