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Published June 2018
Starting a business is overwhelming, and there are so many things to do before opening the door to customers. We’d like to thank the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness for making it a little bit easier – what a great resource to have. Premier McNeil wasn’t half bad at decorating cookies either!

LISA BROW & SAFIA HAQ
owners of the Tart and Soul Café in Halifax.
MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

Creating a stronger regulatory system, one without overreach, unnecessary complexity or cost, plays a central role in our broader strategy to create the conditions for economic growth and prosperity.

It was the reason the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness was created in 2015.

In three years, we have made significant progress while focusing on three areas of work.

First, we consistently assess and measure the impact of regulatory proposals against best practice, including quantifying dollar impacts. This work enabled us to set a target to reduce the regulatory burden by $25 million (net) by December 2018.

I am proud to report that as of March 31, 2018, the changes we’ve made and the work that’s underway puts us 93 per cent of the way to achieving that target. An interim progress report is included in these pages, and I fully anticipate we will meet the target by year’s end.

Second, we are improving how we serve and support business people in their efforts to learn and comply with regulation. Our Business Navigator program – the first of its kind in Canada – was nationally recognized by the business community last year for the work it’s doing. Navigators have helped more than 1,800 businesses since the service launched in early 2017, with each business using the service saving, on average, 10 hours of time. By the end of the year, we estimate this service will have saved clients more than $2.5 million. These dollars are put to better use in their business.

Finally, we are working with other governments to align regulatory approaches, where possible. We are working with the Atlantic provinces through the Joint Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. We are aligning regulations in areas like trucking, occupational health and safety and procurement to provide our businesses with easier access to the Atlantic market.

We are also partnering with Halifax Regional Municipality to share regulatory reform practices and develop a common agenda to better serve business.

Through this work, we have learned a great deal.

We have learned the economic opportunity associated with reforming how, why and when we regulate is even larger than first believed.

We have learned there is not just a willingness but an eagerness across government and stakeholders to work together to reform our regulatory system for mutual benefit.

We have learned that together we can reform a system, at times perceived as a constraint on starting and growing a business, into one that supports both, while strengthening protections we value.

While we know there’s more to be done, our results show we are making progress and businesses tell us we are making a positive difference. That’s a clear sign. Nova Scotia’s regulatory system is becoming more efficient and effective.

Red tape has been a barrier to business for a long time, but we’re breaking through.

Hon. Stephen McNeil
Premier of Nova Scotia
REDUCING BARRIERS FOR BUSINESS: IMPROVING OUR GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
Red Tape Report Card 2015 - 2018
The Office’s third annual report is an occasion to reflect on the Office’s work since 2015.

Looking back, our first year focused on building a strong foundation for the three pillars of our work: improving service to business, measuring regulatory burden, and working across governments. The development of a tool to consistently and comprehensively assess and measure impact of regulatory proposals to business, an action plan for regional alignment and groundbreaking research to determine how to improve service to business to reduce burden were actions that helped set the stage for a credible and sustainable regulatory reform program.

Our second year built on that foundation. We designed and piloted a service to improve how we serve start-ups and small businesses in their efforts to learn and comply with government requirements – a necessary component of business success. We also piloted and rolled out the Business Impact Assessment (BIA) to consistently assess regulatory proposals for their alignment with principles of regulatory excellence and to estimate – in dollar terms – business impacts. With that in place, we could – and did – set a target to reduce burden to business. We also expanded our intergovernmental work to launch an innovative partnership with Halifax Regional Municipality on a shared approach to burden reduction.

The strength of our first two years has made our third a breakthrough year. The business navigation service has been more successful and its uptake and impact larger than anticipated. The burden reduction program has been wholly embraced across government and because of that, we are well on our way to achieving the $25 million (net) burden reduction target. And, in parallel to our work across the region, we are now working with new municipal, provincial, territorial and federal partners.

Our achievements are a culmination of many things: the Premier’s vision, the belief, support and determination of our stakeholders, the leadership of my government colleagues, and a small but mighty team focused on action and results.

Fred Crooks
Chief Regulatory Officer

As of March 31, 2018, government has completed or approved initiatives which are estimated to reduce burden to business by $23.2 million (net), representing 93% of the target.

More than 20 burden reduction initiatives are underway or completed – across many departments – to reduce regulatory burden to business.

**PROGRESS ON TARGET TO REDUCE BURDEN TO BUSINESS BY $25 MILLION (NET)**


- As of March 31, 2018, government has completed or approved initiatives which are estimated to reduce burden to business by $23.2 million (net), representing 93% of the target.

- More than 20 burden reduction initiatives are underway or completed – across many departments – to reduce regulatory burden to business.

**SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE:**

- Increasing the B-route network of roads, modernizing weights to reflect advancements in trucking technology and infrastructure improvements to safely maximize payloads will save Nova Scotia commercial transportation companies $2.3 million annually in the first phase of this work, with more to come.

- A new and improved online Registry of Joint Stock Companies IT system, which will replace the current paper-based system, will save start-up and existing Nova Scotia businesses $7.7 million annually.

- Removing tuition and fees for technical training for apprentices will save businesses with apprentices $386,000 every year.

- Removing requirement for the filing of duplicate subdivision and condo plans will save affected businesses $370,000 every year.
The Office and the Halifax Regional Municipality are partnering to take a shared approach to burden reduction – the first such partnership in Canada.

The four Atlantic provinces continue to align rules and regulations across the region to support interprovincial trade and business growth, and have recently committed to an Atlantic Technical Safety Act.

The Office sits as Nova Scotia’s representative on the newly-established Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) - a creation of the Canada Free Trade Agreement.

With representatives from all provinces, territories and the federal government, the RCT’s mandate is to remove regulatory differences across the country.

**IMPROVING SERVICE TO BUSINESS**

Since its launch in 2017, the Business Navigation service has:

- helped more than **1,800** start-up and existing businesses navigate rules and requirements
- consistently received **10/10** client satisfaction ratings
- saved each client, on average, **10 hours of time**

The service is on track to serve more than **3,000 businesses** and save those businesses **$2.5 million**, collectively, by end of 2018.

**WORKING WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS**

- The Office and the Halifax Regional Municipality are partnering to take a shared approach to burden reduction – the first such partnership in Canada.
- The four Atlantic provinces continue to align rules and regulations across the region to support interprovincial trade and business growth, and have recently committed to an Atlantic Technical Safety Act.
- The Office sits as Nova Scotia’s representative on the newly-established Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) - a creation of the Canada Free Trade Agreement.
- With representatives from all provinces, territories and the federal government, the RCT’s mandate is to remove regulatory differences across the country.
REGULATORY ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT
Jordi Morgan
Atlantic Vice-President, Canadian Federation of Independent Business
While a cliché - it holds true for reducing red tape. Understanding the cost and impact, and having a means to assess whether regulatory burden is growing or shrinking, is critical to ensuring we are reducing red tape and creating a better environment to do business.

Working in cooperation with the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness, CFIB collaborated to ensure government action on red tape would directly address the needs of small and medium-size business.

The Office’s research found the annual regulatory burden to Nova Scotia business is estimated at $560 million. By reaching out and consulting business, the Office also developed a potent tool to estimate not only the dollar costs but also potential savings to business available through reforming regulation. Those two findings allowed government to set an achievable, real dollar target to reduce burden to business. This report shows these efforts are working:

Laws are being modernized, forms are being simplified, and government processes are being improved - all while ensuring important protections are maintained.

Annual reporting provides the openness and transparency required to build trust and confidence in the business community. There’s still lots of work to do and CFIB will be on the front lines pushing for more; however, we applaud Nova Scotia’s progress on red tape reduction in 2018.

The burden on business is being measured and, as a result, it’s being managed.

Jordi Morgan
Atlantic Vice-President,
Canadian Federation of Independent Business
Having a consistent means of assessing the impact of regulatory proposals on business, including dollar impact, is key to accountability in regulation.

To this end, Nova Scotia developed a comprehensive approach to assessing and measuring the impact of initiatives. The tool used to assist in this work is the Business Impact Assessment (BIA) application.

The BIA is designed to be used at the very beginning of the policy-making process when an issue is first identified. It has two components:

1. A qualitative section: A series of questions assist policy makers in ensuring proposals align with the Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation.

2. A quantitative section: This walks policy-makers through a series of steps to estimate the costs or savings to business of what’s being proposed.

The BIA, developed with the input of the business community, was piloted and rolled out in 2016. In January 2017, its use for proposals with a business impact became mandatory.

PREMIERS’ CHARTER OF GOVERNING PRINCIPLES FOR REGULATION

Overview
Regulation should not be a first resort: there should be a bias for non-regulatory options.

Regulation, if enacted, should be:
- Lightest touch
- Based on compelling cost-benefit analysis
- Process should be transparent and consultative

REGULATORY ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT
The BIA estimates the dollar impacts (costs or savings) of regulatory proposals.

Its foundation is the Standard Cost Model (SCM), an internationally-recognized and utilized method for determining the dollar cost of administrative burden of regulation imposed on business.

**HERE’S HOW IT WORKS:**
- Every regulation has obligations that business must comply with.
- Every obligation requires activity on the part of the business.
- Every activity has costs associated with it: these can be direct costs, such as fees, or compliance costs (record-keeping, one-time expenditures, etc.). Compliance costs include the time business spends on compliance.

The BIA contains data, such as Statistics Canada’s average hourly wage rates by industry, to estimate costs/savings.

Other inputs, such as time, printing, mailing or fuel costs, are estimated based on discussions with business and internal data.

The BIA calculates the costs or savings of proposals based on the estimates and assumptions. The Office works with departments on its inputs and provides a final review of the estimate for reasonableness.

The BIA gives Nova Scotia the ability to track changes to the overall regulatory burden to business and is the foundation for the commitment to reduce burden to business by $25 million (net).

The interim public report – contained in these pages – provides a detailed overview of the measures taken across government completed or underway to achieve this goal.
REDUCING BURDEN TO BUSINESS BY $25 MILLION (NET)

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

(Progress as of March 31, 2018)
TARGET:
$25,000,000
(net) burden reduction to business by Dec. 2018

% OF TARGET ACHIEVED TO DATE:
93%
(Initiatives implemented or approved for implementation as of March 31, 2018)

FOR A TOTAL SAVINGS OF:
$23,225,000
In 2017, the Government of Nova Scotia committed to reduce regulatory burden to business by $25 million (net) by end of 2018. The target is part of a broader strategy to build a strong foundation for economic growth and prosperity.

The intent of the program is twofold:
1. To ensure a consistent and rigorous means of assessing individual regulatory proposals.
2. To provide a management framework for the regulatory system as it relates to business overall. The focus and oversight at both levels enables government to actively manage the evolution of our regulatory environment: old, outdated or unnecessary regulation is eliminated to make room for that which is new and required. While the program is focused on lowering the overall cost of regulatory burden, it is not designed or intended to dissuade government from pursuing necessary policy objectives and maintaining a strong, high-performing and efficient regulatory system. There will be legitimate external costs in exercising a regulatory mandate, in addition to savings. The discipline of the BIA is to ensure that we have regulation only when necessary, that any necessary costs are identified, minimized and publicly disclosed, and that there is ongoing scrutiny to ensure that the overall burden of cost to business is managed and reduced.

As of March 31, 2018, initiatives approved and where implementation is complete or underway are estimated to reduce burden to business by $23.2 million (net), representing 93% of the $25 million (net) burden reduction target, with additional work underway.

This is an interim report. A final report will be issued after December 2018. It is fully anticipated the target will be met or exceeded.

About the target:
The $25 million burden reduction target is based on an estimate of the overall regulatory burden to Nova Scotia business of approximately $560 million and the provincial portion of this burden, estimated at $200 million annually.

The target is net and contains two parts:
1. Holding the line on the current burden by requiring a $1 reduction in compliance costs for every $1 added.
2. Reducing the overall burden to business by $25 million.

The target builds on work with the business community and provincial departments in developing a tool to estimate (in dollar terms) the costs or savings of individual regulatory proposals, including initiatives that improve processes and service to business. The tool – the Business Impact Assessment – is mandatory for all regulatory proposals with a business impact. It is how progress on the commitment is managed, including the tracking of initiatives that require an equivalent offset.

The $25 million burden reduction program includes regulatory initiatives approved on or after April 1, 2017, and where implementation is complete or underway by December 31, 2018.

Due to the timeframe of the program, some initiatives were first reported in the 2016-2017 Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness’ Annual Report, published June 2017.
As of March 31, 2018, initiatives approved and where implementation is complete or underway are estimated to reduce burden to business by $23.2 million (net), representing 93% of the $25 million (net) burden reduction target. A final report will be issued at the end of the program, in December 2018.

The costs or savings of the measures in the following chart have been estimated using the Business Impact Assessment (BIA) or through customized economic modelling. The BIA is based on the Standard Cost Methodology, which estimates the impact of regulatory proposals and which includes direct costs/savings (i.e. fees, capital purchases), along with compliance costs (including time).

The estimates provided are based on the best information and data available at the time of the assessment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>APPROVED AND / OR IMPLEMENTED REGULATORY MEASURE</th>
<th>ESTIMATED SAVINGS (COST) TO BUSINESS*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Nova Scotia</td>
<td>Amendments to Residential Tenancies Act</td>
<td>$ 826,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changes to Special Move Permit Application form for Carriers for milk and waste haulers during Spring Weight Restrictions</td>
<td>$ 60,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Remove requirement for the filing of duplicate subdivision and condo plans</td>
<td>$ 370,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Modernization of Registry of Joint Stocks Companies</td>
<td>$ 7,170,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amendments to the Consumer Protection Act</td>
<td>$(77,000)</td>
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<td>Liquor Licensing Criminal Record Checks</td>
<td>$ 28,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Electronic Vehicle Registration for Dealers</td>
<td>$ 839,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Telephone Hearing alternative for Residential Tenancies</td>
<td>$ 130,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strike off companies suspended due to lack of payment</td>
<td>$ 1,800,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal</td>
<td>Innovation HUB for Forest Transportation in NS – Phase 1</td>
<td>$ 2,300,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Clarifying the Definition of Public Drinking Water Supplier</td>
<td>$ 10,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Removing duplicative requirements for Lead-Acid Battery Waste and Asbestos Waste Storage</td>
<td>$ 16,000</td>
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<td>Mercury Diversion Program Extension</td>
<td>$ 1,300,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>System Improvements for Notification and Approval Processing</td>
<td>$ 1,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance and Treasury Board</td>
<td>Reduction in Retail Sales Mark Up</td>
<td>$ 805,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expansion of Fuel Tax Credit</td>
<td>$ 1,600,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Labour and Advanced Education</td>
<td>Removing tuition and fees for technical training for apprentices</td>
<td>$ 386,000</td>
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<td>Presumptive Coverage for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for Emergency Workers</td>
<td>$(500,000)</td>
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<td>Workers’ Compensation Board</td>
<td>Secure Messaging with Employers</td>
<td>$ 1,620,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Elimination of special protection accounts for family members</td>
<td>$ 80,000</td>
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<td>New process for annual sub-contractor reporting</td>
<td>$ 252,000</td>
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<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Initiatives Under the Natural Products Marketing Council</td>
<td>$ 53,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poultry Insurance Plan Amendments</td>
<td>$ (1,000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fisheries and Aquaculture</td>
<td>Mandatory Quality Training for Fish Buyers</td>
<td>$(18,000)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotional Awareness and Coordination of delivery throughout Nova Scotia by the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council (to offset costs of mandatory quality training for fish buyers)</td>
<td>$ 18,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Builders Lien Act</td>
<td>$ 440,000</td>
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<td>Business Navigator Service</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
<td>Marine Renewable Energy Act</td>
<td>$(215,000)</td>
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<td>Internal Services</td>
<td>Ariba e-bidding</td>
<td>$ 233,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Burden Reduction Savings:</td>
<td></td>
<td>$23,225,000 (net)</td>
</tr>
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**EXEMPTIONS**

| Environment                        | Quantification, Reporting, and Verification of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Regulations                                 | $(600,000)                           |
|                                   | Safe Body Art Act and Regulations                                                                                | $(400,000)                           |
| Labour and Advanced Education     | Adoption of CSA Fuel Safety Codes                                                                                | Costing is underway                  |

*The costs/savings estimates are based on conservative assumptions, including information from employers, Statistics Canada data and reflect information available to date. It is important to note that the cost and savings estimates may be revised based on new or refined data. For example, more accurate information may be provided to the Office after a measure is implemented. In such cases, estimates will be revised.*
A REASON TO CELEBRATE

Ledwidge Lumber is celebrating 75 years in business this year with three generations of the family employed by the company along with many other long-term employees. We are proud of our success as a state-of-the-art sawmill in Nova Scotia and plan to operate here for many years to come. Transportation is essential to our business whether it be logs coming in or lumber, wood chips, bark, shavings, or sawdust going out. 100% of the log is turned into a product and all of those products need to be trucked from our facility in Enfield.

Our business relies heavily on log deliveries year-round from all over the province to ensure supply is adequate to meet demand. Bridge weight restrictions can create headaches for truckers by making them have to reroute to access fiber or not be able to access it with their configuration at all. Time is money in the trucking business.

Forestry and transportation are both significant factors to our province’s economy, which is why I was happy to see the new transportation weight standards on secondary roads. The standardization of weights on secondary road routes will have a positive impact on business by shortening routes for truckers hauling logs, which results in savings. The transportation weight policy on secondary roads is a positive initiative from the provincial government. This is a good example of government listening to the concerns of businesses and addressing them with safe and practical solutions.

Jim Ledwidge
Ledwidge Lumber
IN DEPTH:
REGULATORY MEASURES APPROVED AND/OR IMPLEMENTED WITH A BUSINESS IMPACT

The following provides a brief description of the measures approved and or implemented to date with a business impact and which are included in the burden reduction program.

SERVICE NOVA SCOTIA

- Amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act
  Landlords can now provide an electronic copy of the Residential Tenancies Act to tenants signing a lease instead of a physical, printed copy. This change saves travel and printing costs for landlords and is a more effective and practical means for tenants to receive a copy of the Act.

- Changes to Special Move Permit Application form for Carriers for milk and waste haulers during Spring Weight Restrictions
  Carriers previously had to complete one application form for every milk and waste truck for which they required a Special Move Permit. The change means application forms require less information and can be combined for multiple permit applications, savings businesses time and money.

- Remove requirement for the filing of duplicate subdivision and condo plans
  Previous policy and process required developers to submit a second set of hard copy plans to the land registration office. Infrastructure upgrades allowed this to be reduced to only one hard copy, saving printing costs and time.

- Modernization of Registry of Joint Stocks
  All businesses operating in Nova Scotia have to register with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies. A new and improved online Registry of Joint Stock Companies IT system will replace the current paper-based system. The modernization will positively impact tens of thousands of businesses annually by reducing travel time, mailing costs, back-and-forth delays, and will mean making fewer calls for status updates, as this information will be available online. The new system will be in place in Fall 2019.

- Amendments to the Consumer Protection Act
  The Consumer Protection Act was amended to implement two recommendations from the Utility and Review Board:

  1. Require payday lenders to provide additional information to borrowers about the cost of alternative financial products.
  2. Change the requirement to fund online loans within one hour. The resources required to comply with the implementation of the UARB’s recommendations will increase costs to payday lenders.

- Liquor Licensing Criminal Record Checks
  Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel & Tobacco offers to conduct background police checks for those seeking permanent liquor licenses at no cost to the applicant. This change reduces cost and effort.

- Electronic Vehicle Registration for Dealers
  Service Nova Scotia is changing the process for motor vehicle registry for dealers, allowing electronic submissions rather than dealers having to travel to an Access Nova Scotia location. Efficiencies for businesses are primarily driven through time savings and travel savings.
Telephone Hearing alternative for Residential Tenancies
This change will allow for tenants and landlords to attend Residential Tenancies hearings by telephone rather than drive to an Access Centre, saving businesses travel and time.

Strike off companies suspended due to lack of payment
When a company’s registration is revoked for non-payment, it continues to exist until it is manually struck from the Registry. Often when a company goes out of business, it simply does not renew its registration. However, until the registration is stricken off, it continues to have obligations to file annually with CRA, which is costly to business. Striking off the backlog of companies will remove the annual filing costs for these businesses.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL

Innovation HUB for Transportation - Phase 1
This project is a multi-phased project which increases the B-route network of roads, modernizing weights to reflect advancements in trucking technology and infrastructure improvements to safely maximize payloads. Savings will be realized throughout the trucking industry, which will be able to haul increased payloads on a more efficient and direct route for delivery and safely use larger trucking units for transporting their payloads along these routes. The first phase is anticipated in save affected businesses $2.1 million annually; additional and significant savings are anticipated for future phases.

ENVIRONMENT

Clarifying the Definition of Public Drinking Water Supplier
Clarifying the definition of “public drinking water supplier” to only capture entities that provide piped water for consumption to the public. This means entities that do not provide piped water for consumption to the public are no longer required to comply with food safety regulations and do not have to spend time and resources on water testing. This regulatory change does not impact public health as appropriate regulatory oversight of public drinking water supplies is maintained.

Removing duplicative requirements for Lead-Acid Battery Waste and Asbestos Waste Storage
The storage of lead-acid battery waste and asbestos waste required both an Environmental Assessment and operating approvals under the Activities Designation Regulations - requirements deemed duplicative for businesses. Removing the requirement of an environmental assessment does not result in weakened environmental protection or public safety as these storage activities are sufficiently regulated through operating approvals which ensure appropriate protection and oversight. At the same time, it ensures necessary regulations are predictable, transparent, and reduce regulatory burden where appropriate to eliminate barriers to private sector growth and productivity.

Mercury Diversion Program Extension
Nova Scotia Power’s credits for kilograms of mercury diverted from landfills may be counted toward emissions of mercury over and above the regulated 65-kilogram cap. Extending the mercury diversion program enables Nova Scotia Power (through EfficiencyOne) to divert mercury from landfills and entering the environment. The program results in a net-reduction in mercury and allows additional time for more costly investment in infrastructure upgrades. This extension does not compromise commitments to work to improve air quality through reducing emissions.

System for Notification and Approval Processing
A new internal processing system is being implemented to support the processing of licenses, permits, renewals, approvals and notifications of activities regulated under the Environment Act. This improved processing system reduces the time spent on completing applications and reduces turnaround times for businesses while ensuring our programs are consistently and efficiently delivered. This system does not in any way modify the important protections established under the Environment Act and regulated activities.
We know first-hand that one of the very real obstacles to gaining or improving skills is cost. Removing the fees associated with apprenticeship training takes away that hurdle, making it easier for Nova Scotians to get certified in a skilled trade.

LESTER BUCKLAND
Black and McDonald
FINANCE AND TREASURY BOARD

• **Reduction in Retail Sales Mark Up**
  The Retail Sales Markup Allocation charged to craft brewers changed from $0.50 per litre on craft beer to five per cent of wholesale costs of sales made on their premises. This change reduces the mark-up paid by the craft beer industry.

• **Expansion of Fuel Tax Credit**
  The motive fuel tax credit applies to natural resource industries that do not go on public roads, such as fishing boats, farm tractors and forestry. It was broadened for equipment used in the mining and quarrying sector, such as haul trucks and excavators, most of which are not allowed to drive on public roads. This change reduces cost and increases competitiveness for the mining sector.

LABOUR AND ADVANCED EDUCATION

• **Removing tuition and fees for Technical Training for Apprentices**
  The tuition fees for technical training for apprentices was eliminated. The change benefits apprentices and aligns with the priority to provide equal opportunity and support participation in the skilled trades. The change also benefits employers who elect to pay the tuition fees as a means of supporting their employees.

• **Presumptive Coverage for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for Emergency Workers**
  Occupational stress due to traumatic events, including PTSD, has always been covered under the Workers’ Compensation Act for all clients of the Workers Compensation Board (WCB), and will continue to be. Amendments to the Act were introduced in October 2017 (in force October 26, 2018) that will create a benefit of presumption for Front-line and Emergency Response Workers diagnosed with PTSD. Currently, Front-line and Emergency Response Workers are required to prove their diagnosed PTSD was caused by a workplace incident. Removing this barrier for Front-line and Emergency Response Workers may increase compensation costs, funded by employers through workers’ compensation premiums.

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION BOARD

• **Secure Messaging with Employers**
  WCB introduced secure messaging with employers through online channels. This form of communication allows businesses to interact with WCB more conveniently and efficiently through electronic messaging, saving time and resources for employers who need to interact with WCB, for example, on time-loss claims. This initiative also supports swifter service and compensation for those injured while at work.

• **Elimination of special protection accounts for family members**
  Employers can extend coverage to family members under the same account as other employees, thus eliminating the need for special protection accounts for family members. Previously, the employer had to complete a form and return it with full payment or postdated cheques.

• **New process for annual sub-contractor reporting**
  The new online channels features automates the process for annual sub-contractor reporting by employers. The previous, manual and paper-based process could take an employer several days to complete.

AGRICULTURE

• **Initiatives Under the Natural Products Marketing Council**
  Changes in levies for supply-managed commodities under the Natural Products Marketing Council have resulted in a net-savings for producers.

• **Poultry Insurance Plan Amendments**
  The Crop and Livestock Insurance Act was amended to implement a new requirement for insured producers to file a report with the Commission before placing a new flock of chickens in a production facility and restructured the calculation of the base premium rate. The net-result is an increase in regulatory burden associated with the paperwork required.
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

- Mandatory Quality Training for Fish Buyers
  The Fish Buyers’ Licensing and Enforcement Regulations were amended to require training for the handling of lobsters prior to the issuance of a fish buyer license as one part of a strategy to increase the value of lobsters. This change was made for buyers of lobsters with each license holder required to have training for one individual and which is valid for 3 years.

- Promotional Awareness and Coordination of delivery throughout Nova Scotia by the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council
  Government is facilitating industry-coordinated training sessions to cover the costs of the first 3-year cycle of the mandatory quality training program. This training is being coordinated by the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council throughout the Province for more than 770 participants.

JUSTICE

- Builders’ Lien Act
  Notice of substantial performance or subcontract completion on construction projects must be given by the owner no later than 10 days after the work is substantially performed or completed by posting a notice on the Substantial Performance page of the Construction Association of Nova Scotia website, and the job site office (if applicable). These changes mean contractors are no longer required to call owners regarding the status of the project and expected timeline for payment, and owners also save time responding to these inquiries.

ENERGY

- Marine Renewable Energy Act
  Aligned with Nova Scotia’s commitment to the safe, responsible, and sustainable development of our tidal energy industry, the Marine Renewable Energy Act defines the path from demonstration to larger, commercial development. The Act is intended to provide the industry and the public certainty around what is required to ensure development is safe, viable, and sustainable.

INTERNAL SERVICES

- Ariba e-bidding
  The Nova Scotia government has adopted an electronic process for suppliers to submit their bids to replace paper submissions. This new feature will streamline and standardize sourcing and will decrease the time required to source for goods, services and construction, resulting in savings to business and an increased opportunity for cross-border bidding.

REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

- Business Navigator Service
  The Business Navigator Service is a unique, first-of-its-kind service in Canada that provides personalized and customized support to help start-up and existing business navigate government rules, regulations and requirements. Since the program’s launch in early 2017, Business Navigators have served over 1,800 new and existing businesses and are on track to serve 3,000 by end of 2018. The Business Navigation Service is estimated to save, on average, 10 hours of business time per client.
EXEMPTIONS

In some exceptional circumstances, government must establish or adapt regulations to address an urgent or pressing public policy issue.

To reflect the intent of the program (reducing unnecessary burden and that which is fully ‘owned’ by the province), criteria was developed to exempt exceptional regulatory measures from the burden reduction program.

The criteria are not intended to be a catch-all or a loophole but to ensure government is not unduly restrained in its function as regulator. There is a formal process in place for departments to apply for exemption and exemption requires certification by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness.

There are three categories of exemptions:

1. Economic analysis indicates economic benefits produced by the regulatory change will be materially larger than the burden.
2. Initiatives that are substantially beyond the direct control of the provincial government but are required to meet national or international standards or agreements (e.g. Federal climate change policy).
3. Proposals certified by the Premier, on recommendation by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness, that are required to meet unforeseen or urgent public policy needs. For example, proposals where research and evidence clearly indicate a significant and urgent public health or safety risk.

Proposals exempt from the program are still submitted to the Office for assessment for alignment with the Premiers’ Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation and are still costed using the BIA. The following measures are exempt from the burden reduction program:

Quantification, Reporting, and Verification of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Regulations

In line with federal requirements to have carbon pricing in all Canadian jurisdictions, greenhouse gas reporting requirements are now in effect to support the province’s cap and trade program. The requirements are detailed in regulations and standards that identify which types of companies must report, how to calculate and report them, and how to obtain third party verification of the report. The first reports were due May 15, 2018. Information collected will help the department continue developing the cap and trade program.

Safe Body Art Act and Regulations

The Safe Body Art Act and Regulations, passed in 2018, come into effect February 1, 2019. The purpose of the Act and regulation is to ensure safe practices and products are used for body art services in order to prevent the spread of infections and infectious diseases. An exemption was granted based on evidence that Nova Scotians are at risk for infectious diseases in this unregulated industry. For example, evidence indicates hepatitis rates in Nova Scotia have been on the rise since 2011 and are higher than the national rate.

Adoption of CSA Fuel Safety Codes

Technical Safety Standards Regulations were amended to adopt seven updated editions of the Canadian Standards Association Safety Codes with respect to fuel safety to ensure alignment with other jurisdictions. This change was required to meet a national standard.
IMPROVING SERVICE TO BUSINESS
1,800

NOVA SCOTIA BUSINESSES HAVE USED THE BUSINESS NAVIGATION SERVICE SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN 2017.
Whether you’re a start-up or existing business, finding, learning and understanding government requirements can be complex and time-consuming.

Businesses of all sizes told us one of the most impactful ways we can reduce regulatory burden is to help them do this work.

That’s where Business Navigators come in.

A first in Canada, Business Navigators provide business owners with customized, personalized and timely help.

That includes help registering a business, learning and applying for permit and licenses, and understanding the inspection process. And we don’t limit our help to provincial requirements – we reach into different levels of government to provide business owners with the big picture.

This legwork and support frees up time and resources so business can focus on what they do best: employ Nova Scotians, provide valued goods and service, innovate and contribute to their community.

Launched in February 2017, 1,800 Nova Scotia businesses have used the service.

We’ll let their experience – and our results – speak for themselves.

YOU CAN REACH US AT:
1-844-628-7347
BusNavigation@novascotia.ca
We were camping, sitting around, and I thought, “You know what? Starting a campground business is something we should do. We could do. Let’s do it.” But we had no clue where to start.

I heard about the Business Navigator program at an Access Nova Scotia centre. And it was the best thing that could have happened.

I sent an email right away and heard back within 24 hours. Not only did Evangeline answer the first couple of questions I had about permits, she sent me an email about things that I didn’t even think of.

Talking with Evangeline was like talking to an old friend. She wanted to know exactly where we were at with the business, she wanted to know how we were feeling, if we were running into any problems, and most importantly what she could do to help next. If I didn’t know something, I always knew I could connect with her.

If Evangeline was here right now, I would want to give her a great big hug and just tell her thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

She’s been a rock for us, she’s been our guardian angel.

Carrie Hayden
Lacey Mines Campground & RV Storage
When I decided to open a health food business, I started by Googling, “how to start a business in Nova Scotia or Halifax.”

I then called Access Nova Scotia. And they pointed me to the Business Navigators.

Andre, my navigator, helped with many of my questions. Doing it all on my own was slow going, so it was really nice to find this person who knew the answers right away and who provided me with clear and direct information.

Andre didn’t just tell me, “go here or go there,” she provided me with the name and number of the person I needed to contact. She even provided me with a database of requirements for food, which I had no clue existed.

The Business Navigators are a free service to any business starting up and those already up and running. My advice to other business owners: use it. As an entrepreneur, time, money, energy are all so valuable.

If I hadn’t been in contact with Andre, I wouldn’t have gotten as far, as fast.

So, to Andre, I say - thank you!

**Tanya Paulin**
Bytz Foods
WHERE BUSINESSES THAT HAVE USED THE NAVIGATION SERVICE ARE BASED

CAPE BRETON: 9%
MAINLAND NS: 26%
HRM: 49%
OUTSIDE NS: 9%
OTHER: 7%
BUSINESS NAVIGATION: WHAT CLIENTS ARE CALLING ABOUT

61% of inquiries come from start ups  |  39% of inquiries come from established businesses

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) recognized the Business Navigation Service as one of the best examples of "cutting red tape" in Canada.

GOLDEN SCISSORS AWARD 2018
I owned a garage and other car-related businesses for the last 25 years in the Philippines, my home country. When my wife and I made the decision to move to Canada, while we visited each major province, we fell in love with Nova Scotia.

For three years, I immersed myself in the local auto industry. Through that work, I saw a need for a more convenient way of bringing basic car care services to customers, especially seniors.

With my years of experience in the auto industry, I knew what type of business I wanted to open, but there were so many regulatory requirements. To me, they were complex and unclear. I knew I needed help.

In May 2017, I contacted Andre. She was so helpful. She outlined what I needed and what I didn’t.

She thought of things I didn’t consider and put me in contact with the people I didn’t know. She even helped me understand and comply with municipal rules and bylaws – both of which I wasn’t aware of.

By December, my business was registered and in March 2018, I was up and running. This wonderful service helped me get my business started.

I know we made the right decision to move and start our business in Nova Scotia.

**Rafael Tomas**
Rapid Wheels

"The wonderful Business Navigation Service helped me get my business started."
For most of my professional life, I’ve practiced pain and massage therapy in Los Angeles and British Columbia. What drew me back to Cape Breton was sharing my skills and knowledge to help people here.

Coming from British Columbia, I knew nothing about what I needed to get set up here. I was on the internet for hours trying to figure out what I needed for licensing, insurance, and a location for my business. When I went into the access centre, an employee told me about the Business Navigation Service. I first thought it was just another hurdle; but I made the call. There was an actual person on the other end of the phone. Andre told me she would take care of me. And she did - whenever I wrote, she would reply within minutes.

I’m sure it would have taken me three months or longer for all my paperwork to go through. But with Andre’s help, I had my license in my name in seven days and in three weeks, I had a sign outside to accept clients.

I feel confident I can run a successful business here and help people with chronic pain.

Even though I felt like I should pay them, there were absolutely no fees for using the Business Navigation Service.

Providing this service is the best thing that government could do for me.

Ann Power
Power Pain Therapy Clinic
WORKING WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS
WORKING WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO REMOVE BARRIERS

One of the primary areas of focus for the Office is our work with other governments, including other levels of government, to align regulatory modernization efforts. To this end, we partner with the Halifax Regional Municipality, the other Atlantic provinces and sit as Nova Scotia’s representative at the provincial / territorial / federal table to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers across the country.

1. PARTNERING WITH THE HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY: JOINT PROJECT FOR REGULATORY MODERNIZATION

The Halifax Regional Municipality and the Government of Nova Scotia, through the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness, have joined forces to take a shared approach in addressing the regulatory burden caused by rules, requirements and processes that are unnecessarily complex, outdated, or redundant.

The project was initiated through a Memorandum of Understanding between the municipality and province which focused on swift action with positive impact on business.

An advisory panel, which includes representatives from the business sector, provides leadership and oversight for the implementation of the following objectives:

A. Trial and adoption by the municipality of a customer service strategy for business that includes elements of the business service plan developed for Nova Scotia.

B. Development and adoption by the municipality of guiding principles of regulation based on the Charter of Principles, adopted by Nova Scotia and the neighbouring Atlantic provinces.

C. Identify and implement improvements to municipal regulation to reduce regulatory burden. These include:

- Streamlining the sidewalk café application.
- Making it easier for business to understand sign regulation and navigate the permitting process.
- Develop performance reports to monitor service delivery for processing temporary sign licenses, permanent sign permits, and sidewalk café licenses.
- Customize municipal customer service training for inspectors and supervisors.
- Streamline license applications for temporary sign installations.
- Amend the noise by-law to simplify noise exemption applications for recurring special events.

JOINT PROJECT’S ADVISORY PANEL

- Canadian Federation of Independent Business (Chair)
- Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Halifax Partnership
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness
- Restaurants Canada
- Spring Garden Road Business Association (representing all Business Improvement Districts in the municipality)
- Urban Development Institute
The Argyle patio plan has been a wonderful addition to the city. The plan has greatly reduced red tape to our business by streamlining the application process, and saving money on putting up and tearing down patios each year. All around this process and initiative has been very positive for business costs and operations and the result has meant a better entertainment and cultural experience for residents and visitors in downtown Halifax.

JOE MCGUINNESS
Durty Nelly’s and Antojo Tacos & Tequila
Dexter Construction is the largest civil contractor in Atlantic Canada. And in that role we do many things: excavate, build roads, bridges, airports and utility plants, design mines, haul waste and other materials. And that’s just the beginning.

I oversee dispatching at Dexter Construction, which means I make sure that equipment is moved to every job site as required. Much of the equipment I dispatch is big and heavy, putting it on the road requires a special move permit. Getting this permit in one province can be time-consuming and complex. it’s doubly so when moving equipment between provinces because I have to do everything twice.

That’s why the work currently underway in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to create a single-entry permit portal for over-dimensional equipment is encouraging. When completed, it means that when we need to move equipment between the two provinces – which is often – we’ll only need to apply once for a permit – not twice – and receive routing information once, as opposed to two times.

This change will save time for our business. It will also reduce frustration. But above all, it just makes sense.

Marshall MacLaughlin
Dexter Construction
2. ATLANTIC REGIONAL REGULATORY ALIGNMENT: JOINT OFFICE OF REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

The Joint Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness was established in 2015 as a partnership between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador joined later in 2015 and in 2016, respectively.

The core premise of the Joint Office is to achieve greater economic growth through improved, more aligned, and less regulation across Atlantic Canada to provide easier and less costly access to a larger market.

Independent research, including that of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC), has validated the vision of the four Atlantic Premiers that a relatively small reduction in internal trade barriers (mostly unnecessary regulatory difference) among the four provinces can add materially to Atlantic Canada’s GDP performance.

To realize the economic promise presented by regional regulatory efficiency, the Joint Office began its work by developing a shared foundation for its regional agenda. The early work included the adoption of the Premiers’ Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation across the region and passage of mirror legislation.

To build on this foundation, the Joint Office has been leading an alignment agenda, using as a guide the priorities identified by APEC, along with the input and advice of the business community.

OUR REGIONAL WORK TO DATE:

A SHARED FOUNDATION FOR REGULATORY EXCELLENCE

Adoption of Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation: All four Atlantic provinces have adopted the Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation which provides a shared framework for regulatory excellence.

The Regulatory Accountability and Reporting Act: Legislation has been passed and proclaimed in all four Atlantic provinces.

A Common Approach to Assessing and Measuring the Impact of Regulation on Business: Nova Scotia developed and implemented the Business Impact Assessment (BIA) application which measures the impact, including in dollars, of individual regulatory proposals. New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador, are in various stages of considering or implementing the BIA.

Shared Approach to Service: A Business Navigation Service was developed, piloted and is now a permanent feature in Nova Scotia to help start-ups and existing businesses navigate what can be a complex regulatory environment. Other Atlantic provinces are in various processes of determining whether or how to extend the program across the region.

REGIONAL ALIGNMENT MEASURES

LABOUR STANDARDS

Align timing of minimum wage changes: The minimum wage now changes on April 1 in all four Atlantic provinces.

Align employer record-keeping requirements (Maritimes only): Employer record-keeping requirements were harmonized with legislative amendments passed in all three Maritime provinces. This commitment was made before Newfoundland and Labrador formally joined the Joint Office.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mutual Recognition in specific areas of Occupational Health and Safety - Training and Equipment

Phase 1: There is general agreement between jurisdictions that head and foot safety equipment is standardized and can be used in all Atlantic provinces.
Phase 2: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being developed to formalize mutual recognition in this area and will cover such areas as first aid and joint occupational health and safety committee training, eye and face protection, high visibility clothing, hearing protection, personal floatation devices and respiratory protection, safety training, fall arrest training, traffic control training and confined spaces training.

TECHNICAL SAFETY

Mutual Recognition of Licenses for activities and occupations in Technical Safety in areas such as elevators, pressure welding, amusement rides. It will also cover areas in electrical, propane and compressed natural gas.

Atlantic Canada Technical Safety Act: The four provinces are pursuing full regulatory alignment of all the Atlantic technical safety trade legislation and regulations. The requirements for licensing, fees, inspections and enforcement will be harmonized, bringing consistency across the four jurisdictions.

The Atlantic Canada Technical Safety Act initiative builds on and includes the following initiative, which was previously underway: Mutual Recognition of Licenses for activities and occupations in Technical Safety, to be established first for elevators, pressure welding, and amusement rides, and subsequently in the areas of electrical, boilers and pressure vessels, propane and compressed natural gas. The Mutual Recognition initiative will continue within the broader context of the Atlantic Canada Technical Safety Act initiative, beginning with elevators and lifts as planned.

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION

Adoption of Canada Revenue Agency’s One Business Number for WCB’s: Nova Scotia introduced the Business Number several years ago and is connected to the payment system; New Brunswick has implemented the Business Number and Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador are working towards implementation by mid-2018 and end of 2018, respectively.

PROCUREMENT

Common Solicitation Documents for Procurement - Goods and Services (Maritimes only): Request for Proposals (RFP) and Negotiated Request for Proposals (NRFP – consecutive and concurrent) for goods and services are now harmonized (same look and content). This commitment was made before Newfoundland and Labrador formally joined the Joint Office.

Common solicitation procurement documents for Construction (Maritimes only): A harmonized ‘instruction to bidders’ document has been developed, which is one of the more significant procurement documents in this area.

Additional areas for procurement alignment are in the process of being identified, aided by a survey of vendors across Atlantic Canada.

INSURANCE

Mutual Recognition for Temporary Licenses for Insurance Adjusters: Insurance adjusters can now operate outside of their home province in an Atlantic Canadian province for 90 days after a catastrophic event.

TRANSPORTATION

Standardizing Carrier Profile: Individual provinces have made changes to align differences associated with carrier profiles within Atlantic Canada and are in the process of standardizing the Conviction Equivalency Table (CET) which outlines demerit pointing system.

Shared training of Transportation Enforcement Officials: Opportunities for shared training of transportation enforcement officials have been identified, with staff now consulting regularly with Atlantic counterparts when developing training schedules.

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Joint Over-Dimension Permits for Trucking: New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are developing a joint portal for over-dimension permits for the trucking industry and will mean a trucking company need to apply once for a permit – not twice – and receive routing information once, as opposed to two times.
One of the groups I met with for help getting these tires on roads across the region was the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. They were keen and eager to work with us.

Our company is a proud and long-time employer in Nova Scotia with three production facilities across the province. Our facility in Waterville, Kings County produces a unique truck tire – the MICHELIN® X One® tire. This wide base tire is revolutionary in that it reduces the weight of the truck on the road by transforming an 18-wheeler to 10 wheels, resulting in fuel savings and less greenhouse gas emissions.

We’re extremely proud of it and that it’s produced here, at home.

It’s one thing to engineer and produce an innovative tire; it’s another getting it approved for use on highways by governments across the country - something I’ve personally been focused on for the past few years.

One of the groups I met with for help getting these tires on roads across the region was the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. They were keen and eager to work with us. With support from the Office, and through our work with transportation officials in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the tires are now approved for use in both provinces, joining many others across the country.

Now, trucking companies have more choice. And our made-in-Nova Scotia tires have access to more markets along with the opportunity to show just how revolutionary they are.

Jeff MacLean, President
Michelin North America (Canada) Inc.
3. THE CANADIAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT: REGULATORY RECONCILIATION AND COOPERATION

The Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) was ratified one year ago, in July 2017. The agreement establishes a regulatory reconciliation process that will help to address barriers to trade that companies may experience when doing business across provincial and territorial borders.

Fred Crooks, Nova Scotia’s Chief Regulatory Officer, sits as the province’s representative on the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) – a federal-provincial-territorial body established by the CFTA to oversee the regulatory reconciliation process and promote regulatory cooperation across Canada.

Here’s how the process will work:

A. The potential barrier is identified. Based on information provided by stakeholders or other sources, a potential barrier to internal trade is identified by a province, territory or the federal government.

B. Governments work to establish a reconciliation agreement. Once a barrier to trade has been identified, a government (federal, provincial or territorial) can submit the measure to the RCT for reconciliation. After submission, participating governments and their relevant regulators negotiate a reconciliation agreement. Governments may opt out of negotiations if they do not have an existing measure to reconcile or determine that reconciliation is not a desirable option for their jurisdiction.

C. The barrier to trade is reconciled. Once implemented, the reconciliation agreement will effectively remove the barrier to trade between participating governments. The RCT is developing its first workplan and will be producing an annual report.
HOW THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS WORKS

1. Identify potential barrier

2. Submit the measure to the National Table for reconciliation

3. Establish reconciliation agreement

4. Removal of barrier for business
WHAT'S NEXT
The Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness has created a perfect storm from a mixture of inspired leadership, innovation and transparency, underpinned by a thirst for measurable results and a common-sense approach. Nova Scotians are reaping the benefits.

JACK KYTE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Pictou County Chamber of Commerce
After nearly three years into our mandate, we have made great strides. However, our experience to date and advice from business stakeholders and public servants tell us that much more remains to be done.

To recap on our initial accomplishments, we and our public and private partners have secured reductions in regulatory burden and barriers to trade in three main areas:

- Measurable and credible reductions in compliance costs to business. We anticipate exceeding the $25 million (net) burden reduction target by year’s end which includes a “freeze” on increases to compliance costs.

- Improved service to regulated businesses, (particularly small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs) including the establishment of our Business Navigator Service which has served more than 1,800 clients and received national recognition by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB).

- Reduction in intergovernmental difference, duplication and overlap of regulatory programs, through partnerships with municipal governments in Nova Scotia and the governments of the other three Atlantic provinces. We and our provincial partners have made progress in more than 21 areas of regulatory harmonization. In addition to this work, the partnership between the Halifax Regional Municipality and Government of Nova Scotia is a groundbreaking collaboration that is producing results for business.

Looking ahead, a significant priority of the Office will be to see that these established initiatives continue to produce even better results and to implement experience-based improvements as we go.

But to meet the economic opportunities in front of us, our agenda needs also to embrace other key levers for better regulation. Areas for research, consultation and consideration currently include:

- The relationship between government and medium to large regulated entities doing business in the province. Currently the relationship tends to be transactional and is conducted on the government side from various “silos” of regulatory specialty. With our partners, we intend to explore a model where there is a more ongoing relationship, conducted from a single point of contact in government. The objective is to provide better service, based on a deeper understanding of the business climate for our leading businesses and the impact of regulatory policy and procedures on their success.

- Working with Procurement, exploring the impact of procurement policies and procedures on economic opportunity in the Province. This includes topics ranging from complexity of process, access for suppliers and recognition of the economic leverage implicit in managing an annual spend of $2 billion.

- Building upon and broadening our successful joint project with the Halifax Regional Municipality where 45 per cent of the province’s population resides and to which 56 % of Nova Scotia’s GDP is attributed. At present, our work to align provincial and municipal approaches to regulation is unique in Canada. With a shared foundation (the Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation and the Business Impact Assessment), we believe there is much more work that can be done to align approaches and make business start-up and operation easier and less costly.