

Annual Accountability Report

for the fiscal year 2010–2011



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Message from the Premier

I am pleased to present the Government of Nova Scotia's Accountability report for the fiscal year 2010/2011.

This report is an account of the work that government has undertaken as outlined in the Nova Scotia Government Business Plan for the fiscal year 2010/2011.

The report highlights significant accomplishments of the past year that will provide better health care for you and your family, create good jobs and grow the economy, ensure the province lives within its means and make life more affordable for Nova Scotia families in all regions of the province.

Whether it is hiring new nurse practitioners to work in nursing homes, reducing the small business tax, taking HST off children's clothing and shoes or exercising wage constraint, this government is committed to making smart and strategic decisions that will put this province on a better path forward and make life better for Nova Scotia families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Dexter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Darrell" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dexter".

The Honourable Darrell Dexter
Premier of Nova Scotia



Better Health Care for You and Your Family

Nova Scotians deserve quality health care that meets their needs now and in the future. The province's Better Care Sooner plan, launched in December, will keep government's commitment to ensure emergency rooms remain open, reduce wait times for patients, and provide better care for Nova Scotia families.

As part of Better Care Sooner, the Minister of Health Maureen MacDonald tabled the first annual accountability report on emergency departments in the legislature last spring. The report provides accurate, reliable data to better understand the challenges facing the province's emergency care system.

The province also established a Rapid Assessment Unit to help relieve stress on emergency departments and help patients move faster through the system.

A major initiative of Better Care Sooner will be the establishment of Collaborative Emergency Centres (CECs) across the province. CECs will ensure same or next-day appointments. They provide communities with collaborative-care teams that include a mix of professionals and 24/7 access to emergency care. The first CEC in Nova Scotia is scheduled to open in Parrsboro this summer. The province will use the \$3-million Emergency Room Protection Fund to help fund Better Care Sooner initiatives, including the new Parrsboro CEC and at least three other such centres that will be announced in the fall.

Better Care Sooner calls for improved health care for Nova Scotia seniors. The province hired four new nurse practitioners for nursing homes in the Cumberland, South Shore, South West, and Cape Breton district health authorities, and implemented self-managed care allowances and personal alert assistance programs for seniors at home.

In order to provide better health care to Nova Scotia families, the province must also have access to state-of-the-art equipment and health infrastructure. As committed to in Better Care Sooner, the province now has a dedicated fixed-wing aircraft for EHS Lifeflight Service, available 24/7.

Other health-care initiatives the province has accomplished include supporting pre-hab teams in the four district health authorities that perform hip and knee surgeries, launching a public awareness campaign to increase understanding of the 24/7 emergency health-care system, covering the costs of Lucentis and Avastin for treatment of Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration for beneficiaries of publicly-funded drug programs, and expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists.



NOVA SCOTIA

Living Within Our Means

Efforts to live within the province's means and get back to balance are on track.

Government has been able to significantly reduce expenses through a number of strategic measures, including:

- holding the line on departmental budgets;
- reforming the civil service pension, which helped return the plan to a fully funded position;
- continuing to exercise wage restraint;
- reducing departmental budgets by one per cent for administrative spending;
- implementing a Change in Innovation Fund that allows departments and district health authorities to invest in new technology and equipment that will result in savings and efficiencies. For example, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal will convert 2,500 high pressure sodium (HPS) lights throughout the province to light-emitting diode (LED) lights, conserving more energy, saving money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- issuing a directive to eliminate March Madness spending for all departments and agencies;
- and reducing the amount of money spent on professional services.

These measures, along with increased revenues, helped the province end the 2010-2011 fiscal year with a \$569.1-million surplus, allowing the province to reduce its net debt for only the seventh time in the past 50 years.

The province's better than expected performance through the global recession, an unanticipated prior-year adjustment, and efforts to control spending were significant contributors to the year-end surplus.

Rather than spend that surplus, which has been the practice of previous governments in Nova Scotia, this government took the view that "a penny saved is a penny saved," and continued to exercise fiscal prudence by using the funds to reduce net debt by \$217.8 million. This action has reduced debt servicing costs by \$55 million annually and improved Nova Scotia's debt-to-GDP ratio for 2011/2012, which is now 35.7 per cent.

In fact, for the second year in a row, total spending is coming in under budget. This is a significant achievement. It's the first time in 23 years that Nova Scotia has witnessed back-to-back underspending of the budget.

Creating Good Jobs and Growing the Economy

Over the past 20 years, Nova Scotia's economic growth has been lower than any other province in Canada. As the economy went global, competition intensified, technology took off and Nova Scotia didn't keep up. That needs to change, and unfortunately the economic trend cannot be changed overnight.

In November, the province announced jobsHere, the province's plan to create good jobs and grow a strong, more sustainable economy. The strategy is made up of three interrelated priorities:

1. Learning the right skills for good jobs
2. Growing the economy through innovation
3. Helping businesses be more competitive globally

Each priority is supported by several new and existing programs and initiatives.

Some of the programs and initiatives that government has put in place in the 2010-2011 fiscal year to support jobs here include:

Cutting Small Business Tax

This government knows that small business plays a big role in growing our economy. That's why government cut the small business tax rate. Effective Jan. 1, the rate was reduced by 0.5 percentage points to 4.5 per cent, which will return about \$6 million to small business next year.

This government is the first to cut the small business tax rate since 1992, and has now done so two years in a row.

Co-op and community-based learning for high school students

In 2009/2010, the province invested to expand co-op education in 39 high schools and provide mentor services for co-operative education teachers and their principals.

Creating 250 community college seats targeted to high-demand trades and professions

Government has fulfilled its commitment to invest \$2 million in high-demand programs at the Nova Scotia Community College. This includes an additional 250 seats in NSCC campuses across the province.



Productivity Investment Program

This program is designed to encourage businesses to become more productive, innovative and globally competitive. It includes three incentives:

The Capital Investment Incentive contributes 20 per cent, up to a maximum of \$1 million, toward the cost of technologically advanced machinery, clean technology, equipment, software and hardware with preference given to exporters.

The Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive provides funding to companies to encourage investment in skills development and certification. It is also designed to help companies adapt to the introduction of new technology and innovative processes, improve productivity, and strengthen international competitiveness.

The Strategic Co-operative Education Incentive aims to grow the number of work placement opportunities available to students enrolled in cooperative education programs in universities and community colleges. It will also assist high-value businesses and organizations across the region to recruit and retain students for work placements. The Incentive provides organizations 50 per cent of the required minimum hourly wage of \$15 an hour.

Renewable Electricity Plan

The new renewable electricity standard set by the new government requires 40 per cent of the electricity used in Nova Scotia to come from renewable sources by 2020.

To meet that aggressive target, the province released its Renewable Electricity Plan in the spring of 2010. The plan is designed to increase renewable electricity supply, improve energy security and stabilize long-term prices. It will result in billions of dollars worth of new investment and create thousands of new jobs. So far, renewable electricity targets have been met or exceeded.

The Lower Churchill project presents a new and exciting opportunity to continue the transformation of Nova Scotia’s electricity supply, protecting consumers and businesses from the volatile costs of fossil fuels. It will also provide thousands of new jobs in construction through 2017, and significant economic opportunities for local companies.

Five-year paving plan

A strong and modern highway system connects communities in Nova Scotia and boosts our economy. Building and maintaining roads and infrastructure creates thousands of jobs, allows local businesses to transport goods to market, connects Nova Scotians to vital services, employment and education, and allows visitors to travel to every corner of our province. Nova Scotia's first multi-year highway plan has created certainty and direction when provincial investment in better roads is at an all-time high.

Nova Scotia Gateway Secretariat

Nova Scotia is geographically positioned to be a premier marine and air freight gateway to and from the North American marketplace because of the province's infrastructure links and proven capabilities. The Gateway Secretariat is working with partners to expand trade through the province by developing a vision, role, and strategy for Nova Scotia's Gateway efforts.

Film Industry and Digital Media Tax Credits

Changes to the Film Industry and Digital Media Tax Credits will ensure the province's film, television and new media industry continues to be one of the most competitive in Canada.

Residency requirements for both credits were changed so that for income tax purposes, someone has to be a resident of Nova Scotia during the production period only. The total production costs cap for the Film Industry Tax Credit was also removed. Previously, the Film Industry Tax Credit was based on the lesser of 50 per cent of the costs of eligible labour, or 25 per cent of total production costs. Due to the labour intensity of digital animation, the cap limited the ability of animators to take full advantage of the credit.

Regional Venture Capital Fund

The province is pursuing a new, privately operated regional venture capital fund, targeting high-growth opportunities for knowledge-based companies. The fund will be designed to attract new capital into the region and improve access to capital for companies that want to innovate. The province is working to engage federal and Atlantic counterparts, and extend the reach of the fund throughout Atlantic Canada.



Helping Nova Scotians Make Ends Meet

The province has been working hard to help make life better by making it more affordable for Nova Scotia families.

To help Nova Scotians who need it the most, the province introduced a new Affordable Living Tax Credit. The credit puts money back into the hands of Nova Scotians living on low or modest incomes. This important measure means that households earning less than \$30,000 receive quarterly payments, similar to the existing GST credit. It returns about \$240 per household and \$57 per dependent child every year. Those earning up to \$34,800 also receive a portion of the credit. This credit improves the standard of living for many Nova Scotians.

The province also made a number of vital household items more affordable through point-of-sale rebates. Government removed the provincial portion of the HST on children's clothing and footwear, feminine hygiene products and diapers. These new measures came into effect last summer and saved approximately \$11 million for families in every region of the province.

The province also made significant progress in making life more affordable for Nova Scotia seniors. Any senior who receives the Guaranteed Income Supplement will be refunded the provincial portion of any provincial income tax.

The province introduced a new Poverty Reduction Credit. This credit returned about \$3 million annually to about 15,000 individuals living in poverty, many of whom are disabled. This credit began by providing \$200 a year for recipients.

Government also provided assistance to those who must travel outside of the province for medical treatment. Patients who need treatment not available here at home may be eligible to receive up to \$1,000 for round-trip travel costs, and up to \$1,500 for accommodations for as many as 12 medical visits a year.

Other affordability measures introduced in 2010/2011 include:

- Increasing the minimum wage to \$9.65, making it among the highest in the country;
- maintaining shelter allowances for families when children are attending post-secondary education;
- exempting income, such as tax credits, foster care payments and caregiver's benefits when determining eligibility for income assistance; and
- increased the number of licensed child care spaces by 920 and increase the number of child care subsidies by 700.

Accountability Reports 2010–2011

Department	Web Address
Agriculture	http://gov.ns.ca/agri/department/business_plans/
Community Services	www.gov.ns.ca/coms/ (Click on “About This Department,” then “Publications, Policies & Reports”)
Economic and Rural Development	www.gov.ns.ca/econ/ (Click on “Publications and Reports”)
Education	www.ednet.ns.ca/ (Click on “Business Plans”)
Energy	www.gov.ns.ca/energy/ (Click on “Background Information,” then “Accountability Report”)
Environment	www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ (Click on “Resources,” then “Publications”)
Finance	www.gov.ns.ca/finance/ (Click on “Publications,” then “Accountability Report”)
Fisheries and Aquaculture	http://gov.ns.ca/fish/department/business_plans/
Health	www.gov.ns.ca/DHW/ (Click on “Corporate Reports”)
Health Promotion and Protection	www.gov.ns.ca/DHW/ (Click on “Corporate Reports”)
Justice	www.gov.ns.ca/just/ (Click on “Publications”)
Labour and Workforce Development	www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/ (Click on “Publications”)
Natural Resources	www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ (Click on “Business Plans”)
Seniors	www.gov.ns.ca/scs/ (Click on “Business Plans and Accountability Reports”)
Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations	www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/business-plan.asp
Tourism, Culture and Heritage	www.gov.ns.ca/tch/ (Click on “Statement of Mandate”)
Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal	www.gov.ns.ca/tran/ (Click on “Publications”)



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Public Service Entity	Web Address
Aboriginal Affairs, Office of	www.gov.ns.ca/abor/office (Click on “What We Do” and then “Statement of Mandate”)
Acadian Affairs, Office of	<i>English:</i> www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/e/ (Click on “Publications”)
Affaires acadiennes, Office des	<i>Français:</i> www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/ (Cliquez sur “Publications”)
African Nova Scotian Affairs, Office of	www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/ (Under “What’s New,” click on “Accountability Report 2010-2011”)
Chief Information Office	www.gov.ns.ca/cio
Communications Nova Scotia	www.gov.ns.ca/cmns (Click on “Publications”)
Emergency Management Office	www.gov.ns.ca/emo/ (Click on “Resources,” then “Publications,” then “Accountability Report”)
Executive Council Office	www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/ (Under “Publications” click on “Office Publications”)
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office	www.foipop.ns.ca/ (Click on “Publications”)
Gaelic Affairs, Office of	www.gov.ns.ca/oga
Human Rights Commission	www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/ (Click on “About Us”, then “Publications, Reports, and Plans”)

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Immigration, Office of	http://immigration.gov.ns.ca/Publications
Intergovernmental Affairs	www.gov.ns.ca/iga/ (Click on “Publications”)
Nova Scotia Securities Commission	www.gov.ns.ca/nssc (On the right, click on “Plans and Reports”)
Ombudsman, Office of the	www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/publications.htm
Office of Policy and Priorities	www.gov.ns.ca/PPO/ (Under “Publication,” click on “Office Publications”)
Public Prosecution Service	www.gov.ns.ca/pps/ (Under “Publications,” click on “Business Plan”)
Public Service Commission	www.gov.ns.ca/psc/businessPlan
Status of Women, Advisory Council on	http://women.gov.ns.ca/councilreports.asp (Under “About Us,” click on “Reports”)
Sydney Tar Ponds Agency	www.tarpondscleanup.ca (Click on “Agency,” then hover on “Agency” until you see “Business Plan”)
Treasury Board Office	www.gov.ns.ca/treasuryboard/ (Under “Publications,” click on “Office Publications”)
Utility and Review Board, NS	www.nsuarb.ca/ (Click on “About Us,” then “Plans & Reports”)
Voluntary Planning	http://vp.gov.ns.ca/ (Click on “Publications”)



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Crown Corporation	Web Address
Art Gallery of Nova Scotia	www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca (Click Halifax, About Us, Corporate Information, Annual Reports)
Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission	www.hdbc.ca (Click on "About HHB," then "Annual Reports and Publications")
Film Nova Scotia	http://film.ns.ca (Click on "Corporate," then "Corporate Reporting")
Harbourside Commercial Park Inc.	www.harcom.ca
Innovacorp	www.innovacorp.ca/ (Under "About Us," click on "Publications")
Nova Scotia Business Incorporated	www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/ (Click on "About Nova Scotia Business Inc.," then "Corporate Reports and Plans")
Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission	www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board	www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/ (Click on "Business Plan")
Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board	www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/ (Click on Business Plan 2011-12)
Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation	http://nsgc.ca/corporate/financials/annual_reports/
Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation	www.gov.ns.ca/coms/department/Publications.html
Nova Scotia Lands Inc.	www.nslands.ca
Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation	www.myNSLC.com Annual Reports (footer at the bottom of the page)
Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation	www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc (Click on "Business Plan")
Nova Scotia Power Finance Corporation	www.gov.ns.ca/finance/en/home/budget/default.aspx (Under "Budget," click on "Budget Documents," and select the year)
Sydney Steel Corporation	www.sysco.ns.ca
Trade Centre Limited	www.tradecentrelimited.com/ (Under "About TCL," click on "Corporate Policies & Reports")
Waterfront Development Corporation Limited	https://my-waterfront.ca/about-wdcl/corporate-info

