



# Western Economic Diversification Canada

## Government On-Line (GOL) – Our Journey to Success

### Public Report 2005

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#### I. Departmental GOL Strategy - Overview Information

##### Government On-Line Vision and Strategy

Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WD) Government On-Line (GOL) vision is to provide products and services to Western Canadians through all service delivery channels: in person, correspondence, fax, telephone, and the Internet. On-line products and services will complement, not replace, existing methods of interacting with external clients. On-line services will be developed where it responds to client demand and is deemed cost-effective.

WD's GOL initiative is integrated into departmental programming and policy considerations. On-line products have been developed in support of WD's strategic outcome areas: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Communities. On-line business tools, workshop presentations and interactive guides are available to aid entrepreneurs. On-line submission guidelines are provided to enable access to business development programs.

Across all three strategic directions, WD uses partnerships with other levels of government, private sector, universities, and communities to maximize the investment in Western Canada's most valuable resources - the talents, energies and ideas of its people. The goal of ensuring all Western Canadians including Aboriginals, youth, women, and residents of remote and northern communities have an opportunity to participate in and contribute to, the economic success of the region and our country, underlies all of our activities.

Opportunities to service citizens through WD programs is enhanced by ongoing development of transactional services and improved information sharing services on the WD public website. Government On-line objectives are achieved by moving activities from a separate unit into mainstream decision-making. This ensures that as programs and services evolve or new ones are developed, consideration regarding on-line delivery will naturally be included in the process. Accordingly, WD maintains its GOL activities as follows:

- Grants and Contributions Funding Service – includes all programs delivered by the department that were reflected in 2004.
- Information Sharing and Exchange Service - includes information particular to economic growth within western Canada developed by WD, often in partnership with other research organizations or industry associations.

Both services can be found at [www.wd-deo.gc.ca](http://www.wd-deo.gc.ca).

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## II. GOL Services Reporting

### Grants and Contributions Funding Service

WD Grants and Contributions (G&C) funds are distributed within a framework of three strategic outcome areas: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Communities; all strongly supported by Policy, Advocacy, and Coordination. WD manages six G&C programs, each governed by a separate set of terms and conditions, and respective results-based management documents. A new service was added this year in support of business partners for Reporting and Performance Measurement. WD's current programs and services include:

English	French
Western Economic Diversification Program (WDP)	Programme de diversification de l'économie de l'Ouest (PDEO)
Innovation and Community Investment Program (ICIP)	Programme d'investissement dans l'innovation et les communautés (PIIC)
Loan Investment Fund Program (LIFP)	Programme de prêts et d'investissement de DEO (PPI)
Service Delivery Network Program (SDNP)	Programme du réseau de prestation de services
Women's Enterprise Initiative (WEI)	Initiative pour les femmes entrepreneurs (IFE)
Community Futures Program (CFP)	Programme de développement des collectivités
WD Partner Reporting and Performance Measurement System (RPM)	Système de mesure du rendement et rapports sure les partenaires de DEO

WD also delivers four national programs (referred to as non-core programs) for Western Canadians on behalf of other federal departments such as: Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative (SICEAI) for Industry Canada and; Infrastructure Canada Fund (ICF), Municipal-Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) and, Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF) for Infrastructure Canada.

The new sub-component added to this year's GOL annual report is the "WD Partner Reporting and Performance Measurement System (RPM)". WD recently initiated a plan to proceed with an on-line system to gather financial and operational statistics from the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN) partners specifically; Women's Enterprise Initiative (WEI), Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), and Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs). RPM will support both improved decision-making and enhanced reporting for the Departmental Performance Report (DPR), House Book Updates, Briefing Notes and periodic reports to regions, partners, and others.

Since 1999, the GOL transactional service has evolved from provision of information, news releases, and interactive tools to become client-focused in support of Grants and Contributions programs managed by the department. This final year demonstrates WD's ongoing commitment to citizens of accountability and transparency with both implementation of the RPM, along with proactive disclosure on the public website of its Grants and Contributions projects. As a result, the WD GOL initiative achieved its targets in support of service improvement demonstrating value to Canadians.

WD is working to create an additional access point to its services using the Canada site gateway called Canadian Business. The primary client identified in the annual report targets voluntary/non-profit organizations. However, WD also recognizes both research communities and provincial/territorial/municipal governments as key partners supporting the West. In addition, the secondary client groups which benefit from WD's services include: adults (working age), aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, urban communities, rural and remote communities, research communities, all businesses, start-ups, SMEs, employers and exporters, foreign investors, and other Federal departments.

Additional opportunities for service transformation are being determined and planned with primary focus on internal processes and gaining alignment across regions. In 2005, WD increased interoperability in terms of sharing timely information and being able to facilitate transactions more efficiently between regions, partners, and clients. For example, WD's common project assessment tool provides business intelligence in the review and assessment of similar applications received across regions, enabling consistent decision-making. WD is committed to continuous improvement through its website to focus succinctly on the clients it serves and ensuring clarity of programs offered.

### **Information Sharing and Exchange Service**

WD brings a local perspective to local development issues. This grassroots approach is served by 100 points of service across the West via the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN) [[www.wd.gc.ca/pos/default\\_e.asp](http://www.wd.gc.ca/pos/default_e.asp)] including Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), Women's Enterprise Initiatives (WEIs), Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs), and the Canada Business Services Centres (CBSCs).

WD works to: develop and diversify the Western economy; coordinate federal economic development activities; represent Western interests in national decision-making; partner with Western provinces and cities, private industry, aboriginal peoples, and other stakeholders; and ensure Western businesses have fair access to industrial and regional benefits associated with major projects. Information Services include four areas: Media Centre, E-Centre for Research Excellence, E-Tools, and Other WD and Partner Website information.

Since the start of this GOL initiative, the information and exchange service has been through significant change. Particularly in 2003, when WD transitioned away from direct client services, the website refocused to provide enhanced tools and links to services for the public. Then in 2004, the public website revitalization project was initiated and is now entering its final stages demonstrating a new look at the home page and a succinct message about the department's services and positioning. The experience of moving and finding information on the site is now improved and streamlined. Further plans include implementation of a content management system to improve internal provisioning of current, timely, and meaningful information.

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Opportunities for further service transformation are always considered with primary focus on internal processes to gain alignment across regions. WD achieved successful implementation of its Project Assessment System, which is expanding to further manage the lifecycle of project applications. This system is now called Project Gateway, and will continue to evolve incorporating the functions of monitoring, payments, and performance measurement. WD already benefits from interoperability in terms of sharing timely information and being able to facilitate information exchange more efficiently between regions, partners and clients. For example, Project Gateway provides business intelligence in the review and assessment of similar applications received across regions, enabling consistent decisions to be made. In addition, significant consultation and collaboration occurs with other Regional Development Agencies and other public sector jurisdictions.

### **III. Client Benefits, Satisfaction, Awareness and Take-up of On-line Services**

#### **Grants and Contributions Transactional Service and Information Sharing and Exchange Service**

Citizens will benefit in a number of ways from provision of both WD GOL services. Benefits include: easier access and availability; time savings in service response; simplified interactions with government; better information leading to increased education, skills, and professional development opportunities; better information leading to increased business opportunities; and other non-quantifiable benefits to clients such as increased accountability and transparency. WD's flexibility in the types of projects it funds can make it difficult to convey the purpose of a particular program. Fact sheets, project highlights, and news releases on projects supported by G&C funds assist the public in better understanding purpose, expected outcomes, and funding recipients.

Results from the WD Public Website Satisfaction Survey (March 2004) report 54.7% of respondents indicated "satisfied" or "very satisfied with their website experience. Another survey will be undertaken once the revitalization is complete, anticipated for 2006/2007.