



**Department of Service Nova Scotia  
and Municipal Relations**

**2003/ 2004  
Business Plan**

**March 12, 2003**

*Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations*

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## *Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations*

### *Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister*

Since its inception in 2000, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has made it easier for businesses and individuals to access provincial government services. During the past two years, we have introduced more service options, reduced red tape and cut our operating expenses.

An independent survey conducted by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) in 2001 shows that we meet or exceed service delivery expectations when compared to other public and private sector organizations. We expect that IPAC's follow-up survey, to be released this year, will be just as encouraging.

In addition to our personal service options, we are setting the pace for on-line service across the provincial government. The number of licence and permit applications and renewals, and other public services available on-line, is growing and gaining in popularity with our clients.

This coming year will be a busy and challenging one for us. Despite financial constraints, we will maintain our existing program and service options. However, plans to introduce new services or expand existing services may take a little longer than we had originally hoped.

Some initiatives to watch in the coming year:

Working with law enforcement and stakeholder groups, we will continue our efforts to reduce drunk driving occurrences, and to make drivers and vehicles safer. We will release a supplement to the *Driver's Handbook*, designed to improve cyclists' safety on our roads. As well, existing helmet regulations will be updated.

This department will help to improve safety and competitiveness of the province's trucking industry by aligning our legislation and regulations with national and international standards.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations will continue to provide leadership in on-line services. The "Ask Joe Howe" search engine will be expanded to include more provincial and public sector web sites. Web site visitors will also benefit from new technology that lets them customize the information they see to their needs.

The Department will work with municipal councils across the province to strengthen these critical relationships. Mayors and wardens, councillors and municipal administrators can look to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations for advice on a variety of topics including land use planning, bylaw development, on-line services and financial management. We will continue the Municipal

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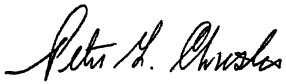
Indicators program, giving local administrations and taxpayers information about the financial and social health of their community to others in the province. Work will also continue on amendments to the *Municipal Elections Act*, in preparation for municipal elections in the fall of 2004.

Vital Statistics, along with its counterparts across Canada and around the world, will continue to strengthen its security options to reduce identity theft and to combat terrorism.

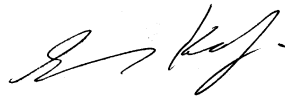
Under the *Land Registration Act*, a new, streamlined system of searching and registering properties will be phased in on a county-by-county basis, starting in Colchester.

Almost every road and building in the province will be catalogued by March 2004 through the Civic Address Project. This will be a tremendous aid to Nova Scotia's emergency services and municipal planners.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is doing what we set out to do: to offer better service to the people we serve and to reduce red tape.



Hon. Peter Christie  
Minister



Greg Keefe, CMA  
Acting Deputy Minister

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### ***Introduction to the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations***

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations was formed on October 1, 2000 as part of Government's effort to more effectively align organizational structures with the priorities of the Government.

As the lead service delivery arm of government for programs and services to businesses, individuals and municipalities, the Department will constantly evolve from its present form to satisfy the future service needs of its customers. The Department is organized on a functional basis to facilitate the evolution in service delivery in a manner that will result in seamless delivery to customers in the most efficient manner possible.

#### **Mandate**

When SNSMR was created in 2000, it was mandated to become the single window service provider for government's non-social services; provide quality service delivery with convenient access; reduce the amount of red tape on businesses and individuals through process streamlining; and provide municipalities with a single access point to the provincial Government.

This mandate requires the Department to make extensive investment in technology and process re-engineering to ensure our systems meet or exceed government and client expectations. In many service areas the Department has made significant advances in streamlining processes and efficiently improving customer service. Experience has proven that with careful planning, appropriate development time and the employment of technology, the Department can simultaneously achieve more effective and efficient service delivery.

Most of the investment to date has been attained through resource re-allocation and internal efficiencies. This is consistent with comments by the Auditor General of Nova Scotia who indicated that Government must improve its use of existing resources. While these options are now very limited, the Department will continue to explore these and other alternatives to support initiatives that promote the Department's mandate and objectives.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Department is responsible for ensuring results in the following areas:

- Effective and efficient policy development, enforcement and program management in the programs and services related to consumer protection, driver and vehicle safety, taxation and business practices offered by the Department.

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- Effective and efficient delivery of government programs and services to clients through in-person, phone, mail, and Internet service channels.
- The provision of local government related policy advice to government and quality advice, support, assistance and program delivery to Nova Scotia municipalities.
- The provision of a fair, equitable and defensible assessment roll.
- The provision of streamlined registration, licensing and permitting processes.
- Collaboration with internal and external partners to evaluate and improve the quality and effectiveness of government services
- Policy development for Department in the area of data privacy, security and access and integrity of data holdings.
- Support Government's corporate strategy for e-government services and alternative program delivery.
- Customer and stakeholder satisfaction with SNSMR services.
- Quality performance and morale of staff.
- Effective and positive relationships with other levels of government, provincial departments and agencies and the private sector.
- The provision of geographic information and associated technologies to support decision making by all provincial departments.
- Effective and efficient management of the Department's resources (financial, human resource, information technology, information)

Most of these responsibilities will be fulfilled via ongoing operations, through the services and programs identified in the Department's core business areas. However, a select few of these responsibilities have been identified for added emphasis over the next several years and represent the Strategic Goals (see page 11) that the Department will strive to achieve over the foreseeable future.

### **Organization**

Currently the Department is organized into five divisions:

- ▶ Program Management and Corporate Services
- ▶ Service Delivery
- ▶ Registry and Information Management Services
- ▶ Municipal Services
- ▶ Alternative Program Delivery.

The following are the major services provided by each of the five divisions:

**Program Management and Corporate Services** - provides the program development, enforcement

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and public awareness functions of the Department in the areas of driver and vehicle safety, landlord and tenant relations, consumer and business policy, taxation, registries and support services such as facilities management, debt collection, policy development and quality assurance.

**Service Delivery** - the Service Delivery Division provides the majority of the direct interaction with customers on behalf of the Department. The Division is responsible for the Department Call Centre and Access Nova Scotia and Registry of Motor Vehicle offices across the province, along with provision of e-services for customers.

**Registry and Information Management Services** - delivers four programs on behalf of the Department including geographic information services, property registration, information management services, business and consumer registrations. The Division also leads two strategic reform initiatives, the Registry 2000 project and the Nova Scotia Business Registry (NSBR).

**Municipal Services** - provides local government related policy advice to government and manages the Province's relationship with, and supports, municipalities by acting as a window into government, providing advice and assistance in areas of administration, financial management, land use planning, fostering partnerships and administering a variety of operating and capital grant programs.

**Alternative Program Delivery** - is responsible for the development of partnerships to deliver services on behalf of other government departments and to manage arrangements with non-government agencies to deliver services on behalf of government. It also includes Assessment Services which prepares assessments for municipalities as well as files and defends the assessments across the province.

### ***Vision***

It's the year 2005. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is a recognized and modeled service organization - our pro-active stance and value-added contributions are well understood both within the provincial government and externally by citizens and businesses across Nova Scotia. Our quality and cost performance set us apart from comparable providers. Citizens can obtain any non-social service at one of our accessible centers and our on-line presence is proven and comparable to peer agencies anywhere. We've been a catalyst in fostering seamless access to all levels of government and in migrating from paper to electronic services.

The public interest is core to our legislative mandate. Clients are confident that public records are safe, reliable and easy to access, and municipalities are pleased with our client-focused relationship. Staff

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recognize their Department as an employer of choice because we have a proven track record for developing people and providing the technology and other tools that support their ability to deliver quality service. Service is our business.

### ***Mission***

To provide Nova Scotians with seamless, easy access to numerous government services in a cost-effective manner while maintaining the interests of the public and municipalities.

### ***Planning Context***

Various factors have to be considered before the Department sets its medium term direction. First and foremost are the priorities of the Government. Then there are internal and external issues within the environment that the Department operates that must be considered and addressed in the plan. Each of these factors plays a role in molding the actions the Department will take over the medium term.

### **Support of Nova Scotia Government Goals**

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations plays a key role in the implementation of the goals and priorities of the Nova Scotia Government. The strategic goals identified by the Department must therefore support, promote and be consistent with the priorities of the Government.

The Government has identified three priorities for the upcoming planning year. These priorities are:

- ▶ Healthy Nova Scotians - stabilize funding and improve service availability and quality
- ▶ Educated and Confident Nova Scotians - improve the quality of education and the learning environment
- ▶ Self Sufficient and Prosperous - to become more self reliant at a provincial and personal level and take advantage of economic opportunities to maximize jobs and growth.

A prime focus for SNSMR activity is to streamline business interactions with government and to make it easier for businesses to operate in the province. This ultimately will support priority number three by growing the economy and increasing the number of jobs so that all Nova Scotians can participate in the growth and become more self sufficient and prosperous.

The Department will continue to enhance its systems that allow business to interact more easily with government and improve public access to its services via channels that are more convenient to the user.



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Much of this work will be undertaken behind the scenes and is not readily apparent to the general public as are some of the Department's higher profile improvements of the recent past. Yet they represent improvements just the same and will be of value to those who actually must use the various systems and channels for accessing government.

Several programs offered by the Department directly or indirectly support the business sector. For example, registering a business and its corporate officers provides protection of the image and good will that the business may have developed over many years. Less direct impacts, but just as important, are the activities the Department takes to protect consumers from unscrupulous business operators. These protections, such as those proposed to protect consumers making purchases via the Internet, provide the consumer with a belief in a fair and balanced economic system and the confidence to make purchases from local or international suppliers. Each one of these programs, in their own way, boost economic activity.

The less time, effort and money that business has to spend on its regulatory obligations the more resources it has to invest, create jobs and seek out opportunities for growth. Efforts to reduce red tape therefore support government's priority related to the economy, jobs and growth.

Initiatives already underway include enhancing the Nova Scotia Business Registry. This includes more on-line renewals on behalf of other provincial departments and bringing more registrations and licences in a number of internal and external program areas into one integrated application delivered via multiple channels.

In addition, considerable work has been undertaken to modernize the Nova Scotia land registry system. The process to convey land is being streamlined by removing repetitive searches of historical records and will at the same time provide consumers with greater certainty of title. The reforms will also allow for electronic land registration, versus the paper based system now in use. These initiatives and others in support of business will be built upon in the upcoming year.

Initiatives undertaken in cooperation with municipalities will make Nova Scotia communities more self sufficient and economically competitive. Provincial funding for municipal infrastructure will help to provide the physical capacity to support new growth and equalization funding enables municipalities to remain competitive from a property taxation perspective. Funding for programs and projects which are designed to facilitate the provision of affordable public transportation services and to make community facilities more accessible to persons with disabilities will make communities and individuals more self-reliant. Lastly, advice and assistance in the areas of land use planning and development, water supply protection and infrastructure development all assist with economic growth in our communities.

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SNSMR will be supporting the other priorities of the Government in a number of ways through ongoing operations and new initiatives in the upcoming fiscal year. To allow the health and education departments to focus on core services, SNSMR will be identifying opportunities, in cooperation with the two departments, to undertake transactional services on behalf of these departments. Where opportunities are found, business cases will be developed during 2003-04 to determine the benefits SNSMR can offer to these departments in delivering some of their non-core services.

Some of these partnerships are already in place. For example, SNSMR has developed the “ask Joe Howe” web site that allows easier access to information about education, government and the world wide web. SNSMR will focus its efforts on identifying high volume, transaction and administrative support tasks that it performs with maximum efficiency.

The Department can also play an important role in reducing the demand side of the province’s health care system. Each year, hundreds of Nova Scotian are killed or injured on our highways. These incidents place a high emotional cost on victims, families and friends, lost productivity for society and high costs on the health care system of the province. The Department will be doing its share to reduce these costs by improving the programs it administers, particularly in terms of driver behaviour and vehicle safety.

These opportunities represent some of the exciting and innovative challenges for the Department during the 2003-04 fiscal year.

### **The Planning Environment - Opportunities and Challenges**

In addition to the overall direction of government, other issues must be addressed by the Department in its business plan. For example, organizations with a service oriented mandate such as SNSMR must constantly monitor the evolving expectations and needs of its customers. In addition, the current state of the economy and key demographic shifts must be considered. Internal relations with other departments and agencies and with SNSMR staff are also key to the success of the Department.

In developing this plan, the Department considered the major issues inherent in its operating environment. These issues provide both opportunities and challenges to the Department. Strategies and priorities have been identified to respond to these issues, while ensuring that the Department remains well positioned to successfully deliver on its mandate. The following items highlight some of the opportunities and challenges critical to the direction this Department wishes to move in the future.

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The most immediate challenge relates to the financial situation of the Provincial Government. The Government has worked hard over the past few years to eliminate the deficit in the face of many important spending pressures and falling federal transfers. The need for ongoing restraint will impact a wide swath of services offered by government, including SNSMR, in the forthcoming year.

Due to the budget situation, new initiatives that the Department had previously planned will have to be scaled back, spread over longer periods of time, or undertaken in smaller components or through different partnership models. However, it remains the Department's intent to move forward on these initiatives through effective management of its resources and by seeking opportunities to generate new resources through successful marketing of its infrastructure. Examples of initiatives where this has occurred include investments in Point of Sale technology, Registry of Motor Vehicle applications and Automated Voice Recognition technology.

Recent events have heightened awareness of security and privacy risks inherent in government data systems. Government must react to this challenge by developing better protection for the confidential data it stores on individuals and businesses. In addition, steps must be taken to reduce identity fraud so that government can verify that people are who they say they are and that the various identification documents issued by government are more secure.

Promoting the mandate of the Department as the service window for government has been challenging. Interest among some departments in using the service delivery and processing infrastructure of SNSMR has been less than originally anticipated in 2000 when the Department was formed. Some of this may relate to complexities including legislative impediments, technical system incompatibilities and different corporate cultures. The Department will be more pro-active in consulting with departments to promote its services to other departments and to understand the requirements of each. In particular, the Department will explore opportunities to make its on-line channel and capacity to process registrations and renewals available to assist other departments and municipalities.

Human resources are also critical to the Department meeting its mandate. As with other private and public sector organizations, the Department is facing a number of challenges in its capacity to build and maintain the workforce it requires. In the next seven years it is estimated that 40% of our knowledgeable and experienced staff will be eligible to retire. This presents a huge challenge for the Department in terms of succession planning and filling positions with the expertise required. The issue is particularly acute in the information technology area where the Department faces stiff competition for skilled and experienced knowledge workers.

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The transition in our workforce also provides an opportunity for the Department. Properly coordinated and thought out staff succession planning will allow the Department to develop the skill sets that will be needed to fulfill its mandate over the next decade and provide opportunities for employees within the Department.

Municipalities face many of the same challenges as the Province, and the Department will continue to work with them to meet these challenges particularly through the promotion of partnerships which allow for more efficient and effective service delivery.

Challenges in a couple of program areas are worthy of note here. Illegal activity involved in the trade in tobacco products may escalate in the near future due to the tax increases that have occurred over the past twenty months. If allowed to build, this illegal activity could deteriorate the provincial tax base and perpetuate a disrespect for the law. Another rising concern is inattention on the province's highways. Several North American jurisdictions have addressed this matter and there are growing demands to do the same in Nova Scotia.

### *Strategic Goals*

Of the 13 major areas of responsibility of the Department, the following four strategic goals have been selected to promote government's priorities, address some of the crucial challenges and opportunities facing SNSMR and fulfil major ongoing obligations. They represent areas where the Department will dedicate additional emphasis, over and above its current level of operations. In particular, the Department will emphasize improvements to its services to business as it sets specific work priorities for 2003-04.

1. Improve accessibility and quality of government services.
2. Improve the effectiveness, efficiency and financial health of municipalities.
3. Improve the standards for consumer protection, driver and vehicle safety, tax compliance, information holdings and security and business practices in programs and services offered by the Department.
4. Emerge as an employer of choice, known for developing staff and providing a motivating work environment.

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### ***Core Business Areas***

The Department's five core businesses are consistent with its five divisions with the exception of administrative and support services that have been removed from the discussion of the core businesses. The Department is organized on a matrix basis, meaning that it is organized around the function being performed such as service delivery or program management rather than on a sectoral or client basis. The discussion below provides the major roles and functions (responsibilities) of each core business.

- 1. Program Management and Corporate Services** - has responsibility for most of the programs offered by the Department. This includes strategic direction for the program, program development, enforcement and public awareness. The Division is also accountable for the related legislation, regulations and policies necessary for each program and for human resource support.

Currently major program areas and activities of this core business include the Provincial Tax Commission, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Registry of Joint Stock Companies, Residential Tenancies, collections for this Department and on behalf of other departments of the government, Consumer and Business Policy, Driver and Vehicle Safety, Corporate Development, and Audit and Enforcement in several program areas.

Benefits of these programs include reduced deaths and injuries due to motor vehicle operations on provincial roads, a fairer and more efficient tax collection system, better consumer protection, more effective program management by the Department, improved compliance by business with licensing requirements, optimized revenue collection by the Department on behalf of government and other departments, and a healthier and safer workplace for Department employees.

This core business fulfills the Department Mission and Goals 3 and 4 by constantly improving the programs administered by SNSMR in a manner that is consistent with the public interest.

- 2. Service Delivery** - is responsible for delivering the programs and services offered by the Department. Service Delivery provides the majority of the direct interaction with customers on behalf of the Department. It is also responsible for the Department Call Centre, Access Nova Scotia and Registry of Motor Vehicle offices across the province, along with managing the e-service channel.

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Major programs delivered by this core business include the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Residential Tenancies, Debtor Assistance and the Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

Benefits of the core business include easier access to an ever expanding number of information and other services offered by the Department on behalf of government. This is accomplished through either electronic or physical means which provide more timely responses to service requests and better quality service in terms of accessibility of the information required.

This core business fulfills the Department Mission and Goal 1 by constantly striving to provide streamlined and easy access to quality, client-centred services.

- 3. Registry and Information Management Services** - is responsible for registering and processing public records related to land, businesses and individuals. It is also responsible for the geographic information holdings of the Province and is the application and system owner of the Department's major databases.

This division operates or provides operational support to a number of registries including the Registry of Deeds, Personal Property Registry, Vital Statistics, the Registry of Joint Stock Companies and the Nova Scotia Business Registry. It leads the Province's strategy for geographic information management including developing, maintaining and distributing Nova Scotia's primary geographic information. Other major back office activities include processing for a number of programs offered by the Department such as fuel, tobacco and vehicle dealer registrations as well as support to programs offered by other departments including *Wildlife Act* licensing programs on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources and registrations on behalf of the Workers Compensation Board.

Benefits from the operation of this core business include improved efficiency in the provision of registration and processing functions on behalf of Departmental programs and external program owners, enhanced integrity and security around the information holdings of the Department, improved quality of the data contained in the holdings, easier access to that information and increased ability to share data with other government departments and agencies.

This core business contributes to the Department Mission and Goals 1 and 3 by continuously improving the registries and information holdings that support internal and external client services offered by SNSMR and by improving the security around those holdings.

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4. **Municipal Services** - provides planning and advisory services related to municipal matters to the government and on behalf of the government to municipalities. The core business also operates many of the grant and other financial support programs offered to municipalities.

Programs within the Division include advice and support to municipalities in the areas of administration and finance and land use planning. The Division also administers programs such as the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program, the Community Accessibility program and the Community Transportation Assistance Program.

Benefits derived from this business unit include municipalities that are more effective in their governance role and their ability to provide services to citizens, that are more financially viable, and able to support development which will provide long term benefits to the entire province.

This core business fulfills the Department Mission and Goal 2 by continuously improving advice, programs and other forms of assistance to promote municipal interests so that they may operate in a more effective and efficient manner.

5. **Alternative Program Delivery** - is responsible for the development of partnerships to deliver services on behalf of other government departments and to manage arrangements with non-government agencies to deliver services on behalf of government.

APD is examining, in consultation with municipalities, other delivery models for the provincial assessment program. Until a final decision is taken, the APD Division also delivers the Assessment Services program on behalf of the Department. Assessment Services is responsible for delivering an annual assessment roll to each of the 55 municipalities in compliance with the *Assessment Act*. The assessment roll is used by municipalities to generate revenue for services delivered by them, and the uniform assessment is used to calculate municipal contributions towards education, corrections and the distribution of provincial grants to municipalities. Legislation also requires assessment notices to be delivered annually to each property owner and to provide for an assessment appeal mechanism. The major activities in the assessment area include preparation of the annual assessment roll, a property inspection program, an appeal process, client relations and technology support.

Opportunities for delivery of other government services by SNSMR include transferring certain licensing and permitting functions from the Departments of Environment and Labour and on-line licence renewals with two departments as well as partnerships with

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several municipalities.

Benefits of alternate program delivery include better quality, cost effective services being delivered to Nova Scotians and a more effective and efficient use of public resources. The Assessment section provides municipalities with a reliable and stable basis to generate revenue to fund the services required by the citizens of municipal units.

This core business contributes to the Department Mission and Goals 1, 2 and 3 by continuously seeking alternate service delivery and infrastructure solutions that improve service and provide it in a more cost-effective manner. Producing the assessment roll is integral to the interests of municipalities and their financial health.

### ***Priorities***

**Program Management and Corporate Services** - the following priorities are intended to improve program standards in the areas of driver behaviour and vehicle safety and security around internet purchases, enhance the level of compliance in several program areas and reduce underground economic activity and illegal activities related to tobacco:

- ▶ promote a number of regulatory and program initiatives to improve driver behaviour and vehicle safety including new commercial carrier safety rating and collision reporting systems, implement measures to discourage impaired driving and expand helmet usage.
- ▶ develop a number of legislative and regulatory initiatives in the consumer protection field including proposals related to motor vehicle dealer licensing, and consultations for possible updating and improvements related to funeral services and cemeteries.
- ▶ to improve tenant-landlord relations, a number of initiatives will be pursued including possible amendments to security deposit provisions under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, improving information available to landlords and tenants on their responsibilities and encouraging the use of mediation for dispute resolution.
- ▶ legislative and regulatory amendments are required to provide a better framework for the registration of businesses. This will include identifying amendments to the *Business Electronic Filing Act* to improve security and authentication requirements for e-government and consideration of amendments to the *Companies Act* to address outdated requirements and to the *Cooperative Associations Act* dealing with, among other things, issuance of preferred shares.



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- ▶ to combat an expected increase in illegal activity associated with tobacco smuggling, the Division will closely monitor wholesale shipments to and retail sales in Nova Scotia and will initiate audits on tobacco wholesalers in Canada. These efforts will also be coordinated with other provincial administrations as well as national organizations such as the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and the RCMP in their efforts to reduce the amount of illegal tobacco trade.
- ▶ a long term strategy is required to reduce the size of the underground economy which will in turn increase the amount of taxes collected by the Province and provide for a more level playing field for businesses that play by the rules. In addition, discussions will begin with the Department of Education to address this matter through the high school curriculum.

**Service Delivery** - the following priorities are intended to improve the quality of service delivery by increasing the utilization of existing physical locations, improving staff training, and by expanding e-service options:

- ▶ identify and develop services feasible for electronic service delivery. This includes the implementation of online applications allowing for the ordering of personalized plates, the payment of outstanding fines and the verification of liens registered to vehicles
- ▶ forecast and monitor customer demand and operational priorities and deploy staff appropriately to achieve service level standards
- ▶ lead the Website Improvement Project by chairing the Steering Committee. Identify opportunities to make improvements to the website governance model, design and branding, content management and technical systems. The focus for this fiscal year will be implementing the SAP Portal System, allowing for enhanced navigation and presentation of the website.
- ▶ Service Delivery wishes to commence a review, in collaboration with RIMS and PMCS, of business service and identify areas for improvement. The initial focus will be on preparing a scope definition for the initiative and identifying the phases of work to be completed. Once complete, the Department will catalog current business services, and analyze and define services feasible to be delivered through each service delivery channel (in-person, Internet, mail, IVR).

**Alternative Program Delivery** - the following priorities will establish this business unit as government's lead in alternative program delivery. The priorities below support partnerships

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resulting in quality, cost-effective services to Nova Scotians and program improvements so that government resources are used effectively. They also provide for a high quality of assessment service characterized by a reliable and stable assessment roll to each of the 55 municipalities:

- ▶ implement an Alternative Program Delivery marketing strategy to raise the level of awareness of services available to client departments and engage them in partnerships for improved service.
- ▶ lead several initiatives in cooperation with other divisions and departments to improve service to citizens and businesses such as the following:
  - single window access for provincial and federal government services related to death (the Bereavement/Compassion Project);
  - deliver more licences through the Nova Scotia Business Registry, including elevators and lifts licences for the Department of Environment and Labour and on-line licence renewals for other departments within the next two years;
  - evaluate an industry self-regulated organization for automobile dealer licensing by developing and advancing enabling legislation; and
  - work with several public service organizations within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality to identify opportunities to partner on common services and infrastructure.
- ▶ enhance the transparency, fairness and usefulness of assessment information by undertaking a number of initiatives that will allow municipal units, department staff and the public to access the assessment information by enhancing web based technology; delivering the roll electronically to municipalities; implementing a web based call centre project; and, evaluating service levels of the municipal units.

**Municipal Services** - the following priorities are intended to provide high quality advice and support to municipalities to assist them in becoming more effective and efficient in their operations, improve their financial viability, and encourage sustainable development:

- ▶ in cooperation with municipalities, developed a performance indicator rating system for all 55 municipalities in the past year. In order to assist municipalities to improve their performance in the rating system, the Division will promote the use of the system within municipalities, encourage municipalities to share best practices among themselves, and

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work with municipalities to broaden the breadth and usefulness of the rating system.

- ▶ to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal operations, provide greater levels of service to the public, and maintain its current position as one of the leading provinces in e-government, the Division will continue to support the implementation of e-government services in municipalities, by establishing pilot projects in those communities that wish to lead the process, and by sponsoring workshops on the development of basic and advanced sites.
- ▶ build on the progress made in the previous year in support of sustainable development by: facilitating and supporting the implementation of new community based inclusive transportation systems; support the completion of additional municipal drinking water supply protection plans in municipalities; and, commit a further 20% (to a total of 95% committed) of funding under the Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program.
- ▶ contribute \$32 million to the Halifax Harbour Solutions Project which includes two pieces of property in Dartmouth valued at \$2 million, over 16 years. Payments in any year will be contingent on budgetary approval and expenditures made by HRM. The Province will also be providing financial support to similar projects in Sydney, Lunenburg and other locations in the future under the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program.
- ▶ promote the use of, and provide support for intermunicipal partnerships as a means for municipalities to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- ▶ joint consultation with municipalities regarding provincial-municipal relations. The objective of this initiative is to develop a set of principles to guide provincial-municipal relations and to identify a series of concrete actions which might be taken to strengthen the relationship.
- ▶ the Division will be devoting considerable effort in the coming year towards an initiative designed to make SAP the financial software platform of choice for municipalities.
- ▶ it is expected that the Municipal Elections Act will undergo extensive revision in the coming fiscal year.

**Registry and Information Management Services** - the following priorities are intended to improve registration processes, to enhance quality, access and security to the department's data and information holdings, and to enable sharing of data among other government departments and

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agencies:

- ▶ expand implementation of the new land registration system which guarantees ownership and provides electronic access to land information that is based on parcel location rather than people's names. The experiences gained through the initial implementation site in Colchester County will be reviewed and an implementation plan for province wide roll-out will be developed. Several more counties will implement the system in 2003-04, providing improved electronic access to land information including municipal tax data, civic addresses and Crown land information.
- ▶ expand the number of licences, permits, registrations and certifications that business can complete through the Nova Scotia Business Registry (NSBR). This involves developing the appropriate technical development capacity and back office procedures to work with existing and new participating programs, such as Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Environment and Labour, who wish to use the NSBR infrastructure to streamline the licencing requirements of businesses in Nova Scotia. This will include a combination of automation and process improvements. A particular focus will be on the potential of the NSBR infrastructure to offer on-line license renewal capabilities on behalf of other departments.
- ▶ implement the first phase of the GeoNOVA portal, in partnership with other provincial departments, municipalities and the federal government, to expand electronic access to geographic information to support program administration and decision making across all levels of government. This includes the implementation of appropriate standards, the provision of more web-based access to geographic information such as the ability to order maps and air photos on line, and an expanded data warehouse for provincial department users to access geographic information directly.
- ▶ participate in national initiatives to strengthen the security of Vital Statistics records and ensure electronic sharing of data among authorized agencies as part of national and international efforts to reduce the risk of identity theft. This initiative will depend on the availability of federal funding as no Department funding is allocated to this priority.

### ***Human Resource Development - Employer of Choice***

The Department has identified the development of its human resources as an important priority. It wishes to become the employer of choice for current and prospective employees. This initiative is Department-wide in that it impacts all the core businesses of the Department and is supported by

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all the units of the Department. It will be lead in large part by the Human Resource unit in conjunction with the Public Service Commission (PSC). Due to the importance of this matter, a number of priorities have been identified for work next fiscal year.

Human resource development priorities for 2003 / 2004 include:

- ▶ Implement an enhanced performance management system across the Department and review performance incentive options with the PSC.
- ▶ Continue supporting the PSC in completing the classification phase of the management group project and defining the pay component. Also support the PSC in completing the evaluation phase of the Civil Service Bargaining Unit Classification project.
- ▶ Work with PSC and line management to develop a succession management plan.
- ▶ Undertake a comprehensive Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) initiative including program refinement, renewing/establishing OHS policies throughout the Department and facilitating training and development for staff and management.
- ▶ Conduct an employee survey and report on the results with the aim to address issues identified in the survey.

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***Budget Context***

<b>Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations - Estimated Budget Expenditures</b>			
	<b>Budget 2002\03 (Per 2002\03 Estimates Book)</b>	<b>Forecast 2002\03 (Per 2003\04 Estimates Book)</b>	<b>Budget 2003\04 (Per 2003\04 Estimates Book)</b>
	<b>\$ Thousands</b>	<b>\$ Thousands</b>	<b>\$Thousands</b>
Total Program Expenses - Gross Current	<u>\$117,685.0</u>	<u>\$128,518.0</u>	<u>\$129,543.0</u>
Net Program Expenses - Net of Recoveries	<u>\$92,298.0</u>	<u>\$94,687.0</u>	<u>\$93,161.0</u>
Salaries and Benefits	<u>\$41,862.0</u>	<u>\$40,122.0</u>	<u>\$44,552.0</u>
Funded Staff (FTEs)	<u>919.6</u>	<u>863.0</u>	<u>933.4</u>

**Outcome Measures**

The following templates provide the major outcomes, measures, data, targets and strategies for each of the core businesses that will be monitored by the Department during fiscal year 2003-04. Most of the outcomes, measures, etc. are the same as those included in the 2002-03 Business Plan. However, as the measurement process continues to evolve, new measures have been added and others have been refined. This refinement will no doubt continue in the future. Base year data was collected during 2001-02 and targets are as of 2004-05 unless stated otherwise. In a number of cases baseline data is not available for new measures as these are often new projects. Base year data will be collected during 2003-04 for these measures.

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Program Management and Corporate Services**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Optimize revenues collected by the Department on its own behalf, the Province and client departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- actual debt collection revenues as a percent of estimates</li> <li>- actual tobacco tax revenues as a percent of estimates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 130%</li> <li>- 99.9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100% (adjusted for changes to forecast due to changing economic conditions)</li> <li>- <math>\geq</math> 100% (estimates will be adjusted to reflect volume sales and tax levels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure that resources are balanced to meet recovery opportunities, upgrade staff and update client departments on debt collection activities.</li> <li>- closely monitor tobacco tax revenues and manufacturers shipments, review the tobacco retail compliance program for adequate coverage and participate in national coordination activities.</li> </ul>
<p>Improve the program standards (in the functions of policy development, program administration and public awareness) in the program areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consumer protection</li> <li>- landlord/tenant relations</li> <li>- driver and vehicle safety</li> <li>- fuel and tobacco tax and,</li> <li>- business registration and licensing .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- deaths and injuries due to operation of a motor vehicle</li> <li>- deaths and injuries due to incidents of drinking and driving</li> <li>- deaths and injuries due to incidents of not wearing a seat belt</li> <li>- deaths and injuries due to incidents involving commercial carriers</li> <li>- ratio of non-adjudicated to adjudicated cases<sup>1</sup> in residential tenancies</li> <li>- number of violations by regulated industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 502.5 (average over period 1996 - 2001)</li> <li>- 86 (average over period 1996 - 2001)</li> <li>- 93 (average over period 1996 - 2001)</li> <li>- 35 (average over period 1996 - 2001)</li> <li>- TBD</li> <li>- TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30% reduction in deaths and injuries achieved for the period 2008-2010 versus 1996-2001</li> <li>- 40% reduction in deaths and injuries achieved for the period 2008-2010 versus 1996-2001</li> <li>- 40% reduction in deaths and injuries achieved for the period 2008-2010 versus 1996-2001</li> <li>- 20% reduction in deaths and injuries achieved for the period 2008-2010 versus 1996-2001</li> <li>- 10% increase in ratio</li> <li>- will increase initially but is expected to decline through time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure that the appropriate roles and responsibilities for each program area are properly allocated across divisions and that coordination mechanisms are in place to provide for effective program delivery.</li> <li>- update, enhance and clarify provisions through legislative amendments in several program areas.</li> <li>- improve the: information to stakeholder groups; program management systems and processes; and, program expertise of program management personnel, in a number of program areas.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Non-adjudicated cases are defined as withdrawn applications and mediated agreements and adjudicated cases are defined as resulting in Director's orders.

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Program Management and Corporate Services - Cont.**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Improve the level of compliance in the areas of the fuel and tobacco tax, driver and vehicle safety and business practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of audits/inspections resulting in unpaid tax or other actions<sup>2</sup></li> <li>- number of business licensing inspections and audits</li> <li>- see driver and vehicle safety measures above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 141 (2000-01)</li> <li>- 25</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase by 10%</li> <li>- 35</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop systems to identify/select higher risk vendors/clients for audit/inspection and to facilitate the effective and efficient allocation of staff resources.</li> <li>- provide training to audit staff through the Canadian Fuel Tax Council Training Sub-Project. Continue cross-training of staff in areas of business licensing, IFTA, fuel and tobacco audits and compliance inspections.</li> <li>- conduct a review of in-office audit procedures and programs to ensure audit resources are effectively deployed.</li> <li>- increase the number of inspections and audits conducted by the Department or assist policing partners in enforcement efforts and promote improved enforcement efforts.</li> <li>- work with various partners to monitor national activities, coordinate initiatives and to monitor illegal activities.</li> </ul>
Reduction in underground economy (UE)	- measures to be identified from public opinion research survey	- TBD	- TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conduct and analyze public opinion survey research to identify enforcement, education and communications gaps and then identify strategies in these areas to augment current efforts.</li> <li>- begin education program at an early age to advise youth of responsibilities of being a citizen and abiding by the requirements of the Canadian tax system.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup>Actions defined as tax assessments or compliance actions.



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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Municipal Services**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Support effective and financially viable municipal government	- % of municipalities with a satisfactory municipal indicators level of performance	- TBD	- 100%	- monitor indicator ratings/assist municipalities to reach satisfactory performance level, refine current programs where required and prepare a comprehensive, long-term viability strategy
	- number of municipalities using Municipal Indicators Initiative to improve performance	- TBD	- 10% of municipalities sharing best practices	- enhance municipal indicators program by providing additional measures in consultation with municipalities
	- % of municipal units in which e-government framework established	- 10%	- 100% of municipalities in position to implement	- sponsor workshops re e-government and establish pilot projects including basic sites and advanced sites in partnership with Province
	- % growth in intermunicipal partnerships	- TBD	- increase by 10% over base year	- establish baseline data on what partnerships are currently in place and prepare best practices guides for the development of partnerships between municipal units to deliver services in a cost effective manner
Support sustainable municipal development	- % of Canada/Nova Scotia infrastructure Program funding committed for approved projects	- 0	- 100% of funding committed	- undertake initiatives to improve the quality of municipal infrastructure with a special focus on green projects and timely approval of applications
	- number of counties served by inclusive transportation	- 5	- 9	- facilitate and support the implementation of community based inclusive transportation systems. Identify opportunities for additional community based transportation services in Nova Scotia
	- number of new municipal planning strategies/by-laws that protect municipal drinking water supplies completed	- 25	- 10 new planning documents completed to a total of 35	- increase awareness of municipal drinking water supply protection program , provide advice & assistance re: planning for water supply area and support the implementation of the Provincial Drinking Water Strategy

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Alternative Program Delivery**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Increase awareness of SNSMR's mandate for ASD	- number of departments that (regularly or substantially) seek APD assistance	- 2 departments	- 6 departments	Market SNSMR's mandate and expertise in ASD activity.
Increase understanding and acceptance of our ASD expertise, tools and processes	- number of projects with other government organizations	- 7 projects	- 10 projects	Develop the methods and criteria for reviewing services and programs for alternative program delivery.  Survey other departments to determine their ASD needs and then develop the tools, such as costing models, to address these needs.
Improve the identification and appraisal of ASD opportunities	TBD	TBD	TBD	Offer SNSMR services to the Departments of Health, Education and Environment and Labour, for alternative delivery
Demonstrate SNSMR's commitment and capacity to provide services for other organizations	% of clients satisfied or very satisfied with quality of the service provided. Quality of APD projects and initiatives based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• process</li> <li>• advice</li> <li>• communications</li> <li>• timeliness</li> </ul>	- 80%	- 85%	Review SNSMR programs for alternative delivery options.  Partner with municipalities and other levels of government for integrated service (single window and shared services).

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Alternative Program Delivery - Cont.**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Increase client confidence with assessment products and services	- % of clients satisfied or very satisfied with service	- 64% (year end 2001)	- 75%	-Establish a communication strategy that allows the property owner and the municipal units easier access to information by enhancing the public access sites, implementation of a call center and a municipal unit web site pilot as well as the evaluation of service levels.
	- appeals as a percentage of total assessments	- 2.2 % (year end 2001)	- reduce the number of appeals from current levels	
Increase efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment roll	- percentage of assessment values to property sale prices	- 97% residential - 100% commercial (year end 2001)	- 95-105% assessment to sales	-Establish an IT strategy that achieves efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment roll, a three year refresh strategy, enhance the web based technology, research a new commercial valuation system and adopt a hand held technology.
	- % of assessment value lost through appeals	- 0.25% of total assessment (year end 2001)	- less than 2% loss of assessment	- Improve the valuation standards by implementing appraisal training, web based valuation, annually conducting inspection programs and adopting a statistical valuation approach like multiple regression analysis.
Increase recognition as a leader of property assessment in Canada	- satisfaction level of municipal units	- TBD, when base is established, aim is to achieve 50% in the base year	- 65%	- Establish a public relations strategy by networking with other assessment jurisdictions, participation in national and international conferences and benchmarking studies and by evaluating service levels of municipal clients.

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Registry and Information Management Services**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Improve the quality and accessibility of property registration services	- % of land parcels converted to new land tenure system	- 0 %	- 10 %	- modernize the land tenure system (Registry 2000) based on a land parcel system and supported by updated legislation, fee structure and a modern software application.
Improve the quality and accessibility of business licencing and registration services	- % of business clients who can complete all necessary licensing requirements through the NSBR	- 30%	- 80%	- partner with APD to make potential clients aware of the capabilities of the Division for possible delivery of their programs.  - re-engineer processes and business functions to achieve efficiencies and facilitate the delivery of multiple programs in a streamlined back office
Reduce the risk of identity fraud in the Vital Statistics service area	- number of recommendations of the Nova Scotia Action Plan implemented	- 0	- 100%	- review and assess Security Committee of the Vital Statistics Council for Canada recommendations; develop an action plan for Nova Scotia.
Improve the quality and accessibility of provincial geographic information	- % of geographic information data-sets accessible from a desktop computer	- TBD	- 80% of government users - 100% of all users by 2008	- implement GeoNOVA portal framework recommendations, continue other projects to improve and integrate access to geographic information; develop new mapping products in response to client demand.

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**Business Planning Template - Fiscal Year 2003-04**

**Core Business - Service Delivery**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Base Year Data</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Strategies to Achieve Target</b>
Achievement of customer service standards at Access and Call Centres.	- % of in-person customers served within 10 minutes	- 50%	- 80%	- forecast and monitor customer demand and deploy staff to appropriately address demand while continuing to balance with other operational priorities, such as cash and inventory balancing, compliance with procedure, security of bank deposits, training etc.
	- % of telephone customer calls answered within 20 seconds	- 80%	- 80%	
	- % of driver road test appointments scheduled within five weeks of request	- 90%	- 100%	
	- % of residential tenancy hearings scheduled within four weeks of request	- 90%	- 100%	
Improved delivery of services to business and individual customers.	- % of customers satisfied with services received through SNSMR sites	- 89%	- 90%	- identify transactions and services feasible for electronic service delivery and develop and implement appropriate online transactions. Focus initially on highest volume transactions with lowest complexity for developing into electronic applications.  - complete an inventory of all current services available to business customers, analyze those services to determine which are feasible for delivery through each of the service channels. Define which services can be offered through each channel and package services together where feasible.
	- number of new electronic service transactions implemented annually	- 4	- 4	
	- % of business clients satisfied with service	- 84%	- 85%	
Improved Government website on behalf of Government.	- % customer satisfaction with Government website	- TBD	- TBD	- lead the Website Improvement Project by chairing the Steering Committee. Identify opportunities to make improvements to website governance model, design and branding, content management, and technical systems.