



ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

Women's Policy Office

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September 13, 2006

In accordance with government's commitment to accountability, I am pleased to submit the annual report of the Women's Policy Office. The report was prepared under my direction and documents the activities and outcomes of the Women's Policy Office from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.

Joan Burke, MHA
Minister Responsible for the
Status of Women

2.0 Organizational Overview

The Women's Policy Office was established in 1985 by MC 116-'85 to:

- develop and expedite Government policies and programs to enhance the social and economic status of women in the province and ensure that these are communicated to the public;
- ensure that the impact on women of all legislation, policies and programs is brought to the attention of the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and departments;
- monitor and review programs and other activities of government departments and agencies to ensure compliance and conformity with the government policy of improving the status of women; and
- liaise with provincial government departments and agencies, other governments and advisory councils and women's organizations on all issues affecting women.



2.1 Vision

The Vision of the Women's Policy Office is social, legal, cultural and economic equality for women in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

2.2 Mission

Women's equality is yet to be achieved in areas of earned income and employment, social and economic security, leadership and decision making positions. Therefore, the necessity and relevance of the Women's Policy Office and its work continues to exist.

Mission: By 2011, the Women's Policy Office will have contributed to the advancement of women's social, cultural, legal and economic equality in Newfoundland and Labrador.

2.3 Lines of Business

Policy Analysis and Advisory Services: The Women's Policy Office defines policy as any action taken by government. The Office applies gender based analysis to government policy in such forms as legislation, programs and services. By applying gender based analysis to government policy, the Women's Policy Office provides advice to departments on how women are affected, how gender equity would be better achieved, and highlights needs and gaps.

Information Collection and Communication Services: The Women's Policy Office is responsible for collecting policy relevant information from a variety of sources to provide evidence based policy advice and report annually on the status of women. To meet this responsibility, the Women's Policy Office maintains a public library on women's issues, collects statistics and conducts research to assess the current status of women, as well as to identify systemic inequities and information gaps. As part of the information collection process, the Women's Policy Office consults regularly with women and women's



organizations to identify ongoing and emerging issues of special concern as well as potential solutions. Beyond providing policy advice to government departments, the Women's Policy Office communicates information on the status of women through publications, events and initiatives.

Violence Prevention Initiative Services: The *Violence Prevention Initiative* reflects government's commitment to addressing the problem of violence in this province. The Initiative is a six year, multi-departmental, government - community partnership to find long term solutions to the problem of violence against those most at risk in our society - women, children, seniors, Aboriginal women and children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable people who are victims of violence because of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or economic status. Ten regional coordinating committees, which include four new committees in Marystown, Stephenville, Gander and Carbonear, have been established to ensure representation from rural areas.

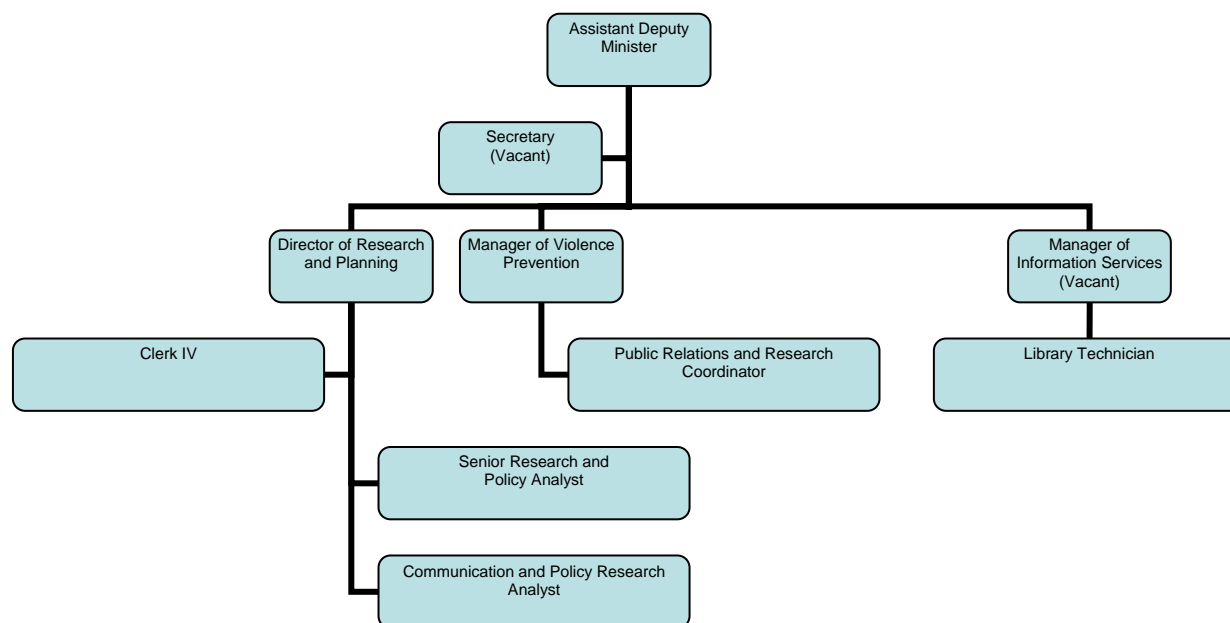
Grants Program: The Women's Policy Office provided \$10,000 in non-repayable grants to equity seeking groups for activities and initiatives to advance the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador subject to approved criteria.

2.4 Physical Location

The Women's Policy Office is located in St. John's on the fourth floor of the Confederation Building, West Block. The Women's Policy Office contracts delivery of services to St. John's, Bay St. George, Port aux Basques, Corner Brook, Gander, Labrador City, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Grand Falls-Windsor through eight Status of Women Councils located across the province as well as through ten regional coordinating committees associated with the *Violence Prevention Initiative*.



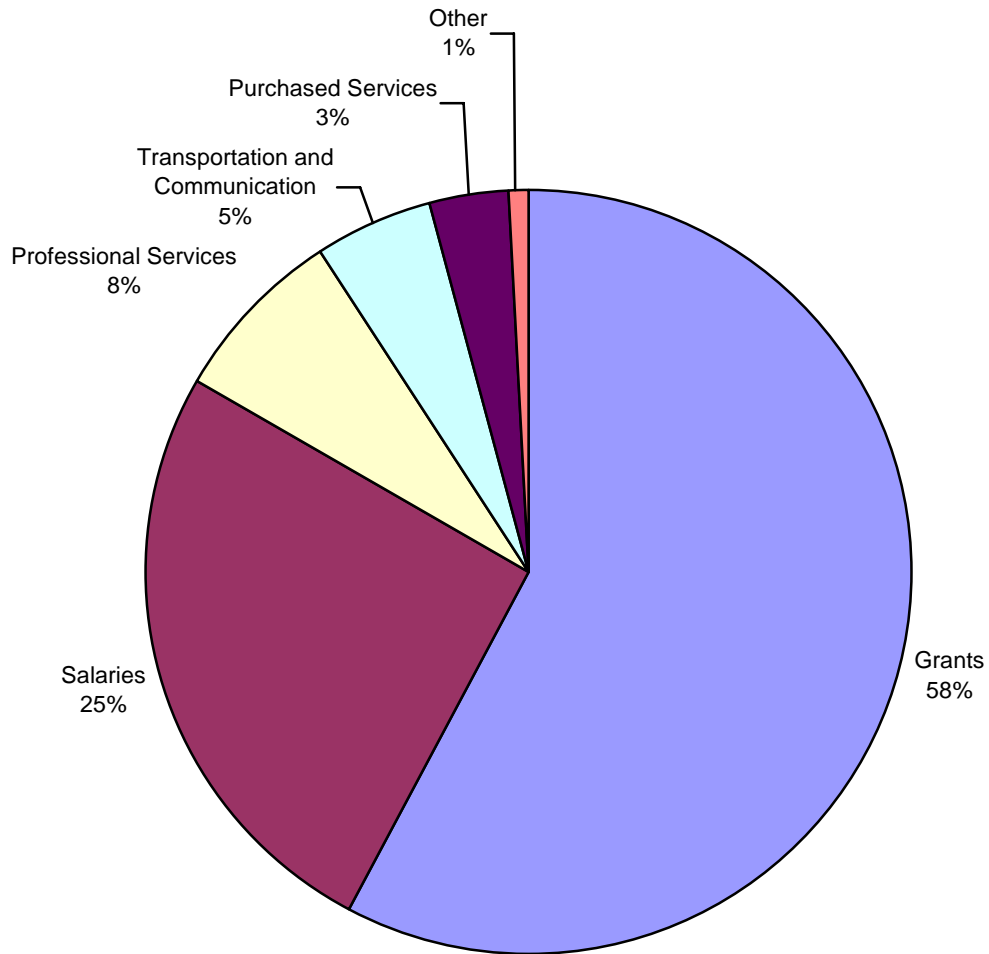
2.5 Employees



Position	Total	
	Men	Women
Assistant Deputy Minister	0	1
Director of Planning and Research	0	1
Manager of Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI)	0	1
Manager of Information Services	0*	0*
Senior Research and Policy Analyst	0	1
Communications and Policy Research Analyst	0	1
Public Relations and Research Coordinator (VPI)	0	1
Secretary	0*	0*
Clerk	0	0
Library Technician	0	0
Total	0	6
0* position is vacant		

2.6 Expenditures

In 2005-2006 the budget of the Women's Policy Office was approximately \$1.7 million. As indicated in the diagram below, grants to community based organizations accounted for approximately 58% of the budget.



3.0 Shared Commitments

The mandate and mission of the Women's Policy Office can only be achieved through working in partnership with the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women to resolve the concerns of the women they serve. The office also involves equality seeking women's organizations as well as provincial and federal government departments, industry partners and other community groups.



In 2005-2006 the Women's Policy Office strengthened community-government partnerships to prevent violence. Government partners include the departments of Justice, Health and Community Services, Education, Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs and Education. Partners also include the Rural Secretariat, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, the Labour Relations Agency, and Regional Integrated Health Authorities. Community partners include the ten regional coordinating committees, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre, the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Seniors Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Citizen's Crime Prevention Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.



To increase women's earned income and employment, the Women's Policy Office works in partnership with the departments of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Natural Resources and Environment and Conservation to increase women's employment in well paying jobs, particularly those in the natural resource sectors. This is largely done using the Environmental Protection Act to require proponents of large scale natural resource developments to put women's employment plans in place. To this

end, the Women's Policy Office worked closely with industry partners such as the Women in Resource Development Committee, Voisey's Bay Nickel Corporation, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board and the

Women in Resource Development Committee. The Women's Policy Office also worked with post-secondary and training institutions on accessibility of training and education for women for these occupations.

To improve women's social and economic security, the Women's Policy Office worked closely with all provincial government departments to ensure that the impact on women of all legislation, policies and programs were brought to the attention of decision makers. The Women's Policy Office maintains a close relationship with Status of Women Canada as well as all Ministers in Canada responsible for the Status of Women.

Working to increase women's participation in leadership and decision making roles the Women's Policy Office worked with community partners such as the Community Service Council, Status of Women Councils, and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women as well as women's Aboriginal, multicultural and seniors groups to strengthen women's voices. The Women's Policy Office also worked with government departments to increase nominations of qualified women to agencies, boards and commissions.



4.0 Highlights and Accomplishments

Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women – In November 2005, Minister



Burke appointed Katherine Baikie-Pottle to represent Labrador on the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. In February 2006, Minister Burke invited expressions of interest for the positions of president and board members to serve on the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. In March 2006, Minister Burke announced Leslie MacLeod as the new President and a new

Board of Directors: Phyllis Artiss, Mary Pia Benuen, Jacqueline Jenkinns, Yamuna Kutty, Carolyn Lavers, Vanessa MacArthur, Michelle Murdoch, Phyllis Seymour, Beni Andersen and Hilda Whelan.

Special Violence Prevention Fund for Aboriginal Women and Children - In

December 2005, Minister Burke announced approximately \$100,000 to help prevent violence against Aboriginal women and children and provide services to victims of violence in their communities. Projects funded included: *The Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC) Hopedale Community Day Treatment Program, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation Aboriginal Women's Retreat on Violence Prevention, Federation of Newfoundland Indians Walking the Prevention Circle for Aboriginal Women and Children, Conne River Health and Social Services' Miawpukek First Nation Creating a Place to Hear our Women and Children, Labrador Metis Nation Violence Prevention Project, St. John's Native Friendship Centre Violence Prevention for Aboriginal Women and Children, Nain Transition House Inc. Healing and Training for Shelter Staff, and The Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC) Boys to Men Project.*

An additional \$80,000 was allotted to support the operation of eight Women's Centers across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Ex Gratia Payment - In March 2006, Premier Williams announced government's decision to make an ex gratia payment of \$24 million to the Association of Allied Health Professionals, Canadian Union of Public Employees, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees and the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses' Union in recognition of the need to redress the issue of pay equity and to value the sacrifices made by provincial public servants from 1988 to 1991.

Surviving Spouses Compensation - In February 2006, government announced that 58 women whose husbands were fatally injured before the Charter of Rights and Freedoms' equality rights provision was implemented received approximately \$3 million in retroactive spousal benefits from the Workplace Health and Safety Compensation Commission.

Women in Music Report - Beverly Diamond, Director of the Music Media and Place Research Centre at Memorial University, was issued a grant of \$10,000 to conduct research relating to: (i) potential barriers that may account for the gender wage gap; and (ii) opportunities that may assist women in overcoming these barriers.

Aboriginal Women's Conference - In March 2006 Minister Burke and Minister Rideout hosted the first province wide Aboriginal Women's conference which took place in Happy Valley Goose Bay. The theme of the conference, "*The Path to the Good Life*" helped participants identify the steps necessary to improve the quality of life in the communities. Issues identified at the conference included: culture, health care, governance, violence, justice, education and training, housing, access to programs and funding, and employment. Approximately 75 Aboriginal Women participated in the conference from Mikmaw, Innu, Inuit, and Labrador Metis Nation communities as well as Aboriginal Women from urban areas.



National Aboriginal Women's Policy Forum - In March 2006 a National Aboriginal Women's Policy Forum entitled *The Policy Forum on Aboriginal Women and Violence: Building Safe and Healthy Families and Communities* was organized by Status of Women Canada. The forum took place in Ottawa and engaged Aboriginal researchers, policy makers and Ministers in the pursuit of cultural sensitive, rigorous research and

evidence-based policy-making. Delegates from Newfoundland and Labrador that attended the forum included representatives from the Women's Policy Office, Federation of Newfoundland and Labrador Indians, St. John's Native Friendship Centre, Miawpukek First Nation, Labrador Metis Nation, Mushuau Innu First Nation and the Nunatsiavut Government.

Meeting with Nunatsiavut Status of Women Minister – In February 2006, Minister Burke held a historic meeting with Ms. Zippy Nochasak, the first Minister Responsible for the Status of Inuit Women for the Nunatsiavut Government. Both Ministers expressed a need for governments to work in collaboration and maintain a strong relationship to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women and children.

Women in Municipal Government Project - In August 2005 the Women's Policy Office partnered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities to deliver a province-wide seminar series with local equality seeking women's organizations to encourage women to run in the 2005 municipal election. Hundreds of women participated in the seminars which took place in Stephenville, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador City, Grand Falls-Windsor, St. Anthony, Corner Brook and St. John's.



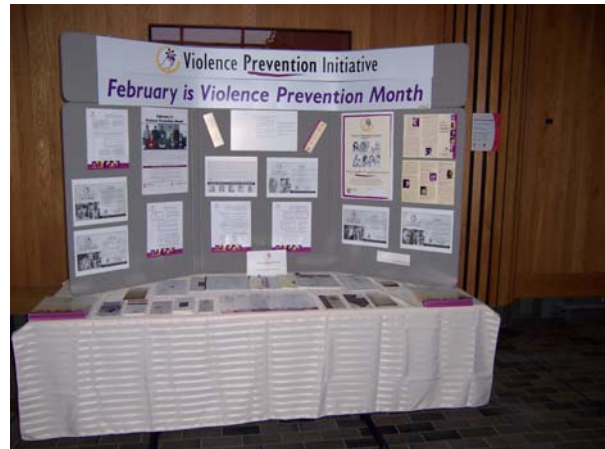
Women's Institute Labrador Project – In 2005, The Women's Policy Office provided \$5000 to support the work of the National Office of the Women's Institute in raising funds for women and children in the Hopedale and Sheshatshiu communities in Labrador. In particular this funding supported their national efforts to reach 17,000 members across Canada seeking financial donations or in kind donations for goods for children's blankets and clothing as well as for arts and educational supplies.

5.0 Outputs

5.1 Violence Prevention

Goal By March 31, 2008 the Women's Policy Office will have coordinated and managed the *Violence Prevention Initiative*

Objective By March 31, 2006 the Women's Policy Office will have identified special initiatives to address violence against Aboriginal women and children.



Progress and Accomplishments

1. **Funding for Hopedale Women's Shelter** – In November 2005, Minister Burke announced \$70,000 to support the Hopedale Women's Shelter. The funding was used to provide a full-time staff person, emergency support such as food, bedding, toiletries and other basic needs, as well as to ensure connections were made with appropriate community agencies to assist women in crisis.

2. **Special Violence Prevention Fund for Aboriginal Women and Children in Newfoundland and Labrador** – In December 2005, Minister Burke announced approximately \$100,000 to help prevent violence against Aboriginal women and children and provide services to victims of violence in their communities. The projects included:

The Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC), Hopedale Community Day Treatment Program - Funding enabled the group to facilitate a five-week addictions program within the community. In the past individuals had to leave the community to receive treatment. Social issues in the community of Hopedale are well documented and include: family violence, child abuse/neglect, alcohol abuse, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and poverty. By having a treatment program available in the community women and men had an opportunity to address their own issues and began making appropriate lifestyle changes.

Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation, Aboriginal Women's Retreat on Violence Prevention - This project aimed to increase awareness of violence among Innu women. The retreat, which was held in the Lobstick Family Treatment Camp, trained frontline workers, Band employees and other women from the community on the different kinds of violence, signs

and symptoms of violence and how and where to get help when in a violent situation.

Federation of Newfoundland Indians, Walking the Prevention Circle for Aboriginal Women and Children – This program informed individuals in the community that action can work to prevent abuse and neglect at the individual, organizational and community levels. Eighteen participants from local Bands received the three-day training that included information on types of abuse and neglect, the indicators and effects on children, and the actions that can work to prevent abuse and neglect at individual, organizational and community levels. Each participant also received a comprehensive manual and video resource for future use in their communities.

Conne River Health and Social Services - Miawpukek First Nation, Creating a Place to Hear our Women and Children - With the support from the *Violence Prevention Initiative*, this group was able to create an accessible space to implement programming to support violence prevention of Aboriginal women and children. The space provided a place for a community support worker to meet with youth, provide programming and support for victims of abuse or violent crimes. It also provided a safe, supervised environment for parent, child and youth interaction, and community education.

Labrador Metis Nation – Violence Prevention Project - This project focused on the development of early violence prevention strategies and programs. The project promoted wellness programs and activities that support violence prevention through printed materials such as brochures, pamphlets, and other communications methods.

St. John's Native Friendship Centre, Violence Prevention for Aboriginal Women and Children – The purpose of this project was to educate, counsel and provide information to Aboriginal women and children residing in urban areas, as well as Shawnadithit Shelter clients, regarding the issues surrounding violence and violence prevention. The project aimed to help individuals as they deal with issues while living in and around St. John's. In addition, the services and programs were available to shelter clients who reside in rural areas, allowing the reach of the project to spread to remote communities where the need is equally great.

Nain Transition House Inc., Healing and Training for Shelter Staff - Given the isolation of this community, staff members at the Transition House do not often have the opportunity to receive training and support for the often traumatic events that they witness. This project provided

counseling, training and self-help planning for staff at the Transition House, and training on counseling victims of family violence.

The Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC), Boys to Men Project - Often family violence prevention initiatives focus on empowering girls and women so they can make positive choices or are able to leave abusive, unhealthy relationships. However, in an ideal world there would be no abuse to leave. This project was aimed at male youths to increase self-confidence, respect for others, responsibility and healthy relationships. The program was delivered in seven communities.

3. **Violence Awareness and Action Training (VAAT)** – In January 2006, VAAT took place in 3 communities in Labrador: (i) Nain, (ii) Cartwright; and (iii) Happy Valley Goose Bay. The training sessions were sponsored by Labradorians for Peaceful Communities and funded by the *Violence Prevention Initiative*. Sessions were facilitated by social worker and consultant Bobbie Boland and Libra house staff members. Approximately 50 participants were involved in the training.

5.2 Earned Income and Employment

Goal By March 31, 2008 the Women’s Policy Office will have supported greater participation of women in occupations where they are currently under-represented.

Objective By March 31, 2006 the Women’s Policy Office will have undertaken activities to increase women’s participation in occupational areas where they are currently under-represented.

Progress and Accomplishments

1. **Women in Music Project** – Statistics Canada identifies that women make up approximately 63% of those employed in occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport. Memorial University also reports that approximately 68% of its full-time undergraduate enrolment is comprised of women. However, in 2004, Statistics Canada reported that on average, women in occupations related to art, culture, recreation and sport earned only 68.5% of men’s average hourly wage in the same occupational category.



Beverly Diamond, Director of the Music Media and Place Research Centre at Memorial University, was issued a grant of \$10,000 to conduct research relating to: (i) potential barriers that may account for the gender wage gap; and (ii) opportunities that may assist women in overcoming these barriers.

2. **Women In Business** – In May 2005, the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs hosted its eighth Annual Conference and Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Gala. This event gave women entrepreneurs a chance to network and provided opportunities for professional development and learning about business management skills, as well as to discuss issues and required supports. The Minister spoke at the event, and government donated \$5000 to support women entrepreneurs.



From Left: Lorraine Taylor, Michelle Critch, Maxine Hoskins, Judy Sparkes, Judith Ryan, Cindy Murray, and Agnes Cabot

3. **Ex Gratia Payment** – In March 2006, Premier Williams announced government's decision to make an ex gratia payment of \$24 million to the Association of Allied Health Professionals, Canadian Union of Public Employees, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees and the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses' Union in recognition of the need to redress the issue of pay equity and to value the sacrifices made by Provincial public servants from 1988 to 1991. The Women's Policy Office provided policy analysis and advisory services to the executives that were instrumental in bringing about this decision.
4. **Environmental Assessment Reviews** – In 2005-2006, 55 projects were released from environmental assessment, two projects were withdrawn and one was rejected. Five projects were released from Environmental Assessment

subject to employment equity conditions as identified below and recommended by the Women's Policy Office.

Pasadena/Deer Lake Golf Course & Residences – Atec Industries incorporated planned to develop an 18 hole golf course, driving range, residences and trail system East of Pasadena. The project was expected to take place over 4 years with construction requiring 158 workers and operation requiring 38 workers. Upon the recommendation of the Women's Policy Office, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, as a condition of release from the Environmental Assessment, required the proponent to include gender equity provisions in job advertisements and tender documents and to consider gender equity when hiring workers and awarding contracts.

Lower Churchill River Exploration – Markland Resources Development Incorporated planned to assess the concentrations of heavy minerals in bulk samples of river sand from the Lower Churchill River. Upon the recommendation of the Women's Policy Office, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, as a condition of release from the Environmental Assessment, required the proponent to include gender equity provisions in tender documents and job advertisements and to consider gender equity when awarding contracts and hiring workers.

Port aux Basques to Belle Isle Appalachian Hiking Trail – The International Appalachian Trail Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter Inc. planned to develop a series of non-contiguous trails totaling approximately 55 kilometres over a period of five years. Upon the recommendation of the Women's Policy Office, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, as a condition of release from the Environmental Assessment, required the proponent to include gender equity provisions in tender documents and job advertisements and to consider gender equity when awarding contracts and hiring workers.

Pine Cove Open Pit Gold Mine – Anaconda Gold Corporation in partnership with New Island Resources planned to construct and operate an open pit gold mine at the Pine Cove deposit. The project planned to contract out the construction and excavation work to local contractors. Operation of the mine is planned to be year round and employ 52 people. Upon the recommendation of the Women's Policy Office, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, as a condition of release from the Environmental Assessment, required the proponent to submit a human resources plan setting a corporate objective to achieve employment equity for women. This plan was required to be submitted to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women and approved prior to any hiring or tenders issued and prior to the start of construction.

Plateau Dolomite Quarry - The Iron Ore Company of Canada planned to develop a new dolomite quarry East of Wabush Lake to replace an existing quarry. Contractors were to be used for the development and operation of the quarry. Approximately 20 workers were expected to be required for each development phase. Upon the recommendation of the Women's Policy Office, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, as a condition of release from the Environmental Assessment, required the proponent to develop an employment equity plan for approval by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women prior to any activity on the site.

5.3 Social and Economic Security

Goal By 2008, the Women's Policy Office will have supported increased knowledge and consideration of and response to women's issues in legislation, policy and program development.

Objective By March 31, 2006 the Women's Policy Office will have undertaken activities to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women.

Progress and Accomplishments

- 1. Aboriginal Women's Conference** – In March 2006 Minister Burke and Minister Rideout hosted the first province wide Aboriginal women's conference which took place in Happy Valley Goose Bay. The Theme of the conference, *The Path to the Good Life*, helped participants identify the steps necessary to improve the quality of life in their communities. Issues identified at the conference included: culture, health care, governance, violence, justice, education and training, housing, access to programs and funding, and employment. As a result of the meeting, Ministers announced



\$100,000 would be allocated in the 2006-2007 budget to continue a community based grants program designed to address violence and other quality of life issues for Aboriginal women and children. Ministers also announced \$20,000 in the 2006-2007 budget to facilitate future meetings between Aboriginal women and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to continue collaborative work to advance the quality of life for Aboriginal women.

2. **National Aboriginal Policy Forum on Violence Prevention** – In March 2006 a national forum was organized by Status of Women Canada called *The Policy Forum on Aboriginal Women and Violence: Building Safe and Healthy Families and Communities*. The forum took place in Ottawa and engaged Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers, policy makers and Ministers in the pursuit of cultural sensitive, rigorous research and evidence-based policy-making. Issues identified at the forum included: barriers to Aboriginal women's equity, legislation, policies and programs to better address violence against Aboriginal women, and fulfilling Canada's commitment under CEDAW by working directly with Aboriginal women.
3. **Surviving Spouses Compensation** - In February 2006 government announced that 58 women whose husbands were fatally injured before the Charter of Rights and Freedoms' equality rights provision was implemented were going to receive approximately \$3 million in retroactive spousal benefits from the Workplace Health and Safety Compensation Commission. The Women's Policy Office provided extensive policy analysis and advisory services to the Workplace Health and Safety Compensation Commission to help bring about this change.
4. **Meeting with FPT Status of Women Ministers** – In September 2005 Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women concluded their 24th annual meeting. They agreed to host a Policy Forum with Aboriginal women in early 2006 to discuss violence against Aboriginal women. The Forum is intended to bring greater awareness to this urgent issue by: (i) providing an opportunity for Aboriginal women to share their experiences and solutions; (ii) showcase best practices; strengthening collective capacity to address violence; and (iii) mobilize governments and aboriginal organizations to inform policy and program development.

The Ministers were informed of research on maternity and parental benefits, and discussed Canada's obligations to the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Canada's follow-up on Beijing + 10. The meeting also provided an opportunity for Ministers to highlight initiatives of their respective governments.

5. **Meeting with Nunatsiavut Status of Women Minister** – In February 2006, Minister Burke held an historic meeting with Ms. Zippy Nochasak, the first Minister Responsible for the Status of Inuit Women appointed by the Nunatsiavut Government. Both Ministers expressed a need for governments to work in collaboration and maintain a strong relationship to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women and children.

6. **Funding for Women Centers** – In the 2005-2006 Budget, government announced an additional \$80,000 increase in funding to support the operation of eight Women Centers across the province. The funding was equally divided between centres in St. John's, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Port aux Basques, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Labrador West. This increase raised the annual grant to \$75,000 for each center to undertake activities to raise awareness and address issues of concern to women.



In 1997, the federal government announced it was discontinuing operational funding to these organizations and in 1998, the provincial government entered into contracts with the seven existing women's centers for the direct provision of services through the women's centres. The contracts outline that women's centres will provide information and referral, direct service, public education, outreach and leadership development activities for women. An eighth women's centre was established in 2002.

5.4 Leadership and Decision Making

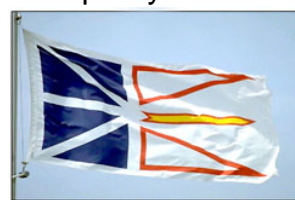
Goal By 2008, the Women's Policy Office will have supported the participation of women in leadership and decision making positions at the community, regional and provincial levels.



Objective By March 31, 2006 the Women's Policy Office will have worked with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities, the Provincial Advisory Council in the Status of Women, status of women councils, and other organizations to deliver a program to encourage women to participate in the 2005 municipal election.

Progress and Accomplishments

1. **Women in Municipal Government** –In August 2005 the Women's Policy Office partnered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities to deliver a province-wide seminar series with local equality seeking women's organizations to encourage women to run in the 2005 municipal election. The sessions were a huge success with hundreds of women across the province attending. The 2005 municipal election resulted in women being elected to 29% of municipal positions.
2. **Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women** – In November 2005, Minister Burke appointed Katherine Baikie-Pottle to represent Labrador on the Provincial Advisory council on the Status of Women. In February 2006, Minister Burke invited expressions of interest for the positions of president and board members to serve on the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. A public competition was held by the Public Service Commission to fill the position of President to increase transparency and to ensure that the appointment was based on merit. In March 2006, Minister Burke announced Leslie MacLeod as the new President and a new Board of Directors: Phyllis Artiss, Mary Pia Benuen, Jacqueline Jenkinns, Yamuna Kutty, Carolyn Lavers, Vanessa MacArthur, Michelle Murdoch, Phyllis Seymour, Beni Andersen and Hilda Whelan. The new board appointees all have strong feminist and social perspectives and include representatives from Aboriginal communities, immigrant populations, business, justice, rural and differently abled communities.
3. **Government Agencies, Boards and Commissions** - Minister Burke confirmed government's commitment to gender equality in the hiring and appointment practices for all departments, agencies, boards and commissions.



6.0 Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

The Women's Policy Office anticipates a number of opportunities and challenges ahead in seeking women's equality particularly in areas of earned income and employment, poverty reduction and violence prevention. However, government is committed to ensuring that women share equitably in the social and economic benefits of the province.

Projected labour shortages within trades, technology, science and engineering occupations provide new opportunities for women's increased participation into these high paying occupations. As these occupations are currently dominated by men, it will be incumbent upon WPO to utilize its resources to work with government departments, industry as well as organizations like Women in Resource Development Committee, Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology, the Petroleum Industries Human Resource Development Committee and the Marine Careers Secretariat to ensure women are trained, hired, retained and promoted within these occupations.

The province's discussion paper on poverty reduction released in June 2005 identified that families led by single mothers, unattached older individuals, persons with work-limiting disabilities, aboriginal peoples and recent immigrants are most vulnerable to long-term poverty. It identified that women in these groups tend to experience greater depth and duration of poverty. It also identified a link between poverty and vulnerability to violence for both women and their children. The Women's Policy Office will continue to participate in ongoing discussions and apply gender based analysis to government's poverty reduction strategies to ensure the needs of women are adequately identified, considered and addressed.

Issues and concerns of Aboriginal women are being voiced more clearly through the formation of the Nunatsiuvut Government and the organization of events to assist Aboriginal women in collectively identifying, prioritizing and addressing these concerns. It is a priority of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women. The Women's Policy Office is committed to maintaining communication with Aboriginal women to ensure their issues and concerns are addressed with culturally sensitive and appropriate interventions.

In the 2006 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador renewed its commitment to reducing violence in Newfoundland and Labrador in partnership with community and other stakeholders. This six-year comprehensive plan of action and an annual investment of \$1.25 million by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will increase government and community capacity to achieve, in the long-term, a reduction in violence against women, children and youth, Aboriginal women and children, seniors, persons with disabilities and others who are victims of violence because of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic status. The Women's Policy Office will coordinate and manage this important initiative.

7.0 Financial Statements - Unaudited

Women's Policy 2005-2006	
	2005-2006
Women's Policy Office	
Salaries	428,669
Employee Benefits	1,535
Transportation and Communication	70,756
Supplies	14,107
Professional Services	82,405
Purchased Services	47,292
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	1,041
Grants and Subsidies	990,054
Total	1,635,859
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women	311,142
Total Women's Policy	1,947,001
Source: Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Year Ended March 31, 2006	

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this table are not audited.