

**Nova Scotia Department of Justice
Business Plan, 2003-2004**

March 18, 2003

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Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

The priorities and goals outlined in our business plan are a reflection of the people and the many services provided at the Department of Justice. The employees of this department are dedicated to the fair and effective administration of justice, and to service excellence for the people of this province.

Accessibility and accountability are important to the Department. That's one of the reasons why the public business plan is critical. It gives Nova Scotians the opportunity to learn more about our core services and our priorities for the coming year. In other words, it makes us more accessible. This planning process also ensures we measure our progress in meeting our objectives and helps with accountability. We encourage you to learn more about us, and to share your views with us. Your input is important.

Jamie Muir
Minister

Douglas J. Keefe, Q.C.
Deputy Minister

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1. Mission

The Department of Justice is committed to the fair and effective administration of justice and to excellence in service for the people of Nova Scotia.

2. Planning Context

Overview of Department

The Department of Justice is responsible for the administration of justice in Nova Scotia and ensuring that public affairs are conducted in accordance with the law.

The Department of Justice is one of the largest departments in the provincial government, with more than 1,350 funded full-time equivalent staff in 2002-2003. Gross expenditures for 2002-2003 are estimated at \$190.3 million, and net expenditures are \$91.7 million. Recoveries include municipal contributions for RCMP and correctional services and fines. For 2003/2004 the estimated gross expenditures are \$196.5 million and net expenditures of \$99.4 million.

The Department has seven divisions: Court Services, Legal Services, Correctional Services, Policing and Victim Services, Finance and Administration, Human Resources and Information Management. The Information Management Division, formed in 2002-2003, deals with the creation, analysis, sharing, storage and protection of information. See Appendix A for the Department's organizational chart.

Challenges

Challenges that the Department will face in 2003-2004 include:

Legislative Demands

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) comes into force on April 1, 2003. Over the past several years the Department has been preparing for the implementation of this federal legislation¹ by providing training to justice personnel, undertaking program development and consulting with key stakeholders. The new programs will place additional demands on departmental staff and the requirements of the new Act will have a significant impact on our justice partners.

The new *Domestic Violence Intervention Act* comes into force on April 1, 2003. In preparation, the Department has initiated training and has undertaken stakeholder consultations to ensure that all

¹Under the Constitution the provinces are responsible for the administration of criminal laws made by the Parliament of Canada.

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justice partners are adequately informed regarding the use of the new measures to improve the response to spousal/partner violence.

The federal government introduced the *Sex Offender Information Registration Act* in December 2002. Preparation for the implementation of the sex offender registry will require the development of registration and enforcement protocols, consultation with relevant justice partners and training.

The Department will also be involved in implementing program changes as a result of other federal legislation, including the *Criminal Code*, the *Divorce Act*, the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*, and the *Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act*.

Proposals to change provincial legislation -- the *Police Act* and *Corrections Act* -- are anticipated during the 2003-2004 year.

Aging Physical Infrastructures

The Department must continue to prioritize and to address the deficiencies in the physical plants of courthouses and correctional facilities. Work will proceed in the renovation or replacement of aging structures, subject to resource availability.

Public Safety and Security

The Department continues to work with our justice partners to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing issues related to organized crime and counter-terrorism. Public safety in the aftermath of 9/11 will remain a priority on the justice agenda. The Department will continue to play a leadership role in developing a response plan that is tailored to Nova Scotia, while integrated with the national plan.

Municipalities are responsible for maintaining an adequate and effective police service for their communities. The challenge for the Department is to ensure the implementation of a regulatory framework that sets appropriate standards for governance, oversight, operating procedures and training.

The Department will continue to work with First Nations communities and the federal government to ensure the provision of responsive policing services. Implementation of appropriate funding arrangements to achieve this objective continues to be a challenge.

The number of private security companies continues to grow and the Department will improve the regulation of this industry to help ensure public safety.

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Increasing Workload Pressures for Justice Personnel

Increased service demands put additional pressure on the Departmental personnel. For example, the demand for the Regional Victim Services Program increased by over 30% from 1998-1999 to 2001-2002, and is expected to increase by another 30% in 2002-2003. Similar increasing demands and workload pressures exist for nearly all components of the justice system, including courts, corrections, and legal aid services.

Changing Demographics

Nova Scotia's population continues to get older, which is reflected in an aging workforce across all operational divisions of the Department. This represents a significant human resource succession management challenge as the retirements of experienced staff increase. Competition from other sectors will put additional pressures on the Department's ability to retain and recruit staff.

Information Management

The Department has been working with all justice partners and the federal government on developing a fully integrated justice information system. The Justice Enterprise Information Network (which will replace the Justice Oriented Information System and improve information exchange) will be implemented in 2003-2004. This significant initiative will challenge the fiscal and human resource capacity of the Department.

Financial

Federal/provincial cost-sharing agreements continue to create financial pressures for the Department.

There is opportunity for the federal government to fully assume its responsibilities in a number of areas, including legal aid and First Nations policing which are significant. Other outstanding federal/provincial issues are public safety and national security and the costs associated with the implementation of the federal youth justice legislation.

In recent years, the Department has been able to respond to the financial challenges through prudence and innovation. However, cost pressures over which the Department has little or no control can be expected to erode the flexibility which has been exercised. Examples are pressures arising from decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada, new legislation, national counter-terrorism initiatives, and increased complexity of cases before the courts.

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3. Strategic Goals

The Government of Nova Scotia has set the following priorities for 2003-2004:

- Health Care — stabilize funding and improve service availability and quality;
- Education — improve the quality of education and the learning environment;
- Economy — take advantage of economic opportunities to maximize prosperity.

The strategic goals of the Department of Justice are to:

- Improve public safety and security;
- Reduce the harmful impact of crime on victims;
- Improve access to justice;
- Promote the lawful administration of public affairs.

The strategic goals of Justice are intended to advance the Justice Vision Statement and the Government's priorities.

Improving public safety and security, and reducing the harmful impact of crime on victims, will help to reduce the demand for health services. A safe Nova Scotia will help stimulate the economy as people prefer to do business and to live in a place where they feel safe. The lawful administration of public affairs provides a healthy environment that will encourage economic growth and prosperity. To be successful in reaching its goals the Department provides numerous staff training opportunities, promoting a life-long learning environment in the justice system.

Nova Scotia is seen to be a place where people and their rights are respected. Justice will provide leadership in partnership with others to build a Province where:

- Citizens trust the justice system;
- People are and feel safe and secure;
- Disputes are effectively and sensitively resolved;
- Access to Justice processes are timely and affordable;
- Communities actively participate in the justice system;
- Diversity is valued and respected.

Achievement of the Justice vision and strategic goals promotes Nova Scotia as 'the' safe community in which to live and grow.

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4. Core Business Areas

Oversight, governance and advice to police and private security services

Improve public safety and security by:

- providing an advisory role to all police services and managing contracts with the RCMP and First Nations Policing;
- providing regular audits/inspections of municipal police agencies;
- delivering the federal firearms program;
- licensing companies and individuals engaged in the private security industry;
- working with communities to develop and implement crime prevention programs.

Provision of assistance to victims of crime

Reduce the harmful impact of crime on victims by:

- working with justice partners and the community to develop and implement policies and programs for victims of crime that address their needs;
- providing direct services to victims through four core programs: the Regional Victim Services Program, the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program, the Victim Impact Statement Program, and the Child Victim Witness Program.

Principled dispute resolution mechanisms

Improve public safety and security, and improve access to justice by:

- administering the following courts: Nova Scotia Court of Appeal; Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, General and Family Divisions; Provincial Court; Family Court; Small Claims Court; Summary Proceedings Court;
- managing programs in support of the Family Division, including conciliation, mediation, parent education and supervised access;
- providing security and transportation of prisoners to and from court;
- providing administrative support to the Justices of the Peace;
- managing the Maintenance Enforcement Program;
- managing the Restorative Justice Program.

Correction services

Improve public safety and security by:

- administering and operating five correctional institutions, two young offender facilities, and sixteen community corrections offices.

Legal services to government

Promote the lawful administration of public affairs by:

- providing legal advice and representation to all government departments and agencies

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The proper administration of justice in the Province in partnership with others

Improve public safety and security, and promote the lawful administration of public affairs by:

- providing legal representation to qualified applicants with priority for matters involving the liberty and civil rights of individual clients and for matters involving the integrity and protection of an individual's family through the Nova Scotia Legal Aid Commission;
- conducting, through the Office of the Medical Examiner, investigations into all deaths due to violence, undue means, culpable negligence and sudden unexplained deaths; and providing documentation including cause and manner of death;
- providing trustee services for incompetent adults/infants and missing persons through the Office of the Public Trustee;
- coordinating administration of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

5. Priorities

In 2003/2004 the Department of Justice will continue to strive for service excellence focussing upon five critical areas:

- Implementation of the new *Youth Criminal Justice Act*;
- Increased funding for Legal aid;
- Enhanced information management systems within the justice enterprise;
- Improved Justice facilities with the construction of a new courthouse in Port Hawkesbury and a new correctional facility in Yarmouth;
- Improved access to the family justice system.

Oversight, governance and advice to police and private security services

- Continue to develop a framework for the delivery of adequate, effective and efficient police services by:
 - strengthening the current police governance model in the Province and enhancing the skills and abilities of the bodies that are responsible for police governance;
 - working with the Justice Learning Centre (JLC) to coordinate police training;
 - continuing the review of and consultative process regarding the *Police Act and Regulations* with the intent that amendments be tabled in the House of Assembly in 2003;
 - working with the Halifax Regional Municipality in responding to the recommendations of the Policing Services Study that relate to areas of provincial jurisdiction;
 - ensuring that the policing needs of the First Nations in Nova Scotia are adequately addressed and that the federal government pays its appropriate portion; and
 - participate in the co-ordination of efforts to respond to and manage threats to public safety arising as a result of terrorism and organized crime.

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- Develop a framework for the delivery and governance of private security in Nova Scotia.

Provision of assistance to victims of crime

- Implement a case co-ordination process in high-risk domestic violence cases;
- Evaluate the implementation of the action plan to improve the experience of child victims in the criminal justice system and make appropriate modifications.

Principled dispute resolution mechanisms

- Continue to improve access to the family justice system by:
 - improving speed of access to the Supreme Court (Family Division);
 - developing best scheduling practices in preparation for the development of an automated system; and
 - resubmitting a proposal to the federal government to expand the Family Division province-wide.

- Enhance the effectiveness, efficiency of and access to courts by:
 - assessing the impact of alternatives to the formal court system;
 - assisting and educating self-representing litigants;
 - examining the implementation of other technological aids; and
 - assessing the viability of video conferencing;
 - addressing the requirement to improve courthouse facilities in Nova Scotia through the construction of a new courthouse at Port Hawkesbury and renovations to other courthouses throughout the Province.

- Implement court-related programs and services to meet the requirements of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, including the establishment of a youth court in Provincial Court province-wide.

Correctional services

- Continue to enhance the network of safe, secure correctional facilities through the establishment and construction of a new correctional institution in Yarmouth.
- Continue to implement a plan to provide programs and services required to comply with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, including implementation of an Intensive Support and Supervision strategy (ISS) and Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision (IRCS) sentence of the courts.
- Undertake a broad review of the *Corrections Act* with a view to modernizing the legislation in the fall of 2003.
- Work with the Public Service Commission to undertake an employment equity review of Correctional Services.

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Legal services to government

- Ensure the best value for government expenditure by:
 - continuing and enhancing our ability to do Government's legal work in an efficient, effective and professional manner, and
 - ensuring that legal services engaged through the private sector are retained in accordance with the Acquisition of Private Legal Services Policy and the Employment Equity for Crown Law Agents Policy.

The proper administration of justice in the Province in partnership with others

- Implement the new Justice Enterprise Information Network to facilitate the exchange of information among justice partners and to assist in meeting the requirements and objectives of *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- Better monitoring of sex offenders in Nova Scotia by supporting the Federal Government in implementing a national sex offender registry.
- Support the work of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP) Review Committee and respond to the recommendations of the Committee.
- Improve public safety by examining, in partnership with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, a program that will increase highway safety and consequently reduce the strain on health care by:
 - studying the Drug Recognition Expert Program for possible implementation by the Provincial Police Service;
 - establishing a partnership with the Provincial Police Service and Motor Vehicle Compliance Officers to enhance highway safety; and
 - undertaking a legislative review with the intent of strengthening the provincial laws in relation to highway safety.
- Deliver approved curricula of the Justice Learning Centre in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Community College.
- Enhance legal aid services for youth and maintain other legal aid services in the face of eroding federal contributions.

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6. Budget Context

	Forecast 2002/03	Budget 2003/04
	000's	000's
Total Program Expenses - Gross Current	\$190,385.9	\$196,580.9
Net Program Expenses - Net Programs	91,753.0	99,417.0
Salaries and Benefits	\$74,515.1	\$79,026.0
Funded Staff (FTE's)	1359	1398

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7. Outcome Measures

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2003-2004	Target 2004-2005	Strategies to Achieve Target
Core Business Area: Provide oversight, governance and advice to police and private security services					
Effective and efficient policing services	Percentage of municipal police services with self-audit program in place	45% (2002)	60% or more	90% or more	Develop a comprehensive audit policy and self-audit curriculum training standard. Coordination of training to allow for adherence to newly established policy and standard.
Core Business Area: Ensure provision of assistance to victims of crime					
Timely provision of service	Percentage of cases where contact with client is initiated within 5 days of referral (Regional Victim Services)	81% (2001-2002)	83%	85%	Active monitoring of time from referral to initial contact by Regional Victim Services program manager.
	Median number of days from date application received until decision rendered (Criminal Injuries Counseling program)	33 days (2001-2002)	40 days or less	40 days or less	Active monitoring of time of processing of Criminal Injuries Counseling program cases by program manager.
Satisfied clients	Client assessment of service on 5 point scale with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent (Child Victim Witness Program - client interview)	Average score of 4.5 (2000-2001)	4.0 out of 5 or higher	4.0 out of 5 or higher	Active monitoring of closure questionnaire for all cases involving child victim witnesses by Coordinator, Community Programming and Research.
Effective targeting of service	Percentage of cases for Regional Victim Services (RVS) and Criminal Injuries Counseling (CIC) programs that are in priority group (e.g., domestic violence cases, sexual assault, etc.)	RVS - 75% CIC - 88% (2001-2002)	RVS - 75% CIC - 80%	RVS - 75% CIC - 80%	Outreach and promotion to key referral sources.

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Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2003-2004	Target 2004-2005	Strategies to Achieve Target
Core Business Area: Provide principled dispute resolution mechanisms					
Reduced delay in family court processes	Percent of cases that completed conciliation within 6 months or less of initiation	50% (1999-2000)		70%	Improve case processing through streamlining of documentation, appropriate allocation of staffing resources, and more effective case management.
Child support payments paid on time and in full	Percent of money owed in child support that is collected	72% (2001-2002)	73%	74%	Actively pursue cases in default, particularly those that have never paid.
Satisfied clients	Client rating of conciliator performance on 10 point scale with 1 indicating low satisfaction and 10 high satisfaction	8.3 out of 10 (2000-2001)		7.5 out of 10 or higher	Maintain high client satisfaction through continued emphasis on quality service and staff training.
Core Business Area: Provides correctional services					
Effective use of alternatives to incarceration	Offenders on probation and conditional sentence, temporary absence, and day parole divided by the number of offenders in institutions	13 to 1 (adult) 10 to 1 (youth) (2001-2002)	13 to 1 (adult) 10 to 1 or greater (youth)	14 to 1 (adult) 10 to 1 or greater (youth)	Use of temporary absence program, parole, diversion programming, fine options, other alternatives to reduce the need to incarcerate sentenced offenders.
Safe and secure facility operations	Number of escapes per annum	13 (2001-2002)	0	0	Convert additional facilities for podular design. Make other modifications to structures and procedures to train staff in Nova Scotia Direct Supervision model.
Reduced recidivism	Percent of incarcerated young offenders who re-offend within one year	54% (1998) ²	52% (2000) ²	50% (2002) ²	Restorative Justice, Centre 24-7, Intensive Support and Supervision, and other programs designed to reduce recidivism among youth.

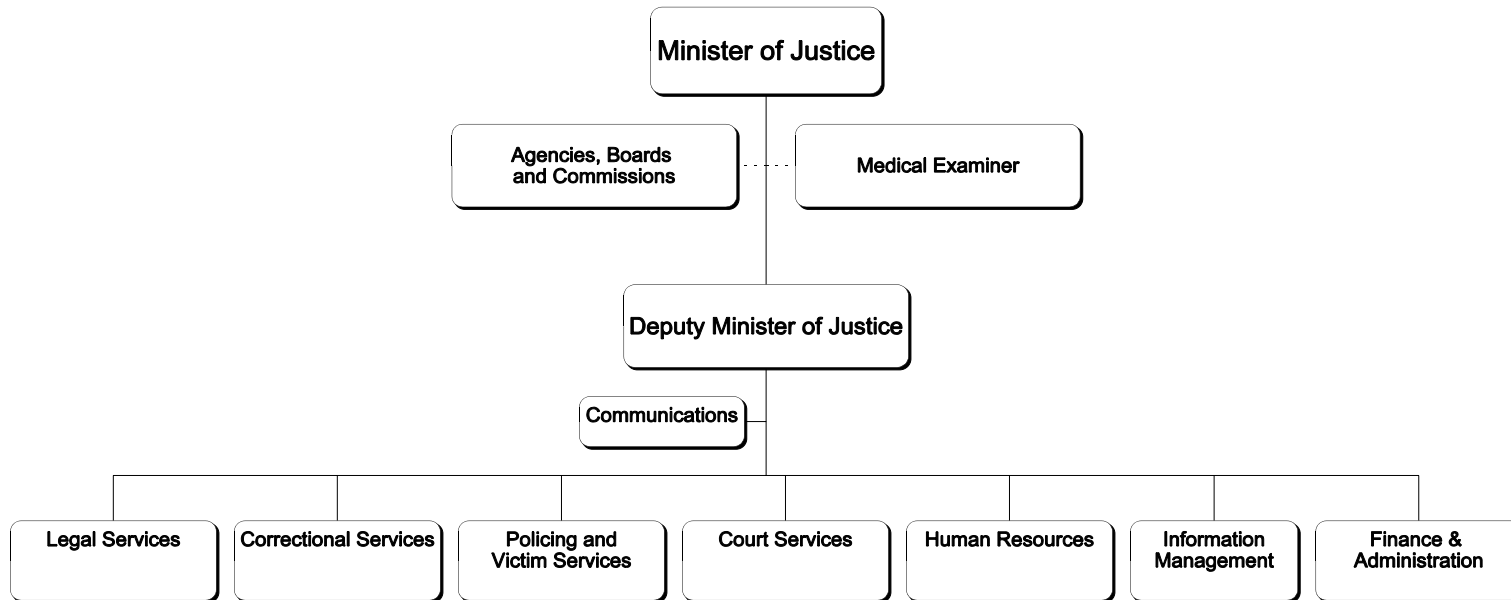
²This figure refers to offenders who were incarcerated in the year indicated and who subsequently re-offended within one year of release.

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Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2003-2004	Target 2004-2005	Strategies to Achieve Target
Reduced incarceration of young offenders	Daily in-house population counts	118 (2001-2002)	124 or less	124 or less	Intensive Support and Supervision strategy
Core Business Area: Provide legal services to Government					
Cost-effective delivery of legal services	Annual cost to Government of private legal services	\$5.9 m (2001-2002)	\$4 m	\$3 m	Build capacity within Legal Services to do as much of Government's legal work as possible.

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**Appendix A
Department of Justice Organizational Chart**



September 25, 2002

March 14, 2003

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