

**Communications Nova Scotia**

**Annual Accountability Report**  
*for the Fiscal Year 2013-2014*

**June 20, 2014**

## **Communications Nova Scotia Annual Accountability Report 2013-2014**

The 2013-2014 Statement of Mandate for Communications Nova Scotia (CNS) was approved in Spring 2013. The Agency's performance measures outlined in the 2013-2014 Statement of Mandate have been revised to reflect organizational changes made at CNS throughout the fiscal year. In addition, it was identified that there was a mix of operational and tactical activities within the document that are better captured within operational plans. These operational activities have been removed from the 2013-2014 Statement of Mandate and appropriate performance measures are being reported on within this Accountability Report.

The Strategic Goals for the Agency did not change.

### **Strategic Goal 1:**

Communicate government core priorities and initiatives to key audiences in a consistent manner to improve engagement, collaboration, education, and involvement

### **Strategic Goal 2:**

Provide the highest quality, best value, and environmentally sustainable communications products and services

### **Strategic Goal 3:**

Evolve the Nova Scotia brand and enhance the effectiveness of marketing efforts across government

### **Strategic Goal 4:**

Evolve the CNS structure, services, and processes based on best practices, collaboration, and innovation

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## Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of Communications Nova Scotia for the year ended March 31, 2014 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Communications Nova Scotia Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of Communications Nova Scotia outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by Communications Nova Scotia management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report of the responsibility of Communications Nova Scotia management. This report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Communications Nova Scotia 2013-2014 Statement of Mandate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Younger', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Hon. Andrew Younger  
Minister of Communications Nova Scotia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Taweel', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tracey Taweel  
Associate Deputy Minister of Communications Nova Scotia

## Message from the Minister

CNS has made some significant changes this past year that will help Nova Scotians understand what their government is doing, and why. These changes are already having a positive impact on the organization, and government as a whole.

New legislation, policy, and guidelines passed this Fall will compel departments and offices to use CNS services; ensure advertising is non-partisan; and hold Ministers accountable for communications services procured outside of CNS and outside of proper procurement processes.

It will mean better coordination across departments/offices; consistency of standards in communications products and services; and better value for money for Nova Scotia taxpayers.

Through its own organizational review, CNS recognized the need to improve research and evaluation efforts around communications and marketing. This year we supported key government priorities like the provincial budget, government's electricity review, and better determining Nova Scotians' understanding of what the OneNS report means for them.

This year, CNS has become more focused on communicating with Nova Scotians directly. Nova Scotians are online and they expect their government to be there with them. In that vein, CNS developed government's first social media plan, updated government's social media policy and guidelines, and provided staff training on online tools that will mean more and better engagement with Nova Scotians.

Through solid legislation and policy, sound fiscal management, fair procurement, and research and evaluation, the employees at CNS have been delivering communications services in a fiscally prudent manner.

The agency will continue to help departments and partners adapt to the challenges and opportunities facing our province, and will look for new and exciting ways to engage with Nova Scotians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Younger', followed by a horizontal line.

Hon. Andrew Younger  
Minister of Communications Nova Scotia

# Measuring Our Performance

## STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Communicate government core priorities and initiatives to key audiences in a consistent manner to improve engagement, collaboration, education, and involvement

### Evaluation/Measurement:

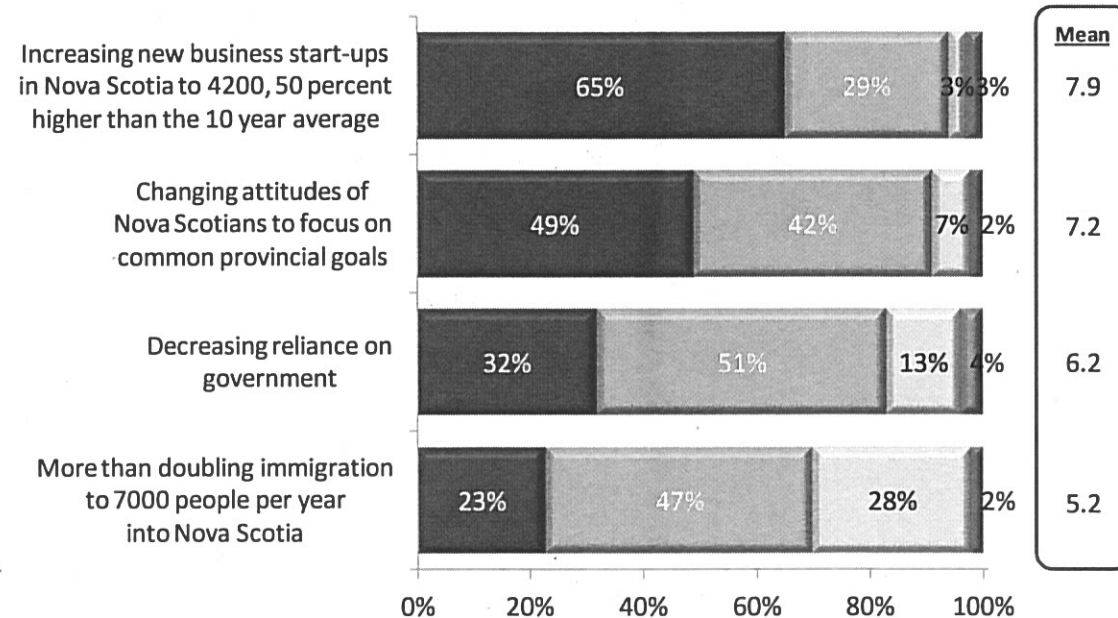
Outcome	Measure	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
Polling data of key initiatives will demonstrate audience understanding and/or acceptance of government programs	Awareness scores as measured in omnibus surveys (Atlantic Quarterly and Atlantic Matters) and other relevant research	Continue to increase awareness of government's plan to improve <b>emergency care</b> and to <b>grow the economy</b>	<p>Awareness of plan to improve emergency care – 47% (compared to baseline* 45%)</p> <p>Awareness of plan to grow the economy – 47% (compared to baseline* 32%)</p> <p><i>Source: Atlantic Quarterly, Summer 2013 (August); baseline* Winter 2011 (February)</i></p>	Increased awareness scores resulted from in-market activity	
Polling data of key initiatives will demonstrate audience understanding and/or acceptance of government programs	Awareness scores as measured in omnibus surveys (Atlantic Quarterly and Atlantic Matters) and other relevant research	<p><b>Provincial Budget</b></p> <p>Setting baseline in Spring 2014 following release of <b>OneNS report</b> by the Nova Scotia Commission on Building the New Economy</p>	<p>Nova Scotians reported hearing about the provincial budget mainly via TV (65%), newspapers (37%), radio (27%) and online (11%)</p> <p><i>Source: Atlantic Quarterly Spring 2013 (May)</i></p> <p>Nova Scotians were asked to rate the importance of a number of recommendations highlighted in the report, using a ten-point scale, where '1' is not at all important and '10' is critically important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing new business start-ups is considered most important (mean 7.9)</li> <li>Changing attitudes of Nova Scotians to focus on common provincial goals (mean 7.2) followed.</li> </ul>		

Outcome	Measure	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is less importance placed on decreasing reliance on government (mean 6.2), or increasing immigration (mean 5.2).</li> </ul> <p>Opinions on the OneNS Report recommendations are similar across the region.</p> <p>Across the population, higher income earners are more likely to deem doubling immigration to 7,000 people per year into Nova Scotia important compared to lower income earners.</p> <p><i>Source: Atlantic Quarterly Winter 2014 (February) (see table below)</i></p>		

## Importance of Recommendations From The Ivany Report

Rating on 10-pt Scale: 1=Not at all important, 10=Critically important

■ Top 3 Box (8-10) ■ Middle 4 Box (4-7) ■ Bottom 3 Box (1-3) ■ Don't know/No answer



Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
Demonstrate use of innovative and creative tools to support key corporate priorities	Tracking and reporting of online behaviour for key initiatives and priority sites (GA)	Setting baseline measures following adoption of Google Analytics as corporate standard for web analytics (Sept 2012) 8 pilot departments identified (Energy, Health and Wellness, AGNS, Communities Culture and Heritage, SNSMR and Access NS, Finance and Treasury Board)	<p>Of the events being measured related to growing the economy, by far the most popular was the Careers page</p> <p>Low referrals from social media to website</p> <p>Low uptake on the featured stories</p> <p>Half of all activity on site ended up leading users to leave the site</p> <p><u>Budget</u> Spike in page views on web site on Budget Day (April 4, 2013) - 4,460</p>	<p>64.5% (6,352) clicked through to Careers section, indicating this was important content for users</p> <p>Press releases were the least clicked through</p> <p>However, of those, Twitter users were the most engaged, viewing more pages and spending longer time on the website</p> <p>Of all the feature stories, the most popular were Charles Mmoloke, Forestry of the Future</p> <p>Increased activity not sustained for the duration of the budget communication roll-out</p>	<p>Consider how website goals deliver on business and communications objectives; identify stakeholders, Key Performance Indicators and goals for web properties and/or campaigns</p> <p>Identify training requirements.</p> <p>Use analytics of user behaviour to develop content strategy</p> <p>Consider where traffic is being sent when links are included</p>



Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
			<p>Low uptake on social media</p> <p>Users spent twice as long as the average on the Business and Jobs sections of the site (when compared to the average time spent on the rest of the website)</p> <p>25% came from Google; 15% typed in address/email (direct traffic); Few referrals from homepage</p> <p>Little mobile users (smart phone, tablets); less than 10%</p>	<p>Facebook was the most social source (less than 3% (160) came to Budget website from Facebook)</p> <p>Twitter not influential in driving people to website</p> <p>Spending more time digesting content</p> <p>Of those, the most common are iPads and iPhones</p>	<p>Don't change Budget URL – users are finding content with organic search</p>
<p>Demonstrate use of innovative and creative tools to support key corporate priorities</p>	<p>Tracking of social media will demonstrate positive to neutral reaction to key initiatives</p>	<p>% increase in positive to neutral reaction or maintain positive or neutral reaction.</p>	<p>Continued increase in users of government social media</p>	<p>1,462 likes on Facebook (started in October 2009)</p> <p>13,224 followers on</p>	<p>Continue training and encourage usage of social media monitoring program</p>

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
			<p>Positive reaction by followers to interaction to responses from government</p> <p>Direct messaging largely positive in tone</p>	<p>Twitter (started in March 2009)</p>	
<p>Demonstrate use of innovative and creative tools to support key corporate priorities</p>	<p>Evaluate performance of government social media channels via user survey</p>	<p>Establish baseline results for satisfaction and other measures for government social media channels</p>	<p>Most respondents (58%) reported Government's social media channels are meeting their needs</p> <p>The majority of respondents expect gov. to be responsive on social media (89%)</p> <p>Only about 1/3 believe gov. is meeting that expectation 25% believe gov. to be unresponsive</p> <p>The majority of respondents (79%) were unaware of the province's YouTube channel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of those who were aware, 85% were</li> </ul>	<p>Online user survey sent via Twitter and Facebook; 132 completed surveys. Most of respondents between 25 and 44. 70% were female. Majority were urban users (67% HRM).</p> <p>Gov. social media policy and guidelines were revised and approved by Minister; posted to Management 300 Manual and gov. email distributed May</p>	<p>Comments from users via survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents want more engagement on government social media channels</li> <li>• Provide information relevant to Nova Scotians with the context "Why this matters to me" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Might not be something that makes the front page of the Herald, but still important to share</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be engaging</li> </ul> <p>Draft Social Media Engagement Plan for 2014-2015 pending approval</p>

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
			neutral in terms of satisfaction <i>Source: Social Media Survey (February 2014)</i>	2014	

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2**

Provide the highest quality, best value, and environmentally sustainable communications products and services

**Evaluation/Measurement:**

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
Key initiatives will come in on - or under – budget	Actual costs compared to budget	<p>Seniors Health Care: \$100,000 budget Helping Nova Scotia seniors and their families make educated decisions about the type of health care they choose.</p> <p>Business Supports: \$25,000 budget Telling Nova Scotia business owners about funding and supports to help grow their business</p> <p>Budget: \$125,000 budget Helping Nova Scotians</p>	<p>Seniors Health Care: \$99,441 (under budget) Included creative direction, television, radio and direct mail (in-house production), talent fees, media buy</p> <p>Business Supports: \$17,988 (under budget) Included direct mail (design, copywriting, production and distribution)</p> <p>Budget: \$53,000 (under budget)</p>	Marketing was focused on communicating government priorities. CNS provides effective cost management by centralizing government advertising and marketing. In addition, a decrease in spending for CNS is consistent and occurs during every election year.	Budget tracking on a project basis will be consolidated within the project management function of Project Services. Appropriate systems for budget tracking will be identified and developed for future use.

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
		understand the contents of the provincial budget	Project included advertising (radio, print, online), creative development and execution		
Communications products and services will meet environmentally sustainability targets	Result of Forest Sustainability Council audit	Queens Printer will maintain accreditation through the Forest Sustainability Council	n/a	In Dec. 2013 the FSC process was suspended. Rational – the new Standing Offer for purchasing printing paper makes it impossible to purchase FSC chain of custody paper as the vendor does not hold FSC Certification. In addition the costs associated with recertification and surveillance audits over the five year certification period is approximately \$17,000, hard to justify given the number of FSC jobs and the difficulty to procure FSC paper.	<p>Since QP has been FSC Certified, it has allowed implementation of systems and procedures that promote sustainability. This will be continued in day to day operations.</p> <p>As always, QP will continue to follow Government's Sustainable Procurement Policy in all procurement activities. For example, QP will continue to procure FSC certified printed product from certified vendors, many of which are on the Colour Standing Offer.</p>

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
<p>Communications products and services will be of the highest quality and meet client expectations</p>	<p>Satisfaction levels from job completion and vendor surveys</p>	<p>Set baseline for job completion surveys</p>	<p>34 surveys distributed during timeframe; 6 returned (18% response rate)</p> <p>Results mostly very positive.</p>	<p>Job completion surveys sent to client once marked completed in corporate system</p> <p>Areas of improvement: work with client to ensure clients understand what they need to do to keep projects moving; clarify communications and touch points among client, department communications staff and CNS third floor staff; increased communication throughout the project, not just at the beginning and end of a project.</p>	<p>Reviewing approach for tracking client satisfaction for completed jobs including surveys, methodology and reporting to increase response rate and feedback.</p>
	<p>CNS Client Satisfaction survey results</p>	<p>Set baseline for vendor satisfaction</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Vendor satisfaction survey did not proceed due to budget limitations</p>	
		<p>Improved results in Client Satisfaction Survey</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Client satisfaction survey delayed due to organizational changes within CNS</p>	<p>To be considered for fiscal year 2014-2015 or 2015-16.</p>

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3**

Evolve the Nova Scotia brand and enhance the effectiveness of marketing efforts across government

**Evaluation/Measurement:**

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
Brand is defined to inform government marketing	<p>Brand qualitative research</p> <p>Brand plan developed</p>	<p>Insights from research with key stakeholders to inform development of Brand plan</p> <p>Increased consistency across government marketing and communications</p> <p>Decrease in number of unique identifiers and department logos</p>	<p>Qualitative research with Nova Scotians and with business audiences in key external markets completed</p> <p>About 46 program, initiative and department logos were reviewed on a project by project basis. Of these 7 were cancelled with the remaining approved on an interim basis pending implementation of official exemption process. <i>Source: CNS corporate system</i></p>		<p>Logo exemption process to be defined and implemented in 2014-2015 to clarify when unique program identifiers and department logos can be used.</p>

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measure	Notes	Future Considerations
Develop tools and supports to ensure consistency of Brand look and feel across government	Public Service Act	Amend Public Service Act to reflect role of CNS	Legislation introduced and approved in December 2013.	Minister sent letter to colleagues in November 2013 in advance of the introduction of the legislation and its impacts on logo use.	
	Advertising guidelines	Develop and implement advertising guidelines	Advertising policy and guidelines updates, developed and posted (December 2013).		
	VIP standards manual	Update VIP guidelines	Draft visual identify guidelines developed.	Revised VIP guidelines to be posted early in fiscal year 2014-2015.	Policy to be updated.





Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measures	Notes	Future Consideration
			each area of focus (for a total of 6), and 59 staff involved in the 15 task teams.		
Organizational changes (MD role, MRA team) implemented to meet opportunities identified in CNS organizational review (Good to Great)	Survey of key stakeholders following implementation of organizational change	The role of <b>Managing Directors</b> was revised in Fall 2012 to provide increased support on strategic issues, to provide role clarity, and strengthen connection among departments.	Overall positive reaction to the changes. Results indicate MD role is more effective than before. ¾ of respondents said the role is more effective now. 16% said about the same.	<p>Online survey; 60% response rate; June 28 to July 4, 2013</p> <p>High Attributes of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to corporate messaging</li> <li>• Connection between gov't priorities and the work of departments</li> <li>• Quality and consistency of communications products</li> <li>• Support and advice on strategic issues</li> </ul> <p>Low attributes of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role clarity between MDs and CDs</li> <li>• Contribution to an effective and efficient team environment</li> <li>• Comments spoke to confusion over roles and areas of responsibility for MD, Director of Media Relations, CD</li> </ul> <p>Lowest attributes of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workload</li> </ul>	Continue to focus on role clarity, addressing workload, and consistency across departments

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measures	Notes	Future Consideration
		<p>A virtual team of <b>Media Relations Advisors</b> was established early 2013 to provide media with better access and faster service. The dedicated team was reassigned from existing resources and work as part of the departmental communications teams.</p> <p>The <b>Policy and Corporate Services division</b> was established to provide oversight for project management, financial management, vendor management and research and evaluation. Previously responsibility for these functions was spread</p>	<p>Overall feedback clearly positive.</p> <p>88% rated the MRA team role as effective</p> <p>63% report MRA team had improved government's media relations, due to one person dealing with media allows for streamlining, consistency, efficiency and better customer service.</p> <p>89% of MRAs reported database has effectively supported them in their role.</p> <p>Division has been created, with acting director position developed to lead the work of the unit. Unit has lead agency's statement of mandate and accountability reporting processes; policy development</p>	<p>Online survey; 80% response rate; October 7 to 11, 2013</p> <p>High Attributes of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency and accuracy of public messages across government</li> <li>• Quality of media releases</li> <li>• Communications and collaboration among departments</li> </ul> <p>Low attributes of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role clarity</li> <li>• Addressing workload</li> <li>• Ability to meet deadlines</li> </ul> <p>Scoping of the division continues with development of job descriptions for key positions within the division, drafting of standard operating procedures, operational plan templates.</p>	

Outcome	Measures	Targets	Actual Measures	Notes	Future Consideration
		throughout the Agency.	and revisions for Advertising Policy and Social Media Policy; guidelines and processes for visual identity and logo exemption.		

# Financial Results

## BUDGET CONTEXT CHART

<b>Communications Nova Scotia</b>			
	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Actuals</b>	<b>Estimate</b>
<b>Program &amp; Service Area</b>	<b>(\$thousands)</b>	<b>(\$thousands)</b>	<b>(\$thousands)</b>
<b>Gross Departmental Expenses:</b>			
Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister	1829	2035	1907
Client Services	238	180	503
Communications Planning	684	673	574
Communication Services	2268	1186	1346
Marketing	3789	3644	3162
<b>Total Gross Departmental Expenses</b>	<b>8808</b>	<b>7718</b>	<b>7492</b>
<b>Additional Information:</b>			
<b>Ordinary Recoveries</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)</b>	<b>107.8</b>	<b>120.0</b>	<b>97.8</b>

**Note:**

**Estimates/Actuals:** All estimates/actuals should be rounded to the nearest thousand.

**FTE's for Departments:** Rounding should follow what appears in 1.1 of the Estimates book.

**FTE's for PSO's:** In accordance with what appears in the Nova Scotia Estimates Supplementary Detail, all FTE information should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

## Appendix A

### ANNUAL REPORT UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE OF WRONGDOING ACT

The Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011.

The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labor Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

- a) a contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) an act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

The following is a summary of disclosures received by Communications Nova Scotia.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2013-2014
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	n/a