



Nova Scotia

Office of the Ombudsman

Statement of Mandate 2010-2011

March 29, 2010



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Message from the Ombudsman

This document has been prepared in keeping with our legislative mandates. This planning cycle will focus on increasing our capacity to conduct systemic reviews and formal investigations in a more timely and effective manner. We will work to develop the expanding needs of Disclosure of Wrongdoing responsibilities, youth, seniors, adult offenders, and vulnerable groups. We remain committed to making our services known and available to all Nova Scotians, inclusive of diversity, seniors, and youth, and will continue to increase our community awareness and outreach efforts.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dwight Bishop".

Dwight Bishop
Ombudsman

Mandate

The Ombudsman is established as an Officer of the House of Assembly, a commissioner for investigations. The Office of the Ombudsman investigates complaints arising from the administration of provincial or municipal laws within Nova Scotia. The Office of the Ombudsman may also initiate investigations of administrative activities and practices, (own motion investigations) or matters referred to it by a committee of the House.

The primary mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman is to review and respond to citizens' concerns arising from the administration of provincial and municipal laws in Nova Scotia. In recent years, the mandate has expanded to include a proactive role in relation to the province's programs and services for youth, seniors, and adult correctional facilities. In 2004, under the province's Civil Service Disclosure of Wrongdoing Regulations, the Ombudsman was given the authority to investigate claims brought forward by provincial civil servants about wrongdoing in the workplace.

Mission

Promoting confidence in the public service by promoting the principles of fairness, integrity and good governance.

Performance Measures					
Complaint Resolution					
OUTCOME	MEASURE/	DATA Base Year 2005-2006	TARGET YEAR 2010-2011	TRENDS	STRATEGIES to achieve target
An efficient and effective complaint resolution process.	Timely completion of administrative review investigations.	2005-2006 (Base Year) 1-7 days 55.9% 8 days - 4 wks 14.8% 4 weeks + 29.2%	2010-2011 Maintain 2008-2009 ratio	2008-2009 1-7 days 55 % 8 days - 4 wks 25% 4 weeks + 20% 2006-2007 1-7 days 60.6% 8 days - 4 wks 17% 4 weeks + 22.4%	Conduct annual performance appraisals, revise work plans, education, and training initiatives. Monitor percentage of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional matters being brought to our attention.
	Timely completion of formal investigations & system reviews.	2005-2006 (Base Year) Complete 60% of formal investigations and system reviews within 12 months (from date moved from administrative review investigation).	2010-2011 Maintain 2009-2010 time frame. 2009-2010 - Maintain time frame of completing 70% of formal investigations and system reviews within 12 months.	2008-2009 11 formal investigations or policy/system reviews were opened and closed during the year with an average length of 3 months. No Disclosure investigations were opened. 4 investigations with recommendations being monitored averaged 4.25 months. 9 formal investigations or system reviews carried over into 2009-2010 (averaged 2.2 months when carried over.) Total 24 4 investigations carried over from 2007-2008 and closed in 2008-2009 exceeded 12 months.	Review quality assurance process and monitor progress. Conduct regular management meetings focusing on files in excess of 3 and 6 months to ensure optimal operational efficiency Continue attempts to obtain computer tracking database that incorporates entire Office functions.

Complaint Resolution					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA Base Year 2004-2005	TARGET YEAR 2010-2011	TRENDS	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Increased awareness of the role and mandate of the Office, including, to achieve a higher percentage of resolutions via the administrative review investigation process, resulting in less formal investigations; increased public confidence and accountability of government.	Maintain a lower percentage of formal investigations compared to administrative review investigations.	2004-2005 Formal investigations 14 (1%)	2010-2011 Percentage of formal investigations conducted at 5% or less.	2006-2007 Formal investigations 16 (1.4%) 2007-2008 Formal investigations 33 (2%) 2008-2009 Formal investigations 24 (2%)	Educate government officials and public servants on the role and mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman. Increase use of alternative dispute resolution processes.
Increased awareness of the role and mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman as it related to the Civil Servants Disclosure of Wrongdoing. Regulations and Policy	Increase in the number of disclosure of wrongdoing file assessments and investigations.	Regulations came into effect in September 2004. 2004-2005 file assessments - 5 Investigations -0	2010-2011 increase file assessments to 25 investigations 1-3	2005-2006 file assessments - 18 investigations - 0 2006 - 2007 file assessments - 16 Disclosure investigations - 2 Ombudsman administrative reviews - 3 2007-2008 file assessments - 21 Disclosure investigations - 1 Ombudsman investigations -1 2008-2009 file assessments - 20 Disclosure investigations - 0 Ombudsman investigations - 2	Educate government officials and public servants about the Civil Service Disclosure of Wrongdoing process. Continue to work with the PSC regarding improvements to regulations and policy and education initiatives Refine internal investigation process, decrease investigation length.

Awareness, access and understanding of the Office of Ombudsman					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA BASE YEAR 2004-2005	TARGET YEAR 2010-2011	TRENDS	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Increased awareness of the principles of administrative fairness, the role and mandate of the Office the Ombudsman and the Disclosure of Wrongdoing process.	The number of individuals receiving information on the roles and mandates of the Office	Individuals reached 2004-2005 -1710	2010-2011 Maintain 2009-2010 target of approximately 3000	Individuals reached 2005-2006 - 1975 2006-2007 - 2711 2007-2008 - 2700 2008-2009 - 3700 (exceeded target)	Enhance our communication strategy by targeting public, government officials, civil servants, seniors, youth, and other designated groups. Increase the number and frequency of site visits/information sessions in relation to youth and seniors. Distribute information regarding the Ombudsman and the Civil Service Disclosure of Wrongdoing. Increase distribution of materials in French, including translation of web site. Encourage the display of the <i>Bonjour</i> sign and encourage staff to enhance ability to provide services in French. Distribute pins depicting our logo.

Fairness and accountability in public sector administration					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA Base Year 2007-2008	TARGET YEAR 2010-2011	TRENDS	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Accountability in the delivery of government programs and services.	Number of administrative review investigations, formal investigations and system reviews with positive outcomes.	2007-2008 Administrative Review investigations: percentage with positive outcomes 80%. Assistance rendered to the complainant 730, resolved for the complainant 160, resolved for the public body 98, settled between the parties 24. Total with positive outcomes - 1012. Discontinued /withdrawn - 160 reviews carried into next fiscal year - 64. Formal investigations - 33	2010-2011 Maintain the percentage of administrative review investigations with positive outcomes at 80%	2008-2009 Percentage with positive outcomes 89%. Assistance rendered - 729 resolved for the complainant 231, resolved for the public body - 61 settled between the parties 14. Total - 1035 Discontinued /withdrawn - 98 Reviews carried into next fiscal year - 31. Formal investigations - 24	Enhance relationship with government. Increase public and government's awareness of the role of the Office. Participate in consultation with government relating to the delivery of programs and services provided. Provide monthly, quarterly and biannual reports to departments on issues relating to youth and adult offenders.
	Number of formal recommendations implemented. Number of recommendations resulting in policy/procedure changes	2007-2008 Formal investigations and system reviews: 37 formal recommendations were made. 13 were accepted and implemented, 5 involved changes to policy or procedures. 23 were being monitored at the end of the 2007-2008 fiscal year, 9 included changes to policy and procedures, 1 rejected. 23 recommendations arose from Disclosure of Wrongdoing investigations (Office total 60).	2010-2011 Maintain the 2008-2009 number of changes to policies and procedures.	2008-2009 27 formal recommendations, 18 involved changes to policy or procedures. 12 were implemented, 10 were being monitored at the end of the 2008-2009 fiscal year, 2 have been accepted in principle, 2 are being considered. 1 rejected. No recommendations arose from Disclosure of Wrongdoing.	

Promote initiatives such as government policy development and review, as well as initiatives focusing on youth, seniors, and cultural diversity

OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA Base Years	TARGET YEAR 2010-2011	TRENDS	STRATEGIES to achieve target
Increase the number of requests from government for reviews of legislation, regulations and policies.	Number of requests for reviews by government.	2005-2006 - 2	2010-2011 Conduct 3-6 reviews.	2006-2007 - 2 2007-2008 -3 2008-2009 - 4	Communicate to government officials our willingness to participate in requests for reviews.
Conduct reviews of legislation, regulations and policies associated with investigations.	System reviews & own motion investigations.	2006-2007 - 5 2007-2008 - 10	2010-2011 Conduct 5-7 system reviews & own motion investigations	2007-2008 - 10 2008-2009 - 9	Establish a mechanism to identify opportunities for such reviews.
Increase presence within communities, areas relating to youth, seniors, and cultural diversity and government.	Number of site visits conducted.	2006-2007- 110 Youth 4 Seniors 7 Adult Offenders 121 Total	2010-2011 number of site visits 130 +	2007-2008- 105 Youth 71 Seniors 16 Adult Offenders 5 Public 197 Total 2008-2009 155 Youth 18 Seniors 13 Adult Offenders	Increase presence and - provide accessibility to seniors, youth, and other designated groups through site visits and education initiatives. Expand the use and subject base of Youth Evaluation Interviews for youth in care and custody of the Province.

FINANCIAL CONTEXT and BUDGET

Office of the Ombudsman			
	2009-2010 Estimate	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Estimate
Program & Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Gross Expenses	1658	1658	1641
Salaries and Benefits	1428	1428	1411
Staff (FTEs)	17	17	17