

**Nova Scotia Office of Immigration  
Annual Accountability Report  
for the Fiscal Year 2006-07**

**Date November 29, 2007**

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## Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Office of Immigration for the year ending March 31, 2007, is pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Office of Immigration business plan information for the fiscal year 2006-2007. The reporting of the Office of Immigration outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Office of Immigration.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Office of Immigration management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Office of Immigration business plan for the year.

original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Len Goucher  
Minister

original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosalind Penfound  
Deputy Minister

## **Message from the Minister**

Each year more and more new immigrants arrive in Nova Scotia to begin new lives. They come here wanting to share their skills, their knowledge and their cultures with us. They help grow our economy, add diversity to our neighbourhoods and increase our understanding of cultural differences worldwide.

It is the role of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration to ensure that the number of new immigrants to our province continues to climb and to put in place policies and programs that make it possible for them to remain here.

In 2006, 2,585 individuals landed in Nova Scotia, which is an increase of 34 percent over the previous year. The increase reflects a positive trend that began in 2003 with the introduction of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program(NSNP), a mechanism that enables the province to nominate individuals to the federal government for permanent residency. In four years, there has been a 75-per cent increase in the number of new immigrants arriving here.

To ensure this trend continues, we added both the Family Business Worker and International Graduate streams to the nominee program this year – streams that serve to attract individuals who can contribute to Nova Scotia's economy and address the province's labour market needs. Negotiations also began on the creation of a Canada-Nova Scotia immigration framework Agreement, which contains a new nominee agreement.

In an effort to ensure the nominee program remains competitive, we also eliminated application fees for all operating categories.

Under the direction of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Council of Atlantic Premiers, we participated in the Atlantic Population Table, which seeks to collaborate on immigration projects amongst the four Atlantic provinces.

Our website took on a new look in 2006, making it easier for potential immigrants to learn about immigrating to Nova Scotia. The web portal agreement we signed during the year with the federal government for funding will help us to further enhance it.

We increased funding for settlement organizations, allocating more than \$1.8 million to approved programs to help newcomers integrate into their new communities and the marketplace. Roundtables were held with new immigrants, including one with the Governor General of Canada, to identify issues that women face trying to settle here successfully.

My predecessor, the Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, hosted a series of CEO forums to identify issues that impede local businesses' ability to hire new immigrants and participated in working groups to address the issues impacting international credential recognition.

Fiscal 2006-07 represented the second full year of the Office's operation and year two of work in implementing the immigration strategy. It was also a time of transition for the Office of Immigration. New NSNP streams were introduced, more settlement funds were allocated and we continued to accomplish many of our stated priorities. The Office also took over all aspects of managing the NSNP on July 1, 2006.

Thank you to the staff of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, our colleagues at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, settlement providing organizations and all our immigration partners.

I am pleased to present the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration's 2006-2007 Accountability Report, which reflects the goals and priorities of the business plan for the fiscal year and our progress in meeting the targets outlined in the province's immigration strategy.

Thank you.

Honourable Len Goucher  
Minister of Immigration

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Context**

In January 2005, Nova Scotia released its Immigration Strategy. The Strategy provides the framework for the direction and actions of the Office of Immigration and contains the ambitious goals of:

- Achieving a 70% retention rate for the 2006-2011 census period.
- Attracting 3,600 immigrants per year within four years of full immigration implementation.

Recent census data has highlighted the significance population demographics will have on Nova Scotia's future. The confluence of an aging population, small population growth and the out-migration of youth could have the very real effect of increasing fiscal pressures in the province, with projected shortages of skilled workers.

Immigration can play a role in helping to alleviate Nova Scotia's population pressures. In 2006, Nova Scotia welcomed 2,585 newcomers. This is a 34% increase over the 1,929 we received in 2005. This continues a four-year upward trend in total immigrant landings in Nova Scotia. Though the majority of this increase can be attributed to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, our numbers are also increasing in many federal categories.

While immigration numbers are increasing, efforts to provide settlement support so that newcomers are able to stay and succeed, are also increasing. Historically, Nova Scotia has one of the lowest immigrant retention rates in Canada. Consequently, the province through the Office of Immigration is focused on attracting immigrants with the backgrounds and experiences that the province needs and who are likely to succeed in Nova Scotia. Funding has also increased for settlement support services necessary to ensure that they are able to stay and succeed here. To this end the Office of Immigration allocated more than \$1.8 million in settlement funding to approved programs in the 2006-07 fiscal year.

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program is the mechanism that can be used to select immigrants who can directly and positively impact the province's economy, based on industrial and economic priorities and labour market conditions. The nominee program also recognizes the importance of encouraging the development of rural, Acadian and Francophone communities.

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program is open to skilled workers, international graduates, and other immigrants who meet community needs. These immigrants are nominated by the province to the federal government, who then conduct security, criminality and medical checks before giving final approvals and issuing Canadian permanent resident visas.

2006-2007 was a year of transition for the Office of Immigration. On July 1, 2006 the province assumed full operational responsibility for the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, including services that had previously been carried out by a contracted private sector entity. During this transition

the Office was primarily focused on the operation of the nominee program, yet continued to work with various stakeholders on immigration issues.

The Office successfully hosted Roundtable with nominees, a Women's Immigration Roundtable with the Governor General of Canada and began negotiations with the federal government on the creation of the Agreement on Canada-Nova Scotia Co-operation on Immigration, which includes a new agreement on Provincial Nominees.

Two new immigration streams for the Nova Scotia Nominee Program were successfully launched. The Family Business Worker category and the International Graduate category. Both streams increase the accessibility of the nominee program, while ensuring that those who are nominated are likely to remain and succeed in Nova Scotia.

2006-07 was the second full fiscal year of the existence of the Office of Immigration. During this year, we expanded on last year's efforts, further implementing the recommendations identified in the Immigration Strategy.

This accountability report is a measure of the Office of Immigrations actions in response to the goals, priorities and performance measures identified in the 2006-2007 Business Plan.

## 2. Department Progress and Accomplishments

### 2.1 Progress and Accomplishments 2006-2007

#### Core Business Area: Attraction and Recruitment

**Manage the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP), the province's primary immigrant attraction tool, and use it to address Nova Scotia's economic and labour force needs.**

- Began negotiations with federal government, through Citizenship and Immigration Canada, on a new Agreement on Provincial Nominees, which will transition the NSNP from a pilot to a permanent program and will see the removal of all limits on the number of nominations that can be issued. This will give the Office of Immigration greater flexibility in the operation of the Nominee Program.
- In December 2006, successfully launched the Family Business Worker stream of the Nominee Program. This category allows Nova Scotia-based business owners to offer full-time employment to close relatives living abroad. The addition of this stream helps increase the accessibility of the nominee program.
- In March 2007, successfully launched the International Graduate stream of the Nominee Program. This category is focussed on those who have graduated from a Nova Scotia-based educational institution and have full-time employment in the province. The addition of this stream helps increase the accessibility of the nominee program.
- The Office of Immigration assumed full responsibility for the operation of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program in July 2006 and introduced new policies and process changes.
- Established clear guidelines for the Community Identified stream in partnership with regional development authorities, Francophone and Acadian community partners and other key municipal stakeholders, which will help rural communities promote immigration to their region through the nominee program.

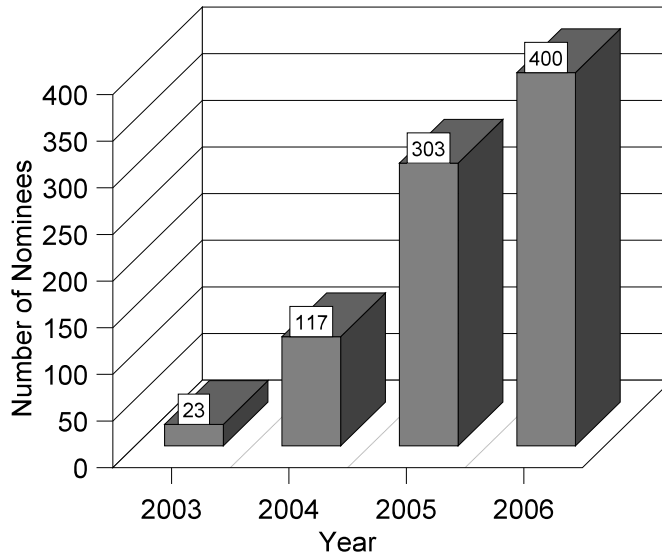
In the 2006-2007 business plan the following item was included under this priority:

*Design an Entrepreneur category targeting business owners and managers who wish to create a business or invest and actively manage an existing business in Nova Scotia.*

- The Office of Immigration stopped accepting applications to the Economic Category of the Nominee Program on July 1, 2006 so a review could be undertaken and the stream could be redesigned with the aim of eliminating program application fees. Due to other priorities during the transition of the Nominee Program, the design of the entrepreneur category was delayed to late 2007.



**Chart 1: Nominee Certificates Issued**



**Promote and market Nova Scotia, in partnership with communities, as an attractive immigrant destination.**

- Officially launched its new website in March 2007. The updated website contains new promotional materials, promoting Nova Scotia as an ideal immigration destination and provide information to support successful settlement.
- Accessed monies from Acadian Affairs for translation of web-based materials and brochures into French to help promote immigration to Nova Scotia of French-speaking peoples.
- Signed Web Portal Agreement with federal government, which will provide funding for website development over the next three years, improving Nova Scotia's web presence and ability to promote itself abroad.
- Attended, in March 2007 immigration fairs in England and the Netherlands to promote Nova Scotia and provide information on the nominee program.

In the 2006-2007 business plan the following item was included under this priority:

*Develop a marketing plan, targeted at potential immigrants, to promote the benefits of living and working in Nova Scotia.*

- While other items took precedence and the marketing plan was not completed, initiatives such as the CEO forums and the provinces partnership on the pan-Atlantic marketing committee provided valuable feedback to aid in the development of a marketing plan. The plan will be completed in 2007-08.

## **Core Business Area: Integration and Retention**

**Partner with existing funders and community agencies to support delivery of settlement and integration programming so that newcomers have better access to timely and quality information and services upon arrival.**

- More than \$1.8 Million was allocated by the Office of Immigration to 34 approved projects providing services to immigrants, focusing on language training and employment related programming, ensuring that newcomers have access to the settlement services they need to succeed.
  - In 2006-07, 14 projects served Halifax regional municipality, 6 projects served rural areas and 14 projects had province-wide impacts.
  - \$250,000 was transferred to the Department of Education to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) education in the public school system.
- Staff participated in a number of working groups and government committees addressing International Qualification Recognition issues including those faced by international teachers and health professionals.
- The Office of Immigration worked with the Department of Education on an Atlantic initiative to explore the establishment of an International Credential and Competency Assessment and Recognition (ICCAR) centre in the region. Formal consultations were scheduled for the next fiscal year.
- More than \$41,000 was given to Federation acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse to build capacity to promote, recruit, welcome and integrate new French-speaking immigrants in the Acadian and francophone regions of Nova Scotia.
- The Office of Immigration successfully hosted a Roundtable with nominees and the Governor General's Roundtable with immigrant women, during which immigrants were able to share their thoughts and experiences on the immigration and settlement process. Such knowledge is used to help guide Office of Immigration policies and actions.
- Minister of Immigration toured regions of the province (Lunenburg, Truro, Isle Madame, Sydney) to discuss regional and rural immigration initiatives and participated in rural repopulation planning session with the Rural Secretariat.
- The Minister also held CEO forums in Port Hawksbury, New Glasgow, Amherst, Bridgewater, and Yarmouth to consult businesses on their existing and anticipated skills shortages, and to inform them about how the NSNP could assist them in filling job vacancies.

- Participated on French Language Services Coordinating Committee, and consulted with the Acadian and francophone community to identify current settlement services available to French speaking immigrants, and to identify gaps in service delivery.
- Provided \$41,300 in settlement funding to Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse to conduct a public awareness and outreach project in eight Acadian and francophone regions of the province.

**Raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of immigration to Nova Scotia's future.**

- Office staff made a number of presentations on the Nova Scotia Nominee Program to regional development authorities, businesses, professional associations, among others, to promote and create awareness of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and immigration to Nova Scotia.
- The Minister of Immigration hosted 8 forums with CEOs from the business community across the province to raise awareness of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, and of how it can help address current and future labour market needs.

**Core Business Area: Leadership and Policy Development**

**Develop partnerships with all key stakeholders to leverage existing and new resources and create synergies to achieve our common goals.**

- Began negotiations with the federal government on the creation of the Canada-Nova Scotia Co-operation Agreement on Immigration and Provincial Nominees, which will help clarify respective federal and provincial roles with regard to immigration in Nova Scotia.
- Signed a web-portal agreement with the federal government to secure funding for the development of the [www.novascotiainmigration.com](http://www.novascotiainmigration.com) website for the next three years. The website will be used to promote Nova Scotia and provide accurate and up-to-date information on the Nominee Program and settlement services available throughout the province.
- Worked with the other Atlantic Provinces, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Council of Atlantic Premiers and Citizenship and Immigration Canada to develop collaborative Atlantic Canada population initiatives.

**Provide advice and support in policy, planning, research, interdepartmental coordination, and intergovernmental relations as they relate to immigration.**

- Successfully negotiated a funding formula with Citizenship and Immigration Canada for allocation of additional settlement money for 2006-07 and 2007-08, to provide necessary settlement services so that newcomers have access to the services that will help them succeed.

## Budget Context

<b>OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION</b>			
	<b>Budget 2006-07 (\$ thousands)</b>	<b>Actual 2006-07 (\$ thousands)</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Total Program Expenses - Gross Current</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Recoveries</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-327</b>	<b>-327</b>
<b>Grants</b>	<b>1798</b>	<b>1810</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>3290</b>	<b>3018</b>	<b>-272</b>
<b>Funded Staff (FTE's)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13.64</b>	<b>0.6</b>

### **Budget Variance**

The variance in recoveries was due to \$106,000 in salary adjustment (for pay for performance and contract settlement), \$17,000 was provided by Acadian Affairs for French related projects and \$204,000 was carryover of economic category fees from 2005-2006.

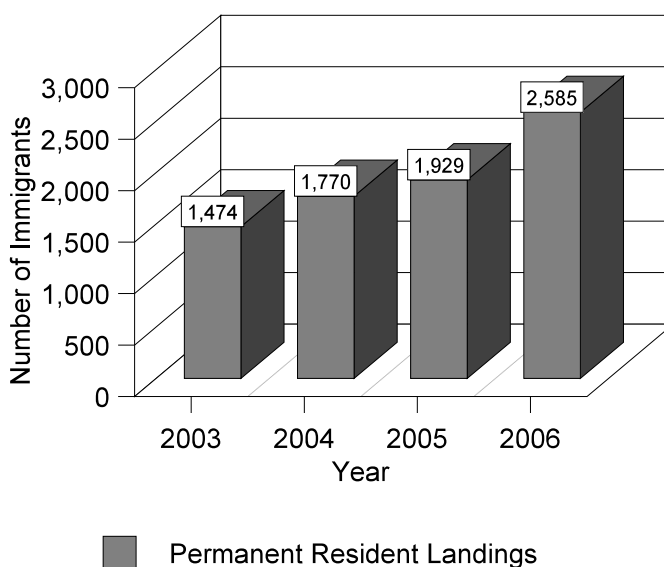
Two FTE positions were added to support the Minister's office. These new positions were partially funded through current vacancies. A new FTE was allocated for a Financial Manager to administer the NSNP Trust Fund.

## 4.0 Performance Measures

### IMMIGRANT ATTRACTION

One of the goals outlined in the Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy is to increase the number of immigrants who choose to settle in Nova Scotia in order to address population and skilled workforce needs. As the following chart indicates, the total number of landings has increased over the past four years.

**Chart 1: Permanent Resident Landings in Nova Scotia**



### WHAT DOES THE MEASURE TELL US?

This measure shows the progress we are making in attracting newcomers to the Province of Nova Scotia and what the positive impact of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program has been since its inception.

### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The above tables show that the number of immigrants choosing to make Nova Scotia their home is on the increase. Chart 1 shows that the total number of immigrants coming to Nova Scotia in 2006 has increased by 34% over 2005. This increase can be directly attributed to the increasing number of persons selected by the province under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program. In 2006, 863 newcomers landed in Nova Scotia through the nominee program. This number includes both the principal applicant and their family.

### WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Our target for this measure is to attract 3,600 immigrants per year by the year 2010.

NOTE: The second Performance Measure noted in our 2006-07 Business Plan , Immigrant Retention, is not being reported on in this Accountability Report as data will be based on 2011 census.