

**Response to
Recommendations of the
Red Tape Reduction Committee**

Office of Red Tape Reduction
Executive Council Office
Province of New Brunswick

June 2001

Introduction

A six-month review of red tape and other job creation barriers was carried out by a private sector-led committee in response to the commitment set out in *New Vision/New Brunswick*.

The Red Tape Reduction Committee presented its report to Premier Bernard Lord on June 21, 2000. The report contains 37 recommendations focused primarily on reducing red tape in the manufacturing, construction and small business sectors.

In receiving the report, the Premier stated that the recommendations would be reviewed by government and consideration would be given to those that are feasible to implement.

As of June 25, 2001, there were:

- 11 recommendations implemented to date,
- 23 recommendations underway and supported by the government
- 2 recommendations that are not supported.
- 1 recommendation on hold.

The current status of these recommendations is set out in this Status Report.

Response to Recommendations - Summary

Completed

- E-business #8
- Alternate dispute resolution #10
- Tender Closing #11
- Consultation: Transportation of Primary Forest Prod Act #15
- Fines - motor bus #17
- Capital Budget #19
- Credit Card - liquor licenses #21
- Signage #25
- Trucking #27
- Farm Trucks #28
- Legislation - Construction Safety Association #35

Total = 11

Supported / Underway

- Business Registry #1
- Expand SNB services #2
- List fees #3
- BIT #4
- CCRA #5
- Development Body #6
- Vehicle licenses part year #7
- Contractor Registry #9
- Design Specifications #12
- Crown Construction #13
- Safety programs #14
- Health Licenses #18
- Standardize financial assistance #20
- Lists of liquor licenses #23
- Marketing Strategies #24
- Interprovincial trade - food processors #26
- Fees - Farm truck reg. #29
- Tax - boats, pleasure craft #30
- Single point - development approvals #31
- Property Transfer Tax #32
- Inspections - construction industry #34
- Site inspections #36
- Financial Records #37

Total = 23

Not Supported

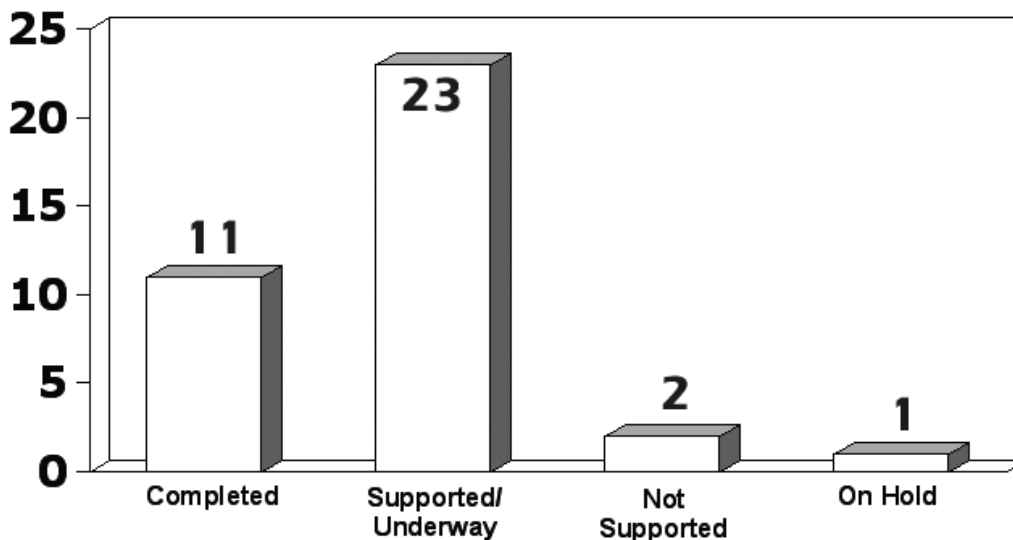
- Reallocation of Crown Lands #15
- Translation Services #33

Total = 2

On Hold

- Liquor Service Levy #22

Total = 1



Recommendations and Current Status

Recommendation #1

The government move to having a single registration and information system serving all government departments and that the Finance Department's "Consolidated Registry System" be considered the model for the administrative system.

Status: Supported and underway.

Service New Brunswick (SNB) is developing a Business Registry that will allow businesses to obtain federal, provincial and municipal permits and licences through one on-line system. Announced May 11, 2001.

Recommendation #2

The Government of New Brunswick should increase its efforts to enhance the level of services available to businesses at Service New Brunswick, and provide the leadership required to bring together all departments working with Service New Brunswick in enhancing the service to New Brunswickers everywhere.

Status: Supported and underway.

The single window concept of service delivery will be strengthened with the development of the Business Registry and with Service New Brunswick's leadership in developing and delivering on-line services.

Recommendation #3

The government should direct each department to establish a complete listing of fees, licences and permits and consider implementing a moratorium on any new user fee levied until an evaluation of existing ones is conducted. The evaluation should be based on clear and consistent cost recovery policies, and reviewed to determine that they are not to be excessive such that any portion of the fund cannot be used other than for the original service for which they have been established. This should be reviewed by an ongoing Red Tape reduction process and then be made public. Any additions, increases or elimination should be communicated within the budget.

Status: Supported and underway.

A catalogue of fees will be developed and the fee policy reviewed.

Recommendation #4

The government should consider implementing a “Business Impact Test” as is now gaining use at the federal level. This would deal with proposed and existing regulations, such as those interfering with commercial relationships between separate/independent business interests.

Status: Supported and underway.

This is a software-based consultation process also used by some federal government departments. There will be an evaluation of the process to determine suitability.

Recommendation #5

The Government of New Brunswick should examine opportunities to streamline interactions with businesses with the new Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, with the goal of reducing the paper burden and cash flow problems.

Status: Supported and underway.

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) is working with SNB in developing a common registration number for federal and provincial purposes, as part of the development of a Business Registry (Recommendation #1).

Recommendation #6

The Government of New Brunswick should implement a senior body to overlook development projects with a mandate to expedite the decision process through the various departments.

Status: Supported and underway.

A senior coordinating body will be established within government.

Recommendation #7

The government should have the Transportation department assess the possibility of having partial year licenses for the construction industry and report to the industry as to the feasibility of this suggestion.

Status: Supported and underway.

A review of the entire registration fee system will be undertaken by the Department of Public Safety. Vehicle type and usage will be examined in the review.

Recommendation #8

The Government of New Brunswick should take a leading role ensuring its commitment to use E-business and other new technologies such as tendering, permits and applications forms, etc. with the goal of improving service in all government departments.

Status: Completed.

An e-New Brunswick (eNB) coordinator has been appointed, and departments are making progress in placing services on-line.

Recommendation #9

The government of New Brunswick should establish a contractor registry.

Status: Supported and underway.

A registry will be developed based on input from industry associations, licensed contractors, and other stakeholders.

Recommendation #10

The government, in consultation with the construction industry, should enforce a simple, but functional, alternate dispute resolution process. This would not only foster a more positive working relationship; it should also save both parties considerable dollars in legal fees.

Status: Completed.

There is an agreement that the present dispute resolution process will be maintained, monitored and improvements made as required. The present process allows both parties to sit together to negotiate a resolution.

Recommendation #11

The government should establish a rigid rule whereby all tender closing dates would be at least 48 hours after the receipt of the addendum.

Status: Completed.

Instead of setting a rigid rule, Supply and Services (DSS) has agreed with industry to extend tender openings when appropriate.

Recommendation #12

A meeting of government representatives, the design community and contractors should be convened to address ways of improving specifications.

Status: Supported and underway.

Government and stakeholder associations will organize learning events to review practices in this area and ways of making improvements.

Recommendation #13

The government should reaffirm its commitment to the Crown Construction Contracts Act and place all offending parties on notice that it will not tolerate such disregard for provincial legislation.

Status: Supported and underway.

The *Crown Constructions Contracts Act* will be reviewed and changes made where appropriate.

Recommendation #14

The WHSCC in collaboration with the small business community should develop an enhanced communication plan for smaller workplaces.

Status: Supported and underway.

Currently resources are focused on industries in greatest need, specifically, those industries with higher accident costs. A review of the safety program incentive system for large, medium and small employers is in the planning stage.

Recommendation #15

Guidelines should be reviewed by the Department of Natural Resources with the intent of fair and equal distribution of the allocation of crown lands.

Status: Not supported.

No major review of the *Crown Lands and Forest Act* is planned at this time. Reviews are conducted as part of the five year Management Planning Process for Crown Lands.

Recommendation #16

Prior to proclaiming the Transportation of Primary Forest Products Act, the government should give small business owners the opportunity to express their concerns.

Status: Consultation completed. Implementation supported and underway.

Extensive consultation has taken place with industry, marketing boards and other stakeholders in the forestry sector in preparation for the proclamation and enactment of the *Transportation of Primary Forest Products Act*.

Recommendation #17

The Government of New Brunswick should have a fines structure which matches the structure found in other jurisdictions in order to ensure a level playing field.

Status: Completed.

The fine for operating a tour bus without a valid permit has been increased to \$700 effective July 1, 2001. This is in keeping with the fines in neighbouring jurisdictions.

Recommendation #18

The requirements from the departments responsible for these licences, (formerly Health), should be reviewed so as to reflect the size of the operation while respecting cleanliness and health standards.

Status: Supported and underway.

This recommendation will be taken into consideration when drafting regulations under the new Public Health Act.

Recommendation #19

The timing of the introduction of the Capital Budget by the Minister of Finance should facilitate the start of the construction work early in the construction season.

Status: Completed, 2001-2002 Capital Budget tabled on December 6, 2000.

A Capital Budget will be tabled in the late fall for each fiscal year.

Recommendation #20

Based upon strong evidence, government departments which provide financial assistance support programs to business need to continue improving the following: communications with clients; timelines of the process, and standardization of information.

Status: Supported and underway.

Departments will streamline and facilitate the applications process for financial assistance based on a standard set of criteria. Regional information sessions have been conducted; more are planned. A review of processes and approval points will be conducted to determine how they can be adjusted to remove delays for applicants.

Recommendation #21

NB Liquor should be offering a credit card option to licensees, as they do to the general public.

Status: Completed.

Announced May 10, 2001.

Recommendation #22

NB Liquor should disclose the revenues from the service levy and explain what services it is meant to cover. Otherwise, it should be eliminated.

Status: On Hold.

The issue of the user fee authorized under subsection 5(1) of Regulation 89-167, a Regulation under the *Liquor Control Act* cannot be addressed at this time.

A notice has been served on the province that two companies intend to institute a legal action against the province to question both the amount and constitutional validity of the fee. It would be inappropriate to address this recommendation until the legal and cost issues are fully examined.

Recommendation #23

The Finance Department should communicate the names of new liquor licensees to NB Liquor in order to streamline the current process. This would be a good example of a simple benefit of using a single registry system.

Status: Supported and underway.

Discussions have begun to determine how the process will be streamlined for licensees.

Recommendation #24

The new departments of Investment and Exports and Business New Brunswick should review current marketing efforts and ensure that they are accessible and communicated to smaller firms.

Status: Supported and underway.

Both departments will work together to ensure marketing efforts are made available to small business.

Recommendation #25

The department responsible for the signage program should establish a working group with industry representatives in order to ensure that the program reflects the realities of the province.

Status: Completed.

On April 4, 2001, new commercial highway sign regulations were announced following extensive consultation with industry representatives.

Recommendation #26

The New Brunswick government should examine how small processors can access domestic markets without having to comply to the federal system. (This issue could be well served by the Council of Atlantic Premiers).

Status: Supported.

Discussions will take place with the federal government on this issue.

Recommendation #27

There are hundreds of requirements from all levels of government in this industry. We recommend that the government establish a public/private sector working-group comprised of transportation operators of different sizes to examine opportunities for improvements. (This issue could be well served by the Council of Atlantic Premiers).

Status: Completed. A public/private sector working group is in place and work is underway.

Transition from Canadian Association for Vehicle Registration (CAVR) to International Registration Program (IRP) has been successful.

Information for truckers is now available on the SNB Web site. Future improvements include: electronic access to forms, electronic forms submission, information on the Web, electronic payments, process improvements, and increased services for truckers through the SNB office network.

With respect to permit costs and classification limits for weight and load dimensions among the Atlantic Provinces, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on consistent weights. The Memorandum is awaiting Newfoundland's signature. Regulatory change will follow.

Recommendation # 28

The limit of two farm truck registrations per farmer should be eliminated.

Status: Completed.

Regulations have been amended and farmers can now register up to 12 vehicles as farm trucks.

Recommendation #29

The registration fees should be reviewed in an effort to bring them in line with neighbour jurisdictions.

Given the conditions of the red tape issues with the agriculture industry (and others as well), the government should undertake an industry specific red tape review.

Status: Supported and underway.

A review of the entire registration fee system will be conducted. A review of satisfaction with services in this industry will be undertaken.

Recommendation #30

It is recommended that if the Government of New Brunswick, in conjunction with the appropriate federal authorities, conduct a review of boat, aircraft and pleasure craft registration in the province. The purpose of the review would be to ensure uniform tax, registration, safety and insurance requirements.

Status: Supported.

The Departments of Finance and Public Safety will conduct a review.

Recommendation #31

The government should review the process of a single point registration system for planning commissions based on provincial and federal standards.

Status: Supported and underway.

A pilot project will be launched.

Recommendation #32

The government should either eliminate or institute a fee which is reflective of the costs associated to dealing with such transactions when the owner of the property remains the same.

Status: Supported and underway.

A review of the *Real Property Transfer Tax Act* will be conducted.

Recommendation #33

The government should have the Department of Supply and Services review current government translation practices in collaboration with private sector representatives and provide recommendations as to required changes.

Status: Not supported.

The mandate of the Bureau is not limited to translation but also includes the maintenance of uniform, quality, translation standards for New Brunswick in partial fulfillment of the Official Languages Act; development of the industry through in-service training of students; development of the translation industry in the province; economic development for small companies supplying such services to government; and providing one administrative centre to handle all translation requests of government.

Recommendation #34

The Business New Brunswick department should have an overview of all requirements for the construction industry and find ways to eliminate duplications while respecting public safety.

Status: Supported and Underway.

An examination of inspection and regulatory requirements of various departments and agencies will be done to determine the degree of overlap and duplication.

Recommendation #35

It is recommended that the government enact the legislation required to fund the construction safety training association. This action should also have an impact in reducing the accident rate in the industry thereby reducing the costs to the WHSCC.

Status: Completed.

Legislation received Royal Assent on December 6, 2000. The issue of funding for the safety training association is to be worked out by the construction industry.

In December 2000, the government announced a pilot program, called Safety Start, to help reduce the number of workplace injuries sustained by New Brunswick youth through occupational health and safety training.

Recommendation #36

The government should review the roles of site inspectors to reduce the duplication of effort. All inspectors should have a reasonable base level of safety training.

Status: Supported and underway.

Department of Public Safety has streamlined propane, natural gas, electrical and plumbing inspections. Environment and Local Government (ELG) has been examining the potential for permits to be issued and inspections to be conducted through a single window in rural areas.

Departments will work together to improve the coordination of inspections including modernization and simplification of the *Electrical Installation and Inspection Act*, the *Plumbing Installation and Inspection Act*, the *Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act*, the *Elevator and Lifts Act* and related regulations.

Recommendation #37

The Department of Finance requirements for maintaining financial records should be consistent with the federal requirements, as well as implementing flexible guidelines for late remittances.

Status: Supported and underway.

Action requires possible legislation or regulatory amendments to the *Revenue Administration Act*, supported by policy development, to ensure provincial record keeping requirements are consistent with federal requirements.