

Social Development

Annual Report
2014–2015

**Social Development
Annual Report 2014–2015**

Province of New Brunswick
PO 6000, Fredericton NB E3B 5H1 CANADA

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Transmittal letters

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the Annual Report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Cathy Rogers
Minister

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Cathy Rogers
Minister of Social Development

Dear Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the Annual Report describing operations of the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year 2014-2015.

Respectfully submitted,



L. Craig Dalton
Deputy Minister

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Minister's message

It is with pleasure that I present the 2014-2015 annual report for the Department of Social Development.

The Department of Social Development continues to strive to improve the lives of New Brunswickers while meeting the fiscal and economic challenges of our province.

I am proud of the accomplishments of the department. These successes would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our employees, who remain committed to helping others.

With these talented and devoted professionals, our government is well prepared to foster an environment that will contribute to the creation of jobs for people living in New Brunswick; to address New Brunswick's fiscal situation successfully; and to ensure the well-being of families by providing the supports they need.

We have a number of successes to highlight for 2014-2015, including key initiatives in support of the Home First Strategy for seniors, which will enhance healthy aging and care in New Brunswick and will help seniors remain safely in their homes longer than before.

In addition, we were successful in launching the Youth Engagement Services program under the child welfare system to assist youth who cannot live in the parental home. This program will better address the developmental needs of youths aged 16 to 18.

As well, the department continued to build, replace, expand, renovate and repair nursing homes.

Of the many initiatives undertaken by the department this past year, the aforementioned are only a few of the significant milestones that have been achieved. Our successes play an important role in supporting our government's priority to improve finances while enhancing our opportunity to provide our programs and services in a smarter and more efficient manner.

I am honoured by the tremendous work accomplished in 2014-2015, and I look forward to building on this success in the coming year.



Honourable Cathy Rogers
Minister

Deputy Minister's message

The 2014-2015 fiscal year was challenging yet successful for the Department of Social Development. All employees of the department can be justifiably proud of their individual and collective efforts to provide high-quality programs and services in support of the province's most vulnerable populations.

I am particularly proud of the department's ongoing efforts to balance effectively quality service delivery with fiscal prudence while remaining focused on our mission to support greater independence, an improved quality of life and protection for those in need. Indeed, our dedicated, innovative and compassionate professionals achieved a great deal as they focused on the strategic priority areas of more jobs, fiscal responsibility, smarter government and the best place in which to raise a family. A few of our many accomplishments include the following:

- \$7.2 million was announced for the first year of a three-year Home First Strategy that will enhance healthy aging and care in New Brunswick and will help seniors remain safely in their homes longer than before. Considerable progress has been made in the first year of the strategy toward the development of a rapid rehabilitation and re-ablement service and modernizing nursing homes.
- The department successfully negotiated an extension to the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement with a combined federal and provincial investment of \$78 million over five years.
- Building on a formal management system and Lean Six Sigma Process Improvement methodology, the department achieved savings of \$1,573,673. To achieve this target, the department completed a number of Waste Walk and Lean Six Sigma projects.

In 2015-2016, we will continue to pursue our strategic priorities with a continued focus on innovation and excellence. While there are no doubt challenges ahead, I am confident that we will rise to meet them while we continue to work together to ensure New Brunswick is the best place in which to raise a family.



L. Craig Dalton
Deputy Minister

Strategic priorities

Strategy management

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses a formal management system built on leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This process provides the public service with a proven methodology to execute strategy and continuously drive improvement.

The development of the strategy, using the formal management system, starts with a strategic vision of *Moving New Brunswick Forward*. This vision is anchored in four strategic themes which include:

1. **More jobs** — Creating the best environment for jobs to be generated by New Brunswickers, by businesses, by their ideas, by their entrepreneurial spirit, and by their hard work. This includes providing seamless support to businesses, leveraging new technologies and innovation by supporting research and development, and developing a skilled workforce by improving literacy and education.
2. **Fiscal responsibility** — Getting New Brunswick's fiscal house in order through a balanced approach to decrease costs and increase revenues.
3. **Best place to raise a family** — Designing social programs to make life more affordable and make New Brunswick the best place to raise a family.
4. **Smarter government** — Providing taxpayers with better value for their money by transforming the culture of government by eliminating waste and duplication, adopting new innovations in technology to improve services and savings, and improving accountability measures.

Highlights

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Department of Social Development focused on these strategic priorities through the following initiatives:

Under the Wage Gap Initiative, department employees and community residence direct-care providers worked in collaboration with the Executive Council Office to provide recommendations to government regarding pay equity for community residence workers.

Staff in community residences received a total of \$1,874,037 in pay equity. As of Oct. 1, 2014, with the inclusion of pay equity funding and an additional wage increase of 25 cents per hour, home support employees are receiving a minimum of \$12.58 per hour.



In April 2014, the department signed an extension to the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement with a combined federal and provincial investment of \$78 million over five years. These funds will be used to increase the supply of affordable housing through new construction; improve housing affordability through rental subsidies; and improve and preserve existing housing stock occupied by low-income homeowners and rental households. The funds will also support safe and independent living for seniors and persons living with a disability.



An investment of \$7.2 million was announced for the first year of a three-year Home First Strategy that will enhance healthy aging and care in New Brunswick and will help seniors remain safely in their homes longer than before. Home First is a joint initiative between the departments of Social Development and Health as well as the regional health authorities.



In support of the 2011-2016 Nursing Home Renovation and Replacement Plan, one new nursing home was opened, renovations commenced on three nursing homes, eight nursing homes were under construction and one nursing home was in the design phase. A Request for Proposals was released for the procurement of additional beds in the greater Moncton area.



The department led joint efforts to improve employability skills for social assistance recipients. This resulted in 2,731 clients being referred to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour for employment and training services. This represents a 72 per cent increase (1,144 more clients) from the original number of referrals at the beginning of the project in 2012-2013.



The Youth Engagement Services program was introduced in October 2014 for youth between the ages of 16 and 18 who cannot live in the parental home. It is a service delivery model within the child welfare system that provides social work interventions, financial and other supports to promote the youth's transition to independent adulthood. Prior to this program, these youth would have received services through social assistance. The primary goal is to have youth actively engaged in a case plan related to education, employment and permanency.



In March 2015, there were 536 fewer cases requiring social assistance from the previous year.



The department achieved savings of \$1,573,673 with Continuous Improvement projects. To achieve this target, the department completed various initiatives, including Waste Walks and Lean Six Sigma projects.



The department participated in the Strategic Program Review process, including the analysis of its core programs and the identification of initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services.



The department saw a significant reduction in employee sick leave. With the help of all employees, supervisors and managers, the department exceeded the target reduction for the fiscal year. This represents more than a 17 per cent reduction from the previous year.

Performance measures

| | |
|---|---|
| More jobs | Measures |
| Support/develop the workforce | Percentage of social assistance cases accessing a wage exemption |
| Support/develop the workforce | Number of social assistance clients referred to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour |
| Support/develop the workforce | Number of cases leaving social assistance (net reduction) |
| Fiscal responsibility | Measures |
| Reduce expenditures | Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures |
| Best place to raise a family | Measures |
| Fairer access to government services | Percentage of abandoned calls at screening |
| Fairer access to government services | Grade of service at screening (%) |
| Help families | Percentage of seniors on the caseload receiving community based home support services |
| Smarter government | Measures |
| Enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity | Total number of paid sick days used |
| Enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity | Percentage of employee performance reviews completed |

More jobs

Objective of the measure

To support/develop the workforce.

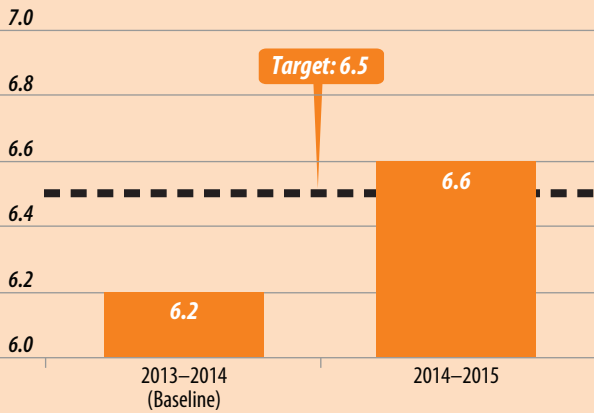
Measure

Percentage of social assistance cases accessing a wage exemption.

Description of measure

This measure calculates the percentage of cases accessing a wage exemption of a target caseload that are either employable or receiving training or skills upgrades to improve employability.

Cases accessing a wage exemption (%)



Overall performance

A continued focus on pre-employment services has resulted in this measure exceeding its fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

Clients receiving social assistance want to work and be self-sufficient. The department has programs in place to help in their transition to the workplace. This measure represents the department’s success in increasing the number of cases accessing a wage exemption.

The percentage of cases accessing a wage exemption is calculated as a measurement of the effectiveness of clients in gaining employment and accessing wages to supplement social assistance benefits to transition into the workforce. A higher percentage of cases accessing the wage exemption shows clients are gaining employment and preparing to transition into the workforce and exit social assistance.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

In October 2014, changes in social assistance were made to assist persons living with a disability to keep money earned from either part-time, full-time or self-employment when calculating income for social assistance. The fixed portion amount of the wage exemption for persons certified as disabled increased from \$250 to \$500 monthly, while continuing to allow individuals living with a disability to keep 30 per cent of every dollar earned beyond \$500.

In addition, a focus on pre-employment services, referrals to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour and case planning helped more clients to enter the workforce than before.

More jobs

Objective of the measure

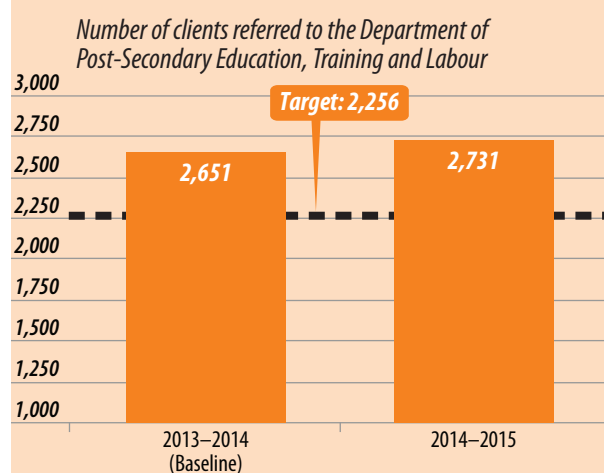
To support/develop the workforce.

Measure

Number of social assistance clients referred to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour.

Description of measure

This measure provides the total number of social assistance clients referred to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour for employment or training programs throughout the fiscal year.



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

Improving workforce readiness of clients is done through case planning and by providing the right services at the right time. Measuring the number of case referrals to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour provides an indicator of the number of clients who are training to enter the workforce or are upgrading their workforce skills to support their exit from social assistance.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The departments of Social Development and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour continue to work together to provide training and employment programs for clients in need.

In total 2,731 referrals were made during the 2014-2015 fiscal year – 475 more than the established target for the fiscal period.

More jobs

Objective of the measure

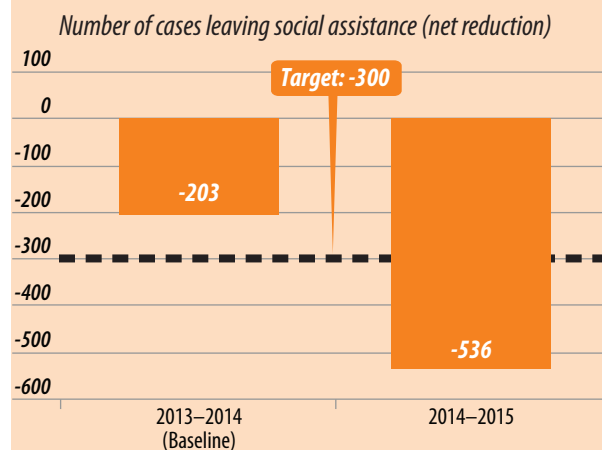
To support/develop the workforce.

Measure

Number of cases leaving social assistance (net reduction).

Description of measure

This represents the net difference in the social assistance caseload, compared to March of the previous fiscal year.



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

The net reduction in the social assistance caseload represents the department's work in successfully closing social assistance cases. Through case planning and targeted services, the department works with clients able to enter the workforce and transitions them to self-reliance.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

A number of factors contributed to the success in reducing the caseload, including continued case planning, referring clients to education and training programs and Social Assistance Reform. Under Social Assistance Reform, among other changes, the creation of the Youth Engagement Services program saw youth aged 16 to 18 transition from social assistance to a new service delivery model focused on developing self-reliance and independence while providing services and benefits available under other child welfare programs. Through this program, case management will be expanded to include connections to family and/or community as well as provide support and services to minimize factors that prevent a successful transition to adulthood.

Fiscal responsibility

Objective of the measure

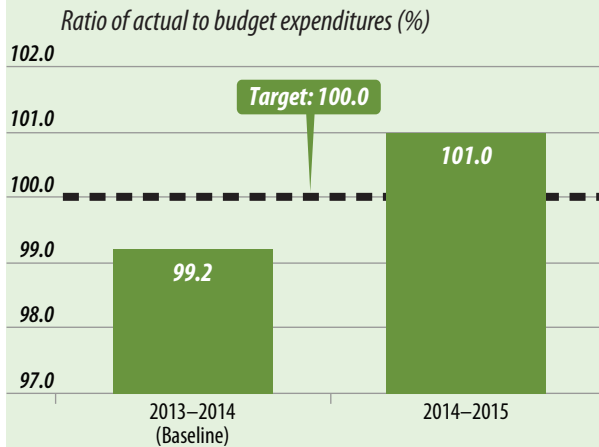
To reduce expenditures.

Measure

Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures.

Description of measure

The ratio measures whether the department is over-budget or under-budget. The ratio will exceed 100 per cent when spending is over-budget and be less than 100 per cent when spending is under-budget.



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

This indicator measures the ability of the department to manage its overall expenses as compared to budget. GNB must ensure expenses are managed in accordance with the budget and be prepared to take corrective action if expenses are projected to be over-budget during the year.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

Savings of \$1,573,673 were achieved with Continuous Improvement projects. Working toward this target, the department completed various initiatives, including Waste Walks and Lean Six Sigma projects.

Best place to raise a family

Objective of the measure

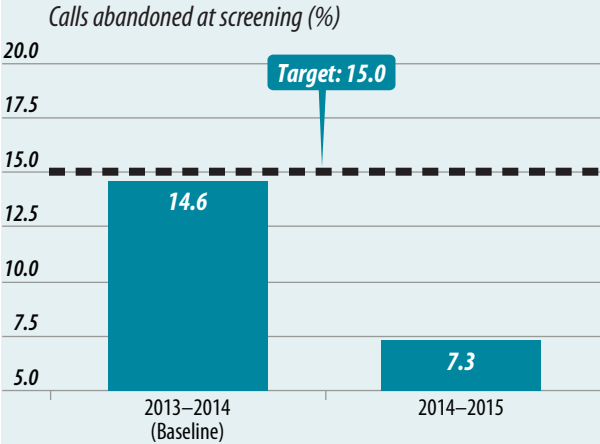
To measure fairer access to government services.

Measure

Percentage of abandoned calls at screening.

Description of measure

The number of abandoned calls divided by the total number of incoming calls (with the before-automated response abandoned calls subtracted).



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

The percentage of abandoned calls represents the percentage of incoming calls that disconnect before talking to staff. Although there are multiple reasons for disconnecting, a reduced number of abandoned calls demonstrates that staff are fielding calls from potential clients or those seeking information on services provided by the department.

The percentage of abandoned calls varies from region to region and month to month. Part of the Efficiencies at Screening project was aimed at improving consistency of service, which is seen in the provincial results.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The Efficiencies at Screening project was implemented. The goals were to improve overall screening services; standardize processes; and reduce wait times for applicants. The benefits include more efficient and standardized service delivery; fewer dropped calls; and improved client services.

Best place to raise a family

Objective of the measure

To measure fairer access to government services.

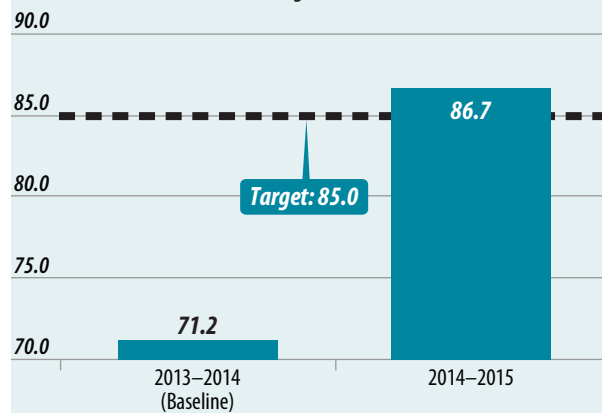
Measure

Grade of service at screening (%).

Description of measure

Percentage of calls answered in less than four minutes (not including calls abandoned before the automated response).

Grade of service at screening (%)



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

The grade of service represents the department's ability to answer screening calls in a timely manner and ensure consistent and fair access to government services.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The Efficiencies at Screening project was implemented. The benefits include more efficient and standardized service delivery; fewer dropped calls; and improved client services.

Best place to raise a family

Objective of the measure

To help families.

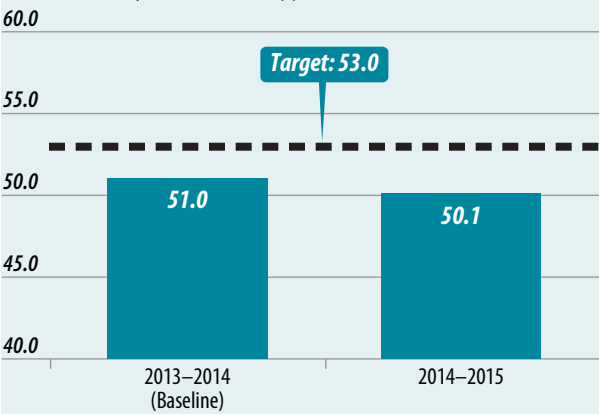
Measure

Percentage of seniors on the caseload receiving community based home support services.

Description of measure

Percentage of seniors supported by the Long-Term Care program receiving community based home supports to the entire Long-Term Care program caseload.

Seniors on the caseload receiving community based home support services (%)



Overall performance

The percentage of seniors on the caseload receiving community-based home support services declined throughout the fiscal year and was below the target.

Why do we measure this?

Seniors prefer to receive long-term care services in their homes when possible.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

While the 2014-2015 target was not achieved, the department supported 289 more seniors through community-based home support services and adult residential facilities compared to the previous fiscal year. The implementation of a series of innovative approaches, strategies and initiatives through the Home First Strategy will position the department to provide in-home supports to the increasing demographic of seniors in need of long-term care services.

Smarter government

Objective of the measure

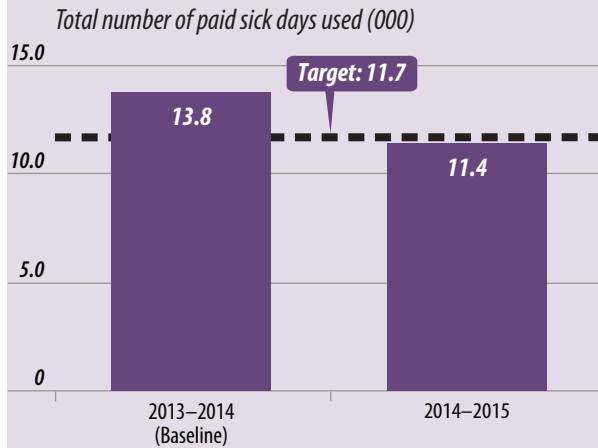
To enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity.

Measure

Total number of paid sick days used.

Description of measure

Number of sick days (paid and advanced paid) used by employees.



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

Why do we measure this?

A three-year reduction target of 20 per cent was established in sick leave usage by March 31, 2015 (three years to achieve the target) for employees in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Service. Lower absenteeism and in particular, sick leave usage within certain employee groups, will result in significant savings and will help reduce costs associated with lost productivity as well as staff replacement costs.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The Attendance Support program was introduced to all departmental employees. The program is a comprehensive and consistent approach by which immediate supervisors promote a healthy workplace and support attendance concerns. Some absences are unavoidable; thus, the goal in managing attendance is not to eliminate absenteeism or encourage employees to come to work when they are sick. Rather, the goal is to reduce preventable absences, support employees experiencing difficulty with regular attendance and strive to have a healthy and productive workforce.

Smarter government

Objective of the measure

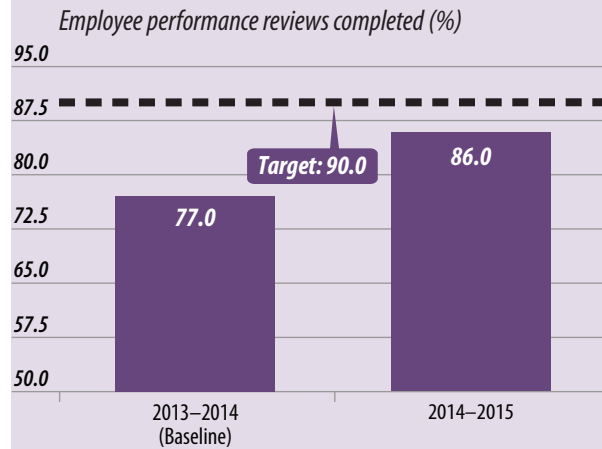
To enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity.

Measure

Percentage of employee performance reviews completed.

Description of measure

Number of performance reviews completed each quarter divided by the number of total reviews planned.



Overall performance

This measure was not achieved this fiscal year.

Why do we measure this?

The completion of performance reviews provides an opportunity for managers and employees to discuss and review the accomplishment of work objectives, demonstrated competencies and individual employee contribution against business results and GNB's overall strategy. Through the performance review process, both strategic and organizational goals are discussed and cascaded through the organization to increase organizational and individual performance.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

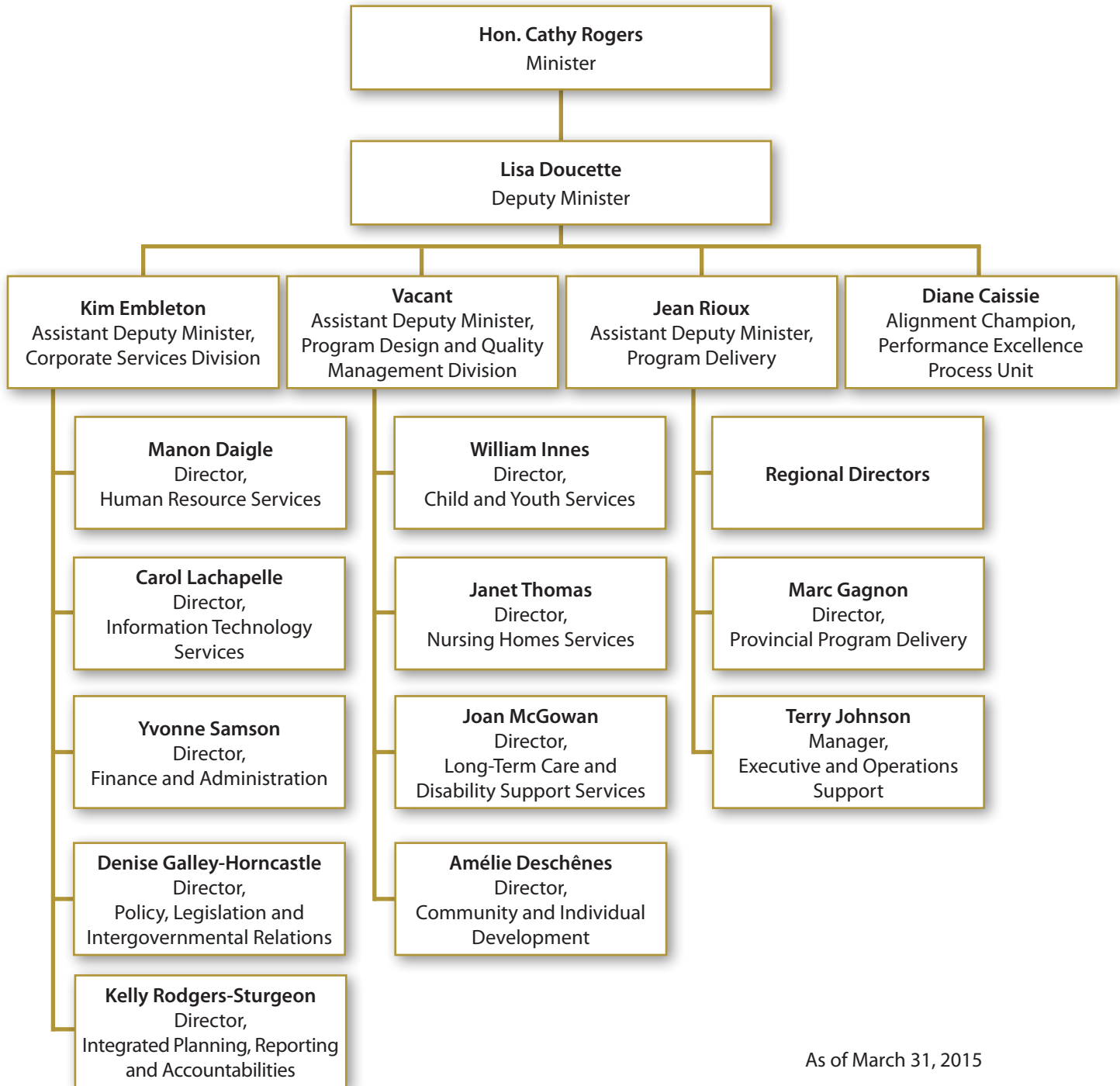
The department emphasized the importance of timely, regular feedback to staff. It saw an improvement in the number of reviews completed compared to the previous fiscal year.

Overview of departmental operations

The Department of Social Development offers programs and services to provide greater independence, an improved quality of life and protection to New Brunswickers in need.

The department is comprised of three divisions and one unit, as seen on the following organizational chart that integrates in a team-based approach to support four core business areas: Community and Individual Development, Child and Youth Services, Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services and Nursing Home Services.

High-level organizational chart



As of March 31, 2015

Program Design and Quality Management Division

The **Program Design and Quality Management Division** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring department programs. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations and legislation. The division is focusing its efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality.

The division consists of the Nursing Home Services Branch, the Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services Branch, the Community and Individual Development Branch and the Child and Youth Services Branch.

The **Nursing Home Services Branch** is responsible for monitoring nursing homes to ensure compliance with the *Nursing Homes Act* and its regulations as well as department standards and policies. The legislation and policies are designed to improve residents' quality of life; help safeguard their dignity; and ensure appropriate quality residence services are provided as efficiently as possible within available resources. Government assistance is provided to residents unable to pay for the full cost of services.

The **Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services provided to adults with a disability and seniors. This branch includes: Adult Protection program, Long-term Care Services, Home Support Services, Disability Support program, Adult Residential Services, Day Activities for Adults, Adult Developmental Activities program and Training and the Standard Family Contribution Policy. This branch delivers training for adult and senior services and programs throughout the province.

The **Community and Individual Development Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services to support individuals and families and to achieve and maintain self-reliance. This branch includes: Transitional Assistance program, Case Management Services for Social Assistance Clients, Career Development Options for Social Assistance Clients, Extended Benefits program, Special Needs Benefits, Family Support Orders Services, Youth Services, Youth Policy, Homelessness, Transition Houses, Public Housing program, Rural and Native Housing program, Rural and Native Homeowner program, Non-profit

Social Housing program, Portable Rent Supplement program, Rent Supplement program, Affordable Rental Housing program, Community Partnership Initiatives, Rental and Rooming House program, Rental Conversion program, Shelter Enhancement program, Homeownership Assistance/Home Completion program, Community Involvement program, Home Orientation and Management program, Federal/Provincial Repair program and Emergency Repair program.

The **Child and Youth Services Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring child welfare and youth programs and services. The branch is responsible for the ongoing development and monitoring of the Competency Based Child Welfare Training System as well as the delivery of training to child welfare social workers and social workers' supervisors, including First Nations staff, program delivery managers and provincial consultants. This branch includes: Family Supports for Children with Disabilities, the Adoption program, Access and Assessment, Children's Residential Services, Child Protection, Child in Care, Family Enhancement Services, Birth Parent Services and Youth Engagement Services.

Highlights:

Nursing Home Services Branch

- Worked with the nursing home sector to improve the management of WorkSafeNB claims. The nursing home industry rate was reduced for the fourth consecutive year, from \$4.60 per \$100 to \$3.94 per \$100 of insurable earnings. This initiative resulted in a 66-per-cent reduction in the number of claims during the last two years, resulting in \$4.7 million in recurring annual savings.

Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services Branch

- Increased the minimum hourly wage for home support workers by 25 cents per hour. Home support workers received the third installment of pay equity, an increase of \$1.33 per hour. As a result, home support workers saw their wage increase from \$11 per hour to \$12.58 for every hour worked to provide care to clients in the Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services programs.

Community and Individual Development Branch

- In October 2014, implemented four new initiatives under Social Assistance Reform II to further support the commitment to alleviate poverty in New Brunswick, including:
 - introduction of a new wage exemption for persons with a disability. The fixed amount of the wage exemption for Extended Benefit program recipients increased from \$250 to \$500 monthly while continuing to allow a retention of 30 per cent of every dollar earned beyond that amount;
 - an increase in allowable asset limits for persons with a disability, including a liquid asset exemption of \$10,000 per unit and an exemption of \$50,000 in RRSPs. This allows persons with a disability who require social assistance to qualify without having to liquidate accumulated assets and incurring a penalty;
 - removal of restrictions on life insurance and prepaid funeral amounts, which allows applicants and clients to qualify for income assistance without needing to liquidate these assets. The business asset exemption period for self-employed clients and applicants was also modified; and
 - creation of a new youth services model to better address the developmental needs of youths aged 16 to 18. This change resulted in a rate increase for both 16 to 18 year-olds and 19 and 20 year-olds.

Program Delivery Division

The **Program Delivery Division** is responsible for delivering programs and services to clients of the department. The division consists of eight regional offices, Provincial Program Delivery Branch and the Executive and the Operations Support Unit.

The **regional offices** are responsible for the delivery of programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families. The core business areas include Community and Individual Development, Child and Youth Services, Long-Term Care and Disability Support Services and Nursing Home Services.

The **Provincial Program Delivery Branch** is responsible for delivering programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families through single entry province-wide service delivery models. Programs and services include: Centralized Intake for Child and Adult

Protection referrals, After Hours Emergency Social Services, Family Group Conference, Immediate Response Conference, Child Protection Mediation Services, Post-Adoption Disclosure Services and Centralized Social Development Record Checks.

The **Executive and Operations Support Unit** is responsible for providing a range of key supports and direct services, in collaboration with the department's management team and other departments, to achieve effective program delivery service in core business areas to individuals and families.

Highlights:

Provincial Program Delivery Branch

- Worked on expanding the Family Group Conference service to the Child in Care program to assist children/youth in the permanent care of the Minister in achieving and maintaining permanency.
- In the fall of 2014, the Efficiencies at Screening project implemented dual roles (Screener and Basic Case Manager) to serve clients more effectively.

Executive and Operations Support Unit

- Worked in collaboration with the New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization and the Canadian Red Cross in response to emergencies:
 - Post-Tropical Storm Arthur, which saw extensive power outages for several days (July 2014); and
 - rainfall causing localized flooding (December 2014).
- Participated in nuclear disaster emergency response planning and represented the department on Atlantic and National Emergency Social Services Forums.

Corporate Services Division

The **Corporate Services Division** is responsible for providing a range of key supports and direct services to the department's employees. It works in partnership with other divisions of the department to assist in the success of the organization's finances, staffing, information management and technology, research, evaluating, planning as well as legislation and policy initiatives.

The division consists of the Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, the Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch,

the Information Technology Services Branch, the Human Resource Services Branch and the Finance and Administration Branch.

The **Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch** is responsible for developing departmental policy and legislative proposals and providing ongoing support and advice on the interpretation of departmental legislation. The branch is the departmental lead on a number of interdepartmental tables and it represents GNB on intergovernmental forums related to housing and social services. The branch is also the departmental lead on legal and litigation matters and on the department's response to inquiries and investigations by the Ombudsman, the Access to Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Child and Youth Advocate and the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. The branch is the departmental lead for discussions and consultation with the provincial Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat and with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada on issues related to child and family services in First Nations communities. It serves as the departmental liaison to the Family Income Security Appeal Board.

The **Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch** is responsible for leading the strategic planning process and the department's annual planning and reporting cycle. The branch provides advice and guidance to the department by undertaking research and evaluation of programs and services and by providing statistical analysis for policy and program development. It is responsible for corporate data analysis, monitoring and reporting on the performance of departmental programs and services. It is responsible for Project Portfolio Management, intra-departmental communications and participation in interdepartmental initiatives in support of overall government goals.

The **Information Technology Services Branch** is responsible for designing, developing and implementing innovative business solutions through partnering with the department's divisions. It supports all departmental program areas in achieving their business objectives through provision of appropriate information technology solutions and services such as client systems business support, applications maintenance and operations, technology contract management, enterprise architecture and information security services.

The **Human Resource Services Branch** is responsible for providing support and consulting services to management and staff to increase organizational effectiveness and performance. The branch tries to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, safe and high-performing workforce that provides excellent service to New Brunswickers. It works collaboratively to meet its mandate and objectives while supporting the strategic goals of the department and GNB. The branch consists of two business units: Employee Relations Services and Employee and Organizational Development.

The **Finance and Administration Branch** is responsible for working with management to ensure the department's financial resources are spent within GNB's fiscal framework. The branch provides information and advice to ensure consistency in budgeting, financial reporting and administration. It performs internal audits for the department's programs and services. It provides Records Management for central office and Facilities Management services for the department.

Highlights:

Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch

- Responded to 34 requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and filed 14 Memorandums to Executive Council (MECs).

Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch

- Led the department's participation in the Strategic Program Review process, including the analysis of core programs and the identification of initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services.

Information Technology Services Branch

- Continued work on the new Housing NB system, a major development project that modernizes how the department delivers its housing program. Clients will be served more effectively and efficiently.

Human Resource Services Branch

- Provided training to more than 30 Change Management trainers. They are now available to deliver training and support to central/regional management teams as the branch proceeds with Change Management in many areas across the department.

Performance Excellence Process Unit

The Performance Excellence Process Unit is responsible for developing, facilitating and implementing the Performance Excellence process. This is a results-oriented, long-term approach to how the department manages its business of increasing efficiency and accountability, improving services to the public, streamlining administration and seeing continuous improvements across the department.

The unit uses the methodology of the Formal Management System, which ensures strategic alignment across the organization. It uses data-informed performance measures to drive performance and Lean Six Sigma to improve processes and identify efficiencies. The tools used are: Strategy Map, Balanced Score Card, SOMIA, Lean Six Sigma projects and Daily Management.

Five Process Improvement facilitators have been trained in Lean Six Sigma. Along with the department's Alignment Champion, they are leading the execution of the Performance Excellence process.

Highlight:

- Implemented a Lean Six Sigma project to help eligible clients apply for the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit rather than receive social assistance. The project benefited clients, taxpayers and the department by empowering clients, saving taxpayers' dollars and recovering funds.

Financial information

This financial overview was prepared based on the best available information at the time of publication, and therefore, may not correspond exactly with the figures subsequently published in GNB's Public Accounts.

| Expenditures | Budget | Actual | Variance Over (Under) | % Over (Under) | Note |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------|
| Corporate and Other Services | 12,450.6 | 12,343.7 | (106.9) | (0.9) | |
| Income Security - Service Delivery Costs | 20,126.5 | 20,600.7 | 474.2 | 2.4 | |
| Income Security - Benefits | 226,894.0 | 226,382.1 | (511.9) | (0.2) | |
| Child Protection and Child Development | 124,219.7 | 124,422.0 | 202.3 | 0.2 | |
| Long-Term Care | 597,170.4 | 604,065.9 | 6,895.5 | 1.1 | 1 |
| Housing | 86,350.5 | 81,245.9 | (5,104.6) | (5.9) | 2 |
| Other Benefits | 32,200.0 | 31,749.9 | (450.1) | (1.4) | |
| Total | \$1,099,411.7 | \$1,100,810.2 | \$1,398.5 | 0.1 | |

Numbers are expressed in thousands

| Special Purpose Account Expenditure | Budget | Actual | Variance Over (Under) | % Over (Under) | Note |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------|------|
| CMHC Funding Account | \$18,000.0 | \$14,557.7 | \$(3,442.3) | (19.1) | 3 |

Numbers are expressed in thousands

| Revenues | Budget | Actual | Variance Over (Under) | % Over (Under) | Note |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------|
| Return on Investment | 3,101.0 | 3,210.1 | 109.1 | 3.5 | |
| Licences and Permits | 40.0 | 28.6 | (11.4) | (28.5) | |
| Sale of Goods and Services | 19,850.0 | 16,950.5 | (2,899.5) | (14.6) | 4 |
| Miscellaneous | 9,500.0 | 9,390.0 | (110.0) | (1.2) | |
| Conditional Grants - Canada | 30,763.0 | 31,568.8 | 805.8 | 2.6 | |
| Total | \$63,254.0 | \$61,148.0 | \$(2,106.0) | (3.3) | |

Numbers are expressed in thousands

| Special Purpose Account Revenue | Budget | Actual | Variance Over (Under) | % Over (Under) | Note |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------|------|
| CMHC Funding Account | \$10,679.0 | \$7,930.3 | \$(2,748.7) | (25.7) | 5 |

Numbers are expressed in thousands

Notes on significant variances

1. Over budget due to a change in the accounting estimate for the Nursing Home Pension Liability.
2. Under budget mainly due to implementation delays in Affordable Rental Housing program.
3. Under budget mainly due to lower-than-anticipated costs for new Housing NB system and lower expenditures under Social Housing program.
4. Lower-than-anticipated revenue for Public Housing Rental Units and Residential Units.
5. Under budget mainly due to lower interest rate as well as a decrease in program expenditures resulting in lower federal recoveries.

Summary of staffing activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Human Resources delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective departments. Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2014-2015 for the Department of Social Development.

| Number of permanent and temporary employees, as of Dec. 31 of each year | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Employee type | 2014 | 2013 |
| Permanent | 1,237 | 1,221 |
| Temporary | 250 | 258 |
| Total | 1,487 | 1,479 |

The department advertised 54 competitions, including 14 open (public) competitions and 40 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to section 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using other processes to establish merit, than the competitive process:

| Appointment type | Appointment description | Section of the <i>Civil Service Act</i> | Number |
|---|---|---|--------|
| Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical | An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A high degree of expertise and training – A high degree of technical skill – Recognized experts in their field | 15(1) | 0 |
| Equal Employment Opportunity Program | Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities. | 16(1)(a) | 0 |
| Department Talent Management Program | Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness. | 16(1)(b) | 0 |
| Lateral transfer | The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, Part 2 (School Boards) and Part 3 (Hospital Corporations) of the Public Service. | 16(1) or 16(1)(c) | 6 |
| Regular appointment of casual/temporary | An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under Section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service. | 16(1)(d)(i) | 6 |
| Regular appointment of students/apprentices | Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service. | 16(1)(d)(ii) | 0 |

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of Social Development and no complaints were submitted to the Ombudsman.

Summary of legislation and legislative activity

| Name of Regulation | Effective date | Summary of changes |
|--|----------------|---|
| General Regulation 95-61 under the <i>Family Income Security Act</i> | Oct. 1, 2014 | Amendments to the regulation were required to implement a number of substantive policy changes to the social assistance system, including: additional enhancements to the wage exemption policy for persons with a disability; the establishment of a new Youth Engagement Services program; and changes to the exemption limits for life insurance policies, prepaid funerals, business assets, RRSPs and liquid assets. |

Summary of Official Languages activities

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Introduction | The department has developed an action plan that includes strategic activities for each of the four sectors of activity found in GNB's <i>Government Plan on Official Languages</i> . |
| Focus 1 | <p>Equality of Service. To ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province, the following activities were completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The annual review and update of linguistic profiles. Human Resource Services consults with senior management to discuss team linguistic capacity and address any gaps; ensures a short-term plan for “cover off” and a long-term plan for improving the linguistic team capacity (i.e., hiring and providing second-language training). – The department reviewed its current practices with respect to second-language training, including expenditures, availability, accessibility, and process for selection of candidates (aimed to improve process, transparency, fairness and consistency across the department). – A second-language training guide was put in place. – The provision of second-language training was incorporated into the department's overall talent management process to ensure funding is targeted based on organizational need and service delivery demands. – A new section was created on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practise their second Official Language. – A memo was communicated, asking all staff to complete the mandatory iLearn modules on Official Languages. – New employees were informed of the mandatory iLearn modules on Official Languages modules as part of orientation. |
| Focus 2 | <p>Use of Official Languages in the workplace. To ensure an environment and climate that encourages the employee's use of the Official Language of choice in the workplace, the following activities were completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Human Resource Services communicated with Corporate Services managers and Corporate Services coordinators on a regular basis to reiterate that management are to make an Active Offer to conduct performance reviews in the employees' Official Language of choice. – Human Resource Services consults with senior management to discuss team linguistic capacity and address any gaps; ensures a short-term plan for “cover off” and a long-term plan for improving the linguistic team capacity (i.e., hiring and providing second-language training). – A new section has been created on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practise their second Official Language. |
| Focus 3 | <p>Official bilingualism remains a fundamental value conveyed by GNB and its employees. The following activities were completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The department gathered information and compiled status updates through its established accountability and monitoring mechanisms to complete the section in the department's annual report dealing with Official Languages. – A memo was communicated to all staff to complete the mandatory iLearn modules on Official Languages. – New employees were informed of the mandatory modules as part of orientation. |
| Focus 4 | <p>Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the <i>Official Languages Act</i>, relevant policies, regulations and GNB's obligations with respect to Official Languages, the following activity was completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Addressed in activities completed under Focus 3. |
| Conclusion | <p>Implementation of the department's Official Languages Action Plan has heightened employees' awareness of and sensitivity to the responsibilities of the <i>Official Languages Act</i> in day-to-day work and in the quality of programs and services provided to the public. Meeting the linguistic profiles to fill bilingual positions is an ongoing challenge in carrying out the action plan.</p> |

Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

| Name and year of audit area with link to online document | Total | Adopted |
|--|-------|---|
| Foster Homes - 2013 Vol. 2 http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/agnb-vgnb/en/publications/reports/year/2013.html#2013v1=Page1&2013v2=Page5 | 11 | Nine, and the remaining two in October 2015 |
| Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. (CMHC) Social Housing Agreement - 2011 Vol. 3 http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/agnb-vgnb/en/publications/reports/year/2011.html#2011v1=Page1&2011v2=Page4&2011v3=Page8 | 2 | 1 |

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Social Development did not receive any disclosure(s) of wrongdoings in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.