

Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation

Activity Plan

2020 - 2023



Table of Contents

Minister's Message	1
Overview	2
Mandate.....	3
Budget	4
Lines of Business	4
Primary Clients	5
Vision	6
Strategic Issues.....	7
Strategic Issue 1	7
Goal.....	8
Goal Indicator.....	8
Annex	i



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is my pleasure to present the Activity Plan for the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation for the period of April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is guided by my Ministerial Mandate Letter and is committed to supporting Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, families, and individuals in a relationship based on mutual respect and a foundation of trust. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation's goal is one of increased Indigenous well being and a more inclusive society.

In order to achieve this, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, must work collaboratively with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, and people. We recognize the important contributions that Indigenous people have made and continue to make to the province.

The Office must also collaborate with the Federal Government, given the Federal Government's exclusive Constitutional jurisdiction for Indigenous people. We must partner with Indigenous Governments and Organizations, and the Federal Government, to advance the aspirations of Indigenous people.

As the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives. This plan was prepared in consideration of the strategic directions of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and was prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** requirements for a category three entity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Dempster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" and the last name "Dempster" clearly legible.

Hon. Lisa Dempster
Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation

Overview

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation has three core functions: Policy and Planning, Consultations, and Negotiations.

The objective of the Policy and Planning function is to develop policies that promote the aspirations of Indigenous people, and provide advice to Provincial Government departments and agencies on programs and services that are culturally sensitive, meaningful, and appropriate. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation strives to achieve this objective through a respectful, principles-based relationship with Indigenous people, communities, Governments and Organizations.

The Office is also responsible for the development of Indigenous consultation processes and providing advice to Provincial Government departments and agencies on the conduct of Indigenous consultations.

Negotiations division focuses on the assessment, negotiation, and implementation of land claims, self-government and other agreements to promote the self-sufficiency, self-government, and cultural autonomy of Indigenous peoples, and to provide clarity and advice on Indigenous rights in Newfoundland and Labrador.

For more information on the Office, please visit our web page at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/ias>.

Mandate

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation focuses on a principles-based relationship with Indigenous people, characterized by mutual respect. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is specifically mandated to:

- collaborate with Indigenous Governments and Organizations and the Federal Government to advance reconciliation;
- support the Provincial Government's efforts to provide cultural sensitivity training to elected officials and public servants to ensure understanding of and respect for the cultures, values, and histories of Indigenous people;
- host the Indigenous Leaders Roundtable;
- advance work on land claims and self-government;
- support Provincial Government apologies to Residential School survivors;
- collaborate with other Provincial Government departments to establish a public inquiry into the treatment, experiences, and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system;
- develop a process under which provincial monuments, symbols, and observances are anti-racist and better reflect the diversity, cultures, and traditions of Indigenous people.

Budget

As of December 31, 2020, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation had a staff complement of eleven (five female, six male, and one vacancy) and a total estimated budget of \$1,647,600.

The entire staff complement is located in the Confederation Complex in St. John's.

Lines of Business

Indigenous Policy and Planning, Consultations and Negotiations

Coordinate, develop, and deliver policies relating to Indigenous issues.

Land Claims, Self-Government and Other Agreements

Negotiate and provide for the implementation of land claims, self-government, and other agreements related to Indigenous self-determination.

Indigenous Consultation

Develop and provide advice on Indigenous consultation to Provincial Government departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and corporations of the Crown in right of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Indigenous Affairs, Relations and Engagement

Work with provincial Indigenous Governments and Organizations, the Federal Government, provincial and territorial governments, and National Indigenous Organizations respecting issues of priority and importance to Indigenous peoples.

Coordination, Collaboration and Advocacy

Work collaboratively with Indigenous people and provincial officials to ensure Provincial Government programs, policies, and services are culturally meaningful and reflect the unique needs of Indigenous people.

Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation include:

- The people of Newfoundland and Labrador;
 - Indigenous Governments and Organizations in the province, including:
 - Innu Nation, as well as Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations
 - Miawpukek First Nation
 - Nunatsiavut Government, as well as the five Inuit Community Governments
 - NunatuKavut Community Council
 - Qalipu First Nation
 - Indigenous Women's Organizations:
 - AnanauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association
 - Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network
 - Newfoundland Native Women's Association
 - Friendship Centres:
 - First Light, located in St. John's
 - Labrador Friendship Centre, located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay
 - People of the Dawn Indigenous Friendship Centre, located in St. George's and Stephenville
 - The Provincial Government and its departments / agencies / boards / commissions
 - The Federal Government and its departments / agencies / boards / commissions
 - National Indigenous Organizations:
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- Assembly of First Nations
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
- Métis National Council
- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
- Native Women's Association of Canada
- Indigenous Organizations in Quebec with claims or interests in Labrador

Vision

The vision of the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is to advance the social and economic aspirations of Indigenous people in the province.

Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation will work to enhance collaborative relationships with Indigenous people.

Indigenous people have unique perspectives and cultural traditions informed by and arising from historic, social, cultural, and geographical factors. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation works with departments and agencies to provide advice on Provincial Government policies, programs, and legislation so that they better meet the needs of the diverse Indigenous people and communities of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation also provides leadership and advice with respect to any Duty to Consult Indigenous Governments and Organizations.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation leads all Government negotiations of land claims and self-government agreements, and supports Provincial Government departments and agencies in their implementation of agreements. The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation leads the Provincial Government's efforts to build and maintain collaborative relationships with Indigenous Governments and Organizations. The Office organizes the Indigenous Leaders Roundtable to meet and establish priority actions. Furthermore, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation works with the Federal Government and Indigenous communities to ensure Indigenous people in the province have access to and avail of federal programs and services designed for and provided to Indigenous people.

Goal

By March 31, 2023, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation will have continued to enhance the Provincial Government's relationship with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people.

Goal Indicator

- Continued to negotiate and implement land claims, self-government, and other agreements.
- Collaborated with Provincial Government departments and agencies, and Indigenous Governments and Organizations, to ensure the unique interests of Indigenous people are considered in public policy, programs, services, and legislation.
- Supported the Provincial Government's fulfillment of its Duty to Consult.
- Worked with the Federal Government and national and provincial Indigenous Governments and Organizations respecting Indigenous issues.
- Supported the Provincial Government's efforts to provide cultural sensitivity training to elected officials and public servants to ensure understanding of and respect for the cultures, values, and histories of Indigenous people.
- Hosted Indigenous Leaders Roundtables.
- Delivered Provincial Government apologies to Residential School survivors.
- Established a public inquiry into the treatment, experiences, and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system.
- Developed a process under which provincial monuments, symbols, and observances are respectful of efforts towards healing and commemoration of Indigenous people's histories and better reflects the diversity, cultures, and traditions of Indigenous people.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation expects to have the same Objective and Indicators for the next three years.

Objective 2020-2023

By March 31, 2021, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation will have continued to support initiatives to build positive relationships with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people.

Indicator

- Advanced Reconciliation by having worked to complete land claims and self-government agreements with Innu Nation, and continued to implement the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.
- Supported the Provincial Government's efforts to provide cultural sensitivity training to elected officials and public servants to ensure understanding of and respect for the cultures, values, and histories of Indigenous people.
- Continued to provide support as the Provincial Government works towards delivering apologies to residential school survivors and their descendants.
- Advised Provincial Government departments and entities on consultation obligations with Indigenous Governments and Organizations.
- Provided advice and support to Provincial Government departments and agencies regarding Indigenous interests relating to public policy, programs, and legislation.
- Established an NL-Innu Anti-Racism Working group, mandated to ensure elected officials and public employees have an understanding and appreciation of Innu culture, values and history; via measures developed for all government programs and services such as health, justice, and corrections.
- Continued to organize and sit on the annual Indigenous Leaders Roundtable to establish priority areas and build stronger relationships with Indigenous people in the province.

Activity Plan 2020-23

- Continued to lead the Innu Roundtable, a forum where the province, Federal Government, and Innu Nation discuss issues of mutual importance.
- Continued to work with the Department of Justice and Public Safety, Innu Nation, and the Federal Government to establish an Inquiry into the treatment, experiences, and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system.
- Supported the establishment of the Muskrat Falls Monitoring and Health Oversight Committee.
- Continued to lead the Newfoundland and Labrador team on new federal action to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.
- Supported the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development on Innu action to avail of Indigenous jurisdiction under the federal **First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth and Families Act**.
- Continued to support the Office for the Status of Women, and the Department of Justice and Public Safety, as they lead the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's assessment of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- Continued to work with Qalipu First Nation on issues within provincial jurisdiction, and communicate on and provide support to Qalipu with regard to enrollment issues.
- Supported the province's response on national Indigenous initiatives including the implementation of Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and recommendations from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- Worked with Provincial Government departments, Indigenous Governments and Organizations, and others to review provincial monuments, symbols, and observances.

Annex

Strategic Direction: Enhance relationships with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities and people. Outcome: Strong, open, and communicative relationships with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities and people that allow collaborative approaches to issues of concern to Indigenous people. This outcome supports the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation's vision of Indigenous people achieving their aspirations. This will require focus in the following areas:

- Indigenous consultation;
- Communication, coordination, and collaboration;
- Negotiation and implementation of land claims, self-government, and other agreements;
- Government policy, programs, and services that are culturally sensitive and appropriate for Indigenous people;
- Continuation of the Indigenous Leaders Roundtable.

