



**PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION**

Business Plan 2011-2014

Message from Chair

On June 30, 2011, the 2011-2014 Business Plan for the Public Service Commission (PSC) was tabled in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Within the past year, the PSC has undergone reorganization and on November 26, 2012, the Strategic Staffing Division and the operational aspects of staffing were transferred to the Human Resource Secretariat. As a result, the Commission's role in staffing will focus on the oversight of Merit-based appointments and promotions. This has made it necessary to adjust the 2011-2014 Business Plan.

It is with great pleasure that I therefore present this updated Business Plan for the PSC, as per the reporting requirements of the Transparency and Accountability Act. This plan outlines the goals and objectives of the PSC for the fiscal years ending 2011-2014. During its development, careful consideration was given to the strategic directions of Government (see appendix A), in particular those related to the PSC.

As Chair and Chief Executive Officer, I am responsible, on behalf of the PSC, for leading the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the goals and objectives contained therein. As in prior planning periods, I am confident that the staff of the Commission will continue to demonstrate dedication and commitment to our shared vision of "Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness and Respect".

We are looking forward to the opportunity to build upon our past successes and as we work diligently to implement the goals and objectives of this plan we will report annually on our progress.



Bruce Hollett
Chair & Chief Executive Officer

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1.0 Plan at a Glance

Vision:

Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness and Respect.

Mission: By 2017, the PSC will have examined, developed, implemented where appropriate and provided recommendations for quality improvement and modernization of legislation and services and will have both validated and enhanced the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.

Goal 1

By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have enhanced overall service quality to address challenges presented by aging legislation as well as changing demographic and labour market environments.

Objective 1.1

By March 31, 2012, the PSC will have reviewed and further developed activities and functions to support quality improvements in staffing and recruitment.

Objective 1.2

By March 31, 2013, the PSC will have implemented outcomes and recommendations arising from 2012 review to further improve the quality of staffing and recruitment.

Objective 1.3

By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have fully examined governing legislation and mandate, and provided recommendations with an overall view of modernization and improvement of service quality.

Goal 2

By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have reviewed and implemented recommendations to further improve transparency and fairness of its mandated decision making processes.

Objective 2.1

By March 31, 2012, the PSC will have reviewed its mandated decision making processes to identify areas for improvement in transparency and fairness.

Objective 2.2

By March 31, 2013, the PSC will have implemented recommendations arising from reviews conducted in 2012.

Objective 2.3

By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have evaluated the success of revisions to its decision making process.

2.0 Public Service Commission Overview

As an advocate for the principles of Merit, Fairness, and Respect, as well as good public administration, the PSC plays a vital leadership and support role for the broader organization. In accordance with this, the PSC administers the Employee Assistance Program and the Respectful Workplace Program. It also supports several adjudication panels designed to provide third party resolution to matters pertaining to the bargaining unit Classification Appeal Board. Support is also provided to the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee under the *Conflict of Interest Act (1995)*. The PSC maintains an investigative unit with the capability of providing a comprehensive range of administrative investigations on behalf of Government.

Governed by the *Public Service Commission Act (1973)*, the Public Service Commission is also responsible for the provision of oversight and policy for Merit-based appointments and promotions within the Public Service of NL along with the certification of Selection Board Chairs.

Divisions and Employees

The PSC consists of Commissioners appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The Lieutenant-Governor in Council designates one Commissioner as Chairperson. The Chairperson is the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission and has Deputy Minister status. The Chairperson directs and supervises the administrative and technical activities of the Commission.

There are two divisions performing the work of the Commission: the Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace division and the Appeal and Investigation division. There is also an Executive group, which consists of the Commissioners, supported by a Manager of Policy and Planning and a Manager of Accountability and Certification. The staff complement of the PSC is 19 employees, including the Executive. Of the 19, there are 14 females and 5 males.

Location and Areas Serviced

The PSC is located at 50 Mundy Pond Road, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. All regions of the province are served from this location.

Legislative Authority

The mandate of the PSC is provided by the *Public Service Commission Act (1973)*.

Budget

The original 2012-2013 salary and operational budget for the PSC was \$5,104,500. It was later restated to \$2,738,700 to reflect the transfer of the Strategic Staffing Division from the PSC to the Human Resource Secretariat.

3.0 Mandate

The mandate of the PSC is provided by its governing legislation, the *Public Service Commission Act (1973)*. The core mandate is the protection of Merit. Merit is a rule of conduct that provides for the recommendation of candidates for a position on the basis of the best demonstration of bona fide levels of required qualifications, knowledge, abilities and personal suitability. The Commission is charged with the provision of oversight and policy for Merit-based appointments and promotions within those areas of the broader public sector that are scheduled to the *PSC Act (1973)*. Along with this, the Commission is responsible for the certification of Selection Board Chairs.

As an advocate for the principles of Merit, Fairness, and Respect, as well as good public administration, the PSC plays a vital leadership and support role for the broader organization. In accordance with this leadership and support role, the PSC administers the Employee Assistance Program and Respectful Workplace Program. The Commission also houses an investigative unit with the capability of providing a comprehensive range of administrative investigations on behalf of Government.

4.0 Lines of Business

The PSC provides the following services and programs to the public service and the general public:

Executive:

Executive Services

- Operational staffing within the core public service is conducted in accordance with the *PSC Act (1973)*, and on behalf of the PSC by the Strategic Staffing Division of the Human Resource Secretariat and through delegated staffing authority with those agencies that are scheduled to the Act.
- The PSC is responsible for the provision of oversight for Merit-based appointments and promotions within those areas of the broader public sector that are scheduled to the *PSC Act (1973)*. In particular, the Executive complement of the PSC:
 - leads and develops policies which complement and support the Merit principle and Government's Strategic Human Resource Plan; provide certification for Selection Board Chairs;
 - focuses on continuous quality improvement and conducts yearly audits, reviewing a sample of all staffing action files and soliciting feedback from stakeholders as a means of assessing the quality of services provided;
 - monitors all appointments and promotions to ensure compliance with staffing policy; and
 - adjudicates staffing disputes.

Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Division:

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP);
Respectful Workplace Program (RWP)**

- The Employee Assistance Program is a joint program of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the Public Sector Managers' Association (PSMA). The PSC is responsible for providing counseling and consultation supports to employees and managers for issues that are either affecting, or have the potential to affect work performance. In this regard the PSC provides:
 - assessment, short-term counseling and/or referral to an outside community agency or private resource;
 - funding and referrals for employees who require the services of trained counselors who are contracted by EAP;
 - debriefing and other supports to individuals and workplaces that experience significant traumatic workplace incidents;
 - services to individuals and work groups impacted by organizational adjustments and/or other issues resulting in either job loss or significant change;
 - support to departments needing to accommodate the workplace needs of employees with mental health issues; and
 - training for managers and shop stewards in understanding the steps involved in assisting employees with personal or work related problems. This training is mandatory through Government's Human Resource Management Program. Information sessions on EAP are offered on request to work-sites across the Province.

- The PSC established the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) recognizing that productivity and quality of work are directly related to psychological health and respect in the workplace. The RWP provides a means to promote a public service work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination, respectful of diversity and constructive in its approach to workplace conflict. The PSC works from a capacity development model and in this regard provides training and information sessions on conflict management, and conflict coaching to employees and managers of government departments and other agencies. The PSC collaborates with government departments and agencies to provide training and alternative forms of conflict resolution in supporting the administration of Government's "Harassment and Discrimination Free Workplace" policy. Specifically, the PSC provides:
 - mediation, facilitation and other problem solving supports to departments requesting intervention in the area of workplace conflict;
 - conflict diagnosis, consultations, mediations, facilitated discussions and conflict coaching that aims to support the positive resolution of conflict;

- workplace and conflict assessments when workplace issues are negatively impacting employee wellness, workplace productivity and/or organizational health;
- services to departments working on building internal respectful workplace initiatives designed to promote respectful work environments; and
- a front line RWP train-the-trainer program that supports departments in delivering respectful workplace information to non-management employees.

- Psychological health is a key part of any healthy workplace. The growth of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) reflect efforts to promote employee psychological health and productivity in our public service. The EAP supports healthy workplaces, through counseling and educational efforts such as promoting good mental health in the workplace, managing change, and other wellness promotion strategies. The RWP promotes the value and accountability of respectful workplace cultures in the public service and provides training that supports positive mechanisms to manage conflict constructively.

Appeal and Investigation Division:

Investigative Services; Classification Appeal Board & Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee

- The PSC houses an investigative unit which reviews complaints of harassment, workplace conflict or other issues of an administrative nature in those public entities scheduled to the *PSC Act (1973)*. The unit also coordinates and interfaces with other agencies and organizations regarding matters relating to complaints, investigations, conflict, and early intervention.
- The Classification Appeal Board was established in 1971 to review and if necessary, hear appeals resulting from the classification system in Government. Specifically, the PSC provides administrative and logistical support for the activities of the Board. The Board is chaired by the CEO of the PSC.
- The PSC supports the *Conflict of Interest Act (1995)* by facilitating the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee. This includes response to general inquires, accumulation of jurisprudence, and preparation and distribution of educational information related to conflict of interest.

5.0 Values and Culture Statement

The core values and culture statement of the PSC demonstrate the character of the organization promoted, not only through organizational effort, but throughout the public service as a whole. Each of the core values has a component part that is integral to the value it espouses. These components are highlighted in each strategic value action statement.

Core Value	Strategic Value Action Statements
Fairness	All employees conduct their work objectively and free from influence and bias and are supportive of the diversity of our clients.
Respect	All employees treat clients and coworkers in a just manner and accept responsibility for their work obligations and contributions.
Professionalism	All employees strive towards service excellence and continuing professional development, utilizing their unique competencies to advance the vision of the organization.

Culture Statement
<p>We are a community.</p> <p>We believe and act with respect and integrity. We balance courage and consideration when we communicate to show that we genuinely care.</p> <p>I help make this community!</p> <p>I am open and authentic. I show empathy and kindness and choose to be helpful. You will see that I strive to do the right thing as I take responsibility for my actions.</p>

6.0 Primary Clients

Primary clients are the Departments and Agencies scheduled to the *Public Service Commission Act (1973)* and the employees who work for those entities. The general public also has an interest, as opportunities for employment for the general population are part of the Commission's purview. In providing policy guidance and oversight, as well as auditing functions of competition files, it is required to consider the public interest as is mandated by Section 12 of the *Public Service Commission Act (1973)*.

7.0 Vision

Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness, and Respect.

8.0 Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Chair over the next planning cycle. It represents the key longer-term result that the Commission will be working towards as it moves forward on the strategic directions of Government. The statement also identifies the measures and indicators that will assist both the entity and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

In the 2011 Speech from the Throne, it was stated that “...some [residents] have faced barriers in their paths to employment and opportunity” and that “lowering [these] barriers will clear paths to opportunity and enable more to succeed”. The PSC supports this Government strategic direction through innovative efforts in all divisions. With new challenges emerging the PSC recognizes a need for ongoing quality improvement as well as increased transparency and fairness of processes mandated.

In May 2012, Government directed the Public Service Commission to undertake a review of the current *Public Service Commission Act* with a view to modernization and in support of the principles of a progressive, merit-based public service. This review is to include consultation with other departments and agencies, including the Human Resource Secretariat and Department of Justice. As a result, the PSC is committed to examining its governing legislation and mandate, to provide sound recommendations through review and adoption of best practices in HR governance, while continuing to promote and protect the merit principle and systems of merit.

In addition to quality enhancements, it is essential that appropriate educational awareness be delivered throughout the public service and the public in general. These changes must be achieved in an environment where protection of the merit principle is dominant. Protecting the merit principle requires openness and transparency. This includes the identification and removal of barriers as well as promotion of equal opportunity.

As a result, the following mission has been identified:

Mission: By 2017, the PSC will have examined, developed, implemented where appropriate and provided recommendations for quality improvement and modernization of legislation and services and will have both validated and enhanced the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.

Measure 1: Quality improvement and modernization of services and processes.

Indicators:

- Reviewed concept of Merit principle.
- Reviewed services provided throughout all PSC divisions.
- Reviewed certification process for selection board chairs.
- Audited and reviewed processes to ensure merit in appointments and promotions.
- Examined best practices in HR governance.
- Provided recommendations for legislation and mandate reform.

Measure 2: Validation and enhancement of transparency and fairness of processes within mandate.

Indicators:

- Defined fairness.
- Examined transparency and fairness in processes.
- Codified roles and responsibilities of administrative tribunals.
- Developed a decision database.
- Evaluated, and where possible, enhanced transparency of decision making processes.
- Developed a decision reporting mechanism.
- Established priorities for corrective action.
- Implemented corrective actions.
- Reported on results.

9.0 Goals and Objectives

In consideration of Government's strategic direction of decreasing barriers to employment, the legislative review, and the current mandate and financial resources of the PSC, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Chair for the next three years. The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected by the end of the three year time frame while the objectives provide a focus of work during each year. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the objectives to assist both the PSC and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

Issue 1: Public Service Demographic Shift and Labour Market Challenges

With the current demographic shift and resulting emergence of new labour market challenges, it is more vital today than ever, to ensure constant quality improvement in services provided. The requirement for well-defined strategies and legislation that promote the principals of a progressive, merit-based public service is significant. It is also imperative that these strategies are developed with consideration of today's best practices in HR governance. The current labour market is changing. Therefore, the focus of appointments and promotions must continue to be broadened to encompass all generations and reflect the diversity of our population and public service while ensuring accessibility. These actions will assist in securing qualified individuals to provide service excellence to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As a result, the following goal has been identified:

Goal One: By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have enhanced overall service quality to address challenges presented by aging legislation as well as changing demographic and labour market environments.

Measure: Enhanced service quality.

Indicators:

- Review of the application of merit in light of current labour market and public service demographics.
- Review of existing policies and processes related to merit and its application.
- Continued enhancement of quality improvement culture through evaluations of services provided.
- Implementation of a more proactive and professional development approach to certification of selection board chairs.
- Implementation of strategic staffing module within the human resource management package to demonstrate to public service managers the value of investing in recruitment and staffing.
- Use of technologies to acquire efficiencies related to recruitment and staffing methods.

Objectives:

1.1 By March 31, 2012, the PSC will have reviewed and further developed activities and functions to support quality improvements in staffing and recruitment.

Measure: Activities and functions are reviewed and further developed.

Indicators:

- Reviewed Merit and its application in light of current labour market and public service demographics.
- Reviewed existing policies and processes related to Merit and its application.
- Reviewed current staffing model (matrix system and assessment techniques).
- Continued review of selection board chair certification process.
- Continued definition of quality improvement infrastructure within the strategic staffing division.
- Researched technologies and practices, particularly as they relate to screening and testing.
- Recommendations made related to various review processes.

1.2 By March 31, 2013, the PSC will have implemented outcomes and recommendations arising from 2012 review to further improve the quality of staffing and recruitment.

1.3 By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have fully examined governing legislation and mandate, and provided recommendations with an overall view of modernization and improvement of service quality.

Issue 2: Transparency and Fairness

The Public Service Commission is an advocate for Merit, Fairness and Respect. As such, it is important that practices and procedures carried out by the Commission be viewed by members of the public service and the general public as transparent and meritorious. This begins with ensuring that decision making processes are conducted in a fair and just manner and proper documentation is in place to ensure consistency. Communication of results in a non-identifying manner provides an accountability function to the work of administrative tribunals. Individuals must know and understand the roles, responsibilities and rights of all players involved.

As a result, the following goal has been identified:

Goal two: By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have reviewed and implemented recommendations to further improve transparency and fairness of its mandated decision making processes.

Measure: Implemented recommendations in support of further improvements to transparency and fairness.

Indicators:

- Completed review of existing procedures.
- Conducted jurisdiction review.
- Acquired evaluative information from clientele.
- Implemented recommendations based on the results of the review.

Objectives:

2.1 By March 31, 2012, the PSC will have reviewed its mandated decision making processes to identify areas for improvement in transparency and fairness.

Measure: Mandated decision making processes reviewed and areas for improvement in transparency and fairness identified.

Indicators:

- Researched documentation associated with decision making processes.
- Consolidated documentation to address information gaps related to rights, roles and responsibilities.
- Explored the use of technology to record and disseminate decisions.

2.2 By March 31, 2013, the PSC will have implemented recommendations arising from reviews conducted in 2012.

2.3 By March 31, 2014, the PSC will have evaluated the success of revisions to its decision making processes.

Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one Government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The direction related to the Public Service Commission (PSC) is provided in the outcome statement below. Government has communicated the strategic direction of decreasing barriers to employment and opportunity. The PSC supports and will contribute to this strategic direction of Government in the areas defined by our mandate and this plan. This strategic direction is comprised of a number of components. These components will be addressed through the various planning processes of the Commission.

Title: Strategic Human Resource Management in the Public Service.

Outcome Statement: Decreasing barriers to employment and opportunity through continuous quality improvement in public service for the people of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, focusing on Merit, Fairness and Respect.

Components of Strategic Direction	Plan in which Component is Addressed		
	Business Plan	Operational Plan	Work Plan
2.1 Oversight Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Improvement • Legislative Review • Change Management / Evaluation • Streamlining processes • Knowledge Transfer 	X	X	
2.2 Leadership Role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder perceptions • Decision reporting mechanism; database (to ensure more consistency) • Define and Evaluate Hardiness in Public Service • Focus on building leadership capacity in Hardiness through enhancement of EAP offerings • Quality Improvement 	X	X	