

# Government Business Plans

for the fiscal year 2010–2011





# Message from Premier Darrell Dexter

I am pleased to present the 2010-2011 government business plan. This document lays out how we will make life better for Nova Scotia families in every region and demonstrate genuine leadership that's on your side.

The new government inherited serious financial challenges. Expenses have been growing much faster than reliable revenues, and little revenue growth was expected. The province has been headed toward a deficit of \$1.4 billion in 2012–2013. That path is not sustainable. To do nothing was not an option.

The current situation requires government to make tough decisions. But these must also be the right decisions for Nova Scotia families.

The government's four-year plan has these key goals:

1. Make health care better for you and your family
2. Create good jobs and grow the economy
3. Make life more affordable
4. Get back to balance and ensure government lives within its means

Our approach is smart, strategic, and steady. Reasonable and responsible decisions are required to create a secure foundation for future generations of Nova Scotians to enjoy a better life. The right decisions now will ensure this is a good place to live, work, do business, raise a family, and retire with dignity.

Sincerely,



Darrell Dexter  
Premier of Nova Scotia



# Introduction

Nova Scotia is at a crossroads. Reliance by previous governments on unstable or short-term revenue streams from offshore energy and federal transfer payments has resulted in Nova Scotia spending more money than it is bringing in. These challenges, complicated by an aging and shrinking population, call for a government to be smart, strategic, and steady—a government that will live within its means and focus on the programs and services important to Nova Scotians.

The pages that follow outline government's four-year, four-point plan that will make life better for families in every region.



## Make Health Care Better for You and Your Family

Nova Scotians want quality health care that meets their needs and the needs of their families into the future. This means making wise investments with our health-care dollars today to ensure the viability of the province's health-care system for future generations.

Health-care spending has outpaced all other areas and now accounts for almost half of all provincial program expenditures. Yet Nova Scotians have comparatively poorer health than their fellow Canadians. Clearly, we must stabilize health-care spending and achieve better health results with existing resources, and we must do this while meeting the expanding health-care needs of an aging population. This will require more efficient and effective ways to organize and deliver services, and greater emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention to reduce the need for such care.

Nova Scotia spends a greater percentage of its total health-care costs on administration compared to the national average. Through our internal expenditure review, we will close this gap and redirect savings to support front-line and primary health care.

Our emergency rooms are crowded and wait times are long, but we are making progress. In September, we appointed Nova Scotia's first-ever advisor on emergency care. The advisor's report will help form the basis of government's plan to ensure that families have access to emergency care when and where they need it.

To help relieve stress on the emergency system, the government will establish a Rapid Assessment Unit to help patients move faster through the emergency room to admission, and open new acute-care beds in Capital Health. As well, collaborative primary-health-care teams will be expanded throughout the province.

The first annual report on chronic emergency room closures will be tabled in the legislature this spring. It will reflect the discussions underway by government, district health authorities, and local communities about resolving chronic emergency room closures.

The health and safety of our patients is paramount. A few months ago, the province introduced a system that gives paramedics travelling in ambulances access to potentially life-saving information about allergies, medical conditions, and medication on patients registered with MedicAlert. It is a first in Canada.

Pharmacists will soon be able to refill medications on behalf of patients if their doctor is not available. They will also be able to order and interpret lab tests and administer vaccines. These changes are helping Nova Scotians access care and are improving the delivery of health-care services.

In 2010–2011, a new initiative will be developed to further promote and improve patient safety and health-service quality, as well as a drug information system to improve patient safety and monitor drug use.

Cancer patients will soon benefit from the improvement of radiation therapy services in Halifax and Sydney with new digital mammography machines. This technology will provide better and faster information that can help save lives.

Government will also initiate development of a strategy to counter childhood obesity in the province and undertake a new Mental Health Strategy aimed at revamping mental health and addiction services.

The number of senior citizens in our province is growing and so too are their health-care needs.

Work is underway to open 360 new long-term-care beds by next spring and have more nurse practitioners available in nursing homes to support seniors with chronic health conditions.

In consultation with stakeholders, we will change the existing Caregiver Allowance Program to improve support and benefits for caregivers playing a vital role in helping their loved ones.



## Create Good Jobs and Grow the Economy

In the last two decades, Nova Scotia's real economic growth was the lowest among all provinces. Our economic challenges are compounded by an aging population and the likelihood of fewer available workers.

As a government, we want to create good jobs and grow the economy. That involves focused capital investments and expanding innovation, productivity, and internal competitiveness across industry sectors.

Work is already underway.

Recently, government announced investments in Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Ltd., Lockheed Martin, Halifax Shipyards, and NewPage Port Hawkesbury Corporation. These strategic investments and others will create hundreds of jobs in 2010–2011 alone.

It is also critical for government to improve the sustainability of our traditional industries.

In 2010–2011, the province will release a 10-year strategy to help the agricultural industry grow by becoming more competitive, market focused, and environmentally sustainable and will introduce a new aquaculture strategy to help this sector improve its advantages on the world stage.

By the end of the calendar year, the province will also release a water management strategy and complete a Natural Resources Strategy for managing Nova Scotia's forests, minerals, parks, and biodiversity.

Currently, Nova Scotia imports nearly 85 per cent of its energy needs, subjecting the province to risks that are beyond our control—risks such as volatile pricing, unstable access to the resource, and carbon footprint penalties. If we are to own our energy future, our dependence on coal and oil must end.

Last year, Nova Scotia became the only province in Canada to place hard caps on greenhouse-gas emissions in the electricity sector, earning us an award at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen. This spring we will release a plan that will show how we intend to meet our 2015 commitment for 25 per cent renewable electricity.

Nova Scotia will become one of a few places in the world moving ahead with plans for commercial tidal electricity production. As home to the highest tides in the world, we are well positioned to create green jobs and build an industry and a reputation worldwide for producing clean energy.

In 2010–2011, we will also invest significantly in other energy efficiency and energy conservation projects.

Together with our federal and municipal partners, we are investing \$230 million in more than 100 road, water, and other infrastructure projects needed to support future economic growth. This investment complements our five-year plan to pave provincial roads.

Government's commitment to raise the Equity Tax Credit from 30 to 35 per cent will make available an additional \$1 million for investment in small businesses. As well, the new Manufacturing and Processing Investment Credit will increase innovation and productivity in these sectors and have a positive impact on rural Nova Scotia.

We are committed to the continuing roll-out of the Broadband for Rural Nova Scotia Initiative and to making Nova Scotia one of the most connected regions in North America.

Through our new Gateway Initiative, we are building an aggressive gateway marketing and business development strategy focused on North America, Europe, and Asia.

In 2010–2011, we will also see the introduction of a new immigration strategy, a key component of which will be to match skilled immigrants with the needs of Nova Scotia employers.

Immigration alone will not address our aging population and shrinking labour force. Our capacity to grow the economy and to maintain public services now depend on generating higher incomes per worker and getting under-represented groups into the workforce so we can increase our labour market participation and help existing workers maintain or advance in their jobs. Education and training are critical.

We will promote skilled trades and trades-related training through our new skilled trades centres to help to attract more young Nova Scotians to these careers.

In 2010–2011, we will continue our work with the Mi'kmaw community to attract aboriginal Nova Scotians into the trades most in demand. Through the Labour Market Agreement with the federal government, we will invest in employment support programs that help other under-represented groups find work.

As well, the government will also create 250 new community college seats in high-demand trades and professions through a \$2 million investment.

Some 100,000 Nova Scotian adults do not have a high school diploma, and many who do lose ground after they leave school because of limited learning opportunities in the workplace and the community.



The province's Adult Learning and Link Continuing Care Assistant Program is tackling this issue head on by helping adult learners gain the literacy, skills-training, and practical work experience they need to enter the workforce. As well, the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, operating in partnership with the federal government, helps older workers re-enter the labour market.

Last year, the province delivered more than 150 workplace education programs to Nova Scotians to help them stay current with the ever-changing needs of the workforce. Our new Recognition of Prior Learning pilot will help to ensure that no one will have to spend time and resources restudying what they already know.

We are also working with our community colleges and universities to ensure that their programming reflects the needs of the labour market.

Additionally, government will provide a tax rebate of up to \$15,000 over six years for university graduates, and up to \$7,500 for college graduates who stay and work here at home—returning about \$17 million into the hands of Nova Scotia's best and brightest.

## Make Life More Affordable

A key aspect of this government's plan is making life more affordable for families in every region. From the moment our government was sworn in, we've been aggressively working toward that end. Government has taken the provincial portion of the HST off basic home electricity, benefitting more than 400,000 households. Government eliminated security deposits for seniors who move into long-term care facilities. And we've also helped 1,500 Nova Scotia families purchase and build new homes with our new home construction rebate.

Starting this year, government will implement new tax measures to make life more affordable for families in every part of the province.

An Affordable Living Tax Credit for households with low incomes will more than make up for the impact of HST restoration to this group.

As of July 1, 2010, new point-of-sale rebates will apply to children's clothing and footwear, and feminine hygiene products and diapers.

Beginning in the 2010 tax year, seniors in receipt of the Guaranteed Income Supplement will no longer pay provincial income taxes, helping 18,000 seniors in every region of the province.

Breaking the poverty cycle will have a lasting positive impact for Nova Scotia families and the province by helping children grow into adults who are full contributors to their communities and by reducing the need for health care and social services.

In 2010–2011, we will begin an overhaul of Nova Scotia's Employment Support Income Assistance program to transform it into one that fosters economic independence and community involvement, and helps clients and their children reach their potential.

The province is also continuing its housing stimulus plan—a total investment of \$128 million over two years to build affordable housing units and upgrade existing ones.

This spring, government will introduce legislation to ensure fairer treatment of individuals hurt in auto accidents, while ensuring insurance premiums stay affordable. We will also introduce amendments to give government more effective oversight over the management of residential care settings and community-based small options homes and ensure the latter are all licensed.

The province will continue to improve the lives of seniors by funding programs that provide recreational opportunities for them while making their lives safer and more comfortable, and needed services more accessible.



# Get Back to Balance and Ensure Government Lives Within Its Means

This government has a solid, four-year plan to get the province's finances back to balance and to ensure government lives within its means. Our plan is aggressive and comprehensive and will support the right decisions for Nova Scotians. It will chart a new course for this province. Government will get back to balance by taking a rational, sensible approach.

## **First Steps**

The size and structural nature of Nova Scotia's deficit poses significant challenges that demand new, comprehensive, and balanced approaches for closing the gap between expenditures and revenues. On the revenue side, tax changes have been implemented in this fiscal year. Several initial steps have also been taken to address expenditure challenges. First, government has frozen the salaries of MLAs and senior officials, reduced MLA spending allowances, and addressed some of the pension liabilities. Government has established wage restraint targets of 1 per cent down from 2.9 per cent. It has also kept growth in total expenses flat in 2010–2011, down from an annual average of 5 per cent or higher in recent years. Departmental spending will be stable for the next four fiscal years.

A Change and Innovation Fund has also been established in Treasury Board with an estimate of \$15.0 million. This fund will be used to encourage departments to consider efficiencies and innovative ways of achieving their business and service objectives. It also includes \$3.0 million for the Emergency Department Protection Fund and \$2.0 million is related to the government commitment on community schools.

## **Next Steps**

We are making progress, but there is much more to do. The government's plan to get back to balance and live within its means will rely heavily on the Expenditure Management Initiative (EMI) to help achieve significant savings in a variety of areas.

EMI has been mandated to support the cost reduction and/or containment efforts of departments and agencies by assisting them with analytical, planning, and project management support.

Government has begun a comprehensive analysis of all department, agency, and third-party spending in order to achieve balance by 2013–2014. Additionally we will examine all administrative controls and fiscal policies, seek strategic alignments, and review all programs and the structure of

government to determine if there are opportunities for savings.

Once we have evaluated each of the hundreds of government programs for cost effectiveness, current usefulness, and alignment with current priorities, we will have more efficient service delivery. With more efficient service delivery comes the need for smaller government.

Rather than resort to layoffs, government will rely on attrition achieved through retirements and voluntary departures to make the civil service smaller. We expect the civil service will employ 10 per cent fewer people by 2013.

Government is taking concrete steps to get its fiscal house in order. About 60 per cent of government expenditures are payments to third parties, such as municipalities, universities, school boards, and health authorities. Government has already begun discussions with some of these parties to work cooperatively to identify opportunities to achieve costs savings and ensure maximum value from their budgets.

In the health sector, we will investigate opportunities to reduce costs in areas such as health authorities shared efficiencies, streamlining health care services, and drug costs.

In the education sector, we will investigate cost savings through the modernization of the school system, opportunities tied to student enrollment decline. We are looking at rationalizing services, sharing administrative costs, and using technology to not only improve service but our bottom line as well.

In combination, this multi-staged approach to address our fiscal challenge is expected to result in a drop in the projected deficit level of the province by 86 per cent in 2012–2013 compared to that projected in the Economic Advisory Panel's Report 2009. This will continue through to 2013–2014 to bring us to balance.



## Conclusion

This government knows where it is going and has a strong plan to get there. We are determined to make the decisions needed to bring Nova Scotia back to balance while ensuring government lives within its means. It will not be easy. But we believe that the challenge before us also offers new opportunities to realign, reorganize, and modernize government in a way that will make life better for Nova Scotian families.

# Business Plans 2010–2011

<b>Department</b>	<b>Web Address</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<a href="http://gov.ns.ca/agri/department/business_plans/">http://gov.ns.ca/agri/department/business_plans/</a>
<b>Community Services</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/">www.gov.ns.ca/coms/</a> (Click on "About This Department," then "Publications, Policies & Reports")
<b>Economic and Rural Development</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/">www.gov.ns.ca/econ/</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Education</b>	<a href="http://www.ednet.ns.ca/">www.ednet.ns.ca/</a> (Click on "Business Plans")
<b>Energy</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/energy/">www.gov.ns.ca/energy/</a> (Click on "Background Information," then "Business Plan")
<b>Environment</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/">www.gov.ns.ca/nse/</a> (Click on "Resources," then "Publications")
<b>Finance</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/">www.gov.ns.ca/finance/</a> (Click on "Publications," then "Business Plan")
<b>Fisheries and Aquaculture</b>	<a href="http://gov.ns.ca/fish/department/business_plans/">http://gov.ns.ca/fish/department/business_plans/</a>
<b>Health</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/">www.gov.ns.ca/health/</a> (Click on "Reports")
<b>Health Promotion and Protection</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/">www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/</a> (Under "About" click on "Business Plan")
<b>Justice</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/">www.gov.ns.ca/just/</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Labour and Workforce Development</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/">www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/">www.gov.ns.ca/natr/</a> (Click on "Business Plans")
<b>Seniors</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/scs/">www.gov.ns.ca/scs/</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/business-plan.asp">www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/business-plan.asp</a>
<b>Tourism, Culture and Heritage</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/tch/">www.gov.ns.ca/tch/</a> (Click on "Business Plan")
<b>Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/tran/">www.gov.ns.ca/tran/</a> (Click on "Business Plan")
<b>Public Service Entity</b>	<b>Web Address</b>
<b>Aboriginal Affairs, Office of</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/abor/">www.gov.ns.ca/abor/</a> (Click on "Office of Aboriginal Affairs," then "What We Do," then "Business Plan")
<b>Acadian Affairs, Office of</b>	<i>English:</i> <a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/e/">www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/e/</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Affaires acadiennes, Office des</b>	<i>Français:</i> <a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/">www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/</a> (Cliquez sur "Publications")
<b>African Nova Scotian Affairs, Office of</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/">www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/</a> (Under "What's New," click on "Business Plan 2010–11")
<b>Chief Information Office</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/cio">www.gov.ns.ca/cio</a>
<b>Communications Nova Scotia</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/cmns">www.gov.ns.ca/cmns</a> (Click on "Publications")
<b>Conserve Nova Scotia</b>	<a href="http://www.conservens.ca">www.conservens.ca</a> (Click on "About the Agency," then "Business Plan")
<b>Emergency Management Office</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/emo/">www.gov.ns.ca/emo/</a> (Click on "Resources," then "Publications," then "Business Plan")



## Business Plans 2010–2011 *continued*

### **Public Service Entity**

#### **Executive Council Office**

### **Web Address**

[www.gov.ns.ca/exec\\_council/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/)  
(Under “Publications” click on “Office Publications”)

#### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office**

[www.foipop.ns.ca/](http://www.foipop.ns.ca/) (Click on “Publications”)

#### **Gaelic Affairs, Office of**

[www.gov.ns.ca/oga](http://www.gov.ns.ca/oga)

#### **Human Rights Commission**

[www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/) (Click on “Publications”)

#### **Immigration, Office of**

[www.novascotiaimmigration.com](http://www.novascotiaimmigration.com) (Click on “Publications & Resources,” then “Corporate Documents”)

#### **Intergovernmental Affairs**

[www.gov.ns.ca/iga/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/iga/) (Click on “Publications”)

#### **Nova Scotia Securities Commission**

[www.gov.ns.ca/nssc](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nssc) (On the right, click on “Plans and Reports”)

#### **Ombudsman, Office of the Office of Policy and Priorities**

[www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/)  
[www.gov.ns.ca/PPO/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/PPO/)  
(Under “Publication,” click on “Office Publications”)

#### **Public Prosecution Service**

[www.gov.ns.ca/pps/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/pps/) (Under “Publications,” click on “Business Plan”)

#### **Public Service Commission**

[www.gov.ns.ca/psc/businessPlan](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/businessPlan)

#### **Status of Women, Advisory Council on**

<http://women.gov.ns.ca/>  
(Under “About Us,” click on “Reports and Business Plans”)

#### **Sydney Tar Ponds Agency**

[www.tarpondscleanup.ca](http://www.tarpondscleanup.ca) (Click on “Agency,” then hover on “Agency” until you see “Business Plan”)

#### **Treasury Board Office**

[www.gov.ns.ca/treasuryboard/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/treasuryboard/)  
(Under “Publications,” click on “Office Publications”)

#### **Utility and Review Board, NS Voluntary Planning**

[www.nsuarb.ca/](http://www.nsuarb.ca/) (Click on “About Us,” then “Plans & Reports”)  
<http://vp.gov.ns.ca/> (Click on “Publications”)

### **Crown Corporation**

### **Web Address**

#### **Art Gallery of Nova Scotia**

[www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/en/landing.aspx](http://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/en/landing.aspx)  
(Click on “Halifax,” then “About AGNS,” “Corporate Information,” and “Annual Reports”)

#### **Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission**

[www.hdbc.ca](http://www.hdbc.ca) (Click on “About HHB,” then “Annual Reports and Publications”)

#### **Film Nova Scotia**

<http://film.ns.ca>  
(Click on “Corporate,” then “Corporate Reporting”)

#### **Harbourside Commercial Park Inc.**

[www.harcom.ca](http://www.harcom.ca)

#### **Innovacorp**

[www.innovacorp.ca/](http://www.innovacorp.ca/) (Under “About Us,” click on “Publications”)

#### **Nova Scotia Business Incorporated**

[www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/](http://www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/)  
(Click on “About Nova Scotia Business Inc.,” then “Corporate Reports and Plans”)

# Business Plans 2010–2011

<b>Crown Corporation</b>	<b>Web Address</b>
<b>Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/">www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/">www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/</a> (Click on “Business Plan”)
<b>Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/">www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/</a> (Click on “Business Plan 2010–11”)
<b>Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.nsgc.ca/busPlans.php">www.nsgc.ca/busPlans.php</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Harness Racing Incorporated</b>	<a href="http://gov.ns.ca/agri/department/divisions/legcom.shtml">http://gov.ns.ca/agri/department/divisions/legcom.shtml</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/department/Publications.html">www.gov.ns.ca/coms/department/Publications.html</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Lands Inc.</b>	<a href="http://www.nslands.ca">www.nslands.ca</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.thenslc.com/">www.thenslc.com/</a> (Under “Media Centre” at the bottom of the page, click on “Business Plans”)
<b>Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc">www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc</a> (Click on “Business Plan”)
<b>Nova Scotia Power Finance Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/en/home/budget/default.aspx">www.gov.ns.ca/finance/en/home/budget/default.aspx</a> (Under “Budget,” click on “Budget Documents,” and select the year)
<b>Sydney Steel Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.sysco.ns.ca">www.sysco.ns.ca</a>
<b>Trade Centre Limited</b>	<a href="http://www.tradecentrelimited.com/">www.tradecentrelimited.com/</a> (Under “About TCL,” click on “Corporate Policies & Reports”)
<b>Waterfront Development Corporation Limited</b>	<a href="http://www.wdcl.ca/">www.wdcl.ca/</a> (Click on “Enter,” then under “Corporate Profile” select “Annual Reports”)

