



The Council of Atlantic Premiers
Annual Report for 2005–2006

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Letter from the Premiers



Shawn Graham
Premier
New Brunswick



Danny Williams
Premier
Newfoundland & Labrador



Rodney MacDonald
Premier
Nova Scotia



Robert Ghiz
Premier
Prince Edward Island

The Council of Atlantic Premiers is delighted to release its 2005–2006 Annual Report, which provides the major activities and accomplishments of Council and its agencies.

In 2005–2006, we released *Building on Progress: Atlantic Action Plan 2005–2008*, which provides a blueprint for intergovernmental cooperation in Atlantic Canada in many sectors of government. This important public policy document outlines our commitment to providing quality and efficient public service as well as growing a competitive regional economy for the benefit of all Atlantic Canadians.

The Council of Atlantic Premiers also provides a vehicle for our respective governments to position Atlantic Canada on issues of mutual and strategic interest. In 2005–2006, we developed positions on a number of issues important to Atlantic Canada, including fiscal imbalance, Canada-US relations, and regional economic development. Together, we promoted Atlantic Canada as a great place to live and conduct business. During this period, we conducted a successful mission to Calgary in November 2005.

We would like to recognize former Premier John Hamm of Nova Scotia on his retirement. We praise him for his contribution to his province for the past 12 years and are grateful for his commitment to regional cooperation as an original signatory to the 2000 agreement establishing the Council of Atlantic Premiers.

We would also like to thank Premier Bernard Lord for his contribution to regional cooperation. Mr. Lord was also an original signatory to the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Council of Atlantic Premiers and played a significant role in shaping a vision for Atlantic Canada.

The Council is also grateful to Premier Pat Binns for his commitment to Atlantic cooperation. Mr. Binns was a signatory to the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding and exercised great leadership in promoting Atlantic Canada.

Atlantic Canadians should be very proud of their accomplishments and of the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead as we build a strong and sustainable region.

Letter from the Secretary

June 15, 2007

Premier Shawn Graham

Premier Danny Williams

Premier Rodney MacDonald

Premier Robert Ghiz

On behalf of the Council Secretariat, it is with great pleasure that I submit the Council of Atlantic Premiers' Annual Report for the 2005–2006 period. We can be very proud of the activities undertaken and the major accomplishments attained during this period. It reflects the commitment and dedication of Atlantic premiers and line ministers in their pursuit to make this region prosperous.

I would also like to recognize the work of government officials and secretariat and regional agencies' staff in their ongoing support of these initiatives. The Council secretariat provides project management by coordinating and serving a number of intergovernmental committees, and added value by applying efficient and effective processes to achieve the desired outcomes.

In conclusion, I would like to recognize the Council of Atlantic Premiers' Management Committee for its guidance and support over the last year.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Osmond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "D" and "O".

Don Osmond

Secretary to Council

Council of Atlantic Premiers

The Council of Atlantic Premiers (CAP) was established in May 2000, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Regional Cooperation by Premiers Bernard Lord, New Brunswick; Brian Tobin, Newfoundland and Labrador; John Hamm, Nova Scotia; and Pat Binns, Prince Edward Island.

The **vision** of the Council is to systematically identify and exploit opportunities through joint action, and to reach ends together that may not be achievable alone.

The **mission** of the Council is to

- promote Atlantic Canadian interests on national issues by seeking to establish common views and positions and working to ensure that Atlantic Canadians and their interests are well represented in national debates
- strive to provide a climate in which Atlantic Canadians can fully participate and be competitive in the global economy, benefit from quality social services, and continue to enjoy the quality of life and environment that is unique to Atlantic Canada
- work with all their partners to foster and promote a sustainable and prosperous future for Atlantic Canada within a strong and united Canada that respects the diversity and equality of all its regions.

The **mandate** of the Council is the

- development of common Atlantic Canada positions for Annual Premiers' Conferences and First Ministers' Conferences;
- development of common Atlantic Canada positions on national issues;
- joint promotion of the interests of Atlantic Canadians;
- coordination of joint activity in areas of mutual agreement, including but not limited to, trade promotion, federal-provincial fiscal arrangements, and economic and social cooperation; and
- coordination of joint analysis and review of economic and fiscal, social, cultural and environmental programs and policies which affect or concern the Atlantic provinces.

The work of the Council is carried out through the coordination of the premiers meeting as a group, the Council Secretariat, central committees, regional agencies, and working groups. An organizational chart is presented in Appendix I.

The Council of Atlantic Premiers met in June 2005 in Saint John, New Brunswick, and in October 2005 in Mill River, Prince Edward Island. The Council also conducted a promotional mission to Calgary in November 2005.

Council Secretariat

The Council Secretariat was established in 1971 to organize and expedite the work of the Council of Maritime Premiers. This role has not changed during the transition to the Council of Atlantic Premiers. The secretariat performs head office functions for regional agencies and employees and serves the premiers in meeting the goals of the Council of Atlantic Premiers. The secretariat's responsibilities include

- providing administrative and logistical support to the Council of Atlantic Premiers
- encouraging regional approaches in provincial decision making
- providing the institutional memory of the Council.

Staff of the secretariat provide services to the Council of Atlantic Premiers (CAP), the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET), and the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP). Special funding arrangements are in place for the CAMET and the NEG/ECP. Secretariat staff are employees of the Council, while the other Council agencies, except the CAMET, employ staff directly.

The governance of the Council of Atlantic Premiers is led by the Management Committee, consisting of the Atlantic deputy ministers of intergovernmental affairs and chaired by the CAP Secretary. It plays a prominent role by providing and/or recommending to premiers regional policy direction of strategic importance to the four provinces. The Management Committee is also responsible for setting the Council meeting agendas, monitoring the implementation of CAP decisions and progress on the premiers' action plan, as well as monitoring the secretariat's annual business plan.

The CAP Management Committee is also supported by an officials' committee. Its main function is to serve in a support capacity for the effective implementation of regional cooperation initiatives under the auspices of the Council of Atlantic Premiers.

The Regional Treasury Board (RTB) Secretaries' Committee consists of provincial deputy ministers responsible for finance and supports Council on the management of funds and regional employees. Financial accountability is preserved in several ways. Agency budgets are reviewed by the Secretaries' Committee and then approved by the Council. Once a year, the Atlantic deputy ministers of intergovernmental affairs and deputy ministers of finance meet to review and recommend budget estimates for the Council and its agencies. Public funds for Council agencies are recommended to the legislatures as part of provincial estimates. An external auditor reports to the Council on the disposition of funds. Financial operating summaries for the reporting period are presented in Appendix II; audited financial statements are available on request.

As part of its continued commitment to improve its management performance, the CAP Secretariat maintained its ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management designation in 2006. ISO 9001:2000 is attained by adherence to an international set of five related standards for qualification of global quality assurance and quality control standards. These standards consisted of inspecting production processes, updating records, maintaining equipment, training employees, and handling customer relations.

The secretariat also provides management and transactional services. During this period, the secretariat continued the provision of pension services for employees of the secretariat, Council agencies, and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.

Premiers' Action Plan: Building On Progress: Atlantic Action Plan 2005–2008

Introduction

In June 2005, the Council of Atlantic Premiers launched *Building on Progress: Atlantic Action Plan 2005–2008*, which outlines the Atlantic governments' commitment to strengthening productivity and competitiveness within the region and achieving greater benefits from cooperation. The action plan reaffirms a shared vision for a prosperous Atlantic Canada and builds on a strong foundation of regional unity and intergovernmental cooperation in Atlantic Canada spanning more than three decades.

The CAP action plan consists of two major themes: providing quality and efficient public services; and growing a competitive economy. Activities and accomplishments are presented under these two themes.

Building on Progress succeeds *Working Together for Atlantic Canada: An Action Plan for Regional Cooperation 2001–2003*, which achieved significant progress across a wide range of public policy areas, including health, environment, procurement, education, economic development, transportation, tourism, and energy.

The 2005-2008 and 2001-2003 action plans are available on the Council of Atlantic Premiers' website at www.cap-cpma.ca.

Providing Quality and Efficient Public Services

Health

Health Human Resources

Provincial departments of health and education have successfully completed a human resources planning study. The study provides a multi-disciplinary health human resources planning model and includes a quantitative assessment of desired service levels based on anticipated population health needs. The framework will assist health and education departments in ensuring there are the right number of skilled health practitioners to maximize the provision of health services in the region.

This initiative is the first health human resources planning study coordinated interprovincially in Canada and was jointly funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the provincial departments of education and health.

National Collaboration Centre for Social Determinants of Health in Atlantic Canada (NCC-SOH)

The Atlantic provinces were asked by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to establish a National Collaboration Centre for Social Determinants of Health (NCC-SDH) as part of a national initiative to establish six national collaboration centres across the country.

As a first task, the Atlantic departments of health struck an Atlantic NCC-SDH working group comprised of representatives from each of the four Atlantic provinces to guide the development phase of the NCC-SDH. A planning and development team was also hired to support the NCC-SDH working group. In December 2005, a process was initiated to solicit proposals for a permanent host agency. In February 2006, a panel of experts external to the Atlantic provinces reviewed and recommended its choice of agency, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia. This recommendation was endorsed by the Atlantic provinces' deputy ministers of health in March 2006 and forwarded to PHAC.

The NCC-SDH working group hosted a think tank in January 2006 to consult experts, policy makers, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and front-line practitioners on future strategic priorities to be addressed by the NCC-SDH. The final report will form the foundation for a second wave of focused consultations to identify priorities for the first full year of operation of NCC-SDH (2006–2007), as well as the medium- and long-term focus of its work.

Electronic Health

Atlantic cooperation in electronic health is conducted under the auspices of Health Information Atlantic (HIA) with the funding assistance of Canada Health Infoway (CHI). Provinces are working jointly in the following three areas.

- *Provider Registry* – A contract was awarded to Barrington Consulting Group to assist in the design of a regional health services provider registry. The objective is to establish a registry that includes interoperable data standards and infrastructure across the region.
- *Diagnostic Imaging* – Provincial departments of health are considering actions related to a diagnostic integration strategy for Atlantic Canada. While each province is implementing their own archives for diagnostic imaging, HIA is working towards the establishment of a diagnostic imaging archiving and communication system that will allow images to be transmitted seamlessly anywhere and anytime in Atlantic Canada.
- *Public Health Surveillance* – New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia are collaborating with the other Canadian provinces and territories to establish a national public health surveillance strategy, which is scheduled to commence in 2006. The program is intended to reduce morbidity from communicable diseases by investing in a new generation of surveillance systems on a pan-Canadian level. The benefits of this strategy will be better and more consistent case management, immunization management, and outbreak detection and response. Prince Edward Island is currently not participating in this initiative but will re-assess its position for future opportunities.

Environment

In 2005–2006, the Atlantic environment ministers formed the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Environment, which formalizes the commitment of the Atlantic provinces to collaborate on key environmental issues. The ministers agreed to move forward as partners on many items, including cooperation on new recycling initiatives and solid waste issues. Together they commissioned a report to identify opportunities for regional harmonization to address solid waste issues. They also agreed to work closely together on issues arising through participation in the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment.

Government Procurement

Joint government procurement continues to be a highly successful initiative and is a good example of how the Atlantic Procurement Agreement can realize significant savings.

Joint School Bus Purchases

One of the most successful areas of Atlantic cooperation in government procurement in the past decade has been joint purchases of school buses. In 2005–2006, provinces achieved substantial savings of over \$2 million, which demonstrates how the combined purchasing power of the Atlantic provinces can produce economies of scale that benefit all provinces.

Drivers' Licences

In October 2005, the Council of Atlantic Premiers announced the Atlantic Canada Drivers' Licence and ID Card Project. The project will provide Atlantic Canadians with drivers' licences and provincial ID cards with enhanced security features and uniformity in design, while retaining unique provincial characteristics. Prince Edward Island will be the first jurisdiction to have the new product in September 2006, followed by Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

Growing a Competitive Economy

Human Capital Development

The regional educational initiatives undertaken under the auspices of the action plan were coordinated and implemented by the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) and focused on public and post-secondary education.

In the area of public education, departments of education and training established two major priorities—support for program implementation and improving student performance. These new priorities followed the completion of common core curriculum in math, sciences, and language arts for Atlantic Canada.

CAMET supported the Atlantic premiers' call to increase federal funding to provinces for post-secondary education and training. The Atlantic departments of education and training identified specific needs in the areas of campus infrastructure and deferred maintenance, research and development, adult literacy, and skills development. These priorities were included in the Atlantic departments of education and training submissions to the Council of the Federation as part of the

provincial and territorial premiers' call to engage the federal government in post-secondary education and training.

A more-detailed account of public and post-secondary education projects is included in the CAMET section of this annual report under the category *Regional Cooperation—Atlantic*.

Immigration

Immigration is a shared federal/provincial responsibility. Atlantic premiers believe the Atlantic region must convey a coherent regional position to the federal government in requesting increased funding support for programs to attract and retain immigrants.

Atlantic premiers agreed to work together to attract and retain more immigrants in the four provinces. Since the adoption of the action plan, provinces have collaborated on research and explored initiatives to promote the region by developing common marketing materials, participating in trade missions, and targeting specific countries and particular skill sets.

The Atlantic departments responsible for immigration pooled their resources and, between March 10 and March 26, 2006, participated in immigration fairs in Utrecht, Netherlands; Sandown, England; and Glasgow, Scotland. This promotional event provided the impetus for a multi-year regional immigration promotion and attraction program being developed by provincial and federal governments as part of an overall Atlantic strategy.

Transportation

The Atlantic provinces contributed significantly to the Council of the Federation's National Transportation Strategy, *Looking to the Future: A Plan for Investing in Canada's Transportation System*, released in December of 2005. The aim of this paper was to secure essential federal support to meet critical transportation infrastructure and policy requirements. Atlantic provinces will develop a regional multi-modal transportation strategy, which will complement the Council of the Federation initiative.

Atlantic provinces are working together to secure federal support to meet transportation infrastructure needs in our region. These critical infrastructure projects include the completion of the Trans-Labrador Highway; twinning Route 95 to Woodstock, New Brunswick; construction of a new international bridge between St. Stephen, New Brunswick and Calais, Maine; and twinning of Highway 104 in Nova Scotia.

Atlantic departments of transportation have finalized draft position documents on the harmonization of over-dimensional loads regulations and on common escort driver training. The objective of this initiative is to harmonize rules for the movement of over-dimensional indivisible loads in the region, leading to the development of a regional permit program. Training for escort vehicle drivers will lead to standard rules and procedures for vehicles operating inter- and intraprovincially. By adopting common interpretation of regulations, operators will face a more consistent application of commercial vehicle procedures by enforcement agencies in each province.

Natural Resources

Softwood Lumber Issues

Atlantic governments continued to convey a united position to the federal government to resolve the softwood lumber issues with the United States. Working closely with stakeholders, including the Maritime Lumber Bureau, the Atlantic position remained very clear on this matter—that no counter-vailing duties, no anti-dumping, no export taxes, no quotas, nor any other trade remedy be applied to this region. In October 2005, the Atlantic ministers of natural resources conveyed to their provincial/territorial and federal colleagues that a negotiated solution respecting the region's unique circumstances was the most effective solution.

Sustainable Forest Management

Provincial departments of natural resources have been meeting on an ad hoc basis to share information on topics such as forest inventory, forest management planning, forest pests, wildfire, silviculture and tree improvement, and research. This forum has also served to formulate Atlantic Canadian positions on the Canada Council of Forest Ministers' initiatives and strategies.

Agriculture: Atlantic Promotion of Atlantic Food Products

The Atlantic ministers responsible for agri-food met on January 12, 2006, to receive the results of the Atlantic Canada Consumer Survey conducted in 2005. The survey concluded that Atlantic Canadian consumers are willing to consider locally produced food products when shopping for groceries, and for selected items, they are already loyal consumers. Based on the survey results, the ministers agreed to work jointly to improve communication between producers and grocery wholesale/retail buyers; assist food producers in improving business skills; examine the impact of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) mandatory nutrition labelling; and develop a strategy to capitalize on direct marketing trends and opportunities on an Atlantic Canada basis.

Tourism and Culture

The current funding agreement for the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership expired on March 31, 2006. The Atlantic provinces, along with the tourism industry, were working closely with the federal government to renew this agreement.¹ A renewed agreement would support the implementation of research-driven, integrated consumer and trade marketing campaigns designed to attract more visitors to Atlantic Canada from key markets in the United States and overseas. The combined commitment under a new three-year agreement is \$19.95 million, cost-shared by the provincial and federal governments and the industry.

Energy

In March 2006, the Atlantic ministers of energy successfully implemented a demand-side management marketing campaign to inform Atlantic Canadians on choices to conserve energy. The campaign, entitled *SAVE* (Shared Atlantic Vision for Energy Efficiency), included television, radio, and newspaper advertisements to motivate Atlantic Canadians to reduce energy consumption. Actions to conserve energy will reduce energy costs and assist provinces in reaching their climate change reduction targets as part of the Kyoto agreement. The *SAVE* media campaign is the first phase of a three-year initiative to reduce demand for energy in Atlantic Canada.

¹ Agreement was renewed in 2006.

Regional Strategic Issues and Initiatives

This section of the annual report highlights the strategic issues and initiatives that are of mutual interest to the provincial governments that were addressed by the Council of Atlantic Premiers in 2005–2006.

Promotion of Atlantic Canada

Building on the success of the 2004 Toronto mission, the Atlantic premiers conducted a mission to Calgary in November 2005. The theme of the premiers' mission, *Opportunity, Innovation, and Success*, was incorporated into promotional products for the mission. The premiers met with representatives of the oil and gas industry as well as key business leaders in Alberta's business community. The mission highlighted the changing nature of the Atlantic provincial economies that include traditional resource-based industries, as well as vibrant emerging industries in energy, manufacturing, and information and communications technologies. The premiers' message also referenced the many successes of Atlantic Canadian companies at the regional, national, and international levels.

The Atlantic premiers showcased opportunities in the region, including access to the most competitive business cost environment among the G8 countries; a skilled and committed workforce; a competitive, reliable, and economical energy supply; an efficient intermodal transportation service; cutting-edge telecommunications infrastructure; and a strong commitment to innovation.

Evaluations conducted after the mission concluded that the events changed perceptions of the intended audiences. Respondents indicated that their impressions following the event were consistently more positive on each of the key messages. The premiers' messages were well received and attracted extensive media coverage.

Fiscal Imbalance

Throughout 2005-2006, Atlantic premiers availed of every opportunity to communicate to the federal government their priority to restore fiscal balance. In communiqués from both the June and October meetings, and in individual submissions to the House of Commons Finance Subcommittee on Fiscal Imbalance, the federal government's Expert Panel on Equalization and the Council of the Federation's Advisory Panel on Fiscal Imbalance, premiers reiterated their position that the principle of equalizing fiscal capacities across provinces should not be eroded.

Aboriginal Peoples

Atlantic premiers developed common positions in preparation for the First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Affairs in November 2005. The premiers agreed on the importance of closing the gap in the quality of life that exists between Aboriginal peoples and the rest of the Canadian population. Priority areas include health, education, housing, economic development, and relationships. Premiers urged the federal government to ensure that it meets its constitutional and fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal peoples. They emphasized that federal/provincial collaboration in this area must include adequate and long-term sustainable funding.

Canada-US Relations

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) is a United States regulatory proposal that would require all US citizens and foreign nationals to present a passport or other secure documents when entering the US. In a letter to the US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, Atlantic premiers conveyed their concerns that the WHTI will negatively impact Canadian and American citizens in border communities, and decrease tourism and commercial trade. Premiers stressed the importance that our border procedures allow day-to-day life to continue while maintaining the highest level of security.

The Atlantic premiers also expressed concern regarding the proposed requirement for the provision of passenger manifests for Canadian aircraft over-flying US airspace to points in Canada or elsewhere.

Atlantic Prosperity Partnership Framework

In 2005–2006, the Atlantic provinces continued to engage the federal government with the intent of renewing a partnership for Atlantic regional economic development. Atlantic premiers advocated the need for economic development activities of the federal and provincial governments to be complementary and coordinated to maximize the impact of resources and delivered through cost-shared bilateral agreements.

At the request of Atlantic premiers and the Prime Minister of Canada, provincial ministers responsible for economic development met with the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) in November 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to identify common priority areas for the long-term economic development of Atlantic Canada in innovation, human capital, and community development. Ministers agreed to continue their dialogue and to convene again in the near future.

Copyright

In March 2006, the Atlantic premiers wrote to the Prime Minister of Canada in support of proposed amendments to the Copyright Act. The premiers were responding to the introduction of Bill C-60, which failed to provide exemptions for educational use of the Internet. Atlantic premiers indicated that the original bill would have a detrimental impact on education and the use of the Internet in classrooms and post-secondary institutions across Canada.

Marine Atlantic

As a response to the May 2005 report released by the Advisory Committee on Marine Atlantic Inc., Atlantic premiers agreed that Marine Atlantic provides an essential transportation link, vital to the regional economy. Premiers stressed that, under the Terms of the Union between Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, the federal government has a constitutional obligation to provide a continuous ferry service in accordance with traffic offering, and this must be a high-quality service offered at a reasonable cost.

World Junior Championships in Athletics

Atlantic premiers expressed their support for the City of Moncton's bid to host the 12th World Junior Championships in Athletics in 2008. They noted that Athletics Canada has also endorsed the bid in obtaining this important international sporting event.

Commonwealth Games

Atlantic premiers also expressed their support for Halifax's 2014 Commonwealth Games bid. They noted that the development of sport and youth activity through such an event would have a beneficial impact throughout the region.

Insurance Harmonization (Maritime)

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island began drafting of the Maritime Harmonized Insurance Act for products other than automobile insurance. The legislation will complement existing legislation in each province by harmonizing industry practices and creating a framework more responsive to changing industry conditions.

Regional Cooperation—Atlantic

Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium

Background

The Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC), a partnership between community colleges and Atlantic government departments responsible for community colleges, provided leadership and resources in advancing the following collaborative and cooperative initiatives, which are consistent with its approved business plan for 2005–2006.

Highlights

- The APCCC Board met three times to provide directions to the work of the Consortium and to share knowledge and experiences important to the growth and development of Atlantic colleges.
- A Business and Tourism “Community of Practice” was established, complete with steering committee and terms of reference. A work plan is under development for the 2006–2007 year.
- APCCC committees and networks continue to provide opportunities for collaboration.
 - *Deans of Trades and Technology* – provides a collective response to the Atlantic Construction Symposium recommendations and supports APCCC's inclusion in the Construction Sector Council's Atlantic Labour Market Information Working Group.
 - *Applied Research Network* – shares best practices and builds a profile of the significant contributions that colleges make to the region through applied research activities.

- *Corporate Services Network* – explores pan-Atlantic training and development opportunities for Atlantic businesses and industries, with much success.
- *Climate Change Action Plan Advisory Committee* – advances opportunities for colleges to become more environmentally friendly and energy efficient.
- *Professional Development Task Group* – identifies strategic organizational development needs and implements appropriate responses through workshops and institutes. The APCCC Professional Development Task Group undertook the following four significant professional development activities in support of Atlantic college employees:
 - ⇒ *Designing the Learning College* – the last of a three-part series designed for support staff, whose contributions to college programs and services are immense (60 participants)
 - ⇒ *Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)* – a workshop to enhance knowledge of best practices in prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) (70 participants)
 - ⇒ *National Council for Staff Program and Organizational Development Conference* – a conference on best practices in teaching and learning (20 participants)
 - ⇒ *Tourism and Hospitality Educators’ Conference* – exploration of ways colleges support the Atlantic tourism industry through quality programming delivery (40 participants)
- *Information and Communications Technology Symposium Planning Team* – brings together businesses, governments, and educators to critically evaluate the state of the industry in Atlantic Canada and identify how colleges can best support its growth.
- The *2006 Guide to Block Transfer Agreements* was published, and 1,100 CD copies were distributed to high school guidance counsellors and principals, employment and career counselling agencies, and college recruitment and student development staff.
- Relationship building activities include invitation of strategic guests to board meetings; participation in APEC and the Atlantic Provinces Chambers of Commerce activities; provision of support and documentation to CAMET; collaboration with the Association of Atlantic Universities on articulation and credit transfer; and circulation of the consortium newsletter to college employees.
- The Roundtable of Improving Competitiveness and Productivity in Atlantic Canada facilitated with ACOA, resulting in a number of recommended activities that are currently being explored.
- Regional-based research was undertaken by the APCCC to support the work of the APCCC board, its committees, and networks; as well, presentations were made to CAMET in preparation for the Council of the Federation’s National Stakeholder Summit on Post-Secondary Education and Skills held in February 2006, to the CEO of APEC, and to support initiatives such as the Infrastructure Renewal Proposal, among others.

Further detailed information on the APCCC can be obtained by visiting their website at www.apccc.ca.

Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET)

Background

During 2005–2006, the ministers of education and training of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island met twice (September 2005 in Prince Edward Island and February 2006 in New Brunswick). During these meetings, ministers discussed issues of strategic importance to the region in public and post-secondary education.

CAMET is supported by the Council of Atlantic Deputy Ministers of Education and Training (CADMET), serving as the board of directors, and two standing committees—the Public Education Standing Committee (PESC) and the Post-Secondary Education Standing Committee (PSESC).

Highlights - Public Education (Entry – 12)

Ministers of education and training are highly committed to working jointly on projects in the areas of program implementation support and improving student performance. Aside from working to achieve common goals, the ministers of education and training recognize that each linguistic sector has different needs or priorities. Therefore, each linguistic sector continues to respond to the needs that are specific to their clientele.

Program Implementation Support

Anglophone Sector

- Development and production continued on social studies curriculum guides for grades entry–2, 3–4–5; and on social studies student textbooks and teacher resources for grade 6, 7, and 8/9.
- Development continued on an integrated curriculum document for entry–3 students. This document will assist teachers in creating coherent multi-disciplinary lessons plans.
- Development and production continued on online math tutorials for high school students. These on-line tutorials will allow students, teachers and parents to access support resources independently of the school setting.
- Development continued of an online prototype for teacher professional development (literacy). When completed, this resource will provide teachers with an easily accessible and interactive learning resource in the critical area of student literacy.

Francophone Sector

- The annual summer institute for school principals was held in Moncton, New Brunswick. The theme of this year's institute was *Fenêtres sur les richesses des communautés d'apprentissage professionnelles*.
- Development and field testing continued of four new online courses for high school students in the areas of entrepreneurship, economics, tourism, and accounting. Putting this course material on-line increases the options for students in smaller rural schools where enrollment might not justify engaging an instructor.

- Development of grades learning objectives continued in mathematics, sciences and literacy for entry–4 and 5–8.
- The grade 9 French language arts curriculum was completed. Work is underway on grades 10-12.
- The French video library provided francophone schools across the region with high-quality programs at a reduced cost. The library is a centre for the purchase of duplication rights and distribution of audio-visual learning resources. It is another example of how the Atlantic provinces reduce costs by combining purchasing functions.

French as a Second Language

- Simulation tools for grades 10, 11, and 12 are nearing completion, which will provide a stimulating second-language learning experience for high school students.
- A tool kit for school administrators has been produced to promote French second language programs. The kit consists of strategies and suggested activities for administrators to support core and immersion French programs for students, parents and teachers.

Improving Student Performance

Anglophone Sector

- As a result of research conducted in the area of student performance, the ministers of education and training agreed to pursue a number of regional projects aimed at supporting teachers, students and parents. These included
 - departments researched the use of differentiated instruction in the classroom to address many challenges faced by students and teachers in the classroom, leading to the development of the *Boys, Girls and Learning – a K–12 Handbook*.
 - an E–3 math assessment resource was developed and will serve as a resource kit for teachers to use in the classroom on a one-on-one basis or in a group setting.

Francophone Sector

- A resource was developed for teachers that focuses on how boys and girls learn differently.
- Development of a literacy website continued. When completed, the website will provide an inventory of school and community resources to support improved literacy.
- Development of a resource for teachers on multi-age grouping is nearing completion. This resource addresses the challenges facing teachers in classrooms where grade levels have been combined.

Highlights - Post-Secondary Education

The ministers of education and training collaborated on strategic post-secondary education and training issues to support and enhance Atlantic Canada’s prosperity.

The departments of education and training developed formal requests for federal funding to

address campus infrastructure needs and deferred maintenance, research and development, adult literacy, and skills development. These proposals also served to position the region as part of the provinces' submissions to the Council of the Federation to engage the federal government in post-secondary education.

In October 2005, CAMET met with the Council of Atlantic Premiers to discuss Atlantic priorities in a federal/provincial partnership in post-secondary education.

In addition, ministers met with representatives of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), and the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC) to discuss and develop a common position on strategic issues. A common Atlantic position was then brought forward to the Council of the Federation's National Stakeholder Summit on Post-secondary Education Skills held in February 2006. The summit was an excellent opportunity to align provincial and federal priorities.

In 2005–2006, interprovincial collaboration in post-secondary education also produced two deliverables:

- a proposal for federal funding of an Atlantic Centre for International Credentials and Competency Assessment and Recognition (ICC)
- completion of the feasibility phase of a study on the mobility and retention of post-secondary students in Atlantic Canada.

Further information on CAMET, its activities, and publications can be accessed through its website at www.camet-camef.ca.

Regional Cooperation—Maritime

Maritime Provinces Harness Racing Commission

Background

The Council of Maritime Premiers established the Maritime Provinces Harness Racing Commission (MPHRC) in 1994. The commission was established as the region's harness racing authority, with the jurisdiction to govern and regulate harness racing throughout the Maritime provinces. It consists of six members appointed by the provincial governments.

Highlights

The Commission issued licences to eight Maritime racetracks, seven of which hold both live and simulcast racing events.

In addition to its normal administrative and regulatory activities, the commission:

- sustained a continuing education and evaluation program that included new officials' seminars and a judges' seminar
- recruited officials through the apprenticeship program

- held appeal and complaint hearings to resolve grievances
- conducted industry meetings on setting race and stake dates, rule changes, and planning sessions
- reviewed applications and issued off-track betting theatre licences and made recommendations to the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency on racetrack home market areas
- completed and distributed revised and amended rules
- revised human drug testing policy and implemented a supervisory training program for some race officials
- developed awareness posters to be distributed to industry stakeholders
- participated in various regional and national regulatory meetings and seminars.

The Maritime industry is now formally associated with Standardbred Canada, which is the official registry of standardbred horses and the record-keeping body for the commission.

Further detailed information on the MPHRC can be accessed through their website at www.mphrc.ca.

Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission

Background

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), an agency of the Council of Maritime Premiers, was established in 1974. In June 1997, the ministers of education in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island agreed to renew and refocus the commission's mandate through an "Agreement Respecting the Renewal of Arrangements for Regional Cooperation Concerning Post-Secondary Education." In January 2005, the new MPHEC Act was proclaimed, giving full force to the commission's renewed mandate.

The commission's primary orientation is directed toward "improving and maintaining the best possible service to students as lifelong learners," primarily within the university sector. This is to be achieved through the following main functions: quality assurance, data and information, cooperative action, and regional programs, as well as providing specific services to one or more provinces or institutions as agreed to by the ministers.

Highlights

Updated Policy on Quality Assurance

In May 2005, the commission released its updated Policy on Quality Assurance, with an implementation date of September 1, 2005. The policy's update, which represents a significant reshaping of the original document, is the result of many discussions with the commission's stakeholders and by the commission itself. The policy was revised to improve the clarity and usefulness of the document.

Review of Academic Programs

Institutions are required to submit proposals for new or modified programs to the commission for approval prior to implementation. In 2005–2006, the commission considered a total of 75 program proposals; of these, 50 programs were approved through the cursory review process, three were approved through in-depth assessment, one was recorded for information only, three were withdrawn, and 18 were still in the assessment process at year-end.

Monitoring of Institutional Quality Assurance Policies and Practices

The purpose of this initiative is to ascertain that the procedures used by institutions to assess the quality of existing programs and other functions, as appropriate, are performing adequately as quality control and quality improvement mechanisms. The Quality Assurance Monitoring Committee, a joint committee of the Association of Atlantic Universities and the MPHEC, carries out the monitoring function on behalf of the commission. During 2005–2006, five were undergoing the monitoring process. At year-end, three of the five institutions were in the final stages of the process. It is expected that the process will be initiated with another four institutions in 2006–2007, and with the final five in 2007–2008.

Annual Stakeholder Meeting

On September 18, 2005, the MPHEC held its stakeholder meeting in Truro, Nova Scotia. This year, the commission shared with its stakeholders the products and services offered with respect to data and information to allow stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on these products and services to help future products and services better meet stakeholder needs.

Data and Information

The commission houses a wealth of data and information spanning the full spectrum of university education. It is responsible for acquiring, auditing, validating, and storing proprietary data, such as the Enhanced Student Information System (ESIS) and the MPHEC graduate survey, in addition to regularly updating non-proprietary data from external sources, which include university finances and faculty demographics.

During 2005–2006, work began to provide the Province of Nova Scotia with the required calculated outputs to run its funding formula. This involves an analysis of the components of the funding formula—its existing parameters, definitions, and policies—and merging these characteristics of the formula in relation to the ESIS data collection in Nova Scotia institutions.

Survey of Maritime University Graduates: Class of 2003 in 2005

During 2005–2006, the graduate survey program created its fourth cohort with the class of 2003 in 2005. As with all of the commission’s graduate surveys, the goal is to monitor and characterize the transitions, and the factors that influence the transitions, experienced by Maritime university graduates as they move between the learning force and the work force, and back again, taking into consideration their experiences prior to enrolling in their university programs. The commission expects to release the final report in early fiscal year 2007–2008.

Five Years After University Graduation: Status of the Maritime Class of 1999 in 2004— Survey Highlights

In November 2005, the commission published under its Trends in Maritime Higher Education series, highlights from the survey of the class of 1999 Maritime university graduates in 2004. The findings were based on a longitudinal data file containing responses from approximately 2,300 graduates who had been previously surveyed in 2001. A full report is expected to be released in May 2006.

Release of R&D Funding in Atlantic Universities

As a follow-up to the commission's *Report on Post-Secondary Research Trends in Atlantic Canada* (2000), the commission released *R&D Funding in Atlantic Universities* in November 2005. This report examines the evolution of R&D funding trends since the previous report's release, as well as the relationship between the Federal Innovation Strategy and the Atlantic R&D environment.

Interprovincial Agreements and Intra-Maritime Program Funding Arrangements

The commission continued to administer agreements with other Canadian provinces to place Maritime students in programs of study not available in this region. The commission also maintained the intra-Maritime agreement for sharing the costs of regional programs, by which each Maritime province provides funding transfers for its students enrolled in programs in either of the other two provinces that are not offered in the home province.

New Brunswick Degree Granting Act

By request of the New Brunswick minister responsible for post-secondary education, the commission reviews program proposals submitted under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act, which regulates the delivery process and the quality of degrees offered by new degree-granting institutions. During 2004–2005, the commission was asked to assess a Master of Education in four areas of specialization, proposed by Yorkville University, located in Fredericton, New Brunswick. The programs were not designated under the Degree Granting Act. Visit the MPHEC website (www.mphec.ca) for further information about the commission, its functions, policies, and publications.

Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers

Background

The first Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP) was held in 1973, and since then, it has met on an annual basis, with the exception of 1991, 1992, 1996, and 2004. The NEG/ECP has successfully undertaken a number of initiatives in the areas of trade, energy, environment, oceans, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, transportation, information technology, and tourism.

Highlights

The 29th conference was held August 28–29, 2005, in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The conference addressed trade, energy, oceans technology and research, border security, and the environment.

The following resolutions were adopted by the governors and premiers.

- Resolution 29-1 *Resolution Concerning the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America* – supported the SPP and requested an action plan to strengthen cooperation between members in areas targeted by SPP
- Resolution 29-2 *Resolution Concerning Energy* – implement monitoring program of challenges and opportunities for natural gas and related sectors to fully realize sector issues from the perspective of various industry participants
- Resolution 29-3 *Resolution Concerning Oceans* – formation of an Oceans Working Group to provide a vehicle of cooperation on all aspects of oceans management
- Resolution 29-4 *Resolution on the Environment* – coordinate common strategies for resolution of regional environmental and related transportation issues; develop low-sulphur heating oil strategy; and achieve 2010 greenhouse gas reduction targets
- Resolution 29-5 *Resolution Honouring the Life and Service of Bill Gildea* – recognizing his 20 years of dedicated service as Executive Director of the New England Governors Conference
- Resolution 29-6 *Resolution on Hurricane Katrina* – recognized the approach of Hurricane Katrina to the Gulf of Mexico states and expressed concern for the citizens of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana

Committee Activities

Environment

Since its inception, the NEG/ECP Committee on the Environment has served the region by implementing numerous environmental and health initiatives. Most importantly, the 1998 adoption by the NEG/ECP of the *Mercury Action Plan* and *Acid Rain Action Plan*, followed in 2001 by the *Climate Change Action Plan*, established the NEG/ECP as an international leader in progressive and pragmatic approaches to environmental policy making. Each of the three plans has ambitious measures for reducing mercury, sulfur and nitrogen emissions, and greenhouse gases.

The following is a brief synopsis of the work of the standing committees, which oversee implementation of the three action plans.

Acid Rain and Air Quality Steering Committee (ARQSC)

- In 2005–2006 the ARQSC actively pursued the following initiatives:
 - In December 2005, funding was identified for completion of the forest mapping project, which will demonstrate which forest areas in the NEG/ECP region are most sensitive to acid atmospheric deposition. This comprehensive project is producing forest sensitivity maps of the entire NEG/ECP region under current emission levels of sulfur and nitrogen.
 - In January 2006, a draft report on residential wood combustion was tabled and reviewed by the committee. Of particular concern is the health impact of outdoor wood boilers. The committee has been working with Environment Canada in drafting a number of recommendations for consideration.
 - The committee continued monitoring the impact that acid deposition has on the regional fresh water supply.

Mercury Task Force (MTF)

Implementation of the regional mercury project is the responsibility of the NEG/ECP Mercury Task Force, with the assistance of specific work groups. In 2005–2006, the Mercury Task Force continued its work in reducing mercury through its dental, school, and utility programs and was also engaged in other initiatives including

- a joint initiative to assay mercury content in heating oil
- participation in the regional petroleum fuels effort
- developing a regional assessment of mercury in wildlife and fish
- identification of new mercury sources
- continued cooperation with other national and international efforts, such as those of the United Nations and the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)
- development of a regional repository of mercury information related to the NEG/ECP project, housed on the NEG/ECP environmental website
- continued ambient air monitoring for mercury

Climate Change Steering Committee (CCSC)

On December 7, 2005 at a special ceremony at the United Nations Conference of the Parties meeting in Montreal, the NEG/ECP was recognized as one of the Climate Group's/BusinessWeek magazine's Low Carbon Leaders of the Decade. The awards, which include recognition of emission reduction and leadership on climate change over the last 10 years, were compiled with the research and analysis support of Innovest Strategic Value Advisors, and the rankings are summarized in the December 2, 2005, issue of BusinessWeek magazine.

The Climate Group's/BusinessWeek magazine's award encouraged the NEG/ECP to continue to move forward implementing its action plan. The CCSC's principal work areas and deliverables in 2005–2006 included:

- developing the strategic planning document for achieving the NEG/ECP 2010 targets

- working with the mercury and acid rain programs to finalize a low-sulfur heating oil strategy
- development of a white paper on renewable energy and energy efficiency
- continuing support of the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management's (NESCAUM's) efforts to obtain funding for its inventory, registry, and fuel initiatives.

Northeast International Committee on Energy (NICE)

The Northeast International Committee on Energy (NICE) was established by the NEG/ECP in 1978 to monitor and act upon energy concerns in the New England/Eastern Canadian region. Since its inception, the NICE has conducted numerous roundtables, conferences, and meetings; published timely reports on energy issues; and recommended regional policy initiatives to the NEG/ECP. In March 2006, NICE launched its *Energy Dialogue* with a forum on natural gas, which brought together influential leaders from industry and government to review the status of natural gas markets in the northeast and to develop recommendations for governors and premiers on regional actions that could contribute to a secure, economic, and reliable energy system in the region. In addition to the *Energy Dialogue*, the NICE worked with the Climate Change Steering Committee in developing the report "Recommendations for Promoting Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in the Northeast." The report is to be submitted to the 30th Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.

Trade Cooperation Committee

The Trade Cooperation Committee submitted its report and work plan at the 29th NEG/ECP Conference. Conference Resolution 29-1 concerning the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) of North America tasked the committee to draft a regional action plan in response to the SPP and to file a preliminary report by the end of December 2005. The committee reviewed and completed the preliminary report on the SPP.

During 2005–2006, the committee also reached consensus on the following issues:

- an NEG/ECP Regional Action Plan on the SPP for the 30th Conference in Newport, Rhode Island
- responses to the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)
- plan and promote, in support of Rhode Island, the reverse trade show on ocean industries and marine technologies proposed for Newport, May 11-12, 2006
- realign and refocus the committee mandate to become more responsive to trade issues and trade promotion.

Appendix I: Council Organizational Chart

COUNCIL OF ATLANTIC PREMIERS

Council's Management
Committee

IGA and Finance Deputy
Ministers' Committee

Council Secretariat

Management Committee's
Officials' Committee

Advisory Committee on
Finance

CAMET
*(Council of Atlantic Ministers
of Education and Training)*

MPHEC
*(Maritime Provinces Higher
Education Commission)*

MPHRC
*(Maritime Provinces Harness
Racing Commission)*

APCCC
*(Atlantic Provinces Community
College Consortium)*

Appendix II: Financial Operating Summary

COUNCIL OF ATLANTIC PREMIERS

Statement of Consolidated Fund Revenue, Expenditures and Operating Surplus

For the year ended March 31, 2006

	Budget	2006 Actual	2005 Actual
	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Province of New Brunswick	1,080,015	1,080,402	1,030,837
Province of Newfoundland and Labrador	283,074	283,074	256,000
Province of Nova Scotia	1,380,011	1,380,011	1,288,681
Province of Prince Edward Island	278,020	278,020	280,245
Other	878,719	781,240	696,671
	<u>3,899,839</u>	<u>3,802,747</u>	<u>3,552,434</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Council Secretariat	1,223,106	1,233,301	1,194,952
Maritime Provinces Harness Racing Commission	659,749	665,998	651,791
Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission	1,368,754	1,463,476	1,257,266
	<u>3,251,609</u>	<u>3,362,775</u>	<u>3,104,009</u>
Grants –			
Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium	80,000	80,000	80,000
Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education & Training	212,230	212,230	212,230
	<u>3,543,839</u>	<u>3,655,005</u>	<u>3,396,239</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR	<u>356,000</u>	<u>147,742</u>	<u>156,195</u>

Appendix III: Council Directory

Council Secretariat

Council of Atlantic Premiers

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Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2Z1

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Fax: (902) 424-8976

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Don Osmond, Secretary to Council/Co-Secretary to NEG/ECP

Rhéal Poirier, Assistant Secretary to Council/

Secretary to CAMET/Assistant Co-Secretary to NEG/ECP

Rod Casey, Chief Financial Officer

Charles Ayles, Director, Federal/Provincial Relations

Angela Buckles, Administrative Assistant

Glenn Davis, Regional Coordinator

Doreen Hamilton, Administrative Assistant

Janice Henderson, Administrative Assistant

Brad Hodgins, Regional Coordinator

Sylvie Martin, Regional Coordinator

Sharon Pinaud, Receptionist

Jackie Ruggles, Accounting and Pension Officer

Hannah Stewart, Finance and IT Officer

Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium

c/o College of the North Atlantic

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Cyril Farrell, Executive Director

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Rhéal Poirier, Secretary

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Mireille Duguay, Chief Executive Officer